PART TWO

Chapter 5: Principles of Design

The Principles of Design include:

1. Unity and Variety
2. Balance
3. Emphasis and Subordination
4. Scale and Proportion
5. Rhythm
Key Terms for this chapter include:

Composition

Unity and Variety: Visual and Conceptual

Balance: Visual Weight, Symmetry, Asymmetry

Emphasis and Subordination: Focal Point

Scale and Proportion: Hierarchical Scale

Rhythm: Repetition
Composition is the organization of all the visual elements within a work of art. Artists design their compositions using guidelines known as the Principles of Design.
5.1 Memory of Oceania, Henri Matisse
UNITY and VARIETY

• **Unity:** The sense of oneness, of things belonging together and making up a *coherent whole*.

• **Variety:** *Differences* that provide interest and contrast.
5.2 Shimmering Substance, Jackson Pollock
5.3 Mes Vouex, Annette Messager
UNITY and VARIETY

• **Visual Unity**: Based on using the visual elements.

• **Conceptual Unity**: Created through tying a group of ideas together.
Girl Before a Mirror,
Pablo Picasso, 5’4”x4’3 1⁄2”, 1932
BALANCE

• **Visual Weight:** Refers to an apparent “heaviness” or “lightness” of forms arranged in a composition.

• When **visual weight** is equally distributed to either side of the implied center of gravity a composition is felt to be visually balanced.
5.9 Some principles of visual balance
5.5 **Red Cube**, Isamu Noguchi
BALANCE

• Symmetrical Balance: Mirror image of shapes/forms on either side of an imaginary axial dividing line; elements correspond to one another in size, shape, and placement.

• Relieved/Approximate Symmetry: Slight differences between axial areas of a work of art.

• Asymmetrical Balance: Two sides that do not correspond to one another in size, shape, and placement.
BALANCE

Principles of Asymmetrical Balance:

• A large form is visually heavier than a smaller form.
• A dark valued form is visually heavier than a lighter valued form of the same size.
• A textured form is visually heavier than a smooth form of the same size.
• A complex form is visually heavier than a simple form of the same size.
• Two or more small forms can balance a larger one.
• A smaller dark form can balance a larger light one.
5.8 Thirteen-Deity Jnanadakini Mandala, Newar artists at Densatil monastery, Central Tibet – SYMMETRY
Reflectwo, Haruka Kojin, 2006, installation
Deer’s Skull with Pedernal, Georgia O’Keeffe, 1936
Death and Life, Gustav Klimt, 1911
The Burning of the Houses of Parliament, J.M.W. Turner, 1835

ASYMMETRY

The Zen Priest
Choka, Edo Period
Emphasis and Subordination are complementary concepts.

- **Emphasis**: The viewer’s attention will be centered more on certain parts of the composition than on others.
- **Focal point**: A specific spot to which one’s attention is directed.
- **Subordination**: A less visually interesting area.
A Bar at the Folies-Bergere, Edouard Manet, 1881-82
5.16 Executions of the Third of May, Francisco de Goya, 1808 – Emphasis/Focal Point
The Banjo Lesson,
Henry O’Tanner, 1893
Scale and Proportion both have to do with size.

- **Scale**: Size in relation to a constant or “normal” size.

- **Proportion**: Refers to size relationships between parts of a whole or between two or more items perceived as a unit.
Vitruvian Man, Leonardo da Vinci, 1485-90
5.17 Plantoir, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, 2001
SCALE and PROPORTION

• Hierarchical Scale: Using size change to indicate relative importance.
5.20 Royal altar to the hand, Benin, 18th century
The Golden Section:
A proportional ratio used by artists and the ancient Greeks in both architecture and other works of art.
RHYTHM

Rhythm is based in repetition and is a basic part of our world.

• **Visual Rhythm**: Depends on the repetition of accented elements, usually shapes.
5.27 Landscape with Yellow Birds, Paul Klee, 1923/32
PRINCIPLES of DESIGN: Summary

The Principles of Design and Key Terms:

Composition

Unity and Variety: Visual and Conceptual

Balance: Visual Weight, Symmetry, Asymmetry

Emphasis and Subordination: Focal Point

Scale and Proportion: Hierarchical Scale

Rhythm: Repetition