

# Principles of Organization

**U N I T Y**

Claudia Jacques de Moraes Cardoso

# Structure of Art in 2D Design

- Components of Art - Analyzed by the Degrees of Representation
  - Subject Matter
  - Content
  - Context
  - Form
    - Elements of Design
      - Line
      - Shape & Space
      - Value
      - Texture
      - Color
      - (Type)
    - Principles of Organization
      - Balance
      - Emphasis & Focal Point
      - Rhythm/Movement
      - Scale & Proportion
      - Unity

# Principles of Organization

**Unity** creates an integrated image in which all the elements are working together to support the design as a whole.

A **unified design** is greater than the sum of its parts; the design is seen as a whole first, before the individual elements are noticed.

**Unity** can be compared to harmony, integrity or wholeness.

# Unity



Wayne Thiebaud, *Paint Cans*, 1990, Lithograph

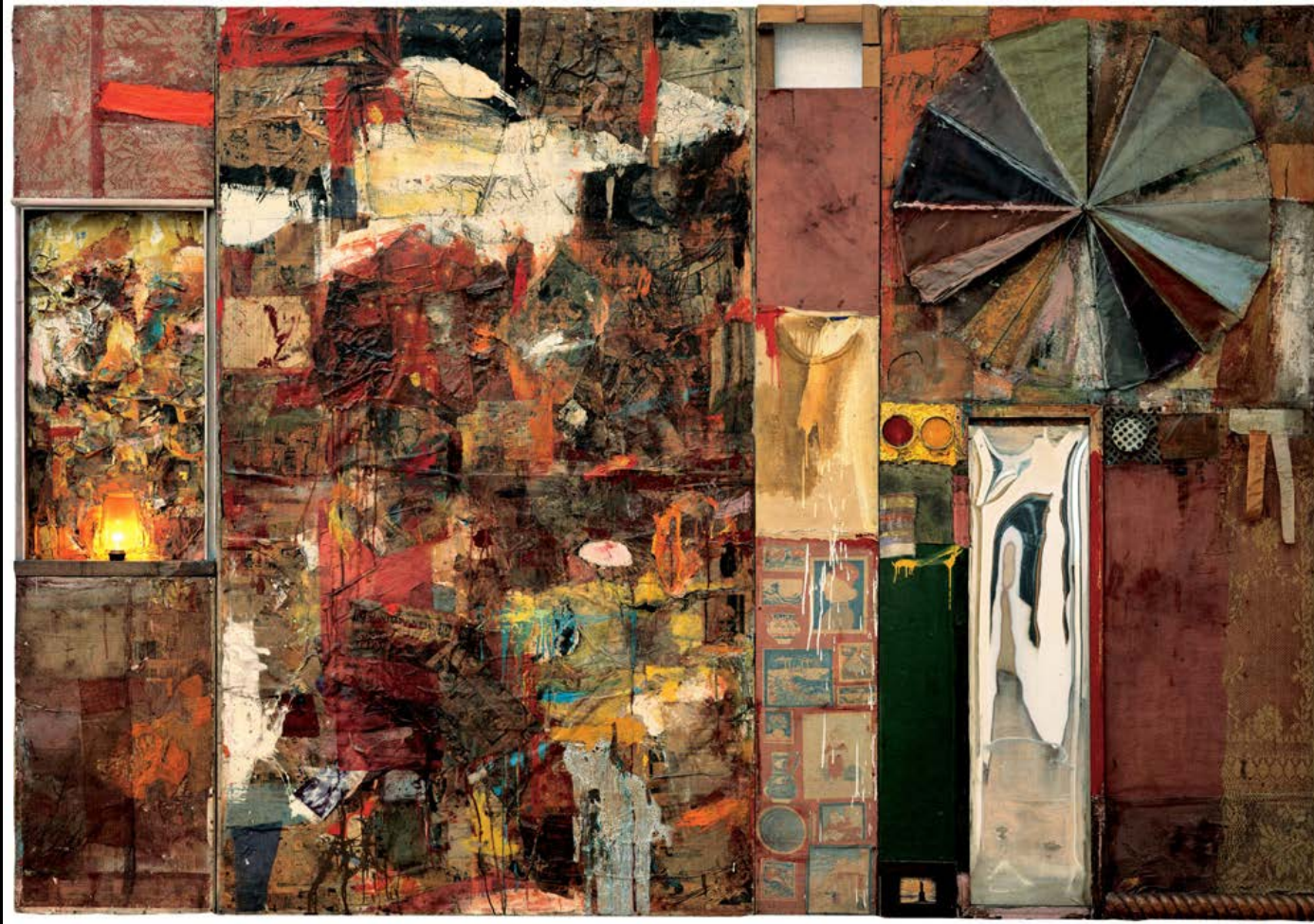
- Unity means there is an agreement among all the elements in a design.
- All elements of the image belong together.
- All elements work together to create a harmonious image.
- If an image is not harmonious, elements appear separate or unrelated.
- The image to the left uses line, shape, and color, as well as an organized direction of these elements to create a harmonious & unified composition.



- The overall composition should be dominant over its individual parts.
- Unlike in a scrapbook, this collage utilizes images to create a unified composition rather than placing emphasis on each individual item.
- The content (idea) or subject matter of each individual image does not create **visual** unity. It is the visual elements and tools utilized that have the capability of creating an unified image.



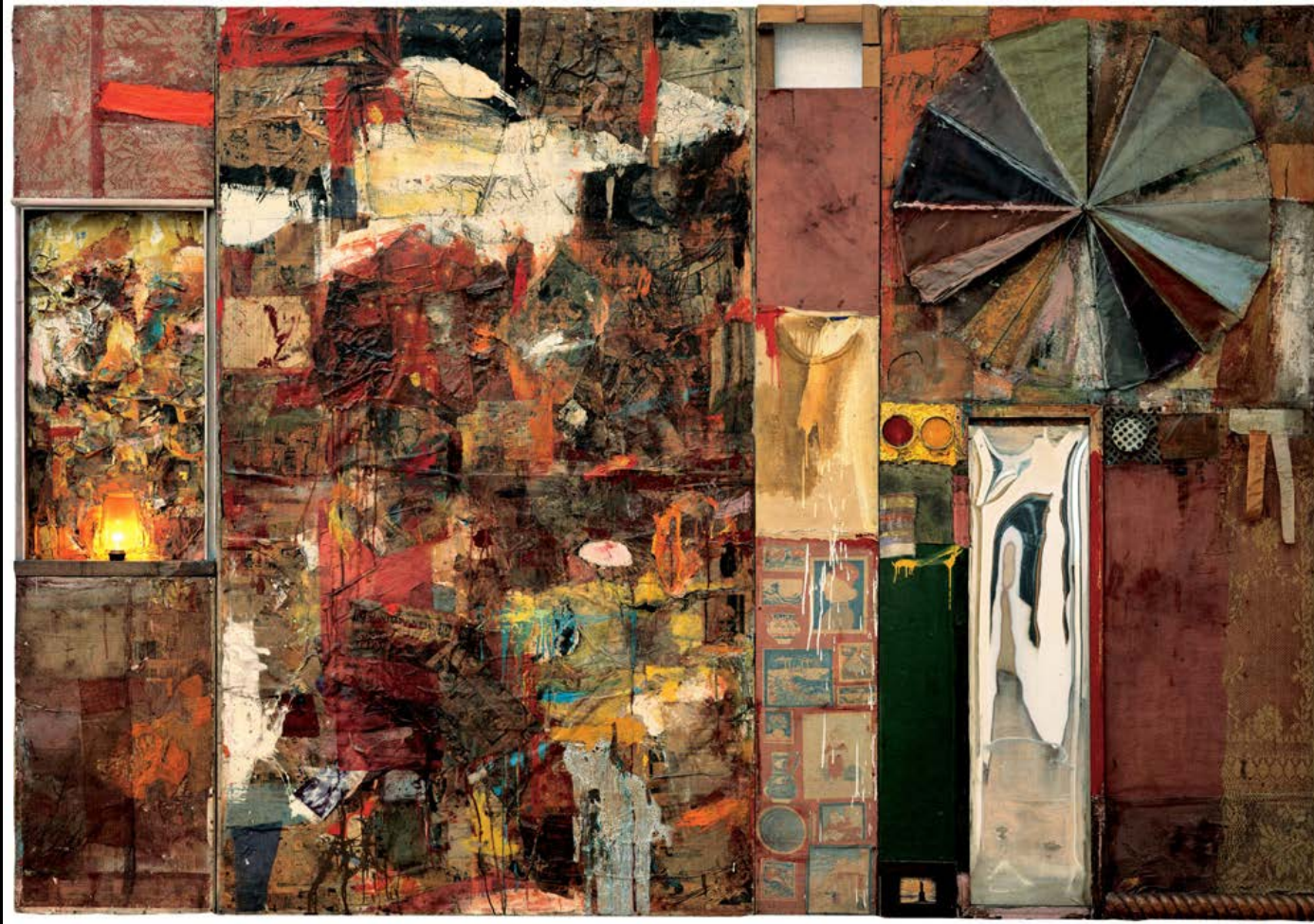
What elements of design in this composition help unify the composition?



Robert Rauschenberg, *Charlene*, 1954



In this painting, visual unity is created with repeated shapes (rectangles), texture, and color.



Robert Rauschenberg, *Charlene*, 1954

This can be done in both representational and non-representational compositions.



What elements of design in this composition help unify the composition?





In this painting, visual unity is created with repeated shapes (rectangles), value, texture, and color.



This can be done in both representational and non-representational compositions.

# Unity

## CRAP in GD

- Contrast
- Repetition
- Alignment
- Proximity

## CRAP in Unity

- Continuation
- Repetition
- Alignment
- Proximity

## Continuation



Edward Hopper,  
*Hotel By a Railroad*,  
1952

Edward Hopper finds lines that seem to connect naturally. Look at the man's left arm and how it almost seamlessly connects to the dresser and the woman's knees.





## Repetition

Shifra Levyathan,  
*Colorful Neglect*, 70x50cm

- Repetition means to repeat something.
- Repetition can be used with any element of design: line, shape, space, value, texture, color and type; and their characteristics, such as direction, character, etc.
- Repetition should not be used to create a predictable composition, but rather create a harmonious image.
- Create interesting variations when using repetition.

# Alignment - The Grid



John Hilliard, *The Most Plausible Theory*, 1977

## Proximity



Caravaggio,  
*The Calling of St. Matthew*, 1604

To unify the figures sitting at the table, Caravaggio places them in **proximity** to each other. The small shapes of light against the black background belong to a group of objects. To place an emphasis on Jesus, he is set aside from the figures at the table.



# Unity & Gestalt - Visual Perception



A **gestalt** is created because the mind simplifies and organizes information. It does this by grouping elements together to create new wholes.

Understanding how the mind groups elements helps us understand how **unity** can be achieved.

# Gestalt Laws

## Closure

Visual Grouping explains why incomplete figures are perceived as complete or whole.



## Pragnanz

We organize our perceptions into the simplest possible experience. The Law of Simplicity.

## Common Fate

Describes how objects moving together are perceived as belonging together.



## Proximity

Objects near one another in space or time are perceived as belonging together.

## Continuity

Objects aligned along a line or curve are perceived as belonging together, and we will perceive the simplest, smooth path, rather than a complex path.



## Similarity

Objects with similar characteristics, such as form, color, size, and brightness, are perceived as belonging together.

## Figure/Ground

Refers to the relationship between positive elements and negative space. The eye separates whole figures from their background in order to understand what's being seen.



## Symmetry

Explains our tendency to perceive symmetric objects as figures on a background.

# Overview: Unity

- Harmony
- Visual Unity
- “CRAP-U”
- Continuation
- Repetition
- Alignment
- Proximity
- Gestalt