

**11/20 Workshop Report:
a Workshop in Design Principles,**
conducted by Howard Schneider,
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Submitted January 7, 2011

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Executive Summary

On November 20, 2010, a workshop was conducted on the campus of California State University, Northridge; Department of Art. Its purpose was to see if a one-day, high-intensity, remedial workshop in design principles could effectively enable students across various disciplines within the visual arts, an opportunity to improve their compositional abilities.

Between the hours of nine and six, students were asked to perform three exercises either in digital or traditional media – their choice. Critiques and revision time proved to be vital components in the workshop schedule.

The next day, students were asked to submit answers to five questions concerning various aspects of the workshop. Their verbatim responses indicate a decidedly positive and enthusiastic response to this type of workshop. This report concludes with examples of student work created “before” and “after” the workshop as well as the marketing and educational materials that were developed in support.

What this workshop begins to call into question is whether the traditional matriculation experience through a contemporary art and design curriculum at a public institution provides sufficient opportunity for the majority of undergraduates to sufficiently understand, adopt and integrate design principles into their creative endeavors.

If not, should design principles then be reintroduced at a later time when students are better able to cognitively integrate these ideas into their own sensibilities?

If successful, would a single one-day workshop in design principles be sufficient for most struggling students?

Background

I have been conducting classes in beginning two-dimensional design (Art 140) at California State University Northridge since 2003. My primary approach in implementing the course has been to emphasize the coordinating principles of design due to fact that, in my observation, these visual principles would infrequently or rarely appear in the work of a number of matriculated students. This situation became most apparent at previously attended AIGA-hosted “portfolio day” activities where professional designers and art directors would conduct portfolio reviews of soon-to-be-graduating design students representing various regional institutions. The professionals I spoke to afterwards agreed that the weakest portfolios lacked these principles more than any other qualities.

The design principles that enable unity and rhythm to occur have been a part of 2D courses since I was an undergraduate and obviously before. I possess a rather unique distinction of having taken three 2D courses at three different institutions with three different instructors. This provided a unique exposure into various sensibilities employed in the creation of art, but it also provided a view into the range of pedagogical hierarchies. In other words, depending on the particular orientation of the instructor, one instructor would place overriding emphasis on form investigation and a somewhat diminished focus on spatial coordination. Then in another 2D class, the reverse sensibility would prevail.

Why and How?

About four years ago, two questions began nagging at me: (1) when and why did students fail to implement design principles in their work, and (2) is there a way students could be given a chance to re-immense themselves in these principles; reacquainting them with ways to cognitively create stronger unity and rhythm which they could then apply to their individual disciplines?

A pattern was noted in some of the Art 140 exercises that I had been giving out over the years. Certain exercises were producing results that exhibited a highly successful degree of integration of design principles. Informal discussions with a few of my former Art 140 students, whom by their own accounts were enjoying success in their art department courses, revealed that they had especially enjoyed some specific Art 140 exercises. These exercises were typically the same exercises whose high success rates I had noted earlier. I began to wonder if there was a way to distill some of the design principles discovered through those exercises and perhaps form them into a short course for those students who were further along in their program but whose work exhibited lack of unity and/or rhythm?

If the answer was yes, the question then became how to go about its implement? With the option of proposing a new course being off the table due to a variety of factors, I decided to propose a short-term workshop format. In order to attract a committed group of students, the one day format was selected over multiple sessions. The reasoning was: students typically have to deal with the normal day-to-day of managing asymmetrical schedules and the chasing of deadlines. After multiply the number of students by the variation of commitments, it seemed a reasonable assumption to limit the workshop's range of days and extend its depth of time (a single six-hour day vs. two three-hour days).

Implementation

Following confirmation of the proposed workshop site and receiving department approval, one-page flyers detailing the workshop schedule and exercises, a listing of required materials, and a sign up sheet were each produced. A poster promoting the workshop was posted on bulletin boards within the department. A flyer /announcement saved in Acrobat format was distributed to department faculty. The workshop date was originally set for 10/30, 9:00AM – 3:30PM. It was later rescheduled for 11/20.

A few days prior, classroom visitations were conducted at which time I announced the workshop and stated how it could help each student develop their “visual sensibilities”; that having known only the tools or having just an intuitive sense of visual form will only take them so far. I asked them what makes some artists and designers more dynamic than others? This workshop would provide them an opportunity to adopt some powerful visual tools in order to help them realize that difference. As a result, they themselves could become stronger.

The sign up sheet stated that beginning 2D design or Art 140 was a prerequisite for the workshop. The reasoning was that students would have taken various courses since having first taken a 2D course, and that this exposure would have contributed towards the development of their “visual voice”. If that voice was dissonant, or chaotic – and if they especially knew it – perhaps the affected student might be more inclined to attend the workshop.

The sign up sheet also asked (1) what their area of (creative) interest was and (2) whether they preferred working in traditional or digital media. Most attendees and those on the waiting list declared their area of interest as “graphics” (fourteen: graphics; three: mixed interests; one: animation; one: undecided) and media preference as “both” (fourteen: “both”; five: “digital”).

Of the seventeen that were committed to attend, seven actually showed up, possibly due in part to the heavy rain and cold weather that dominated the greater Los Angeles area that morning. Starbucks' coffee and tubs of Trader Joe's cookies awaited all the arrivals. Breaks could be taken any time they desired, as often as they needed.

Attendees began appearing at 9:15. Seven had appeared by 9:40 and I decided to begin, now forty minutes behind. I kept a written log as to the various segments; when they actually began and concluded. The first presentation of digital images covered a brief history of modernism, from the period before the Japanese art exhibition at the Great Exhibition of 1851 and after leading up to mid-twentieth century painting, photography and design. Examples of Vermeer, Hiroshige, Turner, Manet, Van Gogh, Monet, Gauguin, Bresson, Hirshfield, Itten, Kandinsky, Malevich, Klee, Bayer, Man Ray, Matter, Maholy-Nagy, Kepes, O'Keefe, Nevelson, Rauschenberg, Saul Bass, Paula Scher, and Nike outdoor ads were flashed across the screen and briefly discussed, lending a historical context and narrative as to how art and design evolved in terms of visual space, balance and unity.

A second series of images was then presented containing examples of repetition and variation in nature. Student examples of the first exercise, *Magazine Grid* were shown as digital images to the class. The class began building their compositions (all digitally, no traditional cut and paste) immediately afterward.

Ninety minutes later, a 30-minute critique was conducted for the first exercise. This exercise focused on repetition and variation; continuity; grouping and dispersion of visual components across a grid. The results were successful but some students did not catch on until later in the allotted time slot.

Thirty minutes later, a slide show of students examples of the next exercise, *Letterforms*, was introduced. The second exercise began immediately. It was the only traditional media exercise. Building a dominant direction or movement, using continuity to create unity, repetition and variation, shaping negative space, and building patterns were the goals. A 10-minute critique followed. Students were then asked to revise their compositions (repositionable glue sticks were mandatory). A second critique was conducted 20 minutes later. All the revised compositions fulfilled most if not all of the stated goals. Slight smiles and/or unwavering attention became apparent. A few heads began nodding affirmatively.

Another image presentation followed that went on for a longer time than I had anticipated: 40 minutes. It covered the next exercise: *A Contrast of Two Systems*,

a digital exercise. Successful student examples of this exercise were numerous of which I selected a dozen. I also included a myriad of twentieth-century art, photography and graphic design examples which demonstrated that compositions containing unity and rhythm occur when visual components form unified systems, which in turn contrast and integrate with other unified systems. (*System*: an entity created from multiple components sharing common qualities.) This exercise required the use of a focal point and contrast of size.

The risk of alienating students by becoming too abstract and theoretical became a moot issue when the results of the final exercise became apparent. A 30-minute critique followed the one hour work session. The final round of revisions ensued which produced some dynamic results.

The actual run time of the workshop was 9:40AM to 5:30PM.

Follow Up

A few days after the workshop, a survey consisting of five questions was sent to each participant. Within two weeks the following (unedited) responses were received.

(1) Which exercise(s) proved to be the most inspiring or relevant?

- “All exercises were great. I think the most rewarding was the very last one that we did, maybe because of the wide possibilities and artistic freedom.”
–Tiffany F. (Animation)
- “I enjoyed hearing you comment on a variety of different works, however some editing would have been nice - there was a bit too much for the amount of time we had. I really enjoyed the cut font project - although I left I imagine that the last would have been the most helpful because it included text, and images - didn’t have the constraints of the first project. I need most help incorporating text.”–Laura T. (Graphic Design/Animation)
- “I think the last project was the most inspiring. mainly because of the simple changes that could be made to bring the piece more continuity and unity. “
–Chris M. (Graphic Design)
- “the third one (*Contrast of Two Systems*) i felt i got the most out of. they were all good exercises. i have done a similar exercise to the second project (*Letterforms*) in my type one class. it took me awhile to get the first exercise but once i did i was able to understand the concept in it.”–Laura C. (Graphic Design)
- “The exercise that was most relevant was really all of them. From the first project making us break apart several images, to the type treatment that I wish I had finished to the last one, they were all fun to do and made me think in terms I normally dont when coming up with ideas.”–Danny T. (Graphic design, Painting, Drawing)

- “I feel that there wasn’t one that least inspired me even though I came a bit unprepared which was my fault and do apologize. But in regards to the least, again I feel like I learned from each one the same amount.”–Eddie C. (Graphic Design)
- “Personally, I like all the exercises but I like the second and last exercises that using cut letter to make poster (*Letterforms*) and using letters, magazine image to make combination (*Contrast of Two Systems*).”–Haeyeon G. (Graphic Design)

(2) Which exercise(s) proved to be the least inspiring or relevant?

- “Least inspiring was the letter form assignment, but I think I learned the most from that critique than the others.”– Tiffany F. (Animation)
- “The first project (*Magazine Grid*)”–Laura T. (Graphic Design/Animation)
- “I enjoyed all the exercises.”–Chris M. (Graphic Design)
- “since i have done a similar one to exercise 2 (Letterforms) i feel like that was the least helpful.”–Laura C. (Graphic Design)
- “There really wasn’t a project for me at least, that I can say was not useful or more so than the others really. Each had its own different approach to take and each required a different application, but required the same attention to the principles and systems the workshop was based on. I enjoyed all 3 and only wish I had more time to try them with a traditional approach vs a digital medium.”
–Danny T. (Graphic design, Painting, Drawing)
- “I feel that there wasn’t one that least inspired me even though I came a bit unprepared which was my fault and do apologize. But in regards to the least, again I feel like I learned from each one the same amount.”–Eddie C. (Graphic Design)
- “The first exercise (*Magazine Grid*), it’s look easy but little bit tricky.”
–Haeyeon G. (Graphic Design)

(3) What do you feel you’ve gained?

- “I’ve gained a new library of design terms and ideas, as now being able to look at traditional paintings in a graphic design sense.”–Tiffany F. (Animation)
- “More clear directions to help plan my designs to achieve a specific purpose or look.”–Laura T. (Graphic Design/Animation)
- “i think your idea was right on, going back to the basics at this point i had a more firm grasp of it all. If you taught and upper division class id take it.”
–Chris M. (Graphic Design)
- “i feel like i am now aware of how much negative space is also important in design. ive heard negative space has an impact but the way you explained it really instilled that idea. also the who concept of repetition and variation and how if that is followed it can produce a real nice design. i plan on keeping that in the back of my mind forever on when i design”–Laura C. (Graphic Design)
- “In terms of what Ive gained, Id like to say a better understanding of the

principles of design, but I don't know if that's entirely true. Probably the more realistic answer is that I've gained an awareness of what I need to take into consideration for every single design I do from here on. Be it for a graphic design assignment or job or even an art piece of my own, I see where these systems come into play in helping the masters of the past and great artists throughout to achieve a visual unity that makes their respective pieces stand out. As someone who would like to create work on that scale, it is up to me now to use this information the workshop presented and incorporate it into my work."—Danny T. (Graphic design, Painting, Drawing)

■ "I gain an enormous amount of respect for art and appreciate the work others in the class showcased from their mind onto the computer or on the (foam) board. The slides you showed made it seem like in order to understand what created principles of design or how they function as a whole with one another was simply art pieces from historic times."—Eddie C. (Graphic Design)

■ "I feel tired later but also feel (too) short time to learn all the stuff to understand enough."—Haeyeon G. (Graphic Design)

(4) What would you like to see added, removed or modified in order to improve this workshop?

■ "Everything was fine. Maybe mix up the projects for each workshop, in case people want to come again. (Which I'm sure they will!)"—Tiffany F. (Animation)

■ "A little less art discussion (slides) - more work - perhaps more time at the end to really help us with what we are working on for our classes. I would like to learn more techniques in Illustrator and Photoshop. - even a list of obscure, helpful techniques would be helpful. More with text - designing websites, brochures, but more than anything - there are some brochures that achieve a look that I don't know how to achieve - is it just the way the photograph was taken or was it done in Photoshop???"—Laura T. (Graphic Design/Animation)

■ "I'm not sure what to add. maybe something you would commonly do at a job."—Chris M. (Graphic Design)

■ "I liked the first and last exercises (*Magazine Grid* and *Contrast of Two Systems*). I'm kind of curious to know what the other exercise was."—Laura C. (Graphic Design).

(The "other exercise" Laura C. was referring to was a more complex endeavor [*Nine Related Shapes*] whereby a compound shape would be repeated and varied eight times, producing nine related shapes in total. Then five shapes would be selected from the nine and arranged on a 10"x15" foam board and given unity by [contour] continuity or alignment. It was replaced by *Letterforms*: an exercise producing a largely similar net gain but without the learning curve and production time required of the former.)

- “Other than to find a way for someone like myself who was interested in taking on both approaches, traditional and digital to do the projects, I think the workshop flowed pretty seamless. The day breezed on by for me and I didn't really notice the time pass other than the fact that it was cold. I don't know about the other people in the workshop but I had no problem staying later than anticipated since what we were doing was in essence something that will benefit our designs. The more time spent on something like this the better is my attitude.”
–Danny T. (Graphic design, Painting, Drawing)
- “I did not see any flaws, however the timing towards the end was extended but it's art and it surely takes time.”–Eddie C. (Graphic Design)
- “Maybe one day is too short, two day workshop is might working with me. It was good to see lots of example.”–Haeyeon G. (Graphic Design)

(5) Would you recommend this workshop to anyone else?

- “Already have! They're all hoping they can join in next time, if there is.”
–Tiffany F. (Animation)
- “Definitely, I really felt like you really wanted to help us, and were also genuinely interested in art, not just your own, but other artists, including your students' art. I really felt like you wanted to help us get better - other wise I'm sure you wouldn't have given up your saturday. If you choose to do another one of these - i'd be happy to go!”–Laura T. (Graphic Design/Animation)
- “definitely”–Chris M. (Graphic Design)
- “yes i would. i actually have a friend who wanted to go and is hoping that you conduct another one.”–Laura C. (Graphic Design)
- “Would I recommend the workshop. Yes. Without a doubt. I would also be interested in taking part in it again to see how Ive progressed since the first one.”
–Danny T. (Graphic design, Painting, Drawing)
- “I would recommend this workshop to my close friends who desire to learn more ways of expanded their creativity in the way they design. Then again, who wouldn't want to learn everyday is a learning experience.”–Eddie C. (Graphic Design)
- “Yes, it was good to experience than just listen.”–Haeyeon G. (Graphic Design)

Noted

One student comment, unsolicited, and made during the third and concluding exercise, was that they never knew that basic design could be so much about “structure”. A recalled experience from their beginning 2D design class (the institution was never mentioned) was that it was more of an “arts and crafts” class that “didn't mean much” to them after the class had concluded. “This (workshop) was an ‘eye opener’ “.

Another commented that they wanted to thank me again for the workshop since it was a good reintroduction to some principles they had disregarded, forgotten or did not give enough attention to in the past.

A surprise occurred eleven days after the workshop, when one of the studies created in the workshop by Laura C. was selected to hang in a CSUN graphic design student competition, “Negative Space”.

Observations

One the whole, the participants approached the workshop with a focused energy that this instructor has rarely seen before in traditional course work. Though we clearly went over the published and promised time frame, nobody left early, few breaks were taken and everyone was involved in the assignments—especially the instructor’s critiques. There was clearly a sense of dedication to seeing what was possible.

Before and After Examples

Examples of each participating student’s work before and after the workshop appear on the following pages. What may not be apparent and even harder to determine is the degree of help and what type of help each student’s instructor(s) may have contributed toward the “after” examples on display, if any at all.

Laura T. (Sophomore; Graphic Design/Animation)



Before: Structured, somewhat static sense of direction or movement; erratic sense for negative space.



After: Fluid yet structured sense of movement; organization of elements as systems; dynamic structure of negative space.

Tiffany F. (Junior; Animation)



Before: Somewhat static interplay of figure/ground relationships (left). Inconsistent utilization of negative space and tension (left vs. right).



After: Rhythmic integration of all visual forms; conscious use of repetition and variation, continuity, negative space and tension.

Celebrate Life in Italy

A well-planned trip to Italy... is truly a celebration of life.

A well-planned trip to Italy, combining the natural beauty and cultural grandeur of Venice with the artistic treasures of Florence and Rome, is truly a celebration of life. For nowhere else will you find such immense cultural and historical wealth in one country where the food is exquisite and the people are warm and helpful.

For 400 years, Venice has attracted the finest painters, architects and craftsmen to the world. Spend your afternoon exploring the grand palazzo, the spectacular St. Mark's Basilica and Doge's Palace, the residence of the Venetian ruler of Venice. Walk through the narrow alleys and across the covered bridges of this magnificent city, taking in the shops where famous Venetian glass and lace is so delight. Sign an espresso at a sidewalk cafe and experience the unique atmosphere that makes Venice one of the most romantic cities in the world.

Florence is another one of Italy's most important cities. Called the "Cradle of the Renaissance" for the art and the architecture that flourished here between the 15th and 16th centuries, Florence is a dream for art lovers. Visit the Uffizi Museum, and gaze the finest works of the Renaissance, including superb sculptures which were children of 27 years to create and which Michelangelo declared the "Stones to Paradise."

In Florence there is so much to choose from - the masterpiece of the Uffizi Gallery or the Pitti Palace. Michelangelo's world-famous statue in the Medici Chapel or a walk across the Ponte Vecchio. Or, a stroll through Michelangelo's tomb for the place you to spend an afternoon.

Rome, the Eternal City, is the heart of Italian culture and the powerful hub of the Roman Empire. This city has influenced art, architecture, literature and government throughout the Western world for more than 2,000 years. See the Sistine Chapel, Piazza Venezia, Piazza Farnese, Colosseum and other landmarks.

400 years, a trip to Rome would not be complete without experiencing the history of the Eternal City, a water and city all in one. Visit the Basilica Chapel and where Michelangelo's famous ceiling, gaze at the Madonna before descending into the crypts of the Basilica where many of the Popes lie in peace.

"Venice, Florence and Rome, three cities that every man, woman and child should see at least once in their life."

ITALY & SICILY
March 7-16, 2009
\$2,699 a trip (incl. airfare from San Francisco)
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Rome, Sorrento, Taormina, Agrigento, Palermo, Capri, Syracuse

Includes: Airfare, breakfast, first class accommodations, baggage handling fees, hotel taxes and a complimentary car service. AAA member benefits and a complimentary tour document. AAA expert travel services provided.

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Before: Chaotic sense of movement and hierarchy. Negative space is largely uncontrolled.

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Includes: Airfare, breakfast, first class accommodations, baggage handling fees, hotel taxes and a complimentary car service. AAA member benefits and a complimentary tour document. AAA expert travel services provided.

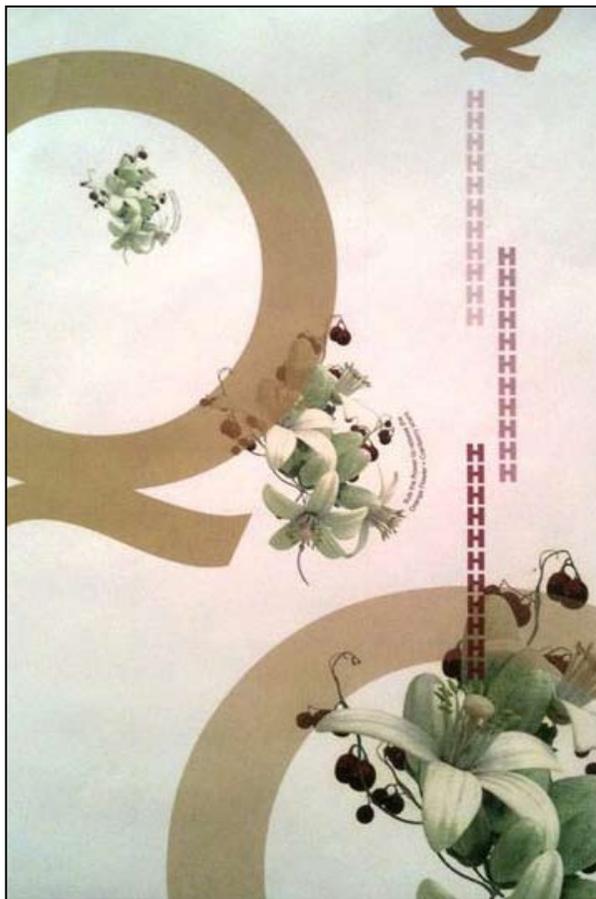
Based on conditions. Prices subject to change based on travel dates. See website for complete details. © 2009 American Express Company. All rights reserved.

After: Greater control over movement and hierarchy; ambiguities remain but to a lesser extent. Negative space appears intentional. Improved sense of balance, repetition and variation, unity and rhythm.

Laura C. (Senior; Graphic Design)



Before: Despite highly evolved headline treatment which exudes unity, hierarchy and depth, overall composition has an ambiguous sense of dominant direction or movement. Negative space is largely a benign component.

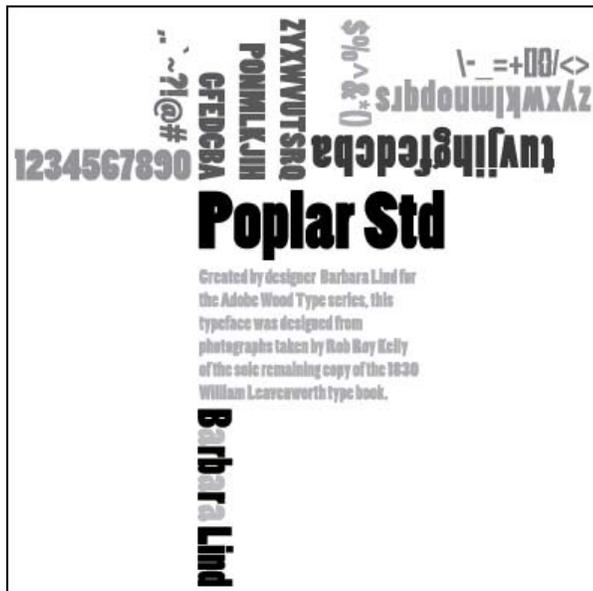


After: Although technically this was produced "during" the workshop, it was later chosen to hang in the *Negative Space* exhibition of student graphic design work sponsored by SAGA. Dominant and subordinate directions. Unity by grouping and continuity. Design systems integrating with other design systems. Negative space is a dynamic component of the overall design as opposed to a "catch all" background upon which elements are placed. Rhythm is evident overall and in all design systems.

Danny T. (Senior; Graphic Design, Painting, Drawing)



Before: Ambiguous sense of dominant or fluid directions. Fractured integration of visual components. Inconsistent use of focal point or advancing/receding qualities.



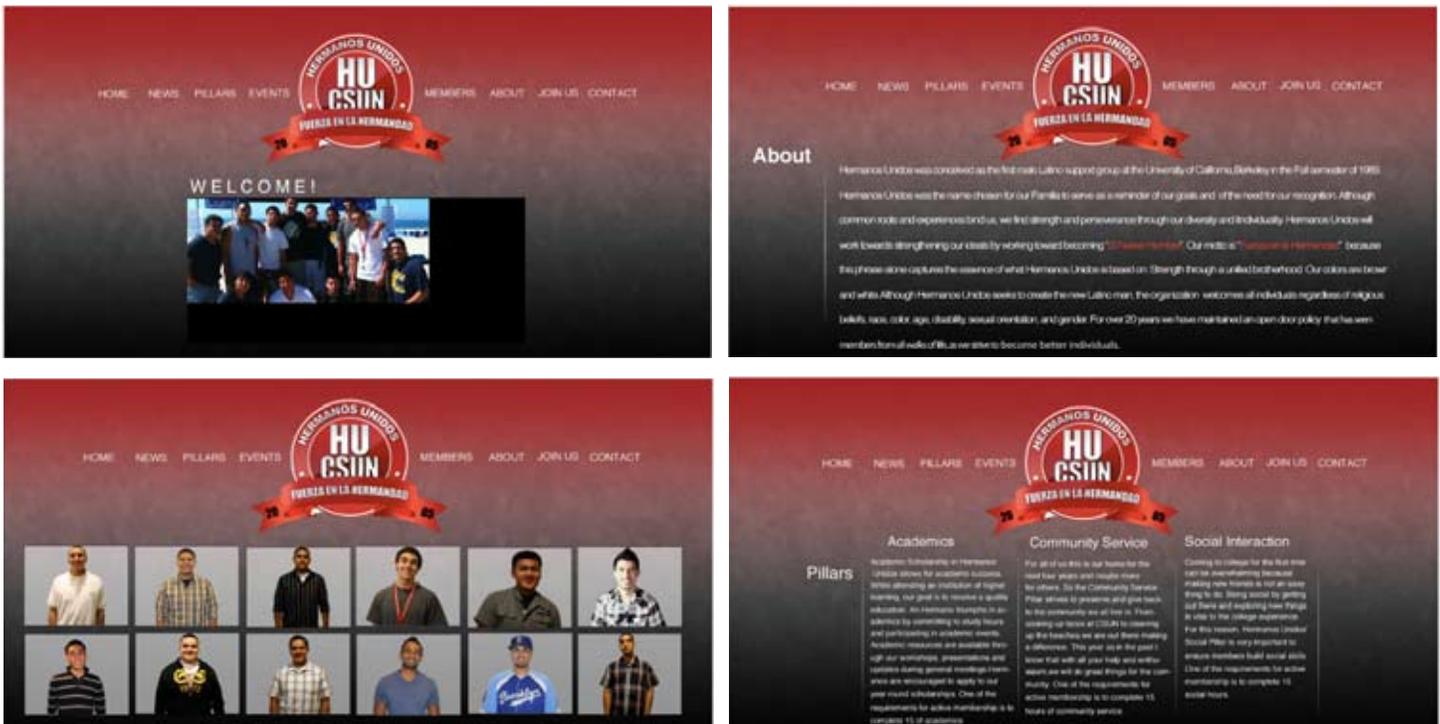
After: Dominant and subordinate direction or movement clearly evident. Clearer sense for visual hierarchy. Negative space becomes dynamic and integrated into the composition. Repetition and variation, continuity, rhythm and unity abound.



Eddie C. (Senior; Graphic Design)



Before: Logotype is unbalanced, ambiguous sense of unity and placed arbitrarily. Core information is contained yet irrelevant to its surrounding space. Duelling dominant directions. Negative space is treated as a benign background.



After: Logotype has unity, rhythm and depth. Negative space is an integrated part of the overall composition. Clearly expressed dominant and subordinate directions. Unity coexists with rhythm. Tensions remains at lower edges.

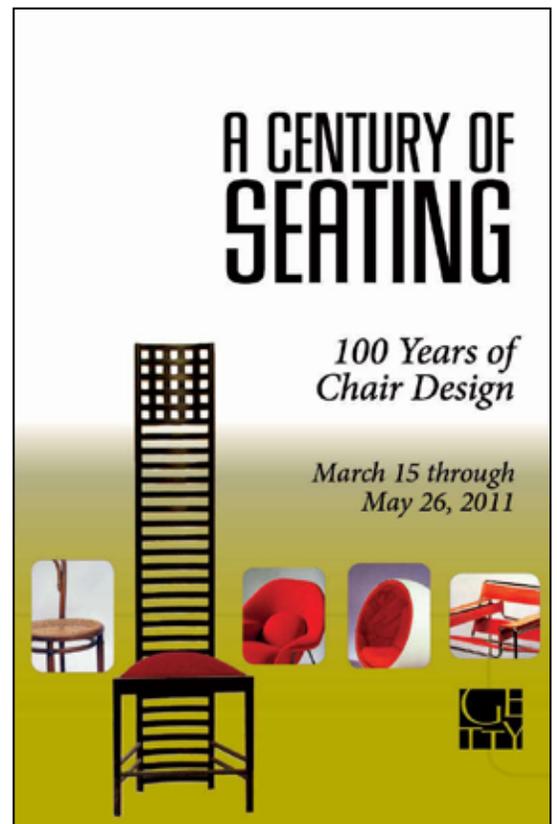
Haeyeon G. (Senior; Graphic Design)



Before: Complex, ambiguous expressions of dominant and subordinate directions. Instability resulting from ambiguous or chaotic arrangements of visual elements.



After: Clarified expressions of dominant and subordinate directions. Negative space is more rhythmic, while acting more like a containing device. Contour alignments enable unity. Juxtaposition and integration of contrasting design systems becomes more evident.



Recommendations

The survey responses pointed out multiple benefits from taking the workshop and two recommendations for improvement. Two issues for reevaluation were:

- More time to do the exercises.
- Fewer presentation images = more work time.

The benefits and gains noted by the students included:

- Most felt all the exercises were good learning experiences, especially the final exercise (*Contrast of Two Systems*).
- One pointed out the clear value of the critiques as a stand alone experience.
- A clearer sense of how to control the working area.
- One student stated: “Going back to the basics...I had a more firm grasp of it all”.
- Greater awareness of negative space, repetition and variation.
- Desire to repeat the workshop to check progress.

The scheduling of additional workshops could help focus and optimize the presentation portions as well as the exercises themselves. It could also permit fine tuning the time allotments needed for both, thus enabling a clearer idea of the actual time required of the entire one-day course.

Additional workshops could also increase the likelihood for attendance by more traditional (hands-on) media students. This engagement would provide an important opportunity for adopting, adjusting and fine tuning the very same assignments being carried out by their digitally-based colleagues.

Future workshops might help also resolve questions whether a single one-day workshop in design principles is sufficient for most struggling students or for that matter, most two-dimensionally-related disciplines.

Conclusions

Though clearly subject to additional investigation, a dedicated reintroduction to design principles appears to yield tangible results in regards to these student’s creative development. Several questions come to mind for future study:

- (1) Are students necessarily better able to adopt design principles into their evolving sensibilities at a later time in their development vs. immediately following their beginning two-dimensional design class?
- (2) If the answer is “yes”, which students and why?
- (3) Does the traditional matriculation experience through a contemporary art and design curriculum at a public institution provide sufficient opportunity for undergraduates to understand, adopt and integrate design principles into their art education?

(4) Would a single one-day workshop in design principles be sufficient for most students in need of such help or would other workshop formats yield better results?

(5) Would a workshop composed primarily of studio talent working in non-digital, traditional, hands-on methods yield different results?

The seven participating students were each involved in, at the very least, the introductory phase of a particular arts or design discipline. Each seemed to positively respond to an opportunity for a focused and directed, fast-track learning experience. Based upon post-workshop feedback and in-class levels of productivity, each student appeared to demonstrate a strong degree of motivation and a desire to direct the lessons experienced towards their own educational interests.

Can you become a better designer, painter, photographer or animator in 1 day?

Refine your ability to see and fine tune your visual chops in an intensive, all-day creative workshop led by foundation and visual communications adjunct professor Howard Schneider. This workshop is a refresher course in basic design principles for those upper division studio and visual communication students whose immediate needs may range from a basic tune-up to re-constructing their underlying visual approach. For digital or traditional media.

Where: AC408

When: Saturday October 30, 2010; 8:30AM-6:00PM

Why: Because there's always going to be someone down the street who thinks they're better than you.

Cost: Free plus cost of materials (materials list at sign up).

Sign up in AC100 by 10/28. Limited to 15.

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Where: AC408

When: Saturday November 20, 2010; 9:00AM-3:30PM

Why: Because there's always going to be someone down the street who thinks they're better than you.

Cost: Free plus cost of materials.

Sign up in AC100 by 10/28.

Simple rules (double meaning intended):

- 1) You must be an upper division level art student and currently enrolled in Fall 2010 semester.
- 2) Show up on time. No early departures. We will have time for breaks and a short lunch. Bringing your own lunch is the best bet.
- 3) No food or drink anywhere near school computer equipment.
- 4) Digital media folks and traditional media folks agree to have fulfilled one of the following supply lists by the time we begin:

Both Digital & Traditional media folks bring:

- > Print out the attachment: *Art140-Letterforms.pdf* at 100% and also at 50%. Then find a good copier and enlarge the 100% printouts to 133% on 11"x17". Closely trim every letterform out with knife or scissors.
- > Xacto knife with fresh blades.
- > A non-skid stainless 18" ruler.
- > Cutting surface (12"x18" resealable, preferred).
- > A **removable** or **restickable** glue stick (essential; please do not show up without one).

Digital media folks bring:

- > A saved digital project you'd like to improve.
 - > Two panels of 10"x15" white foam board.
 - > Your laptop.
 - > Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop installed.
 - > At least 20 scanned (low-med res) pages from magazines such as *Vogue* or *Metropolis* that contain large photos and images containing various interesting shapes and/or letterforms.
 - > A storage drive.
 - > Optional: digital camera and USB cable.
- NOTE: You must be proficient enough in PhotoShop to readily create clipping paths as you need them.

Traditional media folks bring:

- > A project you'd like to improve.
- > A beveled triangle.
- > Pencil + sharpener + eraser.
- > 6 additional panels of 10"x15" white foam board.
- > 3 or more large image magazines such as *Vogue* or *Metropolis* for cutting up (this requirement is essential; don't show up without a couple under your arm).
- > *Optional:* one sheet each of the following Canson papers: Dark Gray (Canson 345), Felt Gray (Canson 429), Pearl (Canson 343) – available at Continental Art Supply, ref: *Schneider Workshop*.

“Can you become a better designer in 1 day?” 10/30/10 Workshop

Sign-up List

Pre-requisite: Art 140 (2D)

Student's Name (please print)
and Student I.D.

Email
(please be legible)

Area of Interest
(Graphics? Painting?)

Traditional or
Digital Media?

Cell Phone

1.				
2.				
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15.				

Can You Become a Better Designer, Painter, Photographer or Animator in 1 Day?

A workshop in design principles conducted by adjunct professor Howard Schneider. (11/20/10)

Pre-requisite: Art 140 (Beginning 2-Dimensional Design)

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Schedule and Exercises. Scheduled times are subject to change. Breaks taken as needed by each student except during critiques. Mini-crits may be called as needed.

09:00 - 09:30	Introduction: goals, comments and images.
09:30 - 11:00	Exercise 1
11:15 - 11:30	Critique
11:30 - 12:45	Exercise 2
12:45 - 01:00	Critique
01:00 - 01:30	Lunch
01:30 - 03:15	Exercise 3
03:15 - 03:30	Critique

Exercise 1: **Magazine Grid**

First assignment employs a grid as a means to contrast and balance both order and randomness. The results will be expressed through the grouping and random distribution of 1" squares cut randomly (manually or digitally) from magazine pages and arranged on a 10"x15" foam board.

Traditional media: magazines, restickable glue stick, 10"x15" foam board, Xacto knife. *Digital media:* magazine scans, Photoshop, flash drive. Net results: Repetition, variation, dominant and subordinate direction or movement; hierarchy; balance and integration of two or more visual systems.

Exercise 2: **Letterforms**

Cut and paste only; no digital option. With Xacto knife, straight edge and glue stick, select and arrange portions of letterforms on 10"x15" white foam board to create a composition utilizing the following Coordinating Principles: positive/negative space, repetition, variation and visual continuity. Letterforms can be cut apart and recombined in whatever way you desire to achieve positive/negative space, repetition, variation and visual continuity.

Goal: your composition must fill the 10"x15" foam board space interestingly with active areas (positive) as well as silent ones (negative). Treat the negative areas as shapes. Negative shapes can divide up 2-dimensional space in interesting ways. They can be used to create silent pattern. Negative shapes can repeat positive shapes. Negative shapes are just as valid as positive shapes.

Exercise 3: **Contrast of Two Systems**

Create a 10"x15" composition that presents an integration of two contrasting visual systems. For example: geometric vs. organic; order vs. randomness; red vs. gray; image vs. typography; symmetrical vs. asymmetrical or any other type of contrasted pairing. Each visual system must have unity and activate the surrounding negative space in interesting way. All the *Coordinating Principles* (see next page) are available. Your composition must exhibit a focal point and create a dominant direction and a subordinate direction as well.

Traditional media: magazines, restickable glue stick, 10"x15" foam board, Xacto knife. *Digital media:* magazine scans, Photoshop, flash drive.

Eleven Coordinating Principles of Design

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1. Proportion

- > Proportion is the most important of all the principles. It can produce **balance** or **contrast**.
- > All of the coordinating principles and the design elements are affected by proportion.
- > Here's the skinny: Proportion is all about the amounts: how much of this vs. how much of that.

2. Continuity

- > Sometimes called *alignment*.
- > One method of organizing design elements for visual flow.
- > Physical Continuity: touching of elements will lead the eye through a composition.
- > Visual Continuity: the eye flows across an open area and connects two or more elements. Especially found when the edges of unconnected shapes share an invisible axis. Two primary types: edge-to-edge; center-to-center.

3. Positive/Negative Space

- > The space around an object in a composition is as important as the object itself.
- > Negative space has shape. Pattern too.
- > The negative space around an object can be more interesting than the object itself.
- > Also referred to as *Form* and *Space*
- > Confused with – but very similar to – *Figure/Ground* relationships.

4. Repetition

- > Creates a pattern of similarity that make the eye comfortable as it moves through a composition.
- > Repetition can take place with any of the design elements. Color, value, line, shape, etc.
- > Negative shapes can mimic (repeat) positive shapes.

5. Variation

- > Basically, a shift in some sort of pattern or similarity. •• •••• •••••••••••••••• ••••
- > Adds visual dynamics.
- > Keeps things interesting. “Variety is the spice of life.”
- > *Repetition and Variation* should be thought of as working hand-in-hand like garlic and ginger, salt and pepper, etc.
- > When combined with repetition, you get **rhythm**.

6. Direction (or Movement)

- > The underlying dynamic in a visual flow
- > Direction can be: *horizontal, vertical, diagonal, triangular, spiral, radial, concentric, dilational...*just for starters!
- > Many shapes already have direction: triangles, ovals, rectangles.
- > All lines have direction or can imply movement.

7. Transition

- > A step in-between.
- > *Transparency* is an form of transition.
- > Elements that “bleed” over an edge are a transition from the composition to the edge of its frame.
- > Medium is the transition between large and small.
- > Gray is the transition between black and white.

8. Dominance-Subordinance

- > Creates the relative level of interest and emphasis among all design elements and coordinating principles.
- > Establishes a visual hierarchy: what will the viewer see 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.
- > Many great designs have one clearly dominant direction or movement.
- > Many confusing designs have too many dominant directions or competing movements.
- > Great designs not only have one clearly dominant direction or movement, they usually also have at least one clearly subordinate direction.

9. Active-Passive / Focal Point

- > Establishes primary and secondary areas of interest.
- > Active areas are dynamic, passive areas are quiet.
- > The most active area in a composition will usually be the *Focal Point*.
- > Multiple focal points can cause confusion and distraction.

10. Depth / Advancing-Receding

- > Illusionary creation of three-dimensional space.
- > Can be created by overlap, placement, value, color (warm colors advance, cool colors recede), active-passive (active things advance, passive things recede), bright vs. neutral (bright things advance, neutral or dull things recede).

11. Unity

- > Similarity, oneness, togetherness, or cohesion.
- > Creates **order**, diminishes **chaos**.
- > Grouping, **overlapping, containment, repetition, proximity, continuity, closure, pattern, grids**, are some basic ways of creating unity.