

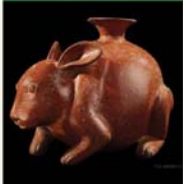


Launching the Imagination

A Comprehensive Guide
to Basic Design



fifth
edition



Mary **Stewart**

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A Comprehensive Guide to Basic Design

fifth edition

Mary **Stewart**





LAUNCHING THE IMAGINATION: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO BASIC DESIGN, FIFTH EDITION

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Launching the Imagination:
A Comprehensive Guide to Basic Design
is dedicated to Scott Betz.

dedication

***Launching the Imagination* treats design as both a verb and a noun—as both a process and a product. By covering the process of creative and critical thinking and presenting the elements and principles used in creating a product, this book offers a unique resource for foundations courses.**

The title *Launching the Imagination* suggests the goals of this book and of the foundations year as a whole. Through an immersion in 2D, 3D, and 4D concepts and problems, students learn to develop ways of thinking visually that will serve them throughout their studies and careers. They discover that design is deliberate—a process of exploring a wide range of solutions and choosing the most promising option for development. And they find inspiration in the work of others, analyzing the art of the past and the present for insights.

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HALLMARKS OF OUR NEW EDITION OF *LAUNCHING THE IMAGINATION*

Building on the strengths of the previous four editions, *Launching the Imagination*, fifth edition, is even more

- **Concise.** Content has been refined so that maximum content can be communicated as clearly and concisely as possible.
- **Colorful.** In addition to the full color used throughout the book, the writing is livelier than that in most textbooks. Analogies expand communication, and every visual example has been carefully selected for maximum impact.
- **Comprehensive.** *Launching the Imagination* is the only foundational text with full sections devoted to critical and creative thinking and to time-based design. The photo program is global, represents a myriad of stylistic approaches, and prominently features design and media arts as well as more traditional art forms.
- **Contemporary.** More than half of the visual examples represent artworks completed since 1970, and 120 represent works completed since 2000.
- **Compelling.** Four expanded profiles have been added to this edition. With at least three visual examples per interview, these new profiles follow the process by which leading artists and designers have developed their artworks. In Chapter 5, designer Steve Quinn describes the seven-step sequence he uses in developing websites, logos, and motion graphics. In Chapter 6, Jim Elniski describes *The Greenhouse Chicago*, an adaptive re-use home that is both highly energy efficient and beautiful. In Chapter 7, Kendall Buster describes stages in the completion of a complex sculpture, from preliminary drawing to installation. In Chapter 8, painter Carrie Ann Baade discusses the sources of her images and four major steps in their development. Five profiles have also

been retained from previous editions: illustrator Bob Dacey, painter Suzanne Stryk, metalsmith Marilyn da Silva, ceramicist David MacDonald, and composer Michael Remson.

- Over 100 new images have been added, representing major artists and designers including Janet Echelman, Lilian Garcia-Roig, Michael Mazur, Matthew Ritchie, Sarah Sze, Mark Tansey, Niklaus Troxler, Leo Villareal, Richard Wilson, and Yayoi Kausama.

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER CHANGES

Each chapter has been updated and, where needed, reorganized to maximize clarity. Improvements include the following:

Chapter 1: A new section on point has been added, and a previous section on degrees of representation has been moved to Chapter 8, Constructing Meaning.

Chapter 2: Diagrams have been updated and the writing has been further clarified.

Chapter 3: The section on Gestalt better emphasizes six unifying compositional forces, and new compositional diagrams help to illustrate how these forces are used. The section on contrast and emphasis has been substantially revised and updated.

Chapter 4: The writing has been further clarified.

Chapter 5: The writing has been further clarified, and more contemporary examples have been added.

Chapter 6: The “Variations on a Theme” section has been expanded and updated.

Chapter 7: The writing has been further clarified, and more contemporary examples have been added.

Chapter 8: The section entitled “Degrees of Representation” has been moved from Chapter 1 and additional digital examples have been added.

Chapter 9: A new section on point has been added, and sections on line and mass have been updated.

Chapter 10: Sections on contrast and emphasis have been expanded and revised for maximum clarity.

Chapter 11: More contemporary examples have been added.

Chapter 12: More contemporary examples have been added.

Chapter 13: More contemporary examples have been added.

Chapter 14: Narrative analysis of *A League of Their Own* has been added as well as new examples from the world of advertising.

Chapter 15: The writing has been further clarified, and more contemporary examples have been added.

SUPPLEMENTS

Online Learning Center

The Online Learning Center at www.mhhe.com/LTI5e offers student resources for each chapter of the text, including chapter objectives, vocabulary flashcards, activities, studio projects, and short quizzes.

Instructor's Center

Led by Mathew Kelly from Central College, a remarkable team of collaborators has developed an extensive Instructor's Manual that provides advice on course construction, critique skills, and technical resources. It includes over 70 assignments divided into 4 sections: two-dimensional design, concepts and critical thinking, three-dimensional design, and time design. Lecture PowerPoints provide a great resource that instructors can tailor to their individual needs.

MyArtStudio at www.mhhe.com/ArtStudio

Students have access to MyArtStudio, a rich and comprehensive website with interactions that allow students to study and experiment with various elements and principles of art. Students can view videos of art techniques and artists at work. Exercises on the Online Learning Center guide students to MyArtStudio at appropriate points in the text.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This substantially revised edition has been quite a challenge. Senior editor Sarah Remington and content project manager Jennifer Gehl offered consistent and supportive leadership. Developmental editor Thomas Sigel helped strengthen and clarify the writing throughout. Photo researcher Deborah Anderson was remarkably tenacious in pursuing each permission and was wonderfully inventive in suggesting alternatives when necessary. Chris Black and his design team at Lachina worked tirelessly to develop the best possible layouts. Images are at the heart of this book. I would like especially to thank all the artists and designers who granted permission for use of their artworks and the galleries, museums, archives, and private donors who provided the high-resolution images.

This book is dedicated to four master educators. Professor Scott Betz, at Winston-Salem State University has been an exemplar of innovation and dedication throughout his career. During his six years as president, the national organization for foundation education (Foundations in Art: Theory and Education) expanded and evolved into a major force for the greater good. The two-dimensional design version of this book is dedicated to Cynthia Hellyer-Heinz, currently foundations director at Northern Illinois University. A brilliant drawing teacher and gifted administrator, Cindy inspires both her students and her colleagues. The three-dimensional design version is dedicated to Professor Mathew R. Kelly, departmental Chair at Central College, and to Professor Peter Winant, Director, School of Art, George Mason University. Since the beginning, Professor Kelly has been the primary author of the Instructor's Manual for *Launching the Imagination*. As Editor of *FutureForward* (the professional journal of Integrative Teaching International) he has consistently offered great insight and wonderful expertise. In addition to his leadership at George Mason University, Professor Winant has worked on community-building projects in Liberia, Haiti, and in the Washington, DC area. All of these remarkable people are exemplars of the very best in education.

The following reviewers provided valuable insights and suggestions:

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Two-Dimensional Design

chapter one

Basic Elements 4

chapter two

The Element of Color 38

chapter three

Principles of Two-Dimensional Design 65

chapter four

Illusion of Space, Illusion of Motion 89

Concepts and Critical Thinking

chapter five

Problem Seeking and Problem Solving 106

chapter six

Cultivating Creativity 123

chapter seven

Developing Critical Thinking 137

chapter eight

Constructing Meaning 156

Three-Dimensional Design

chapter nine

Three-Dimensional Design Elements 180

chapter ten

Principles of Three-Dimensional Design 217

chapter eleven

Materials and Methods 237

chapter twelve

Physical and Cerebral 260

Time Design

chapter thirteen

Aspects and Elements of Time 284

chapter fourteen

Narrative and Nonnarrative 308

chapter fifteen

Interdisciplinary Arts 331

Bibliography 349

Notes 351

Glossary 352

Photo Credits 360

Index 371

Preface vi
Introduction xvi

Two-Dimensional Design

chapter one

Basic Elements 4

POINT 4

Defining Point 4
Using Point 4

LINE 6

Defining Line 6
Line Quality 6
Actual Lines 7
Implied Lines 9
Linear Networks 9
Using Line 11

SHAPE 14

Defining Shape 14
Types of Shape 15
Using Shape 18

TEXTURE 22

Types of Texture 22
Creating Texture 23
Texture and Space 23
Trompe L'Oeil 24
Combining Physical and Visual Texture 24
Marks and Meanings 26

VALUE 28

Contrast 28
Value Distribution 30
Value and Volume 30
Value and Space 31
Value and Lighting 32

Summary, Key Terms 34

Studio Projects 35

Profile: Bob Dacey, Illustrator 36

chapter two

The Element of Color 38

COLOR PHYSICS 39

Additive and Subtractive Color 39
Color Interaction 41

DEFINING COLOR 42

Hue 42
Value 44
Intensity 46

HARMONY AND

DISHARMONY 48

Monochromatic Color Schemes 48
Analogous Color Schemes 48
Complementary Color Schemes 49
Split Complementary Color Schemes 50
Triadic Color Schemes 50
Chromatic Grays and Earth Colors 50
Using Disharmony 51

COMPOSING WITH

COLOR 53

Creating the Illusion of Space 53
Weight and Balance 53
Distribution and Proportion 55
Color as Emphasis 55

EMOTION AND

EXPRESSION 57

Color Keys 58
Symbolic Color 59
The Power of Color 60

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 62

Profile: Suzanne Stryk, Painter 63

chapter three

Principles of Two-Dimensional Design 65

UNITY AND VARIETY 65

Unifying Forces 67
Patterns and Grids 72

BALANCE 74

Weight and Gravity 74
Symmetrical Balance 75
Radial Symmetry 77
Asymmetrical Balance 77
Expressive Uses of Balance 80

PROPORTION AND SCALE 81

RHYTHM 83

EMPHASIS 84

Emphasis by Isolation 84
Emphasis by Placement 85
Emphasis Through Contrast 86

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 88

chapter four

Illusion of Space, Illusion of Motion 89

CREATING THE ILLUSION OF SPACE 90

Linear Perspective 90
Other Ways to Create the Illusion of Space 92
Using the Illusion of Space 94

SPATIAL DYNAMICS 96

A Compositional Setting 96

THE ILLUSION OF MOTION 97

The Kinesthetic Response 98
The Decisive Moment 98
Before and After 98
Fragmentation 99
Multiplication 100

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 103

Concepts and Critical Thinking

chapter five

Problem Seeking and Problem Solving 106

PROBLEM SEEKING 106

- The Design Process 106
- The Fine Art Process 107
- Sources of Ideas 108
- Characteristics of a Good Problem 110

CONVERGENT AND DIVERGENT THINKING 111

- Using Convergent Thinking 111
- Using Divergent Thinking 112

BRAINSTORMING 113

- Make a List 113
- Use a Thesaurus 114
- Explore Connections 114
- Keep a Journal 115
- Collaborative Creativity 116

VISUAL RESEARCH 116

- Thumbnail Sketches 116
- Model Making 117

AN OPEN MIND 118

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 119

Profile: Steve Quinn, Designer 120

chapter six

Cultivating Creativity 123

SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF CREATIVE THINKING 123

- Receptivity 124
- Curiosity 124
- Wide Range of Interests 124
- Attentiveness 124
- Connection Seeking 124

- Conviction 124
- Complexity 124

GOAL SETTING 126

- Characteristics of Good Goals 126

TIME MANAGEMENT 126

- Set the Stage 126
- Prioritize 127
- See the Big Picture 127
- Work Sequentially 127
- Use Parts to Create the Whole 127
- Make the Most of Class Time 127
- When in Doubt, Crank It Out 127
- Work Together 128

VARIATIONS ON A THEME 128

ACTIVELY SEEK SUCCESS 132

- Habits of Mind 132
- Habits of Work 132

Summary, Studio Projects 133

Profile: Jim Elniski, Artist 134

chapter seven

Developing Critical Thinking 137

ESTABLISHING CRITERIA 137

FORM, SUBJECT, CONTENT 138

STOP, LOOK, LISTEN, LEARN 138

OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE CRITIQUES 139

CRITIQUE STRATEGIES 139

- Description 139
- Cause and Effect 141
- Compare and Contrast 142
- Greatest Strength/Unrealized Potential 144

DEVELOPING A LONG-TERM PROJECT 144

- Week One Assessment 145
- Week Two Assessment 145

TURN UP THE HEAT: PUSHING YOUR PROJECT'S POTENTIAL 146

- Basic Arithmetic 146
- Transformation 146
- Reorganization 148
- Developing a Self-Assignment 149

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY 149

Self-Assignment: Jason Chin 150

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 152

Profile: Kendall Buster, Sculptor 153

chapter eight

Constructing Meaning 156

BUILDING BRIDGES 156

- Shared Language 156
- Iconography 157
- Audience 158
- Immediacy 159
- Stereotypes 160
- Clichés 161
- Surprise 161

PURPOSE AND INTENT 163

DEGREES OF REPRESENTATION 164

DEGREES OF DEFINITION 166

CONTEXT 167

CONNECTIONS 168

AESTHETICS 168

- Cultural Values 168
- Modern and Postmodern 169
- Postmodern Strategies 171

DRAMA 172

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 174

Profile: Carrie Ann Baade, Painter 175

Three-Dimensional Design

chapter nine

Three-Dimensional Design Elements 180

FORM 181

- Types of Form 181
- Form and Function 182
- Visualizing Form 182
- Degrees of Dimensionality 184
- Environmental Works 185

POINT 187

LINE 187

- Line Quality 188
- Actual Lines 191
- Implied Lines 191
- Linear Networks 192

PLANE 193

VOLUME 193

MASS 195

SPACE 197

- Positive and Negative Space 197
- Compression and Expansion 198
- Activated Space 200
- Entering Space 200

TEXTURE 203

- Degrees of Texture 203
- The Implications of Texture 203

LIGHT 204

- Value and Volume 204
- Striking a Surface 204
- Ambient and Directed Light 206
- Light as Sculpture 207

COLOR 208

- Degrees of Harmony 208
- Contrast 209
- Color and Emotion 210
- Symbolic Color 210

TIME 211

Summary, Key Terms 213

Studio Projects 214

Profile: Marilyn da Silva, Metalsmith 215

chapter ten

Principles of Three-Dimensional Design 217

UNITY AND VARIETY 218

- Increasing Unity 218
- Combining Unifying Forces 220
- Increasing Variety 221
- Degrees of Unity 222
- Grid and Matrix 222

BALANCE 224

SCALE AND PROPORTION 228

- Scale 228
- Proportion 228

CONTRAST 230

- Opposing Forces 230
- Degrees and Forms of Contrast 230
- Contrast and Connection 231

EMPHASIS 232

- Emphasis by Isolation 232
- Emphasis through Color 233

REPETITION AND RHYTHM 233

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 236

chapter eleven

Materials and Methods 237

CHOICE OF MATERIALS 237

- Increasing Material Strength 238
- Methods of Construction 241

CONNECTIONS AND TRANSITIONS 243

- Connections 243
- Transitions 245

TRADITIONAL AND TRANSFORMATIVE MATERIALS 246

- Stone 246
- Clay 246
- Metals 247
- Wood 248
- Glass 248
- Fibers 249
- Plastics 251
- Ephemeral Materials 251

STUDENT MATERIALS 254

- Boards 254
- Glues 254
- Tapes 255

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS 255

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 257

Profile: David MacDonald, Ceramicist 258

chapter twelve

Physical and Cerebral 260

CONSTRUCTED THOUGHT 261

- From Life to Art 261
- Degrees of Representation 262
- Boundaries 264
- Bases and Places 266

PHYSICAL FORCES 268

- Weight and Gravity 268
- Compression and Expansion 269
- Tension and Torsion 270
- Presence and Absence 271
- Process and Product 272

CONTEMPORARY QUESTIONS, CONTEMPORARY

ANSWERS 274

- Building on a Tradition 274
- Reinventing Sculpture 274
- Contemporary Directions 275
- Ideas in Physical Form 281

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 281

Time Design

chapter thirteen

Aspects and Elements of Time 284

BUILDING BLOCKS 286
 Relationships 287
 Transitions 289

DURATION 290

TEMPO 291

INTENSITY 292

SCOPE 293

SETTING 296
 Physical and Temporal
 Location 296
 Props and Costumes 297
 Setting and Actor 297
 Sound: The Hidden
 Dimension 299

CHRONOLOGY 301

SCHINDLER'S LIST: CONTENT AND COMPOSITION 304

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 307

chapter fourteen

Narrative and Nonnarrative 308

STORYTELLING 308
 From Singular to Multiple
 Images 309
 Group, Series, and Sequence 310
 From Scene to Screenplay 312

ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES 313
 Conceptual Boundaries 313
 Developing a Story 314
 Emotional Boundaries 314
 Style 315

CAUSALITY 317

CHARACTER-DRIVEN NARRATIVE 318
 The Opening Sequence 318
 Increasing Conflict 318
 The Crucible
 of Character 319
 The Closing Sequence 319

NARRATIVE COMPRESSION 320

NONNARRATIVE 325

Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 328

Profile: Michael Remson, Librettist and Composer 329

chapter fifteen

Interdisciplinary Arts 331

EXPLORING THE VISUAL BOOK 331
 Selecting a Text 335
 Writing a Text 338
 Text and Type Style 338
 Combining Word and Image 340
 Advantages of Visual Books 340

INSTALLATION ART 340
 Uses of Space and Time 340
 The Importance of Context 342
 Advantages of Installation Art 344

PERFORMANCE ART 345
 Historical Background 345
 Characteristics of Performance Art 345

ADVANTAGES OF INTERDISCIPLINARY ART 347
Summary, Key Terms, Studio Projects 348

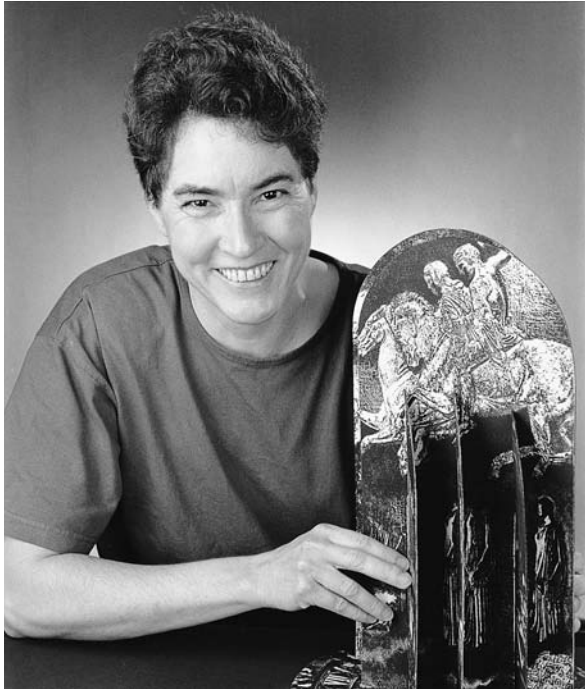
BIBLIOGRAPHY 349

NOTES 351

GLOSSARY 352

PHOTO CREDITS 360

INDEX 371

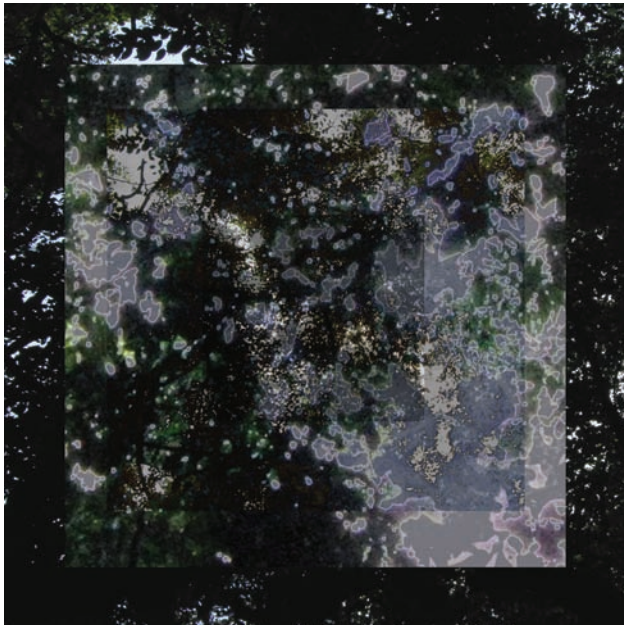


Author Mary Stewart with *Labyrinth* book.

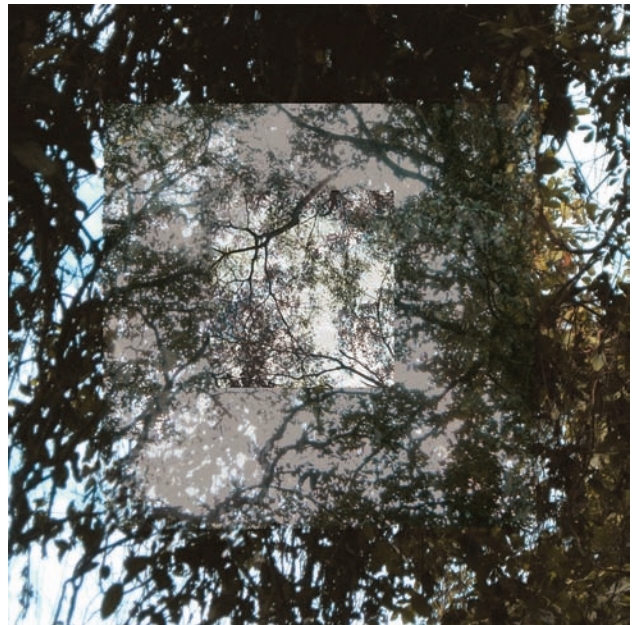
Author, artist, and educator Mary Stewart is a professor in the Department of Art at Florida

State University. Her drawing, prints, and visual books have been shown in over 90 exhibitions nationally and internationally, and she has received two Pennsylvania Arts Council grants for collaborative choreography. A cofounder of Integrative Teaching International, she has given over 50 lectures and workshops on creative inquiry, curriculum design, educational leadership, and storytelling.

As represented here, her *Continuum Series* connects the macroscopic with the microscopic. Fragments of towering trees are juxtaposed with images that suggest activity at a cellular level. In this series, Professor Stewart seeks to explore ways in which we construct and express knowledge, both of ourselves and of the world around us.



Mary Stewart, *Continuum #4*, 2012. Digital collage, 44 × 44 in.



Mary Stewart, *Continuum #8*, 2012. Digital collage, 44 × 44 in.

What is *Launching the Imagination* about, and how can it be useful to you?

In this book, we will explore

- the components of visual construction,
- ways that these components can be used,
- characteristics of creative and of critical thinking,
- ways to increase your creativity,
- the physical characteristics of various materials,
- ways in which you can use materials to express ideas,
- the components and power of visual storytelling,
- contemporary approaches to visualization.

Because studio courses require hands-on work, we will treat design as a noun *and* as a verb.

As a noun, design may be defined as

- a plan or pattern, such as the blueprint for a house;
- an arrangement of lines, shapes, colors, and textures into an artistic whole, as in the composition of a painting.

As a verb, design can be defined as

- to plan, delineate, or define, as in designing a building or a functional object;
- to create a deliberate sequence of events, as in designing a film storyboard;
- to organize disparate parts into a coherent whole, as in designing a brochure.

Design is deliberate. Rather than simply hoping for the best and accepting the result, artists and designers explore a wide range of



solutions to every problem, and then choose the most promising option for further development. Inspiring examples and informative text can help accelerate your learning process. In this book, over 625 images supply visual examples from many cultures and in all areas of art and design. Nine lively interviews with living artists provide insight into the creative process. Idea generation and critical thinking are thoroughly discussed in Part Two, and key questions (posted at the end of various sections of text) provide a way for you to self-assess your projects as they develop.

How high can you fly? How far can you travel? Will you work traditionally, in a specific discipline such as painting, printmaking, or ceramics? Or will you combine disciplines to create new forms of expression? Having mastered the basics of visual thinking, you will have the versatility and critical judgment needed to pursue a personal path.

Launching the Imagination

A Comprehensive Guide to Basic Design



Lilian Garcia-Roig, *Water and Rock Flows*, 2010, oil on canvas, 48 × 48 in. (121.9 × 121.9 cm).

Two- Dimensional Design

Creating objects and images is engrossing and exhilarating. Through our studio work, we can heighten our attention, engage our emotions, and build a sense of accomplishment. These personal rewards make art one of the most popular hobbies.

A *career* in art and design demands more from us. As art and design professionals, we must translate our personal insights into public communication. The ideas and emotions a professional wishes to express must engage an audience, whether the encounter occurs in the silence of a museum or in the chaos of a city street.

This ability to communicate visually is developed through years of study plus relentless practice. As professionals, we must develop our visual awareness, create new concepts, and master various techniques. We spend hours in the studio, refining ideas and inventing alternative solutions to each visual problem.

The elements and principles of design are the building blocks from which we create images and express ideas. Chapter One presents point, line, shape, texture, and value. Chapter Two is devoted to the characteristics and compositional impact of color. Chapter Three introduces a wide range of basic organizational strategies, known as the principles of design. Chapter Four expands these basic principles and devotes attention to the illusion of space and the illusion of motion.

Part One

chapter **one**
Basic Elements

chapter **two**
The Element of Color

chapter **three**
Principles of Two-
Dimensional Design

chapter **four**
Illusion of Space,
Illusion of Motion

Basic Elements

Point, line, shape, texture, value, and color are the building blocks that make up two-dimensional designs. Just as oxygen and hydrogen are powerful both individually and when combined as H₂O, so these visual **elements** operate both independently and in combination. In this chapter, we explore the unique characteristics of the five most basic elements and analyze their uses in art and design. We discuss color, the most complex element, in Chapter Two.

POINT

Defining Point

A **point** is a basic mark, such as a dot, a pixel, or a brushstroke. When we add a point to a blank sheet of paper, we create a dialog between this basic visual element and the surrounding space. This dialog sets a compositional game in motion. In this section, we explore two types of points. A **focal point** is the primary point of interest in a composition. By its size, compositional location, orientation, or color, a focal point activates the design and thus attracts viewer attention. A collection of points creates an **array**. We can create rich textures and entire images using an array.

Using Point

Because points are both simple and powerful, they are often used in logo design. Logos must read clearly in both small and large scale and must be easy to remember. For example, the Think Point Design logo in figure 1.1 is dominated by a circular shape combined with three words. The addition of the small point at the top of the logo adds a splash of darker green and



1.1 Andy Beard and Sharon Sandercock, Think Point Design logo, 2012. Size variable.



Corella

1.2 Pentagram Design, Corella Publishing logo, 2006. Size variable.



mohawk

1.3 Michael Bierut, lead designer, Pentagram Design, Mohawk Paper logo, 2012. Digital media, size variable.

suggests movement. This quickly communicates a simple message: “Think Point Design is an innovative company and always on the move.” By contrast, the point in figure 1.2 transforms a simple black-and-gray shape into a cheerful parrot’s head. We immediately want to find out more about Corella Publishing, the business it represents. Our final example is a logo for Mohawk Paper (1.3). Green, orange, violet, blue, and aqua points combined with lines of various colors create an energetic M. This combination of lines and points also refers to the process by which paper is produced and printed as it moves past the inked cylinders. Using a series of colorful points and lines, lead designer Michael Bierut provided a fresh identity for a well-established company.

An array of points can create an entire image while retaining the energy of the individual parts. Magazines often use this approach for their covers or posters. In figure 1.4, Charis Tsevis combined images of hundreds of everyday people to create the image of American President Barack Obama. Many wear blue or hold blue signs further stating their support. The image suggests that Obama is a man of the



1.4 Charis Tsevis, *Obama*, 2007. Photo mosaic, size variable.

people rather than a remote politician. In our final example, Paddy Japaljarri Stewart has created an Australian landscape from hundreds of colorful points. Using a traditional Aboriginal approach, *Bush Cabbage Dreaming at Ngarlu* (1.5) presents an imagined aerial view of the outback. Based on Dreaming, a spiritual practice that is uniquely Aborigine, each mark records the journey of an ancestral presence across the earth.







1.5 Paddy Japaljarri Stewart, *Bush Cabbage Dreaming at Ngarlu* (detail), 1986. Acrylic on canvas, 47½ × 93½ in. (120.5 × 237.5 cm).

LINE

Defining Line

Line is one of the simplest and most versatile elements of design. Line may be defined as

- a point in motion 
- a series of adjacent points 
- a connection between points 
- an implied connection between points 

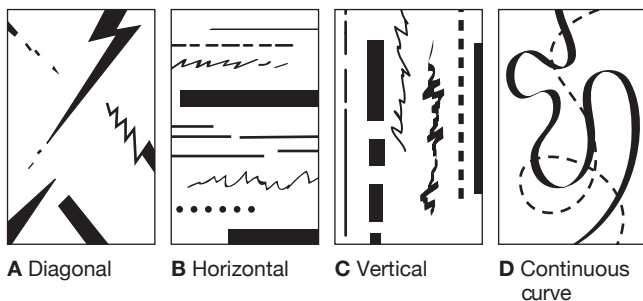
1.6 Line definitions.

The first definition emphasizes the unique dynamism of line. The remaining three definitions emphasize its connective power. Lighter and more fluid than any of the other visual elements, line can add a special energy to a design. Simply by drawing a line, we can activate a space, define a shape, or create a compositional bridge.

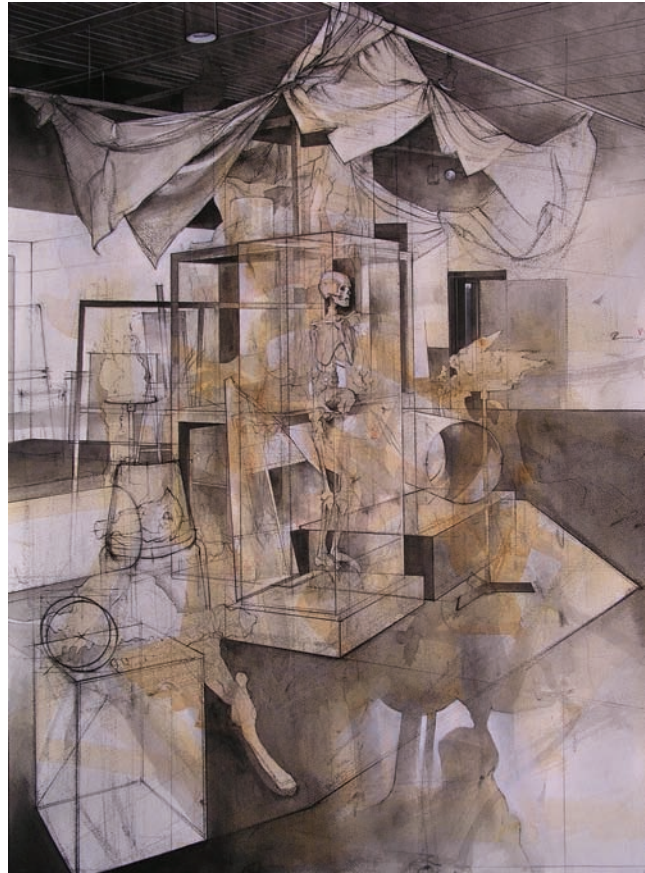
Line Quality

Each line has its own distinctive quality. This quality is largely determined by the line's orientation, direction, and degree of continuity, and by the material used.

Orientation refers to the line's horizontal, vertical, or diagonal position. Diagonal lines and curving lines are generally the most dynamic (1.7A, 1.7D). Charged with energy, they suggest action and movement. Horizontal lines are typically the most stable, or static (1.7B). Vertical lines imply *potential* change. When verticals adhere to the edge of the design, they become tethered and thus lose



1.7A–D Line orientation and continuity.



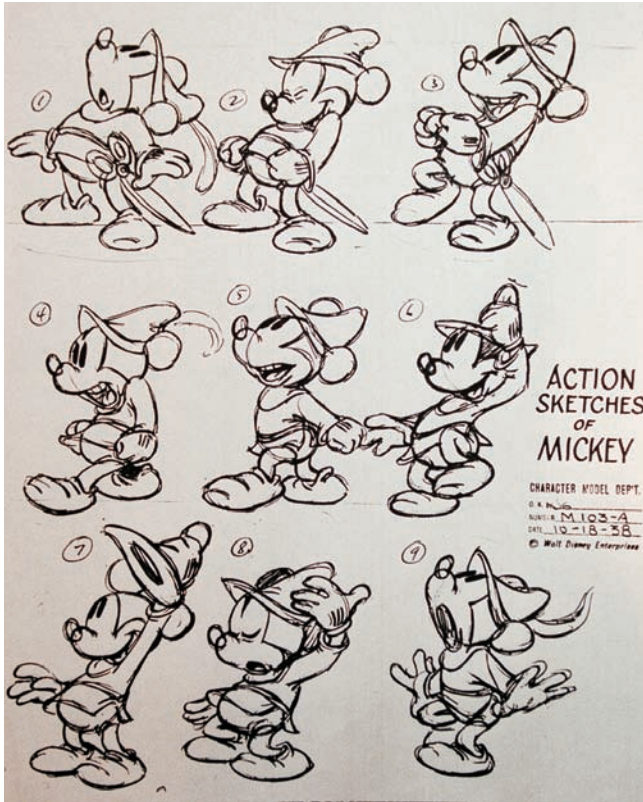
1.8 Kevin Haran, *Still Life with Skeleton*, 2004. Charcoal, ink, and acrylic wash on Arches paper, 30 × 22 in. (76.2 × 55.9 cm).

mobility. Free-floating verticals, on the other hand, seem ready to topple at any moment (1.7C).

Direction refers to the implied movement of a line. We can use line weight to accentuate direction. Generally, a swelling line suggests forward or outward movement, and a shrinking line suggests inward movement. Notice how the top and bottom diagonal lines in figure 1.7A seem to push forward as they become thicker.

Continuity, or linear flow, can enhance direction. Figure 1.7D shows that a continuous line tends to generate a stronger sense of direction than a broken or jagged line.

An artist can use each material to produce a range of distinctive lines. We can use metallic graphite to produce modulating lines of varying thickness. A felt pen produces a crisp, clean, emphatic line. Charcoal and chalk are soft and highly responsive to each change in pressure and direction. Brush and ink offers even wider variation in line width, continuity, and darkness. By experimenting with the range of marks each instrument can produce, we can use each material more expressively.



1.9 Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston, original sketch of Walt Disney Mickey Mouse Cartoon, 1938. © Disney Enterprises, Inc.



1.10 Michael Mazur, *Canto XI (Overview of Hell)*, from the portfolio *Dante's Inferno*, 1999. Etching and aquatint, 25½ × 19½ in. (63.8 × 49.8 cm).

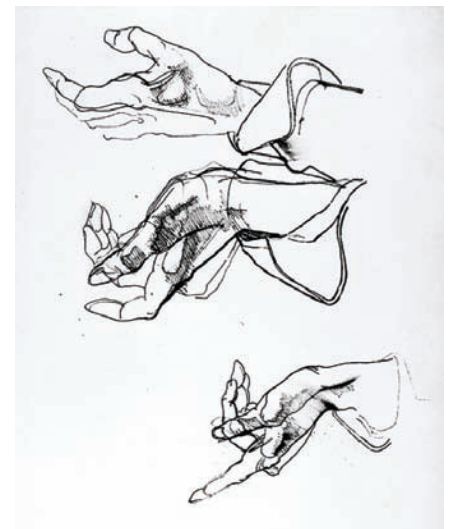
A strong match between line quality and the expressive intent is essential. In figure 1.8, Kevin Haran used vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines to map out the positions of various objects in a still life. Spheres, cones, and the detailed skull become focal points in this complex composition. The fluid lines in figure 1.9 express movement and playful energy. Michael Mazur used a variety of lines in his *Overview of Hell* based on Dante's *Inferno* (1.10). As described by poet Dante Alighieri, Hell is divided into nine circular levels, beginning with Limbo at the top and descending through Lust, Gluttony, Greed, Anger, Heresy, Violence, Fraud, and Treachery. Mazur defines these levels (and the tormented souls they contain) using curving black brushstrokes combined with textured passages and open white shapes. This variety of lines helps to distinguish the various levels and activates the entire image.

Actual Lines

Actual lines can describe forms simply and eloquently. In figure 1.11, Eleanor Dickinson presented different views of hands using **contour lines**. Contour lines define the edges of a form and suggest three-dimensionality. In this study, she distilled complex anatomy down to a few



1.11 Eleanor Dickinson, *Study of Hands*, 1964. Pen and ink, 13½ × 10½ in. (34 × 26 cm).



1.12 Rico Lebrun, *Hand*, 1964. Pen and ink.



1.13 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Two Women Helping a Child to Walk*, c. 1635–37. Red chalk on paper.

simple lines. Similarly, Rico Lebrun’s **gesture drawing** of a hand (1.12) captures essential action rather than describing every anatomical detail. We focus on what the hand is *doing* rather than on what the hand *is*. As figure 1.13 shows, Rembrandt often used economical lines to describe the spheres and cylindrical volumes from which figures are made. Because it communicates information using basic volumes, we often call this type of line drawing a **volume summary**.

Calligraphic lines can add even more energy to a drawing or a design. The word *calligraphy* is

derived from two Greek words: *kalus*, meaning “beautiful,” and *graphein*, meaning “to write.” Like handwriting, the calligraphic line is both personal and highly expressive. In figure 1.14, painter Tawaraya Sôtatsu and calligrapher Hon’ami Koetsu used variations in line weight and continuity to suggest the graceful motion of birds. Gu Gan’s *No.1 Calligraphy and Painting in Harmony* (1.15) provides a contemporary combination of calligraphic text, delicate drawing, and bold brushstrokes. It seems that we are simultaneously viewing a landscape close up and in the distance.

Artists often use **organizational lines** to create the loose linear “skeleton” on which an artist can build a composition. The artist can develop ideas quickly through line, and easily make compositional changes. The Haran drawing in figure 1.8 shows that these skeletal drawings have great energy and can be presented as artworks in themselves. In other cases, organizational lines provide the framework for elaborate compositions. When we analyze Alfred Leslie’s *The Killing Cycle* (1.16), we can see an underlying framework. A dead man on a diagonal board connects a single woman in the lower left corner to the four figures in the upper right. A horizontal line supports these four figures, while their bent arms and legs create even more diagonal lines. The diagonal lines add energy to the composition while the horizontal line adds stability.



1.14 Attributed to Tawaraya Sôtatsu, calligraphy by Hon’ami Koetsu, *Flying Cranes and Poetry*, Edo period (1615–1868). Ink on gray-blue paper, gold flecked, 7% × 6% in. (19 × 16 cm).



1.15 Gu Gan, *No.1 Calligraphy and Painting in Harmony*, 2005. Ink on self-made Chinese paper, 26 × 26 in. (66 × 66 cm).



1.16 Alfred Leslie, *The Killing Cycle #5: Loading Pier*, 1975. Oil on canvas, 9 × 7 ft. (2.7 × 1.8 m).

Implied Lines

Lines can play a major role in a design even when they are implied rather than actually being drawn. Because **implied lines** simply *suggest* connections, the viewer becomes actively involved in compositions that use this type of line.

Fortunately, we have a natural inclination to seek visual unity. Given enough clues, we will connect separate visual parts by filling in the missing pieces. The visual clues may be quite obvious. For example, we can easily link the circles in figure 1.17 to create a linear spiral. In other cases, the clues are subtle. In Minor White's *Sandblaster* (1.18), the white arrow implies a connection between the numbers in the foreground and the worker's helmet.

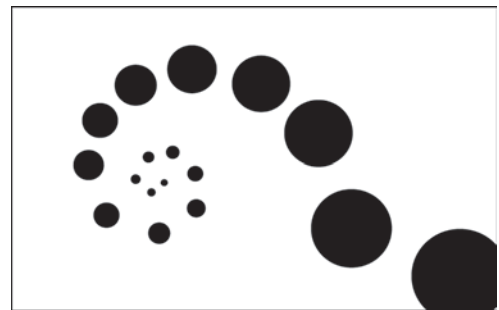
This inclination to connect fragmentary information is called **closure**. "Lost and found"

contours require an elegant form of closure. In a "lost and found" composition, the edges of some shapes are clearly defined, and other shapes appear to merge with the background. When presented with such an image, the viewer must create a mental bridge between the resulting islands of information.

Caravaggio's *The Deposition* (1.19A) uses closure extensively. A contour drawing of this image has many gaps, as details are lost in the shadows (1.19B). Used skillfully, this loss of definition becomes a strength rather than a weakness. Connections made through closure can stimulate the viewer's imagination and encourage a more personal interpretation.

Linear Networks

Multiple lines can add detail to a design and create a convincing illusion of space. **Hatching** produces a range of grays through straight parallel



1.17 A series of dots can create an implied line.



1.18 Minor White, *Sandblaster*, San Francisco, 1949. Gelatin silver print, 10 $\frac{1}{16}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (26.51 × 29.05 cm).