

timeinspace
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VISUAL ELEMENTS

Whenever anything is designed and made, sketched and painted, drawn, constructed, etc., the visual substance of the work is composed from a basic list of elements. Not to be confused with the materials or the medium (such as wood or clay or digital), these visual elements are the basic substance of what we see; they comprise the RAW MATERIAL OF ALL VISUAL INFORMATION.

The Dot Considered the most important graphic element. The minimal visual unit, pointer, marker of space. All plane figures which have a center and are perceived as closed forms may be described as dot-shaped. Dots are bound to a center and thereby static.

The Line The fluid articulator of form. Line is the element of length as a mark connecting any two points (dots). Lines can organize, direct, separate, be expressive, suggest an emotion, or create a rhythm. They can join elements or divide them using a rule, which is a line that separates one element in a design from another. The line is dynamic, movement is its domain.

Shape Refers to the external outline of a form or anything that has height and width. The basic shapes—circle, square, triangle—are considered to be the fundamental shapes found in all design.

Direction The thrust of movement that incorporates and reflects the character of basic shapes, circular, diagonal, perpendicular.

Value The presence or absence of light, by which we see. Value is the relative lightness or darkness of an object or area. It adds dimension by creating the illusion of depth.

Color The coordinate of tone with the added component of chroma (the most expressive and emotional visual element)

Texture Optical or tactual, the surface characteristics of visual materials. It is the look and feel of a surface. In two-dimensional form, texture is essentially visual and adds richness and dimension. Texture can also refer to pattern, which is visual texture.

Scale The relative size and measurement of elements. Refers to the process of making size relationships. Unless there is a scale of reference within a design, it is impossible to discern the relative size of objects and the meaning they represent.

Dimension and Movement Both are most often implied in the visual mode than actually expressed.