

# *Elements of Design*

In any work of art there is a thought process for the arrangement and use of the elements of design. The artist who works with the principles of good composition will create a more interesting piece of art it will be arranged to show a pleasing rhythm and movement. A good knowledge of composition is essential in producing good artwork.

**Color~** refers to specific hues and has 3 properties. Chroma, Intensity, and Value. The color wheel is a way of showing the chromatic scale in a circle using all the colors made with the primary triad. Complimentary pairs can produce dull and neutral color. Black and white can be added to produce tints (add white), and shades (add black).

**Line~** is a mark on a surface that describes a shape or outline, it can create texture and can be thick and thin. Types of line can include actual, implied, vertical, horizontal, and diagonal.

**Shape~** is a 2D line with no form or thickness. Shapes are flat and can be grouped into two categories, geometric and organic.

**Value~** is the degree of light and dark in a design, it is the contrast between black and white and all the tones (gray) in between. Value can be used with color as well as black and white. Contrast is the extreme changes between values.

**Texture~** is about surface quality either tactile (touch) or visual (see). Texture can be real or implied by different uses of media. It is the degree of roughness or smoothness in objects.

**Form~** is a 3D object that has volume and thickness. It is the illusion of a 3D effect that can be implied with the use of light and shading techniques. Form can be viewed from many angles.

These elements are used to create the Principle of Design. Principles are the results of using the Elements. When you are working in a particular format (size and shape of the work surface) the principles are used to create interest, harmony, and unity to the elements that you are using. You can use the Principles of design to check your composition to see if it has good structure.

# *Principles of Design*

The principles of design are the recipe for a good work of art. The principles combine the elements to create an aesthetic (visually pleasing) placement of things that will produce a good design.

**Emphasis~** is an area that first attracts attention in a composition. This area is more important when compared to the other objects or elements in a composition. They can be by contrast of values, more colors, and placement in the format.

**Balance~** is a feeling of visual equality in shape, form, value, color, etc. Balance can be symmetrical or evenly balanced or asymmetrical and un-evenly balanced. Objects values, colors, textures, shapes, forms, etc., can be used in creating a balance in a composition.

**Unity~** brings together a composition with similar things. If your composition was using wavy lines and organic shapes you would stay with those types of lines and not put in just one geometric shape.

**Contrast~** offers some change in value creating a visual discord in a composition. Contrast shows the difference between shapes and can be used as a background to bring objects out and forward in a design. It can also be used to create an area of emphasis.

**Movement~** is a visual flow through the composition. It can be the suggestion of motion in a design as you move from object to object by way of placement and position. Directional force can be created with a value pattern, or with the placement of dark and light areas that you can move your attention through the format.

**Rhythm~** is a movement in which some elements recur regularly. Like a dance it will have a flow of objects that will seem to be like the beat of music.

The Principles of design are the results of your working with the elements of art. Use them in every piece of art you do and you will be happy with the results.