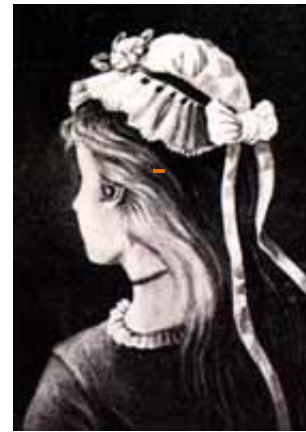


Gestalt Theory Visual Overview.

Gestalt. “The whole is more than the sum of its parts”. A gestalt theory revolves around the idea of a composition. While each of the individual parts have meaning on their own, taken together, the meaning may change. Our perception of the composition is based on our understanding of all the bits and pieces working in unison.

—Founders, *A group of German theorists*

$$1 + 1 = 3$$



[Watch Video](#)

Figure-Ground. This is the ability to distinguish between what is in the front (figure/positive space) and what is in the back (ground/negative space).

A solid page of text lacks sufficient figure-ground contrast and does not provide the reader with anything to focus on. When designing documents, you should use headings, paragraph breaks, graphic elements, icons, and illustrations to create contrast and provide visual cues to support the organization and presentation of information.

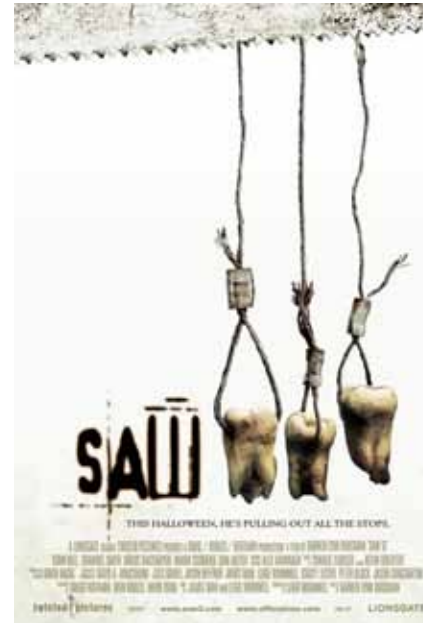
Figure-Ground.



Proximity. Visually we tend to unite objects that are near each other and group them together thus seeing them as units instead of single objects alone.

When designing text on a page consider how you want similar groups of information to group for appropriate reading. Watch your images for how they might read as well due to proximity.

Proximity.



Isomorphic Correspondence. The relationship between structural characteristics of visual forms and similar characteristics in human behavior or experience. An image that evokes a strong emotional reaction from a viewer—such as happiness, fear, sorrow, etc.

Isomorphic Correspondence.



Equilibrium. We tend to want to balance or order visual information. We want to organize what we are seeing to a point where it feels stable or comfortable.

Symmetrical or Asymmetrical we still want our information/composition balanced and organized.



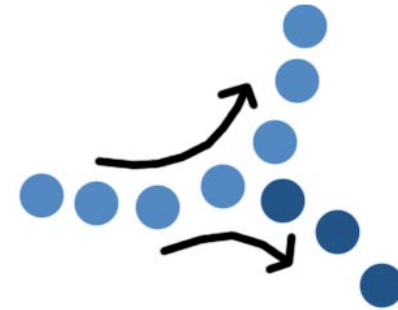
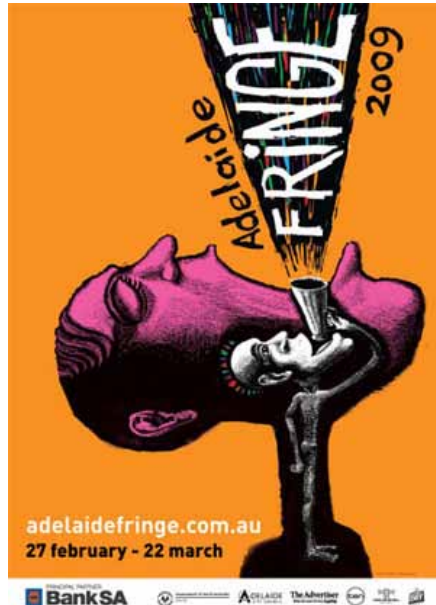
Equilibrium.



Similarity. Elements that visually resemble one another either in size, color, or direction are perceived as being a unit.

In the image at left, most people see vertical columns of circles and squares because the similar objects group visually.

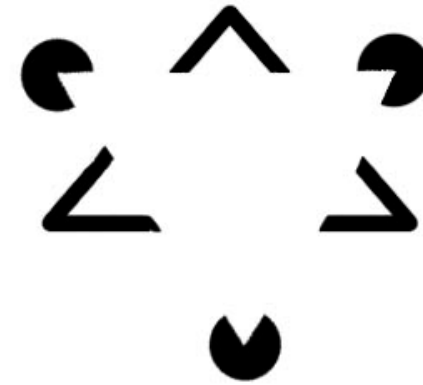
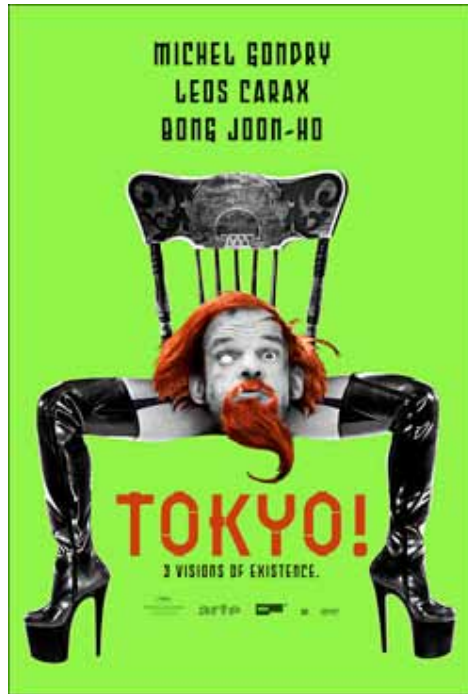
Similarity.



Continuation. Visual information tends to lead along a straight line or path. Gestalt psychologists state that the brain does not prefer sudden or unusual changes in the movement of a line. In other words, the brain seeks as much as possible a smooth continuation of a line.

Continuation also occurs when the eye is compelled to move through one object and continue to another object.

Continuation.



Closure. The act of taking a minimum of clues and mentally filling in non-existing information, to arrive at an easily manageable pattern or conclusion.

We tend to ignore gaps and complete contour lines. Our brain doesn't need to see it all to recognize what the unit is or should be.

perc ption

Closure.