The Art and Science of Depiction

Limitations of the Medium, compensation or accentuation: The Image is Static

Fredo Durand
MIT- Lab for Computer Science

Icons

• Role of pictures/artists
• Iconoclasts

Icons: canon

• Millet-Van Gogh

Icons: canon

• Millet-Van Gogh

Icons: canon

• Millet-Van Gogh

Icons: canon

• Hokusai – Jeff Wall
**Icon: canon**
- Scorcese
- La femme Nikita/Point of No Return
- White House

**Movie anyone?**
- A Personal Journey through American Cinema with Martin Scorcese
- Le Mystère Picasso
- Making of Toy Story

**Talk**
- Who will talk after Spring Break?

**Assignments**
- Readings
  - Different choices
  - Summarize to others the next week (send me the summary)
  - Prepare questions for the text you have not read
- Solso Cognition and the Visual Arts
- Essay
  - Exploratory or Picture comment

**Personal Meeting II**
- Class
- Essay
- Project

**Plan**
- The picture is flat
- The viewpoint is unique
- The image is finite, it has a frame
- The picture is static
- The contrast is limited
- The gamut (palette) is limited
The picture is static

- Single snapshot
  - Content
  - Time & Pose (not at rest)
  - Viewpoint
  - Blur, Action lines, path
- Multiple snapshot
- Metaphor
- Pictorial
- Op’ Art

Content

- Constable, View on Stour

Content

- George de la Tour
  - Penitent

Content

- M.C. Escher, Waterfall
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### Deviation from the resting position

- Andrew Wyeth, *Wind from the Sea*, 1968

### Pose accentuated

- Lartigues (effect of curtain shutter)

### Egyptian vs. Greek
**Pose Effectiveness**

- Effective for 3 year old, no for 2 year old
  
  [Amen 1941]

**Pose Effectiveness**

- Effective for 3 year old, no for 2 year old
- Then decline with age

**Pose Effectiveness**

- Effective for 3 year old, no for 2 year old
- Then decline with age
- The more dramatic, the better

**Pose Effectiveness**

- Philippe Halsman, *Dali Anatomicus*, 1977

**Orientation**

- Left to right in Western culture
- Chinese calligraphy…
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**Viewpoint**
- + lines +pose

**Viewpoint**
- +pose

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**Path of Movement – Motion Blur**

**Path of Movement**
Trails

- Feininger, *US Navy Helicopter Taking Off At Night*, 1949

Limitations: static

Motion Blur

- Star Wars, Lucas Film

Limitations: static

Motion Blur

- Luxo Jr., Pixar

Limitations: static

Motion Blur

- Velasquez

Limitations: static
**Motion Blur, Trail**

- Child Attendant Flying down from Heaven on a Cloud, 1952

**Motion Blur – Figure**

**Motion Blur – Ground**

**Motion Blur - Both**

- +Viewpoint, content

**Motion Blur**

**Cartoon – lines of movement**

- Keith Haring
  Untitled, 1982
Path of movements

- More effective for older groups (>8 year old)

Sculpture

- Umberto Boccioni, *Unique Form Of Continuity In Space*, 1913

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Multiple snapshots
**Multiple snapshots – multiple images**

- Gary Heery
  *Lion, Panthera Persica X Leo* (Fro Zoo)

**Multiple Snapshots – one image**

- *The Dance of Salome*, Benozzo Gozzoli

**Multiple snapshots – superimposed**

**Multiple snapshot – multiple gaze**

- David Hockney

**Multiple snapshot: nature vs. nurture**

- Head motion perception:
  - 3% rural Zulu, 86% White South African
- Cultural nurture

**Multiple snapshots**

- Masaccio and Masolino
**Multiple snapshots**

- Sassetti, *The Meeting of St Anthony and Saint Paul*, 1440

**Multiple Snapshots**

- Murder at the Pentagon, Tobi Indyke, 1993

**Multiple snapshots**

- Etienne-Jules Marey, *Chronophotograph*

**Multiple Snapshots**

- Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase*, 1912

**Multiple Snapshots**

- Giacomo Balla, *Dynamism Of A Dog On A Leash*, 1912

**Hockney**
Multiple Snapshots

• Magritte, *Le Sorcier*

• A Dancer, Pavel Tchelitchew

• Ingres, *Female Nude*, 1826-1834

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Metaphor
**Metaphor**

- *Racing Automobiles*, Balla

**Metaphor**

- *Mondrian Broadway Boogie-Woogie*, 1942-43

**Metaphor**

- *Morris Louis, Saraband*, 1959

**Metaphor – dynamic form**

- *Weston, Artichoke Halved*, 1930

**Metaphor – dynamic form**

- *Sidney Opera*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition - balance</th>
<th>Composition - lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Degas, <em>L’Etoile</em></td>
<td>- + Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Off-center, tension</td>
<td></td>
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<th>Composition - lines</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Turner</td>
<td>- Van Gogh, <em>Starry Night</em>, 1889</td>
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<td>- Barbieri, <em>Sybil Holding a Scroll</em>, 1590-1666</td>
<td>- Tak Kwong Chan <em>The Horse – Away He Goes</em> 1980</td>
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Limitations: static
Composition - grouping

- Arthus Bertrand

Abstract

- Claude Melin, *Chanson De Geste*, 1990

Calligraphy

- Hassan Massoudy

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Op’ Art

- Bridget Riley, *Current*, 1964

Illusion

Florida Election Recount

Count and total black dots for Al Gore and white dots for George Bush. Recount to confirm
**Motion without Movement**
- [Freeman, Adelson and Heeger, 1991]
- Time sequence of images
- No movement but Sensation of motion

**La Gioconda**
- Sfumato
- [Dr. Livingstone]
- Multiresolution vision

**A Paradigm...**

**After Spring Break...**
- Representation system
  - Drawing & perspective
  - Denotation
  - Tone & color

**The picture is static**

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**La Gioconda**

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**Motion without Movement**

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**Limitations: static**

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