

## FINE *Art* TECHNIQUES

We are attracted to beauty and the potential to create beauty on the web is almost infinite. As well as being informative, web sites can be dazzling, soothing, colorful, artistic, dynamic, and even awe-inspiring. The following information outlines some techniques that are used in creating fine art. Let's be a part of the movement that's infusing the web with artistry!



### Relationship/Synergy

Relationship is the force that connects elements. Synergy is when individual elements work together to create a combined effect. Used successfully, relationship and synergy create a dynamic relationship in which the elements used as a group have a greater total impact than when each is used alone.

*What factors/other design principles aid relationship and synergy?*



### Closure

Closure is a perceptual phenomena that makes it possible to read a given form in its totality, even though it is only partially represented. By not closing a form you can achieve a greater relationship between the figure and the ground. Many fine art drawings/paintings leave parts of the object(s) undefined, creating a much more dynamic picture in which the viewer must participate. Most people feel compelled to visually "complete" incomplete objects.

*How might this technique might be used in web design?*



### Direction/Movement

Like eyeflow, movement leads the eye into and around the page to achieve unity between elements and lead the viewer through a guided visual experience. Decide how and where you want to direct the viewer—and at what speed.

*What elements create movement?*



### Rhythm

Rhythm moving force connecting the elements within a composition. The heartbeat or the flow. You might bring several rhythms together into a whole, or run several rhythms simultaneously. An example of rhythm in screen design might be a series of repeated shapes that are echoed in all areas of the design.

*What techniques can you use to achieve a sense of rhythm?*



## Perspective

Perspective is the best way of adding a sense of depth to your designs. It can add dynamism to your designs by creating the illusion of a third dimension. There are several ways that fine artists and screen designers achieve perspective and depth:

- Overlap objects to determine foreground/background relationships.
- Use size to convey depth.
- Add more detail/color in the foreground, less in the background.
- Use converging lines/shapes that lead into the “distance.”
- Utilize images within the design to create the depth (e.g. photos with strong perspective).

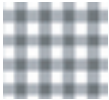
*How can perspective aid web design? What can you use to create a sense of depth on the screen?*



## Value

The use of light to dark shades to create the illusion of form, shape, figure-ground, depth. Light values appear to come forward and dark values appear to recede. In screen design you might try using background shapes of a different value to create more depth.

*How can value be used effectively/creatively in web design?*



## Texture

To add interest to an area or form. Try scanned images from nature or from your own artwork/photographs, use type as a texture, create background tiles with “grain,” use textured patterns inside type rather than flat color etc.

*In what ways could texture be used effectively in web design?*



## Cropping

Cropping involves taking an image and cutting it to create a bolder more interesting view or even cropping it so severely that it is taken out of context. Try using this technique with a series of photos each cropped to a different “zoom.”

*What are some examples of elements that could be cropped?*



## Scale and Proportion

“Scale is the relative size of each element, and I think of it as being relative to the page, to the real size of the element, and to the scale of other elements in the composition.”

Ellen Wixted, Making the Parts Whole, Adobe Magazine.

The relationship of the parts of an image to one another. In perfect balance they relate well and are recognizable. Out of balance they create a distorted view that can be used as a point of interest or create a feeling of disorientation.

*What are some interesting ways you could work with scale and/or proportion on the screen?*



## Figure-Ground

Whenever we look at a mark on a page we see it as an object distinct from its background. This is the first step of perception. Figure-ground interplay or equivocation, refers to an ambiguous dimension or element that may be read in more than one way and is used as a means of relating positive and negative space.

Three main categories:

*Stable Figure-Ground:* Each two-dimensional mark or shape is perceived in an unchanging relationship of object against background.

*Reversible Figure-Ground:* Figure and ground can be focused on equally. What was initially ground becomes figure. Think Escher.

*Ambiguous Figure-Ground:* In some puzzle pictures, one figure may turn out to be made up of another, or of several different pictures.

*How could figure-ground relationships factor into web design?*



## Format

The use of the picture plane as a whole. The shape of the page or screen defines the space where the picture exists. It is the working space and must be considered at all times.

*Any ideas for making the most of the limited format options inherent in web design?*



## Grid

The underlying structure on which a design is based. One can adhere strictly to a grid or break out of it for a point of interest.

*What purpose could a grid serve in web design? What HTML element lends itself to developing a grid?*