

Northern Virginia Community College
Loudoun Campus

ART 131-Fundamentals of Design 1
Monday & Wednesday, 7 - 9-15 pm

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Figure/Ground

Assignment # 5

Contract:

Divide the work area into a 2" simple grid. The object of this problem is to achieve the strongest figure/ground relationship possible in each section of the grid. This is to be accomplished by placing a shape or grouping of shapes in each section of the grid.

Materials:

Materials: Heavy white paper

Size: 18"x 24" - 3" border on all sides (you will need to trim 6" off vertical edge)

Medium/Tools: India Ink, sharpee pen, black paper, rubber cement, T-Square, triangle, xacto knife

Approach to the process:

Experiment with different shapes, sizes, and positions within each individual square.

Purpose: objectives: and why they are doing this project

To understand how the figure relates to the ground. To understand variety, harmony and unity.

What you should be thinking while working on this project:

Figure/ground refers to our ability to distinguish an object from its general surroundings. We see by making comparisons – comparisons between figure/ground.

1. The ground is usually larger and simpler than the figure.
2. The figure usually appears to be on top or in front of the ground.
3. Convex shapes tend to be figure and concave shapes tend to be ground.
4. Unbroken shapes tend to become figures and segmented shapes tend to become ground.
5. What dominates the eye is considered the figure.
6. Darker colors tend to form figure.
7. Figure and ground of the same shape become ambiguous.

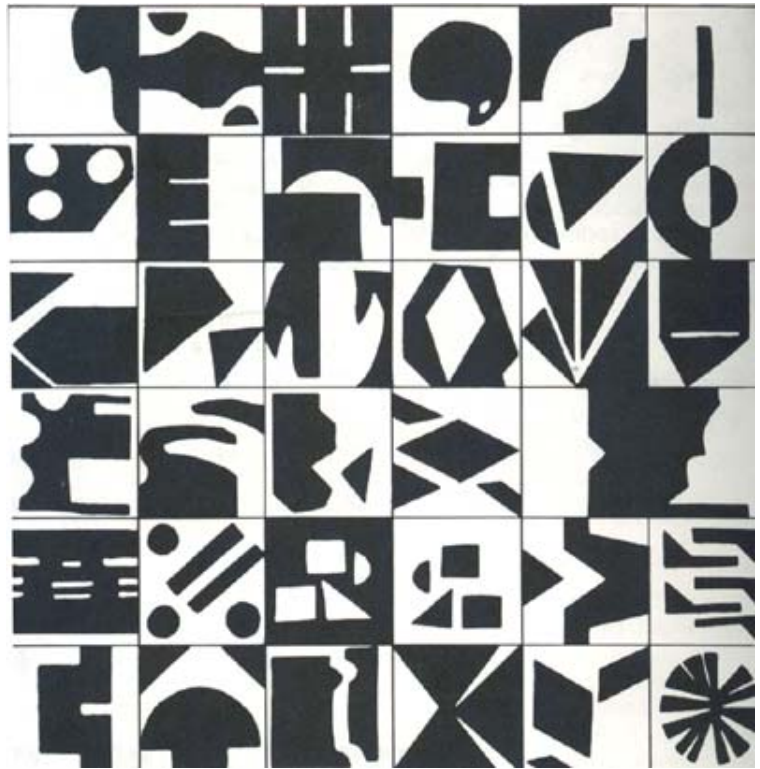
8. Strong figure/ground relationships give us simplicity and weak figure/ground relationships give us ambiguity.

FORM: The organization or inventive arrangement of all the visual elements according to the principles of design.

Elements: Line, Shape, Color, Contrast and Texture.

PRINCIPLES:

- **Variety:** variations on a theme or strong contrast of elements
- **Harmony:** pleasing arrangements of elements
- **Balance:** distribution of the visual weight of design elements
- **Dominance:** the most obvious elements
- **Economy:** using only what is needed, eliminating distracting elements
- **Proportion & Scale:** **proportion** deals with the relationship to the human figure; **scale** deals with the relationship between size of an image and size of its surroundings.
- **Movement:** any visual element that causes the eye to travel across the surface of a composition. For example: diagonal lines tend to suggest movement



Questions to ask yourself while working on this project: These questions are related to the final critique sheet handout.

1. What elements are you using in this project?
2. How many elements did you use?
3. What is the relationship between the elements? How were they used, and with what media?
4. What design principles are prevalent in this project?
5. Do the elements and principles achieve a unified piece of artwork?
6. Is it inventive?
7. Is it obvious?
8. ?) Is your project clean and is the presentation excellent?
9. What problems are you solving during this project?
10. Do you think you were successful in solving the project?
11. What concepts did you explore while working on this project?
12. Is there an idea that explains the work?