

Collage: Emphasis and Focal Point

2D Design
Art 130: Fall 2018

Due Dates:
Tues, 9/04

The term *collage* is a work of art made by pasting bits of paper, cloth, or other material onto a flat surface. The process was first attributed to French artist Georges Braque (a contemporary of Pablo Picasso) in the early 20th century. The word actually means “pasting” or “gluing”. It is a medium that many artists such as Romare Bearden, Arturo Herrera, Fred Tomaselli, Michael Villequette, etc., continue to work in today.

For this series of homework projects, you will need to gather a supply of collage materials (old magazines, old books, scraps of paper, old art projects, cloth, fabric, etc). Look elements that have both an interesting color and texture. You will also need an adhesive such as glue sticks, rubber cement, and modge podge to attach the pieces, and cutting implements (scissors, exacto knives, box cutters, etc.). The type of adhesive you use depends on the material you are trying to glue down, you will have to experiment sometimes to see which will work best.

Each collage will have a specific design goal, however the visual imagery will be up to you. In addition to that goal, you will need to attach a piece of tracing paper over your finished collage and convey to me how you completed the design goal. Be sure to draw and write on your tracing paper, not your collage assignment. The point of the tracing paper is for you to show me your creative thought process.

Each collage should be 5” x 5” with a 1” border all around. These collages should be on bristol paper. Be sure to carefully measure out your edges and cut clean lines. Presentation is very important and will be counted as part of your grade.

Emphasis and Focal Point

Very often in art the pictorial emphasis is clear, and in simple compositions, such as a portrait, the focal point is obvious. But the more complicated the design, the more necessary a focal point may be in organizing the images. As a general rule, a focal point results when one element differs from the others. Whatever element interrupts automatically attracts the eye by this difference.



Example #1
“Major–Minor Orange–Blue”,
Ceri Richards



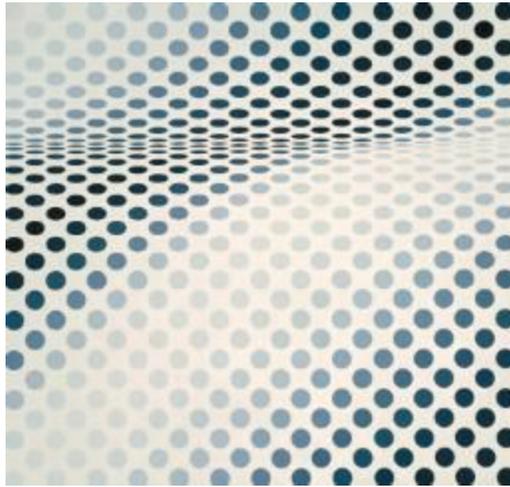
Example #2
“Sketch for Several Circles”
Wassily Kandinsky

The possibilities are almost endless, but here are a few ideas to consider:

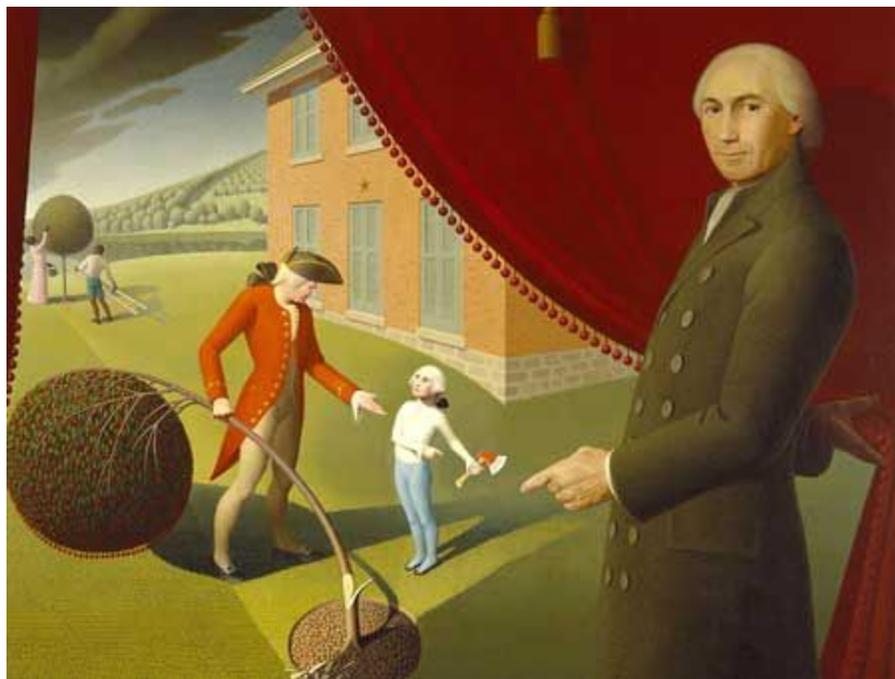
1. When most elements are vertical, a few horizontal forms that break the pattern become focal points.
2. When most elements are irregular, spontaneous forms, an almost geometric shape breaks the pattern and becomes a focal point.
3. In a design consisting of large smooth shapes, a small, linear, detailed element is emphasized.
4. When many elements are about the same size, the one that is larger is visually important and/or gives variety to the design. See example #2
5. In a design of mainly abstract forms, the occasional recognizable images becomes a focus of attention. See example #1
6. When one item is isolated or sits apart from the other elements it becomes a focal point. Just by its separation, the element takes on visual importance. See example #3
7. Sometimes absence can create a focal point. If a design contains a regular rhythm or repetition, when you skip a beat a focal point is created. See example #4.
8. The placement of elements in a design can also direct the viewer's eye to the focal point of an image. In example #5, both figures are pointing to George Washington. This creates an implied leading line.



Example #3
"Surrender of Lord Cornwallis"
John Trumbull



Example #4
“Hesitate”
Bridget Riley



Example #5
“Parson Weems' Fable”
Grant Wood

You will need to create a collage that exhibits a strong focal point or emphasis. You can use one of the strategies outlined above, combine different approaches, or develop one on your own. You will need to document on your tracing paper where your focal point is and why it is the focal point.