

# The Elements and Principals of Design

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- The design of a work of art is its plan.  
Design can be either the organization of a work of art or the artwork itself.
- Sculpture, painting, photography – even advertising all depend upon good design to be successful.
- Good design allows the artist to best convey what they want their work to do.

# Elements and Principals of Design

- Design is made up of the elements of design, which are the basic visual “ingredients”: point - line - form and shape - colour - texture and value.
- The principals of design are the various ways in which artists combine the elements of design to achieve a desired effect or outcome, these are:  
balance - movement and rhythm -  
emphasis - unity - pattern and contrast.

It's important to remember that the elements and principals of design work together – rarely are they seen individually in a work of art.

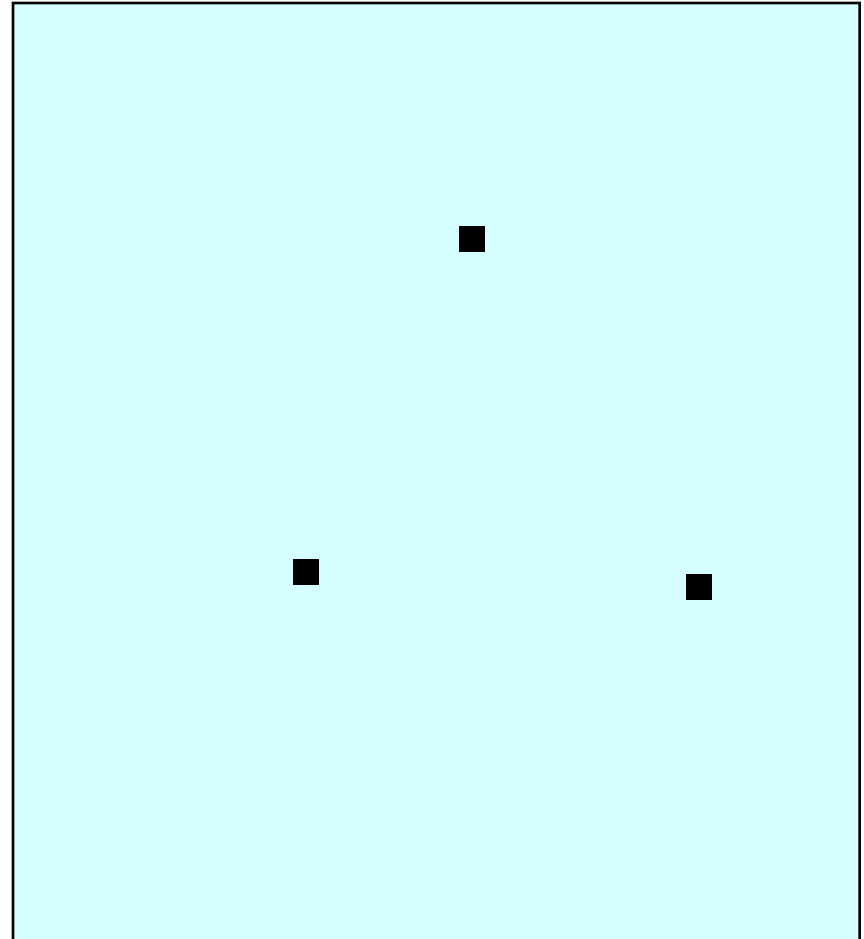


Colour, line, design, movement and other elements and principals of design go together to make this print by “Hokisai” (Japan) successful.

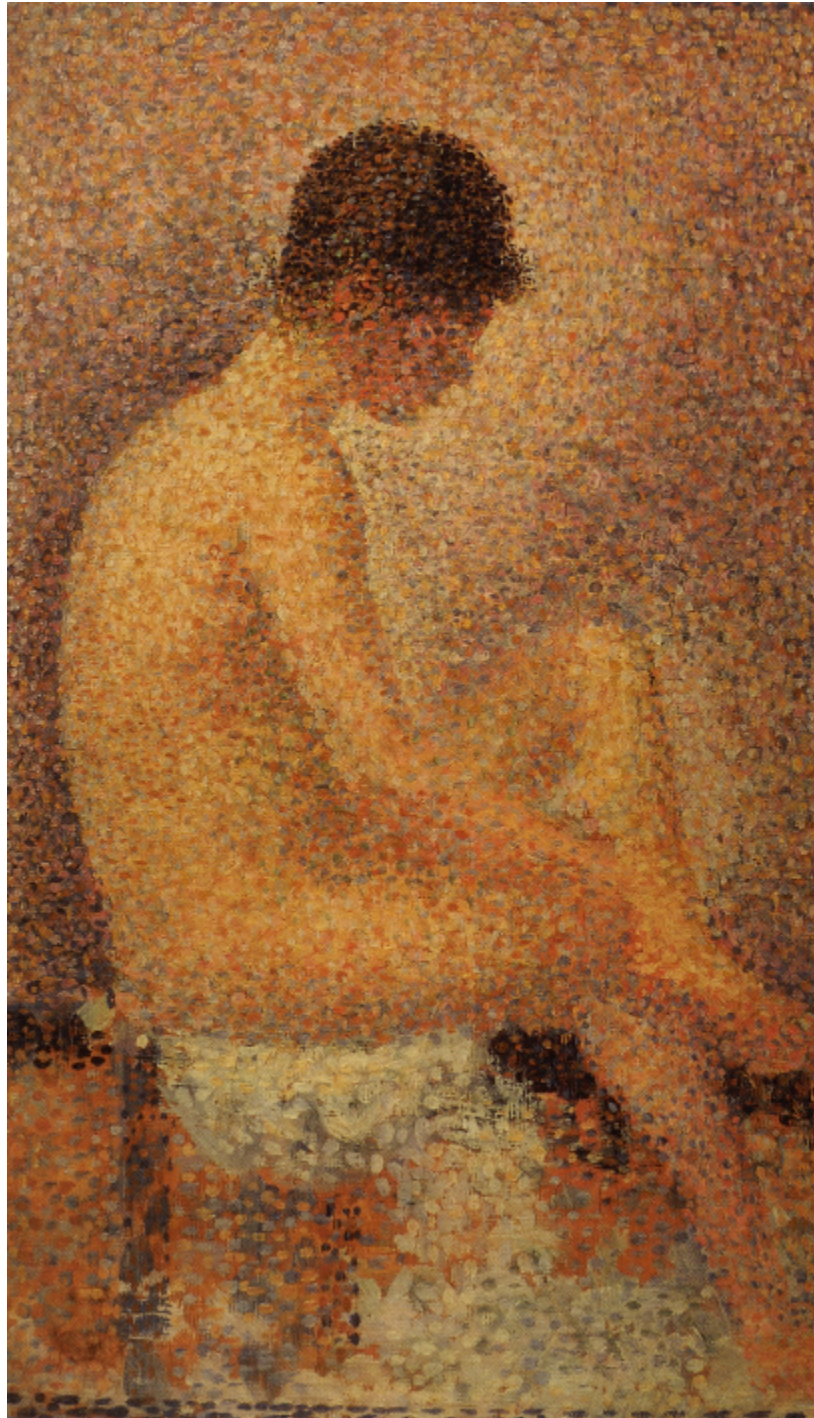


# The Point

- The point is the simplest mark possible – even so, just by placing 3 points on a page, we automatically interpret them as a triangle

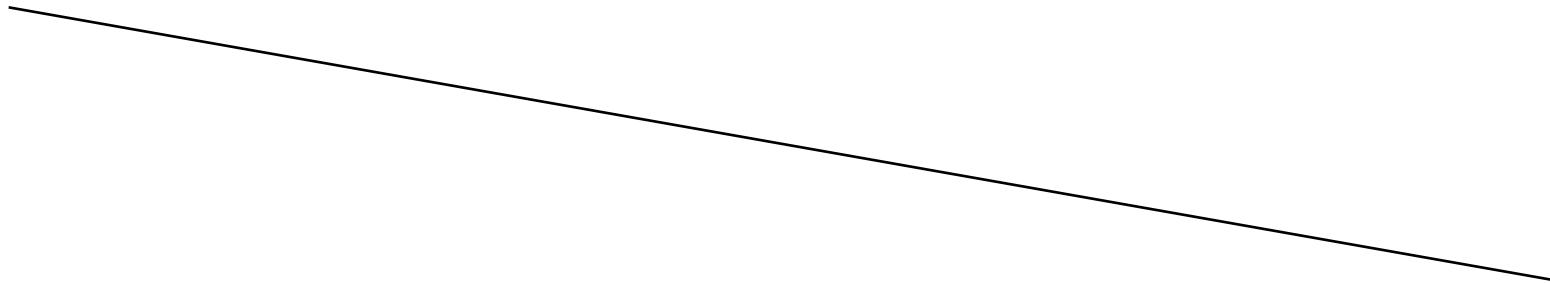


The image on a TV screen or on a printed page is made up of thousands of individual points.

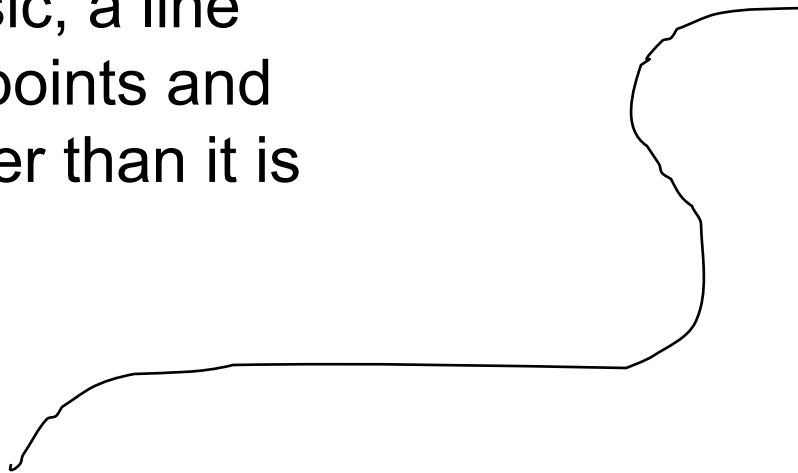


This method of making pictures was first used in the 1870's by the French artist *George Seurat*

# Line



At its most basic, a line connects two points and is usually longer than it is wide.



# Line

- The direction of a line in a work of art effects how the viewer sees and understands the subject.



A strong horizontal line lends a sense of calm, rest to an image.

# VERTICAL



Strong vertical lines give the sense of height, stability, and dignity.



# diagonal



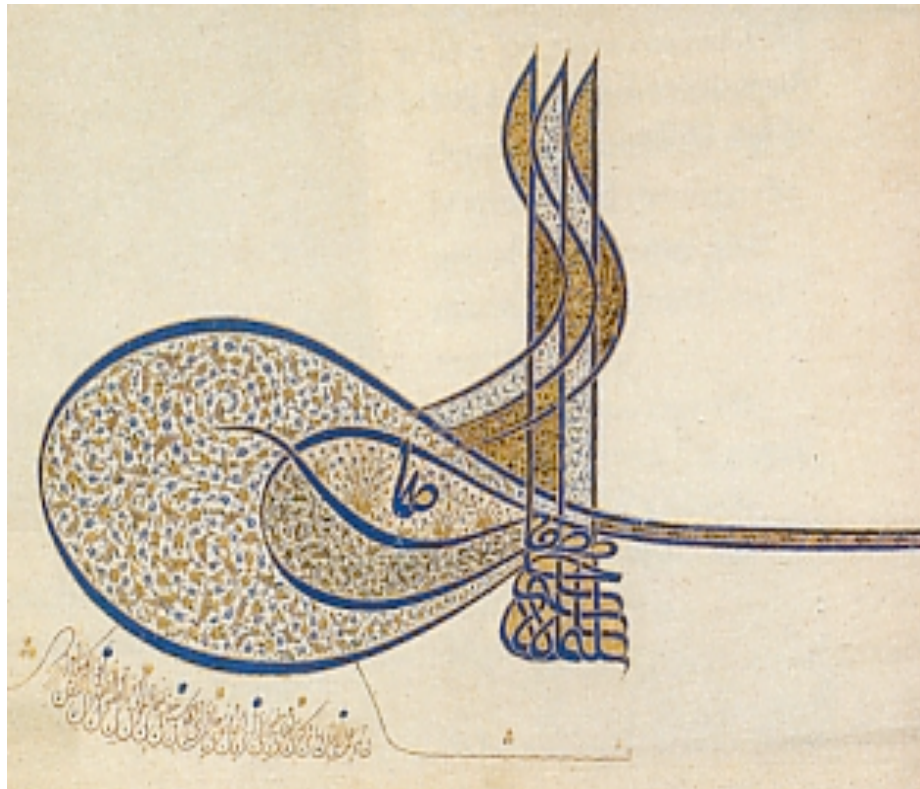
Diagonal lines give a sense of dynamism – movement, as shown in this photorealist painting by the American artist Richard Estes.

# Line

The character of lines can also transmit feelings.

Calligraphic lines originate from the words “beautiful writing” Calligraphy is precise, elegant writing done by hand.

Calligraphic lines vary from thick to thin.



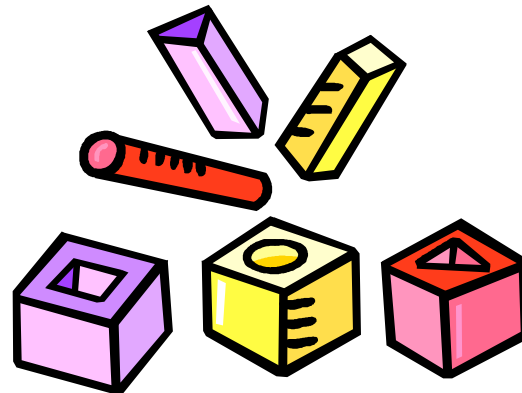
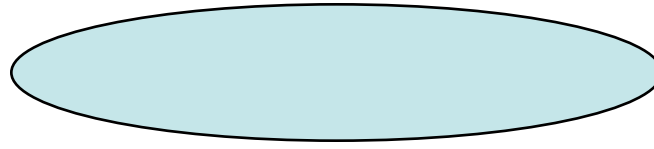




Curved –  
“gestural” lines as  
shown in this  
drawing by Henri  
Matisse are fluid  
and suggest  
movement.

# Form and Shape

- When a line curves around to cross itself or other lines to enclose space it creates a shape.
- Form describes something three dimensional – objects that are not flat.



## Form and Shape

There are two basic types of form and shape: organic, which looks as though it were created by nature.....



and, geometric, which are regular, man made shapes – rectangles, spheres etc.

Flower painting by  
Georgia O'Keeffe



Henri Matisse

# Colour

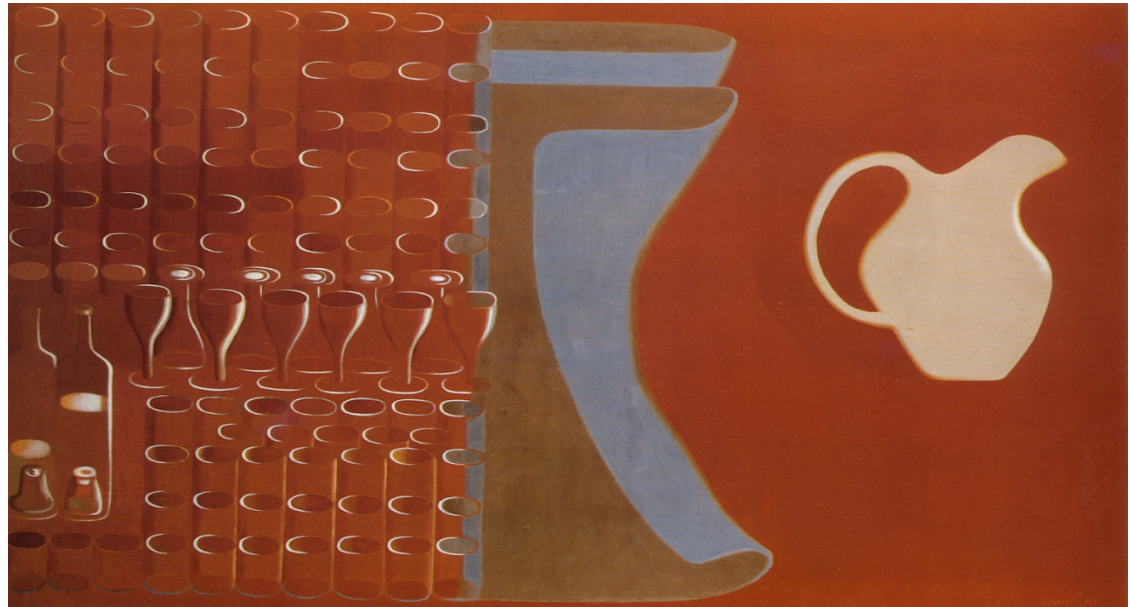
Colour is a powerful design element; it appeals directly to our senses and emotion.



Robert Indiana



Colours can be  
warm.....



or cool...

Wayne Thibaud



**bright**



Andy Warhol

**or dull**

This is referred to as the intensity of a colour.

# Colour

- We all have personal colour preferences – one likes blue, another red.
- However, there are cultural associations regarding colour – we've all “felt blue” or “seen red.”

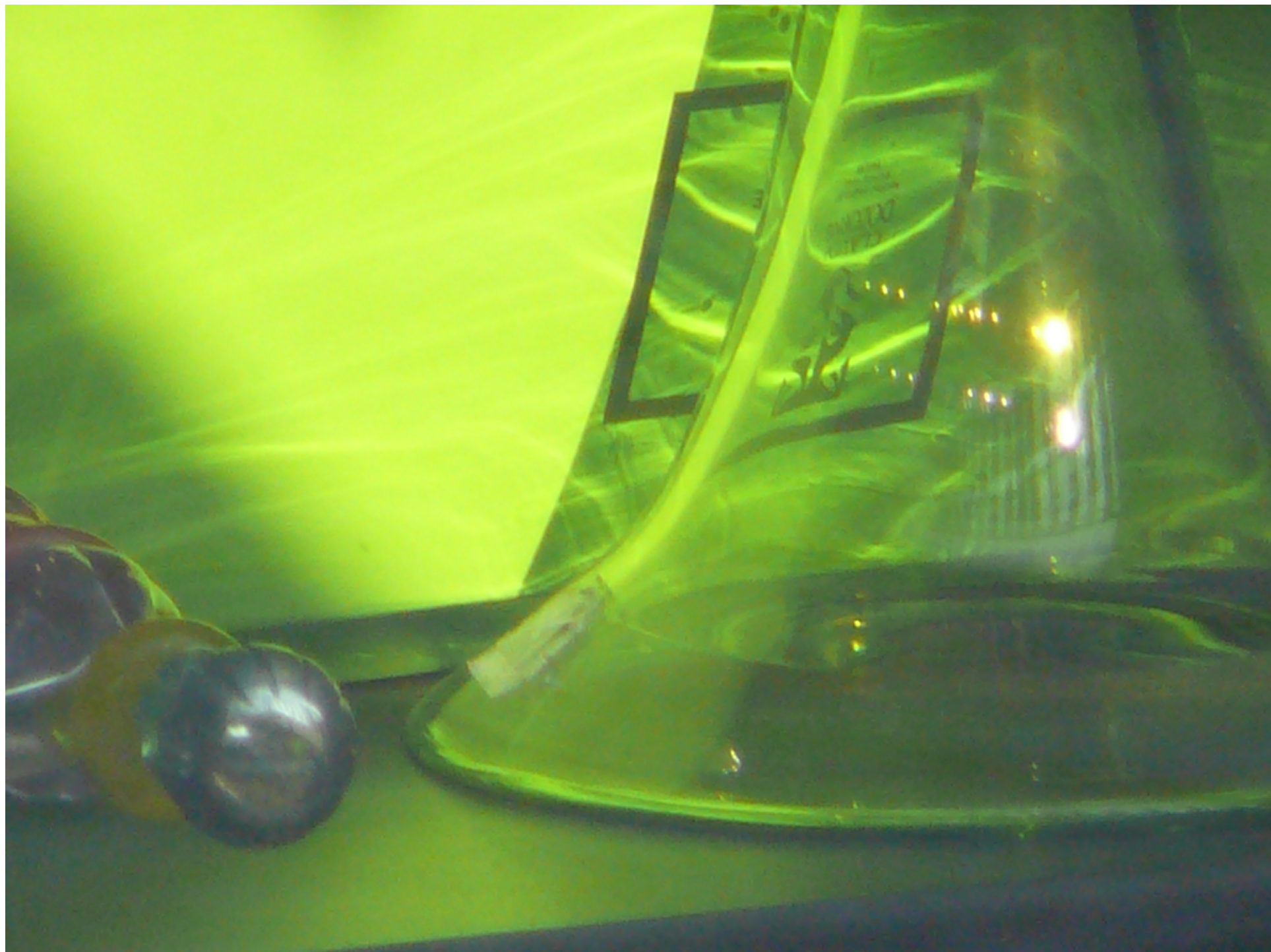


# Texture

- Texture is the real or implied surface quality of an object in an artwork.
- Something can be said to be rough or smooth. This quality will effect the way we understand the object.







# Value

- Value is the range of lightness or darkness of grays or colours in an image.
- With white the lightest value and black the darkest, there are an infinite number of values in between.





## Value

Using dark values can give a sombre sense to a work of art, as can be seen in this self portrait by the famous Dutch artist - Rembrandt Van Rijn

Light values can contribute towards a feeling of happiness, warmth – sunshine.

This is beautifully shown in this painting by Henri Matisse (French)





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The shift in values from light to dark gives the impression of three dimensionality.



# Principals of Design

- To combine the elements of design effectively, artists and designers follow certain principals.
- These principals of design are; balance, contrast, pattern, emphasis, movement and rhythm and unity.
- There are no binding, absolute set principals to creating good design, however, the artist designer must be aware of how to **organize** the various elements of design – which is the ***principals of design***.

# Balance

- Visual balance is the way in which different parts of a composition relate to one another. Balance within an artwork gives a sense of being 'at rest.'
- There are four general types of visual balance – symmetrical, approximate symmetry, asymmetrical and radial.

Symmetrical  
balance  
means that it  
is possible to  
draw a line  
down the  
center of the  
image and  
both sides  
will be the  
same

Diego Rivera







Alex Katz      U.S.

In ***approximate symmetry***, both sides of an image are similar – but not identical.





In **asymmetrical balance** there are no set rules, balance is attained by manipulating the various visual elements until a satisfying sense of balance is attained.

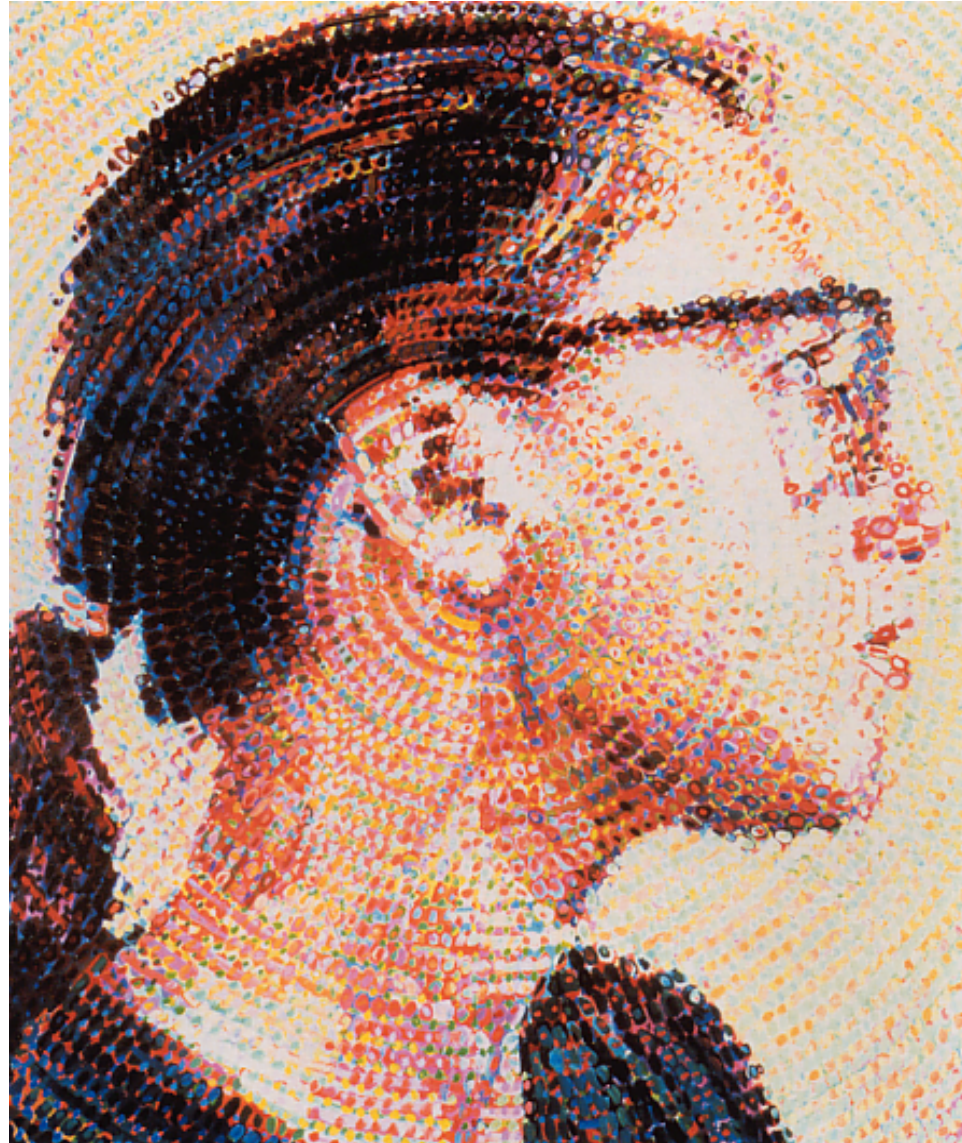
David Hockney U.K.





If the parts of a design turn around a central point, the design has *radial balance*.





Chuck Close U.S.



# Contrast

- In order to maintain interest or change the 'pace' of an artwork, artists will often use ***contrasting*** size, colours, values, materials or textures within a single artwork.



Jasper Johns  
U.S.

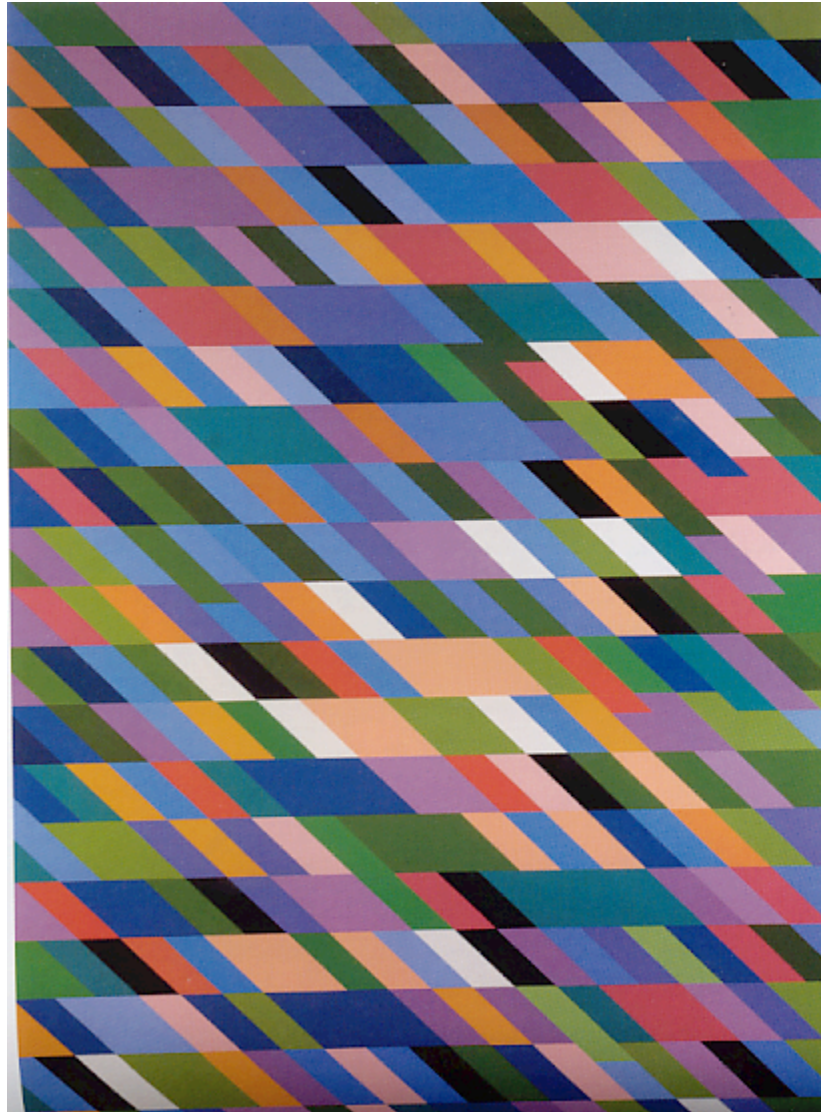
Robert  
Rauschenberg  
U.S.



# Pattern

- Visual pattern is the repetition of one or more elements.
- It's main function in visual art is to organize or unify an area and to provide visual enrichment and interest.





**Bridgit Riley - U.S.**



**Faith  
Mangold**

**U.S.**





**Gusftav Klimt** Austrian

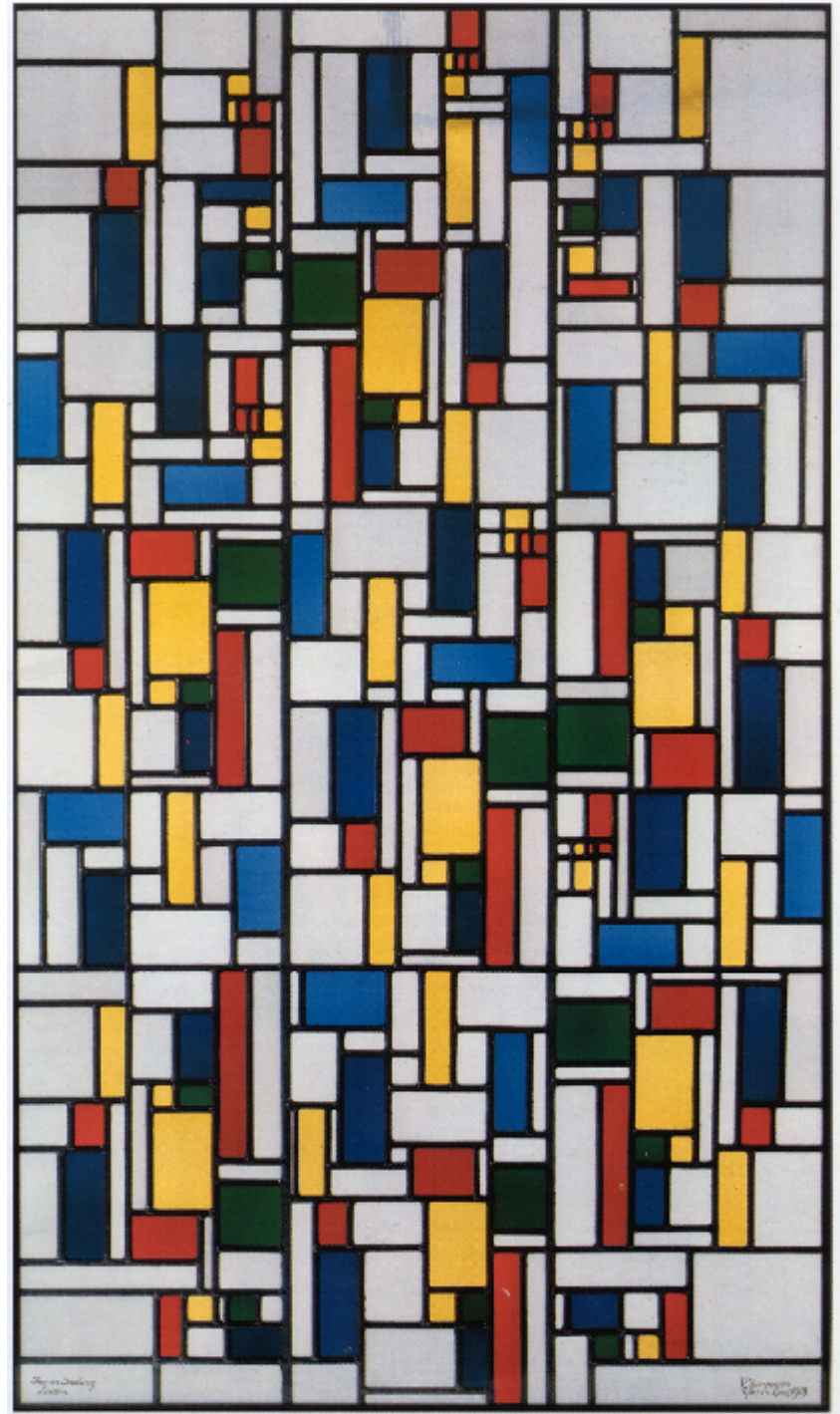
# Emphasis

- Artists often want to draw attention to a particular aspect within a work of art.
- This can be done in a number of ways...



Relying on a  
single element of  
design...

**Van Doesberg** Holland





...Simplifying the  
overall  
composition

**Karl Schmidt- Rottluff** Germany





...or including a contrasting value, colour or texture.



# Movement and Rhythm

- In visual art movement and rhythm can mean a number of things; it can be a visual 'path' which lead a viewers eyes around a composition, it can be a representation of an action by an object in the work or it could be an actual moving work of art.
- Visual rhythm is usually thought of as repeating one or several parts of a design.



In this painting by the German painter **Franz Marc** curving lines lead our eyes around the painting.

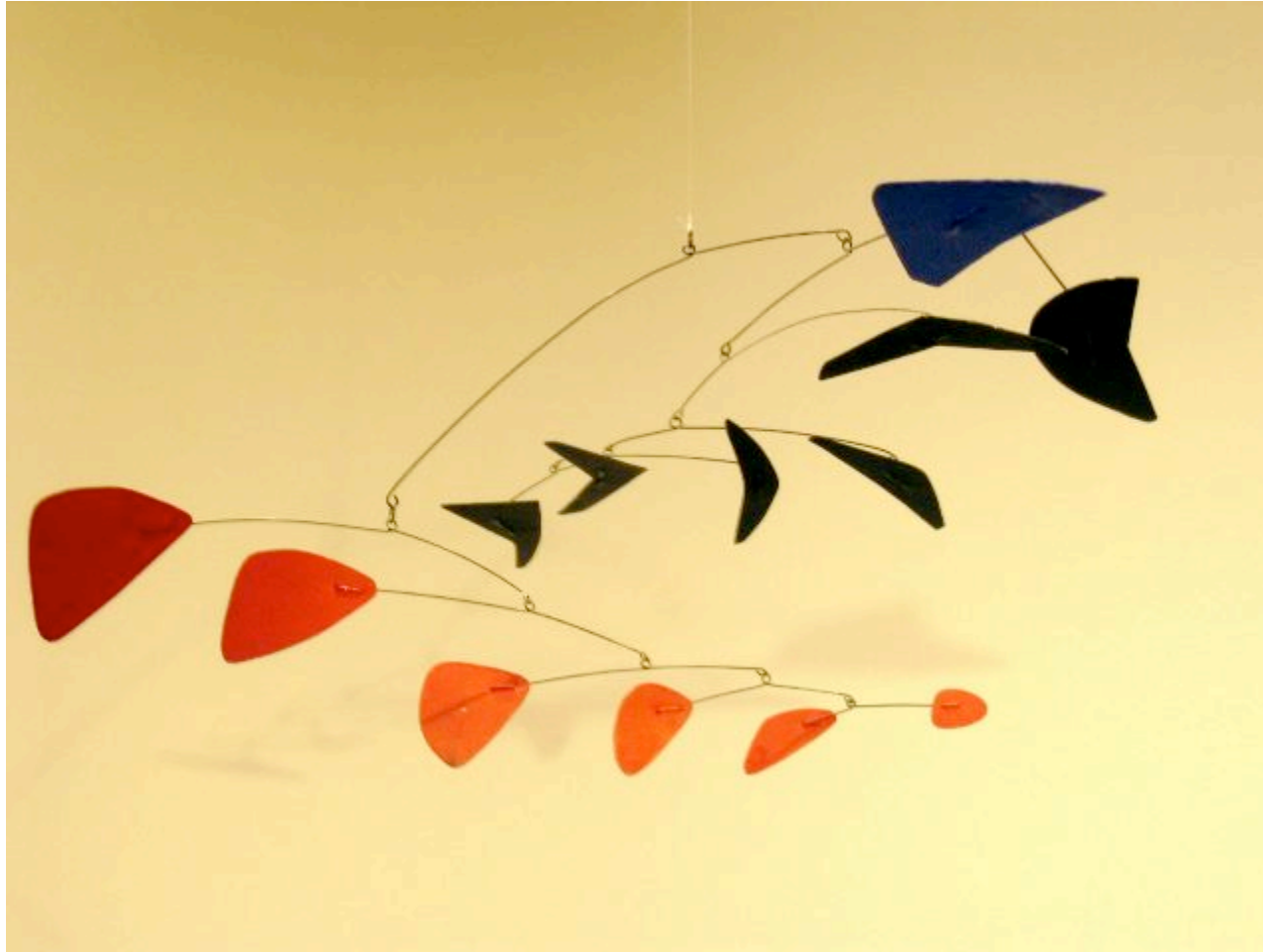
The Italian 'futurists' of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century attempted to represent the dynamic spirit of the age through the depiction of movement in their art.

**Umberto Boccioni**

Italy







**Alexander Calder** was an American artist who created some of the first 'kinetic' or moving sculpture – the mobile.

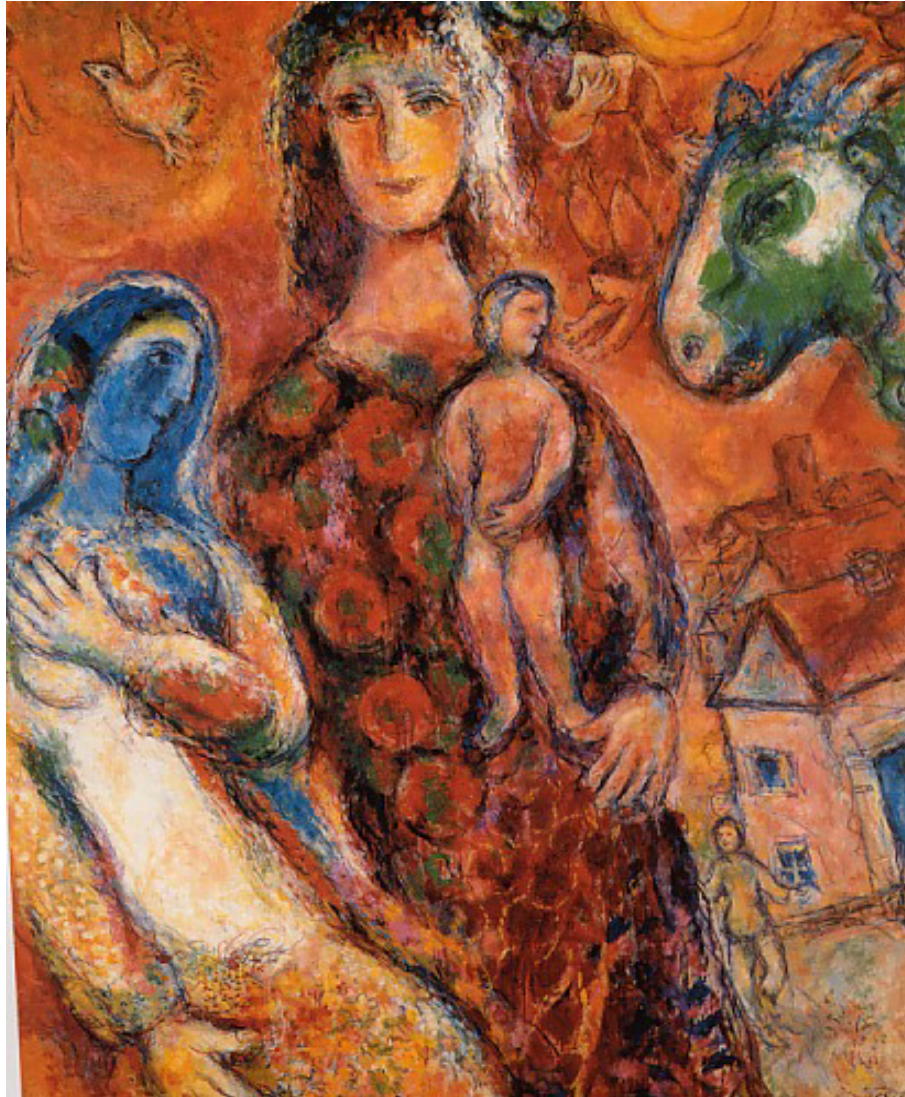
# Unity

- Unity in art and design is the feeling of harmony, the sense that all of the various elements belong together.
- This can be done by the use of colour, texture and repetition of shapes or forms.



**Joan Miró** Spain





**Marc Chagall**

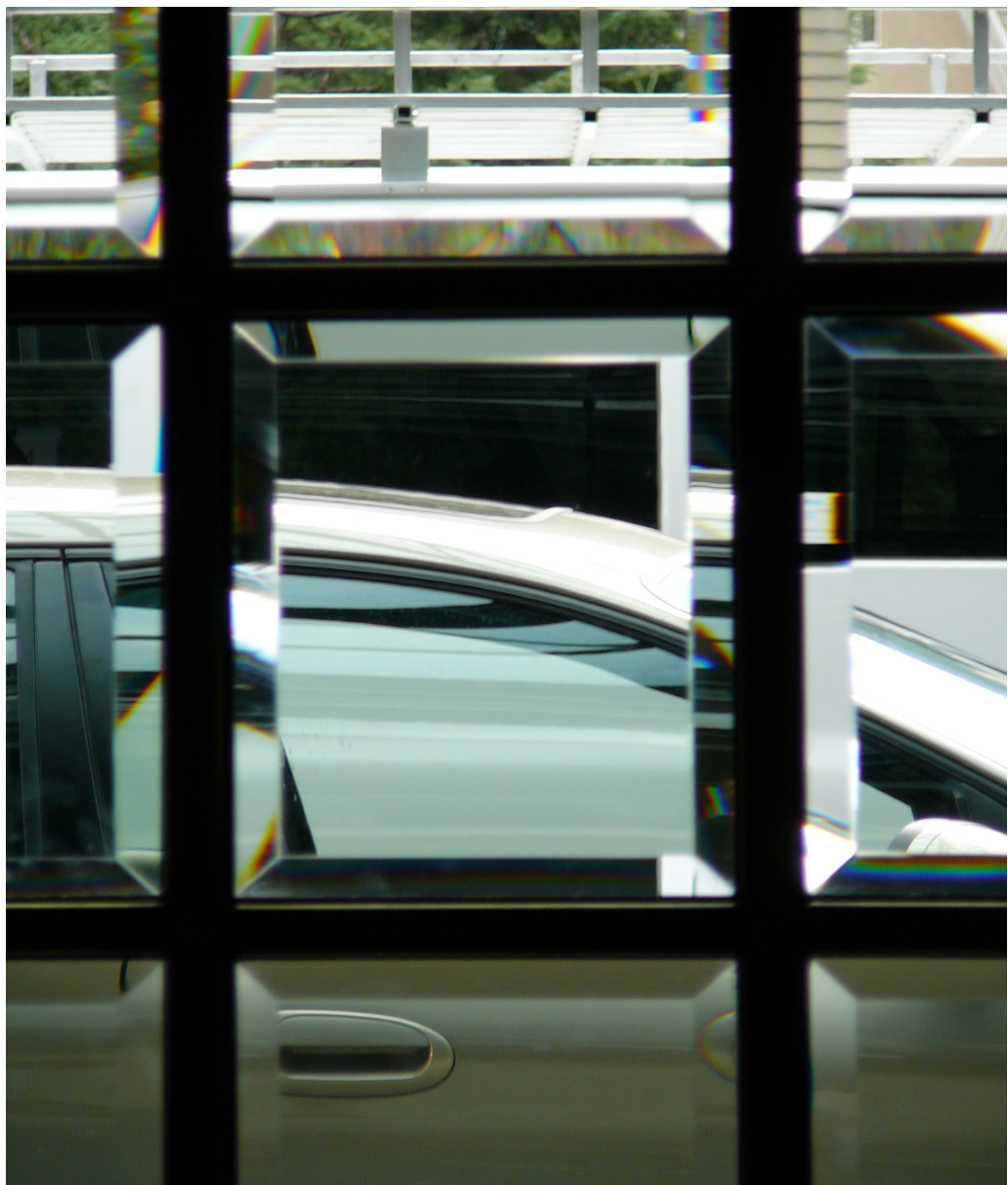
Russia



Joel Nakamura









*The End*