PART 1: FUNDAMENTALS

The Vocabulary of Art

Edward Hopper, *Rooms by the Sea*, 1951.
Paul Klee Landscape with Yellow Birds 1932 watercolor, newspaper, blackbase.
The Visual Elements

**Line:** path of moving point
Actual & Implied (Contour/Outline Direction & Movement
Hatching, Cross-hatching, Stippling)

**Shape:** (2-D) enclosed line
Actual & Implied

**Mass/Form:** (3-D) depth, height & width

**Figure** (positive) & **Ground** (Negative)

**Light:** Digital & electronic
Actual & Implied

**Value:** Relative light & dark
Chiaroscuro (light & dark)

**Color:** Hue
Analogous (warm & cool)
Primary
Secondary
Complementary

**Pointillism:** optical mixing

Figure-Ground Reversal
Definition and Functions of Line

- Connects two points
- Defines the boundaries between planes
- Defines shapes
- Directs the viewer’s eye
- Conveys a sense of movement and energy
The variety of different types of line is virtually infinite.

Whether straight or curved, a line can be regular and carefully measured.

Regular lines express control and planning.

Regulated line communicates objectivity and accuracy.
TYPES OF LINE

c. Actual straight lines and implied curved line.
d. Line created by an edge.
e. Vertical line (attitude of alert attention); horizontal line (attitude of rest).
f. Diagonal lines (slow action, fast action).
g. Sharp, jagged line.
h. Dance of curving lines.
i. Hard line, soft line.
j. Ragged, irregular line.
1.1 Spider, c. 500 BCE–500 CE, Nazca, Peru
• A contour is the outer edge or profile of an object

• Contour lines can suggest a volume in space by giving us clues about the changing character of a surface
Contour and Outline

Duane Preble Blue
Ginger ’93 Pencil 13 ¾ x 11”

Calder Acrobats ’28
Brasswire Height with base 34”
Jean Dubuffet, *Suite avec 7 Personnages*

- Uses an uninhibited style
- Lines are irregular and loose
- In spite of its chaotic appearance, the work is orderly

Torii Kiyotada. *Actor in a Dance Movement*. C. ‘7’5. Handcolored woodcut. 11 ¼” x 6”
Egon Schiele, *Portrait of the Artist’s Wife, Standing, with Hands on Hips*

- The work is drawn almost entirely using contour lines.
- Fingers and shirtsleeves are drawn with great economy.
- Lines of hair vary in thickness and regularity.
- Lines suggest an organic surface.
- Machine-like pattern of clothing, contrasting with the other lines, helps to reinforce expression of organic surface.
Lines to Express Freedom and Passion

• Lines can be irregular, reflecting the wildness of nature, chaos, and accident

• Such lines—free and unrestrained—seem passionate and full of feelings that are otherwise hard to express
Expressive Line

Jackson Pollock Drawing ’50 Duco on Paper 1’10” x 4’ 11 ¾”
Expressive Line

LINE: Direction and Movement

Ansel Adams Rails and Jet Trains, Roseville, CA., 1953
Implied Line

Direction & Eye Movement


• Line can be implied by a series of marks

• Implied line gives us the impression we are seeing a line where there is no continuous mark

• No actual solid line is present; just the idea of a line is created

Implied Line
Implied Line of Painting

Chagall I and the Village 1911. o/c 75
5/8” x 59 5/8”
1.22 Saul Bass, Bass & Yager, AT&T logo, 1984
**Saul Bass, Bass & Yager, AT&T logo**

- Uses horizontal lines to imply a sphere or globe
- Twelve horizontal lines are trimmed to form a circle
- The image is simple, creating an appropriately meaningful and readily recognizable symbol for a global company
  - The AT&T logo was created in the 1980s by American graphic designer Saul Bass
Directional Line

- Artists can use line to direct a viewer’s attention to a particular part of a work
1.13 slide 2: Francisco Goya, *The Third of May, 1808*, 1814. Oil on canvas, 8’4¾” x 11’3¾”. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, Spain
Line: Direction and Movement

Direction

Vertical lines seem assertive, or denote growth & strength.

Horizontal lines appear calm.

Diagonal lines are the most dramatic and imply action.

The directions of lines both guide our attention and suggest particular feelings.

- Vertical lines tend to communicate strength and energy.
- Horizontal lines can suggest calmness and passivity.
- Diagonal lines are associated with action, motion, and change.

**Communicative Line**
Vertical lines communicate strength, stability, and authority

Horizontal lines communicate calm, peace, and passiveness

Diagonal lines communicate movement, action, and drama

1.16 Communicative qualities of line
LINE: Direction and Movement

Cartier Bresson. Aquila, Abruzzi, Italy. 1951
Shape and Mass

**Figure** (positive shape)

**Ground** (negative shape)

**Shape**: an enclosed line;
A two-dimensional area with identifiable boundaries
ie; circles or squares

**Mass/Form**
A three-dimensional area with identifiable boundaries
ie: spheres and cubes
• A shape is a two-dimensional area the boundaries of which are defined by lines or suggested by changes in color or value
• Shapes can be classified into two types: geometric and organic
  • Organic shapes are made up of unpredictable, irregular lines that suggest the natural world
  • A geometric shape is mathematically regular and precise

Shape: Geometric and Organic Shapes
• Implied shapes are shapes we can see where no continuous boundary exists
• Just as line can be implied, so too can shape
Implied Shape

Shape and Mass

**Figure** (positive shape)

**Ground** (negative shape)

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Shape and Mass

Figure-ground Reversal
The concept of positive and negative space.
In representational work, it is the shape of the object.
In nonrepresentational work, it is the shape that appears dominant or active.
• When an artist uses two noticeably different states of an element, he or she is applying the principle of contrast

• Strong differences in the state of an element can be a very useful effect for an artist to use

• It is especially effective to use opposites

Contrast
1.23a Shepard Fairey, *Obey*, 1996. Campaign poster
1.23b Shepard Fairey, *Obey*, 1996. View of the posters as they were installed in public.
Shepard Fairey, *Obey*

- Black features and the blank white space contrast with and complement each other

- The contrast between positive and negative shapes draws our attention
  - Fairey wants strong impact because he needs to catch his audience’s attention quickly as they pass by
  - The image is based on Andre the Giant, a professional wrestler (Fessick in *The Princess Bride*)
  - Fairey posted these images in public spaces as an act of street theater and guerrilla marketing
(figure Ground Reversal)
Figure Ground Reversal

M.C. Escher Sky and Water I ’38 Woodcut 17 1/8 ” x 17 1/4”
M. C. Escher,

*Sky and Water I*

- The negative shape changes from white in the upper part of the picture to black in the lower.

- The most refined version of each animal occurs at the top and bottom extremes of the image.

- Each refined version becomes more vague until it transforms into the negative ground of the other.

- This is a figure–ground reversal.
Light Value and Color

Light: Actual Light

Importance for 3-dimensional work

Real light. With line
Impact of Light

Head of Lincoln. 1922. with daylight.

With addition of artificial light.
Figs. 93-4 Chiaroscuro=gradation of light and shade to create form
Carracci Head of a Youth. 17th C. Charcoal and white chalk on colored paper.

Chiaroscuro.
Caravaggio Amor.

Type of Line Used: Hatching
13.17 Mantegna Dead Christ. 1500. tempera on canvas

foreshortening
Shading and Modeling:
Create mass

Hatching:
Closely spaced parallel lines

Cross-hatching:
Parallel lines intersect like a checkerboard

Stippling:
Dots spaced close or far apart to suggest darker or lighter areas
Shape and Mass

Implied Shape & Mass

Shading and Modeling:  
Create mass

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