



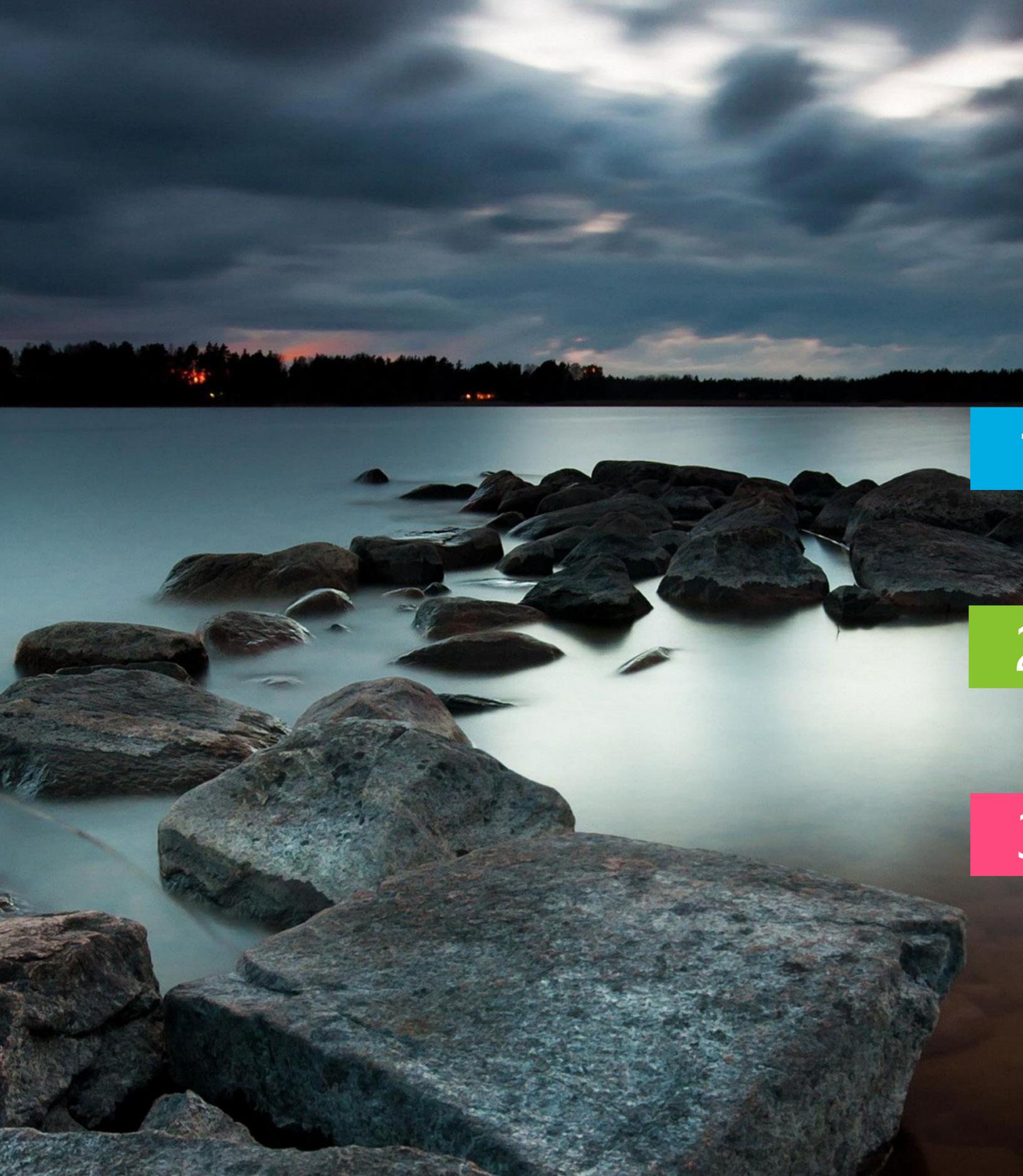
# Art as universal language: Beyond the Spoken and Written Language

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ISOLEC  
Universitas Negeri Malang  
1-2 September 2018



# Objectives

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1

Art as language

2

Understanding visual language

3

Appreciating visual arts

## The case of visual illiterate



Waktu isi minyak keta td singgah nk pegi toilet  
terjumpa peluru ni depan toilet lelaki... OMG!!!  
terkejut seumur hidup tak pernah jumpa peluru,  
i rasa ada org rancang nk rompak stesen minyak ni,  
nasib i yg jumpa... Padan muka perompak tu xboleh  
rompak dh sbb peluru hilang

2

# Art as Language



# Introduction



Art as universal language transcends words. It has no language barriers.

It can be understood not only by art critics trained in deciphering the meaning of its symbols, but by any human being who cares enough to engage with the image.



# Background

Art is used to convey an idea or feeling.



Salvador Dalí  
*Soft Watch at the Moment of  
First Explosion*  
1954  
Ink on paper

# History



From ancient times, people have used these kinds of art forms to communicate without requiring written statements.



Lascaux Cave, France.  
Depiction of aurochs, horses and deer  
Estimated painted about 17,000 years ago

# Art Speaks



The language of art differs from common language. Gazing into paintings of Affandi Koesoema (1907-1990) or enjoying a musical theatre that seems to catch our eye and hold our attention, the artwork seems to speak to our inner hearts.



Affandi Koesoema  
*Bot dan Matahari*  
1971  
Oil on canvas  
92cm x 137cm

# Art in our lives



Art is all around us that our lives are so completely immersed in it. We have become so accustomed to the everyday appearance of the arts that we no longer take the time to notice it.

Everything from a delightfully patterned quilt on the bed, decorative tea towels or tea set to the sleek computer case or angle-poised desk lamp can be considered a form of art.



# Popular Culture



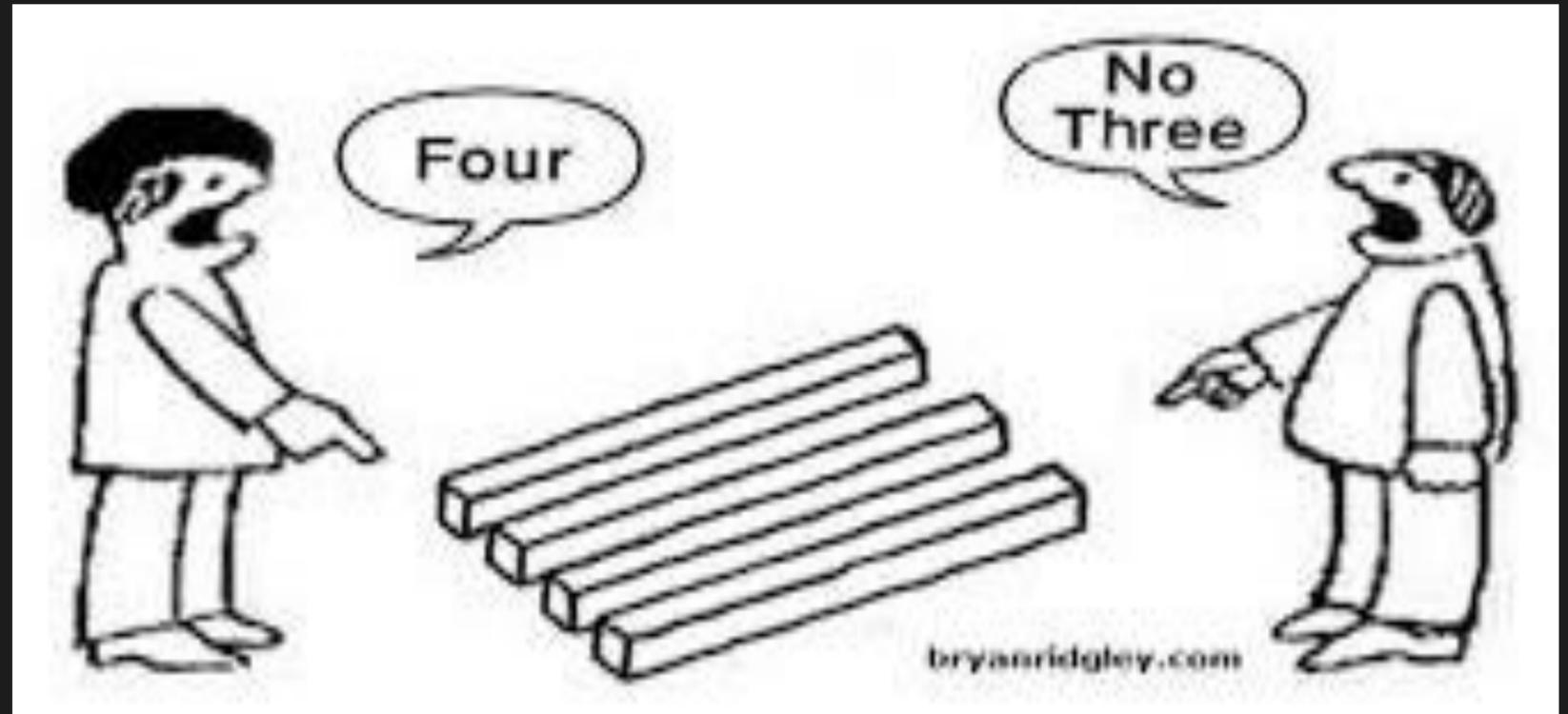
The popular culture that is generally recognized by members of a society as a set of practices, beliefs, and objects provides us information that are created using art to please our eye and evoke emotions and thoughts.





Reality can be so complex that equally valid observations from differing perspectives can appear to be contradictory

Different perspectives leads to **new understandings and new knowledge.**



The logo for 'Dialogic Learning' features a stylized 'D' composed of two concentric, broken green circles. To the right of this graphic, the word 'Dialogic' is written in a pink font, and 'Learning' is written in a white font.

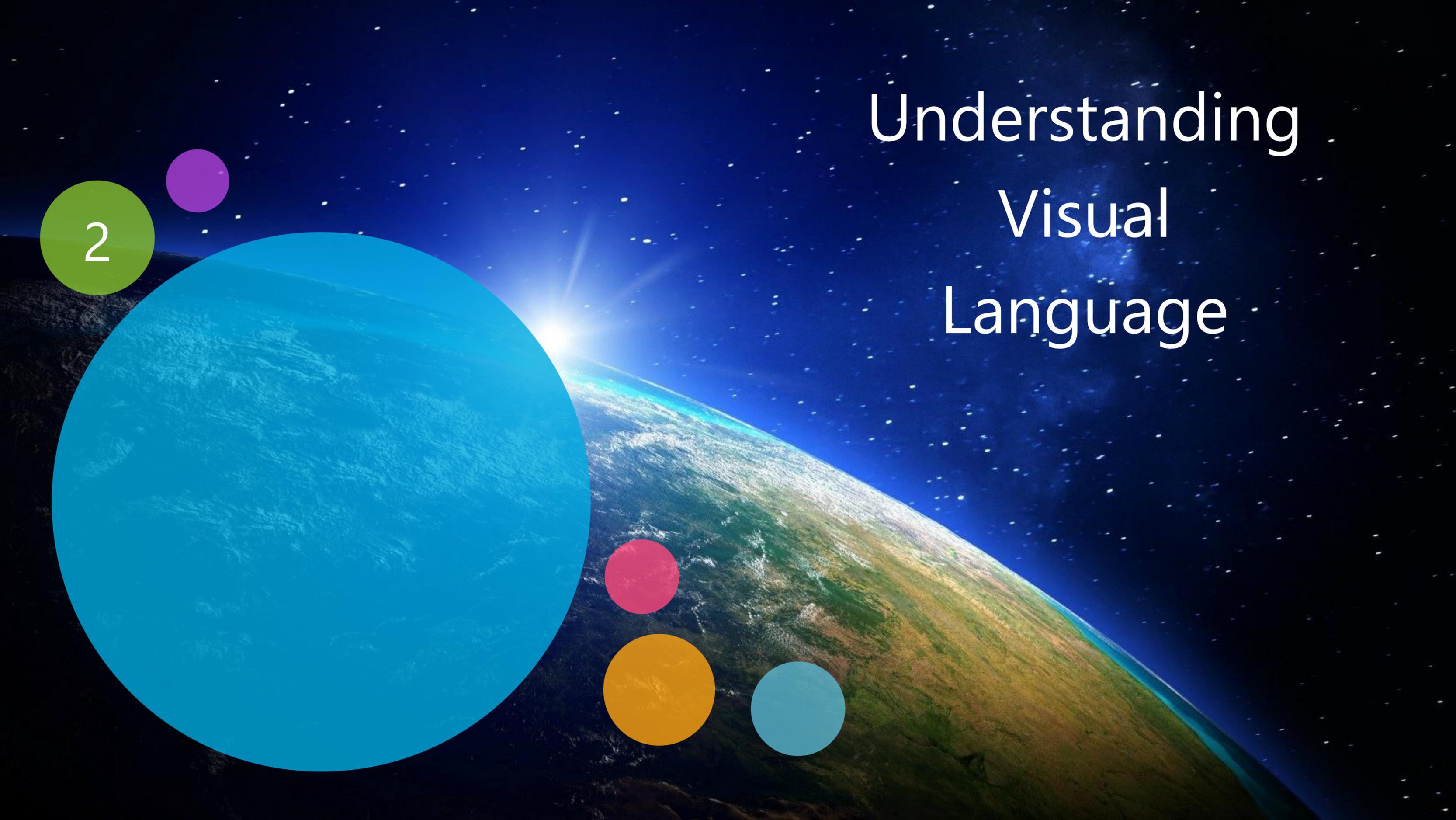
## Dialogic Learning

- Teachers and students can **become more fully engaged in learning** in an environment where these differences are respected and rigorously explored.
- **Meanings are constructed from the inside by learners in dialogue**, rather than imposed from the outside, leads to powerful learning.
- **Learning through dialogue** leads not only to content knowledge but **improved thinking skills**.

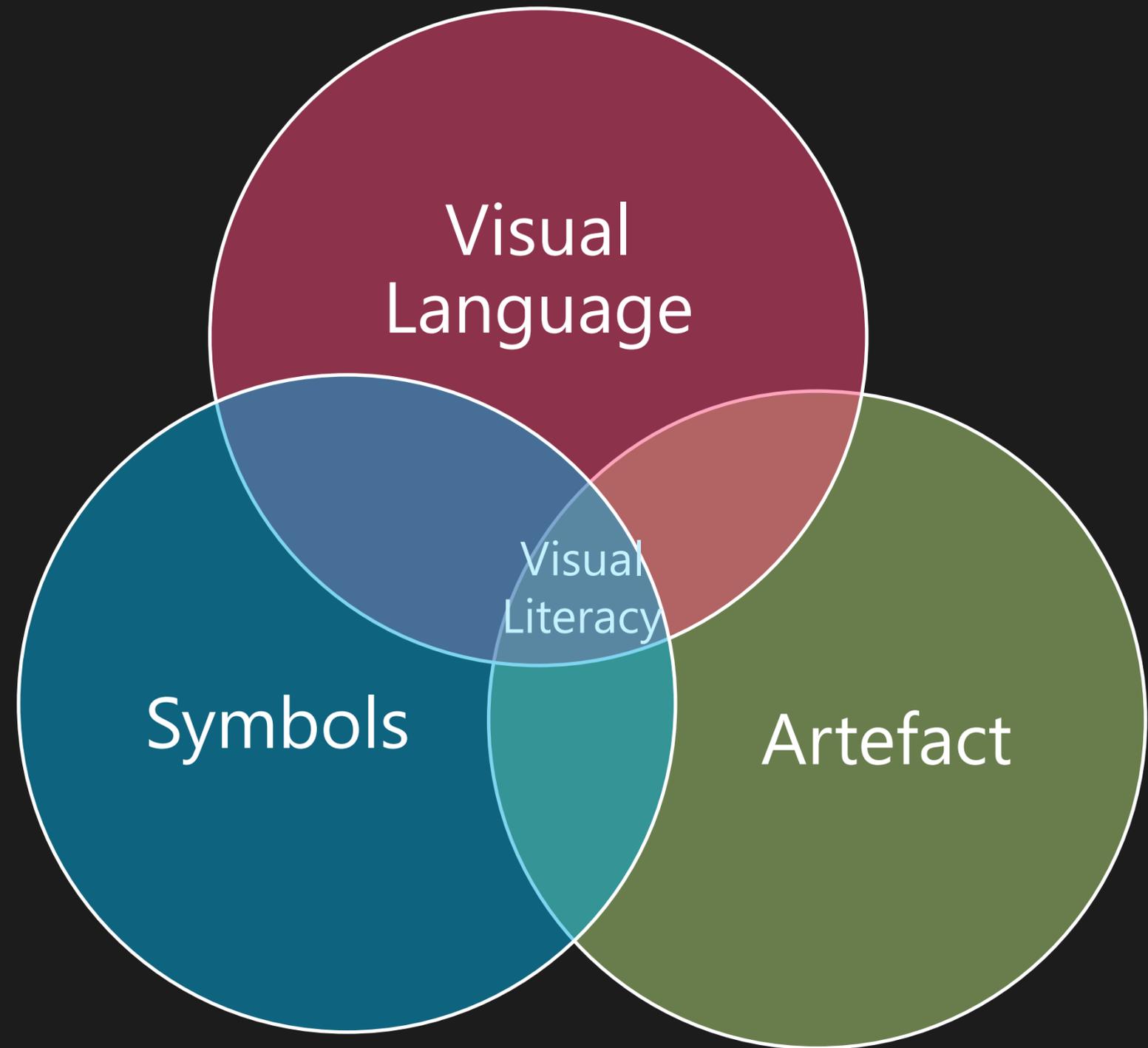
"Argumentation and dialogue are not simply alternative patterns of communication; they are principled approaches to pedagogy.." (*Wolfe, 2008*)

# Understanding Visual Language

2



What is the  
GAP?



# Are we visually literate?

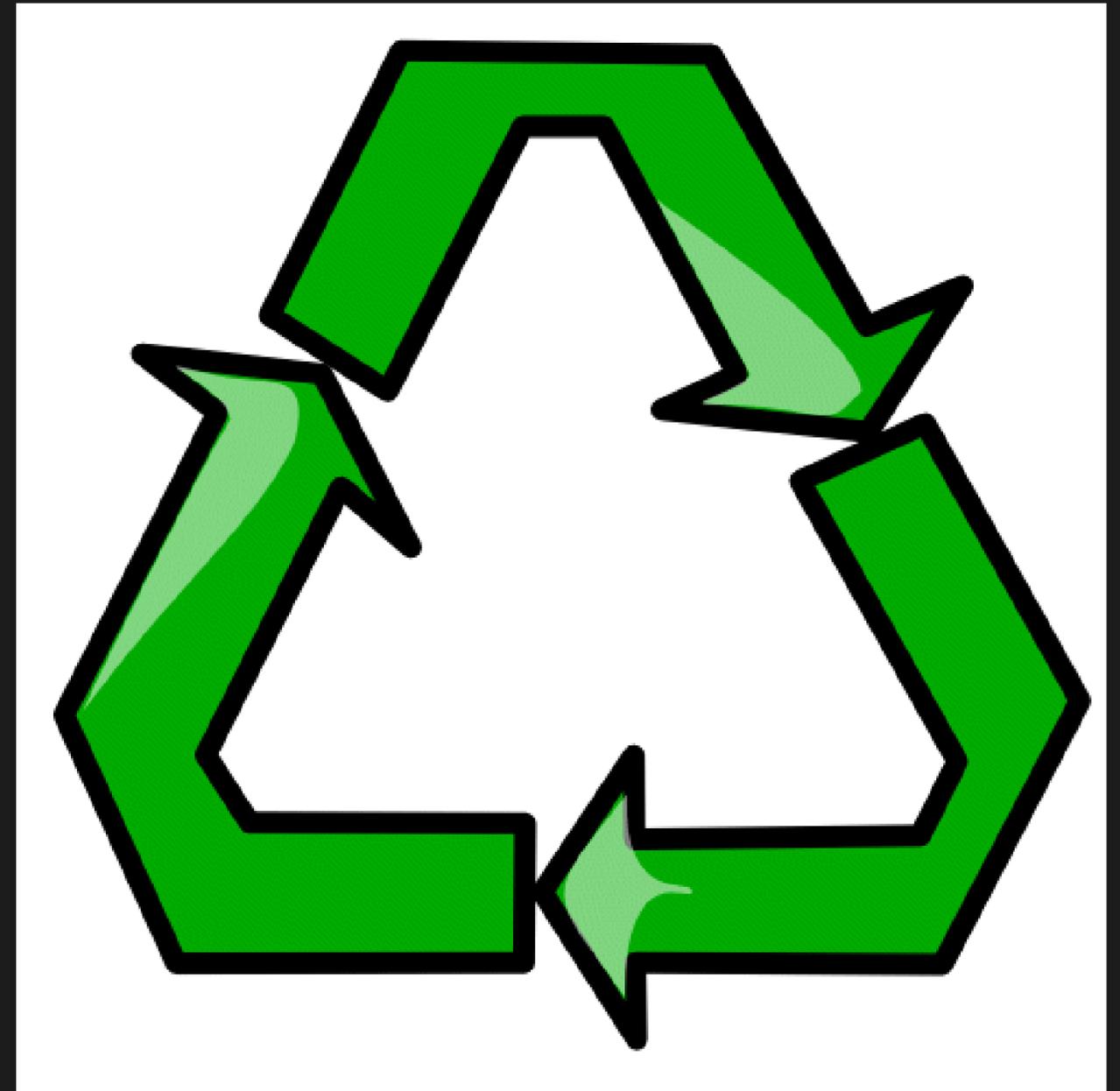


What is it that the picture  
show? →

What is shown in the picture?

What is the main element shown?

What does the element mean?





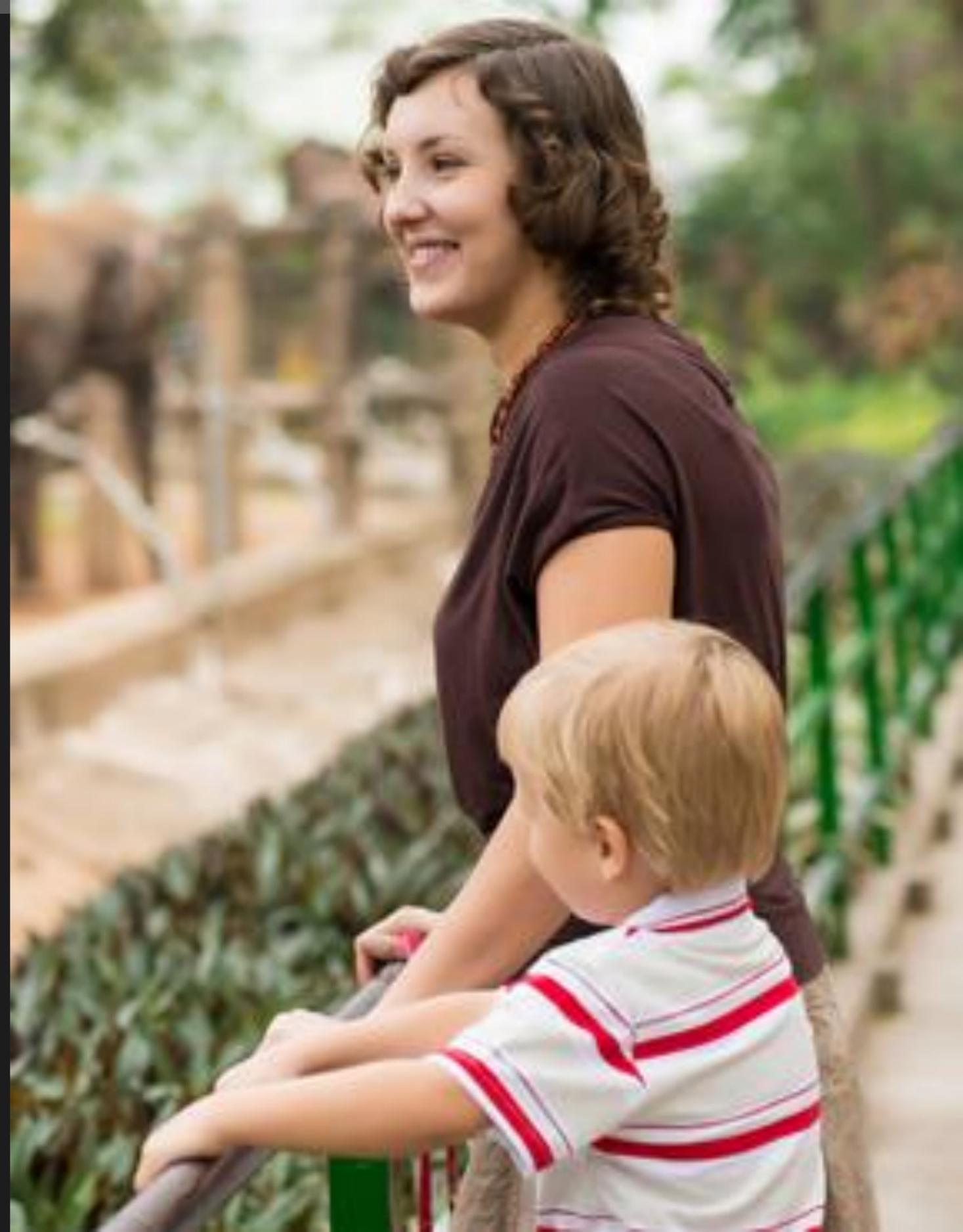
# Visual Language

Three R's are no longer enough.

Our world is changing fast, faster than we can keep with our historical modes of thinking and communicating.

We don't know how to appreciate art

We appreciate art more than it is worth?





# Visual language



- About language, communication and interaction in the visual arts.
- A concept that relates to art and design





# What is visual language?

First coined in 1969 by **John Debes**, the founder of the International Visual Literacy Association



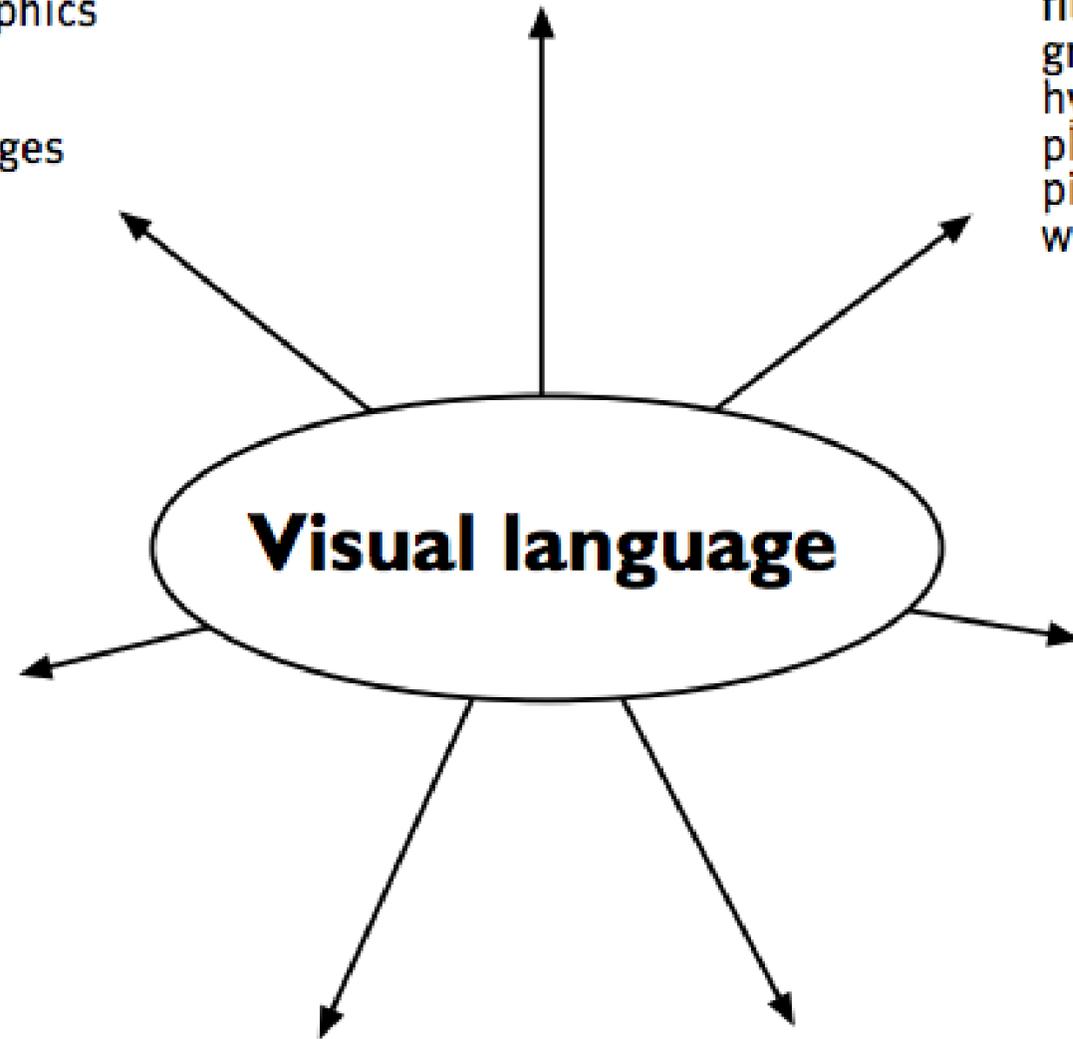
Vision-competencies that can develop **by seeing and integrating other sensory experiences** such as feeling, hearing, and tasting. For e.g. augmented reality (AR).





**To instruct,  
for example:**  
diagrams  
films and videos  
posters  
road signs  
television  
programmes  
web pages

**To explain  
or inform,  
for example:**  
diagrams  
films and videos  
infographics  
maps  
signs  
web pages



**To persuade,  
for example:**  
advertisements  
billboards  
flyers  
photographs  
posters  
road signs  
web pages

**To entertain,  
for example:**  
cartoons  
comics  
films and videos  
greeting cards  
hyperfiction  
photographs  
picture books  
web pages

**To recount,  
for example:**  
films and videos  
hyperfiction  
picture books  
television  
programmes

**To warn,  
for example:**  
posters  
road signs  
television  
programmes

**To describe,  
for example:**  
diagrams  
films and videos  
infographics  
photographs



# Visual language



A system of communication using visual elements and principles.

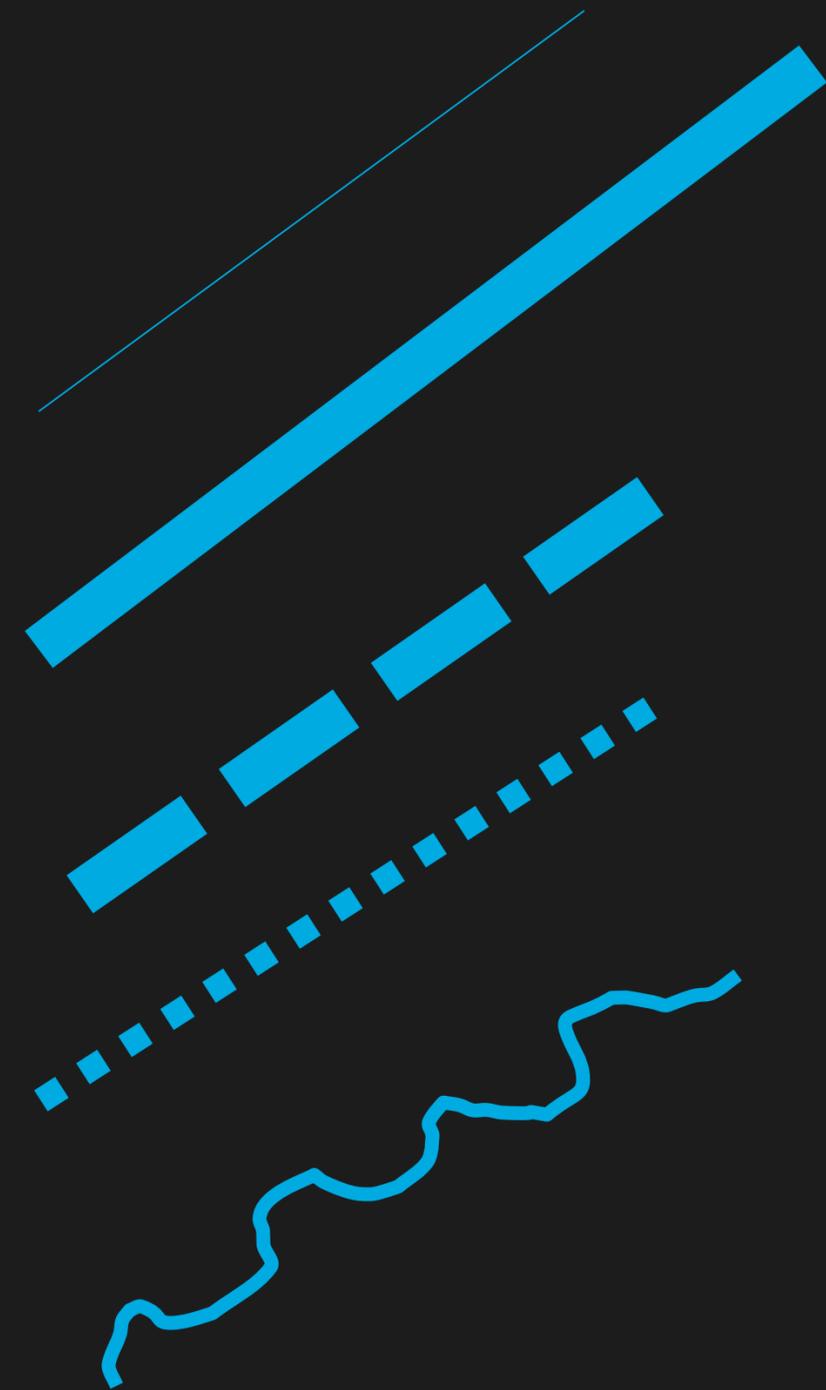
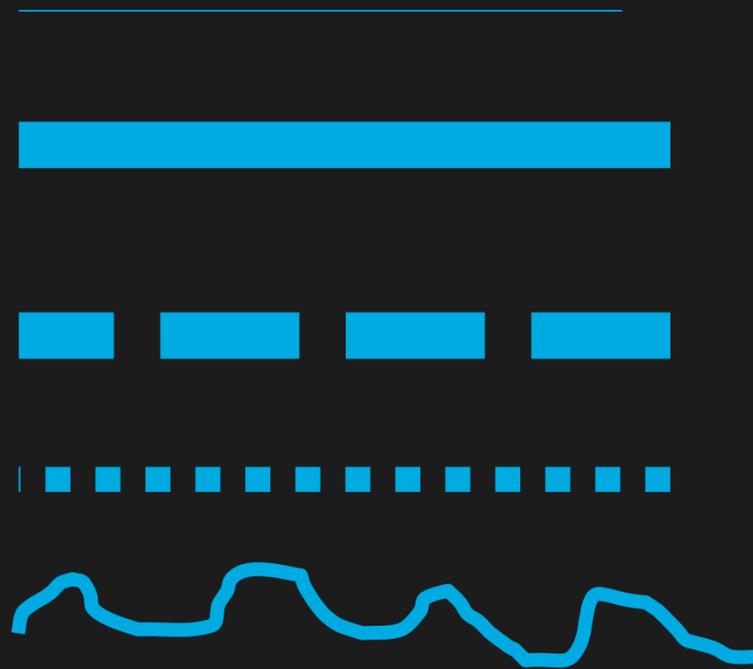
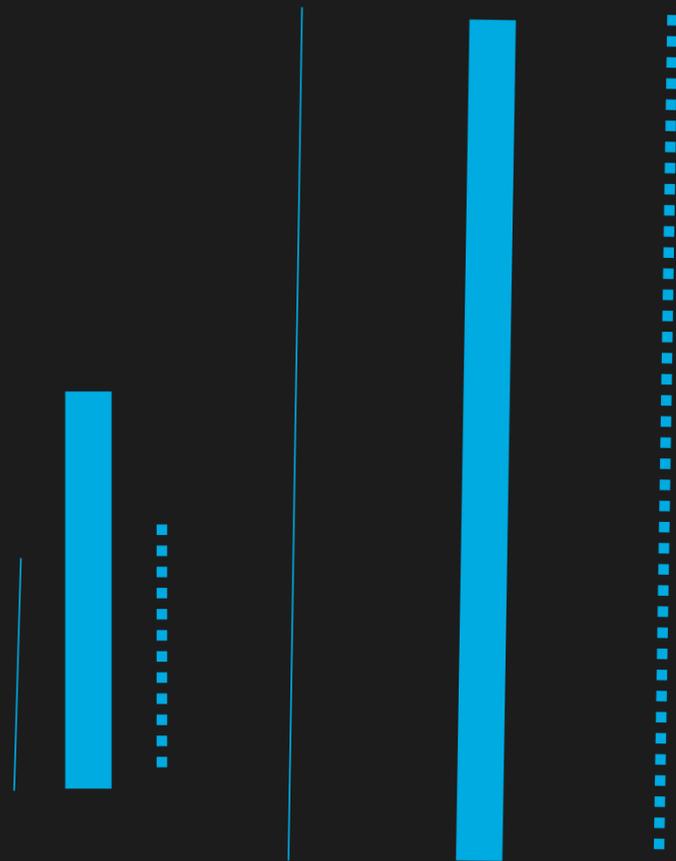


Its **structural units** include line, texture, shape, form, colour, space, balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity/variety.



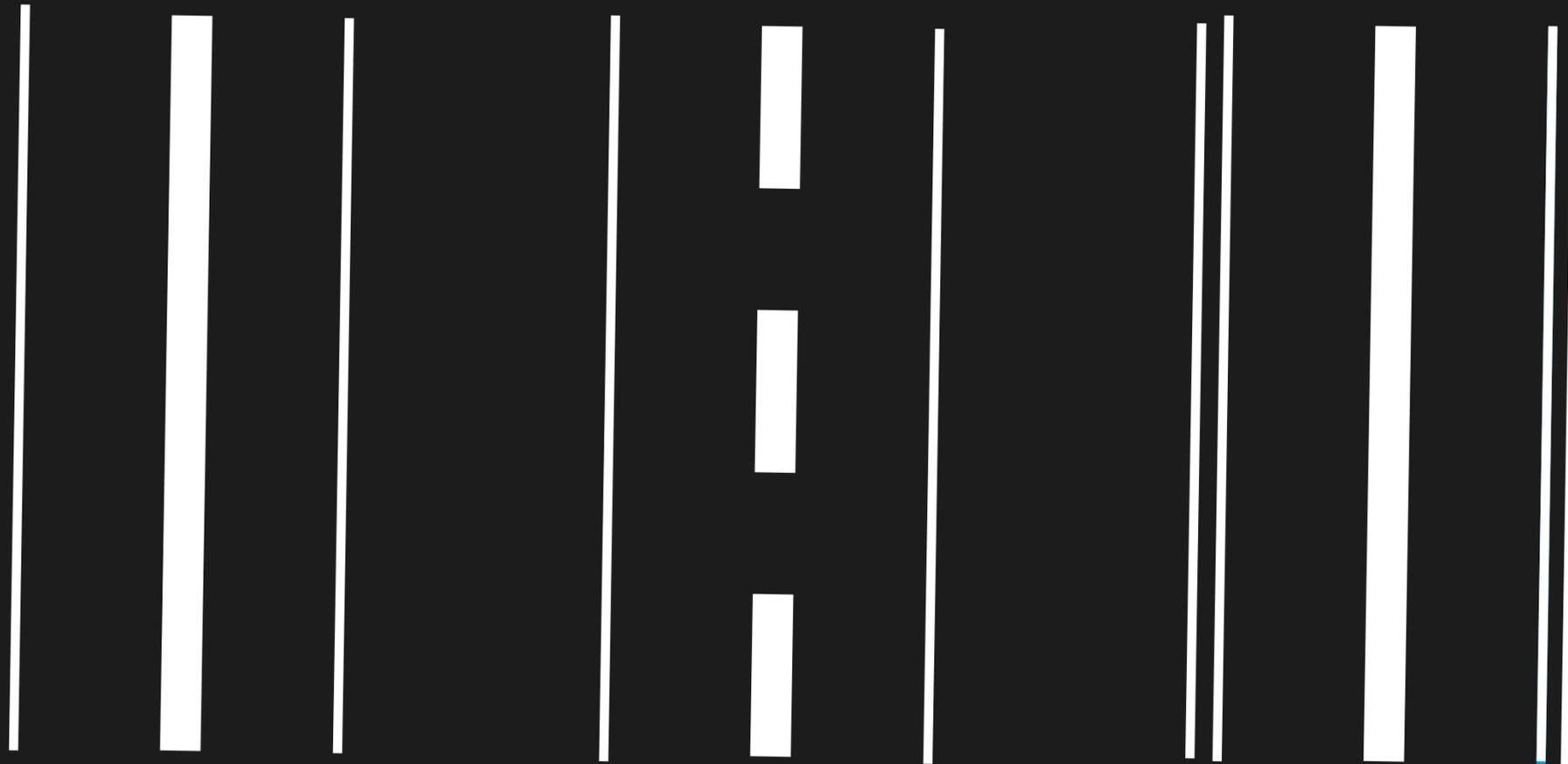
# Visual elements

## Lines



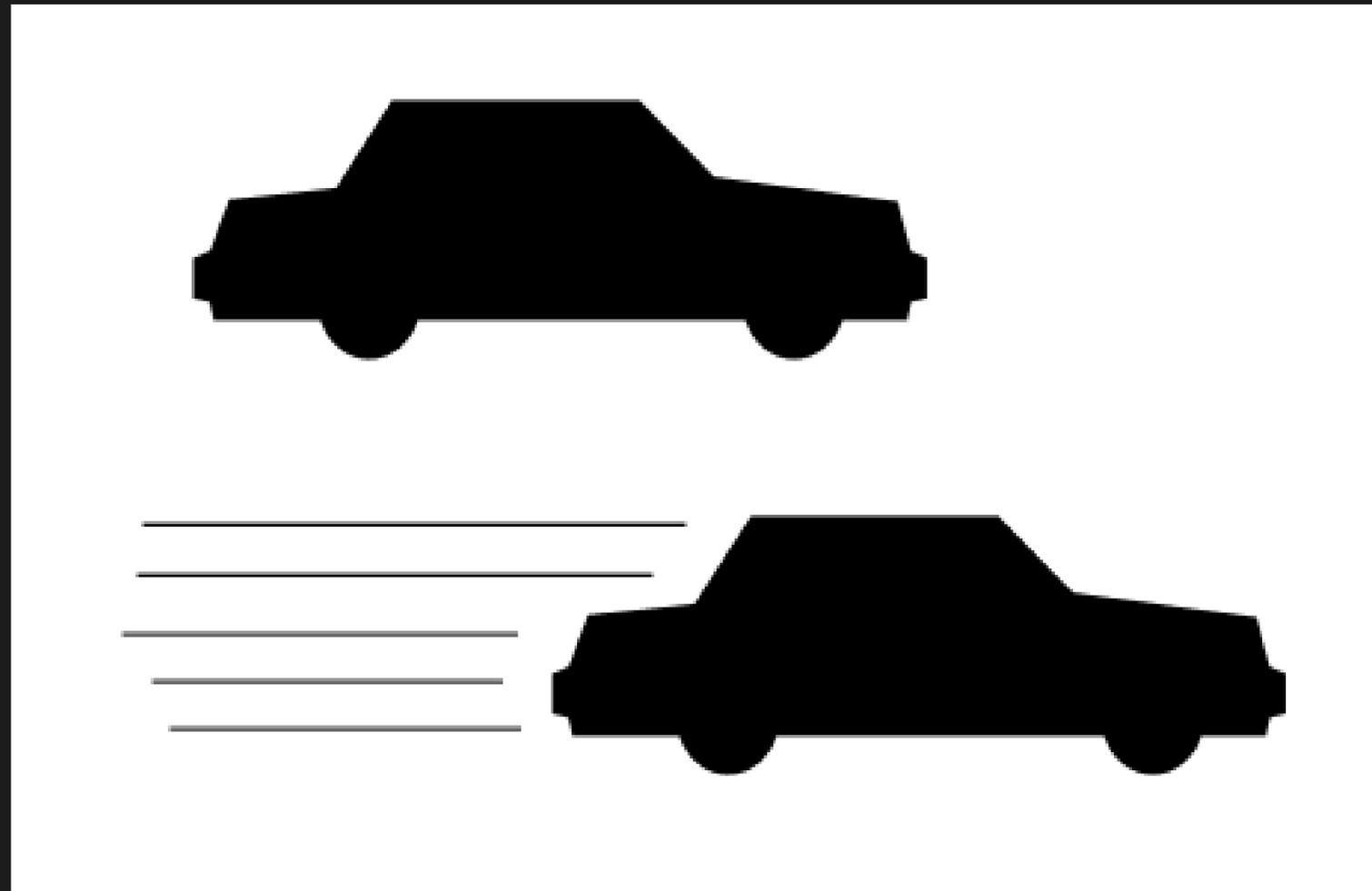
# Visual elements

What can you tell about these lines?



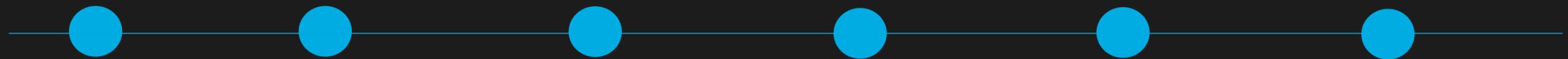
# Visual elements

What can you tell about the lines?



# Visual elements

## Imaginary Lines



# The meaning of different kinds of lines

Thin Lines

Fragile, easy to break. Elegant quality

Thick Lines

Stable, difficult to break, bold and make a statement

Zigzag Lines

Create excitement and intense movement. Convey confusion and nervousness as they change direction quickly and frequently. Imply danger and destruction.



# The meaning of lines

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## Horizontal Line

Calm, quiet, a relaxed comfort, stable, secure, absence of conflict and restful peace.

## Vertical Line

Strong and rigid, stability, lack of movement. Their tallness and formality may give the impression of dignity.

## Diagonal Line

Unbalanced. More dramatic. Filled with restless energy. Either rising or falling. Convey action and motion.

## Curved Line

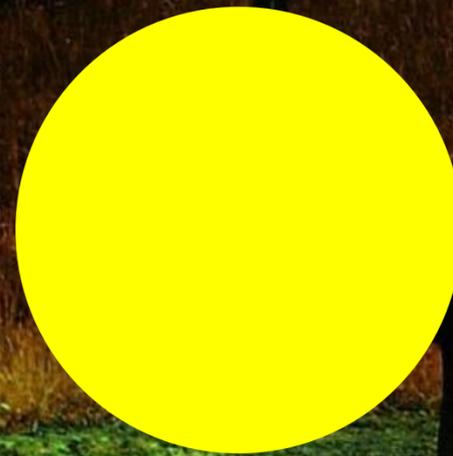
Softer than straight lines. Less definite. Can be calm or dynamic.



## Cleanliness, Purity

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Also represents righteousness, holiness, glory, victory, perfection, and the new beginning



## Sunshine, Gold

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Joy, happiness, betrayal, optimism, idealism, sunshine, summer, philosophy, hope, dishonesty, cowardice, jealousy, deceit, illness, hazard and friendship



## Brave, Heat, Blood

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Excitement, energy, passion, love, desire, speed, strength, power, aggression, danger, fire, war, violence, all things intense and passionate, sincerity, happiness



# Visual literacy



Learn how to look at and study an artwork

Enhance intellectual skills



Engage in artwork





# What is visual literacy?

Ability to both read and create visual information;



Ability to learn visually; to think and solve problems in the visual domain.



Bristor and Drake (1994) define visual literacy as the "ability to understand, interpret and evaluate visual messages" ..





# What is visual literacy?

A form of critical thinking



Higher order thinking skills

Artist and audience as meaning maker



Visual literacy is the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image.



# Study and Artwork

- Analyse and deconstruct the techniques used by the artist.
- Understand the process of art making.
- Explore the explicit and implicit meaning of the artwork
- Making evaluation of an artwork.





# Enhance Intellectual Skills

- To **increase the intellectual content** of aesthetic learning by engendering a well-developed sense of art that is pre-conditional for the intelligent and sensitive engagements of works of art and other things from an aesthetic point of view.





## Engage in artwork

- To build a sense of art, that involves the acquisition of rudimentary capacities to create works of art, a general knowledge of art history, a grasp of some of the basic principles of aesthetic judgment.
- Ability to reflect thoughtfully about the values and uses of the arts as well as the puzzling questions to which they characteristically give rise.



# Appreciating visual arts

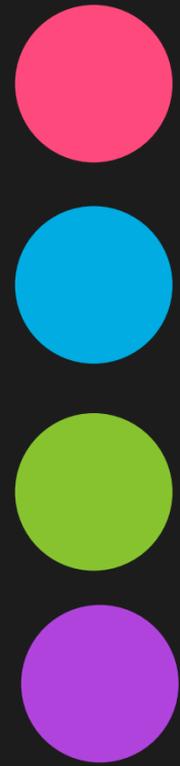


What can you understand about this painting?



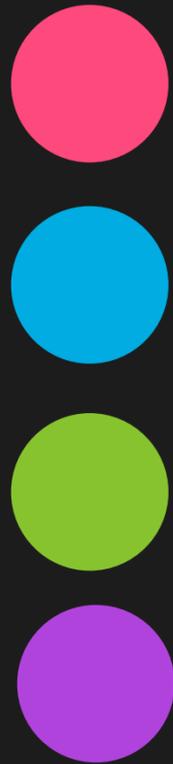
Claude Monet, France  
"Dandelions"  
Oil on cardboard  
1900

# What can you understand about this painting?



Hung Liu, China,  
"Dandelion 11,"  
oil on linen,  
2015

What can you understand about this painting?



Hangama Amiri,  
Afghanistan,  
"The Wind Up Dolls of  
Kabul"  
2011

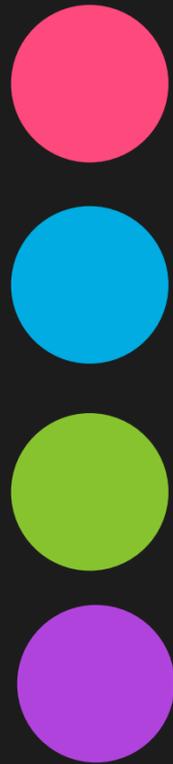
# The Meaning

The humble dandelion as a symbol of female strength.

Afghan and Chinese cultures might prefer women to be beautiful and graceful, like flowers.

While women may be regarded as pretty, fragile, flowers, they are simultaneously strong, stubborn, and resilient.

What can you understand about this batik motif?



Truntum Motif

# The Meaning

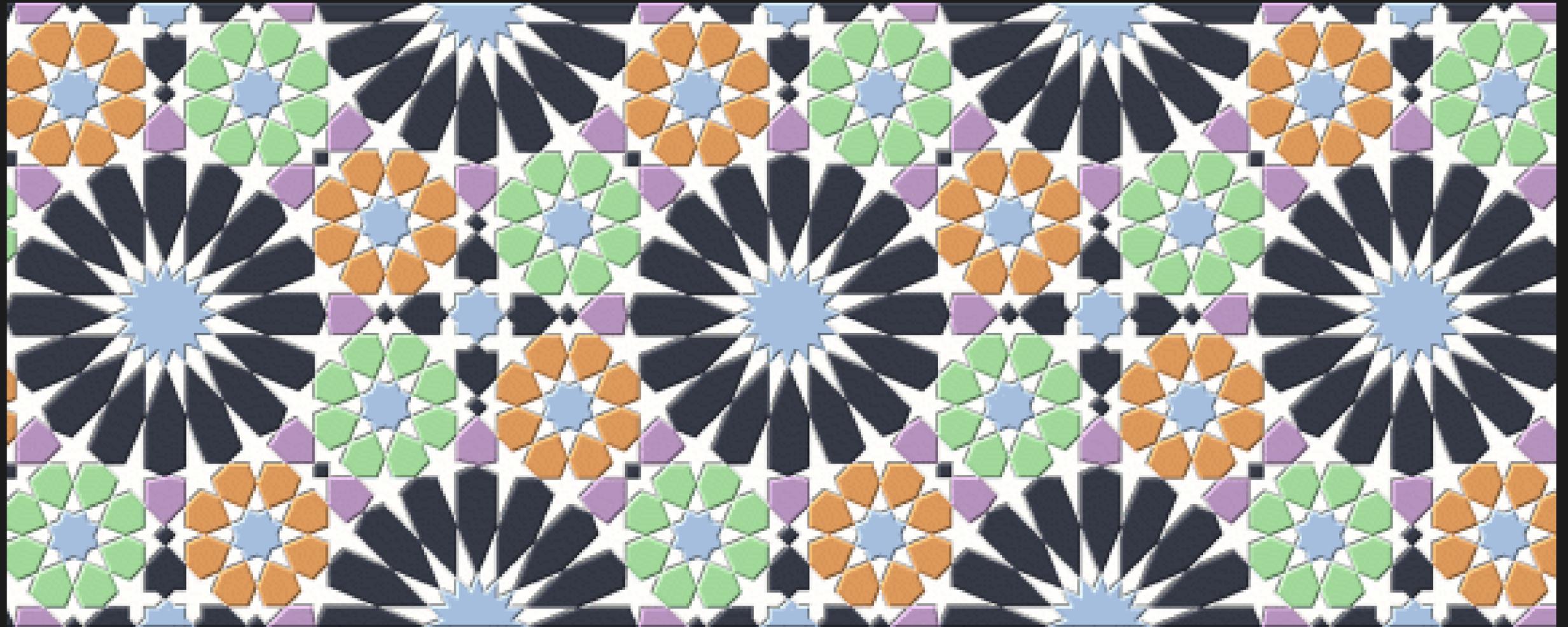
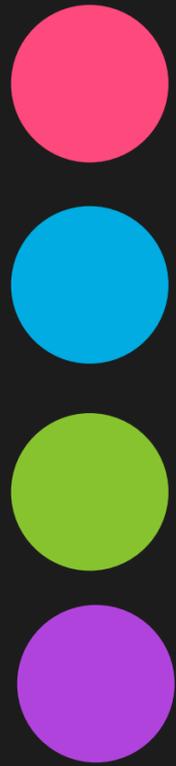
The Truntum motif was created by Kanjeng Ratu Kencana, the wife of Sunan Pakubuwana III.

She created this motif as a symbol of unconditional, everlasting love that continues to grow (tumaruntum).

Because of its meaning, the cloth with the truntum motif is usually worn by the parents of the bride and groom on the wedding day.

It is hoped that the love symbolized in this motif will be passed on to the bridal couple. It is sometimes felt that the parents are required to "guide" the bridal couple as they enter a new life together.

What can you understand about this Islamic pattern?



# The Meaning

The intrinsic meaning of the Islamic patterns is about unity.

All Islamic geometric patterns derive from the same origin – a simple circle, to recognize and understand the oneness of humanity.

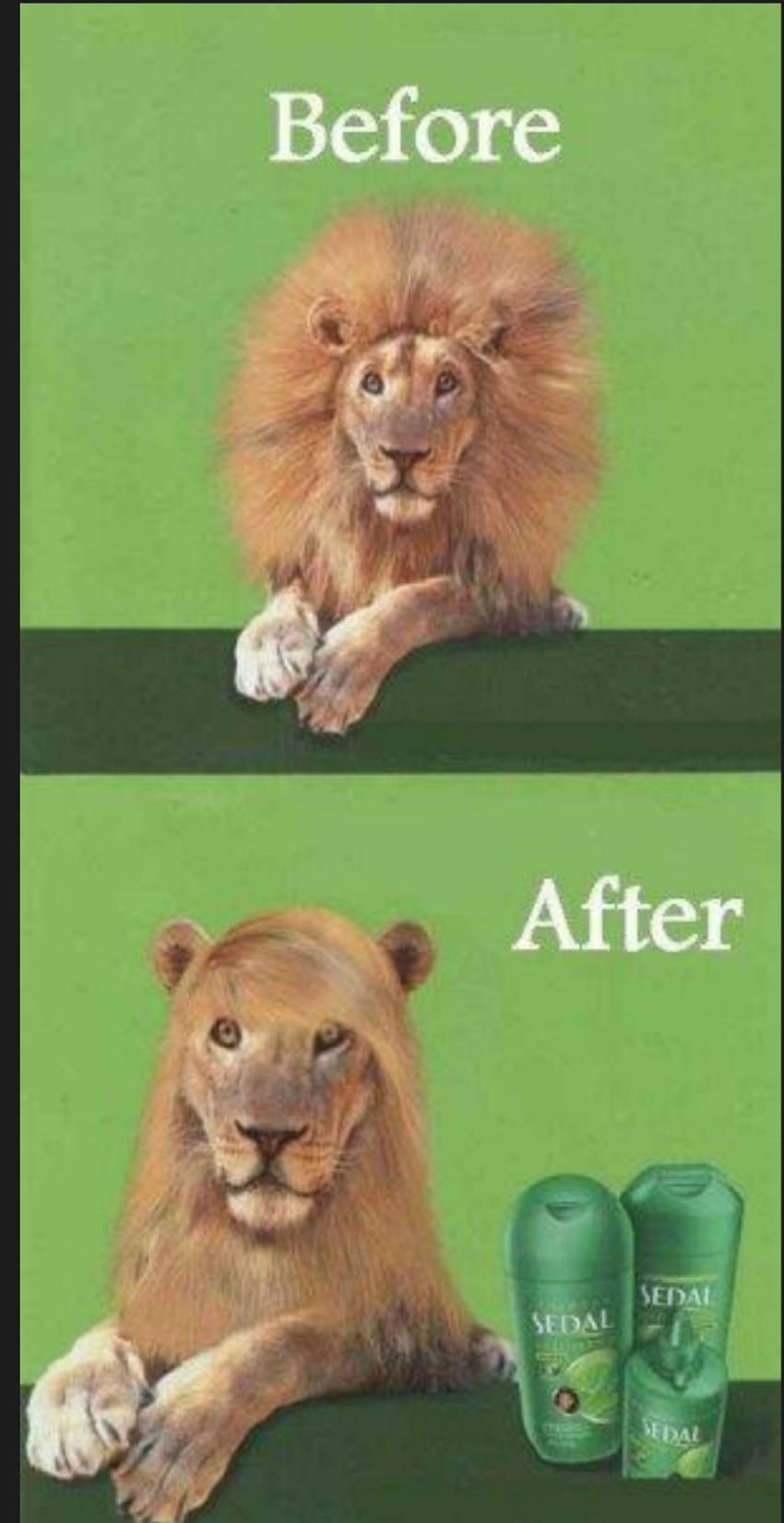
The repetition of the lines that formed the shapes, signifies the characteristics of Allah that has no beginning and no ending.

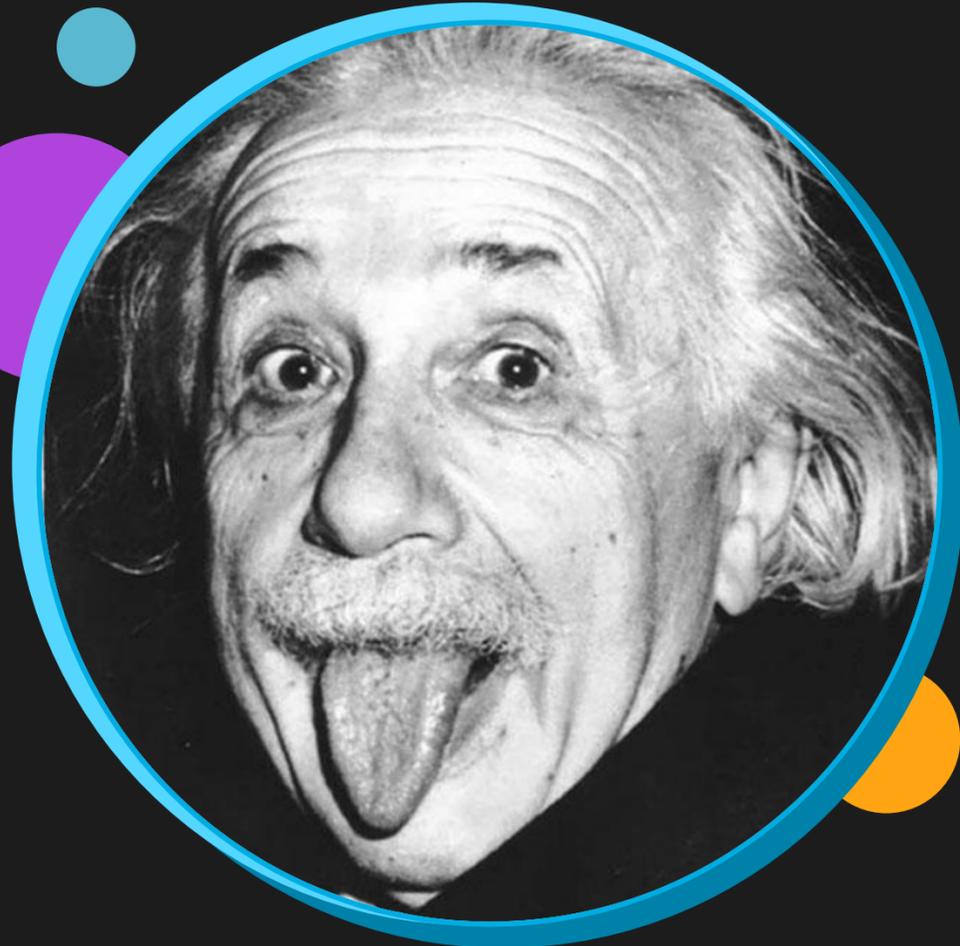
The space in the background of the pattern signifies the act that we should be doing during intervals in our busy dialy lives, to chant (wirid) in the name of Allah.

What can you understand about this Malay traditional wood carving?



What can you understand about this advertisement?





# Everybody is a genius.

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*But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.*



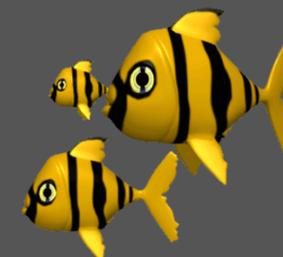
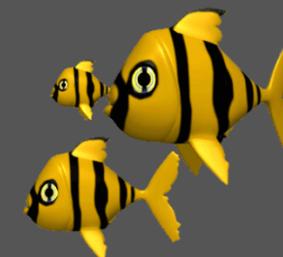
Artist



Accountant



Lecturer



# The Meaning

The intrinsic meaning of the Malay traditional wood carving:

"tumbuh berpunca  
Punca penuh rahsia  
Tajam tidak menujah lawan  
Lilit tidak memaut kawan."

Nakula (1985)

This poem uses motifs in the wood carving to relate to the human beings.

It is a form of advice that we should never backstab our friends.

## References

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- Riitta Lahtinen, RussPalmer, Stina Ojalac (2012). Visual Art Experiences Through Touch using Haptics. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Volume 45, Pages 268-276. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.563>

Website:

<https://vansedesign.com/web-design/visual-grammar-lines/>

Thank You for being attentive!



Any Questions?



# Contact Me!



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# Five Minds for the Future

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Disciplined Mind

Synthesizing  
Mind

Creating Mind

Ethical Mind

Respectful Mind

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Gardner, H. (2008). Five Minds for the Future. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.

# A case of lifelong learning

Kid comes home from 1st day at school.  
Mum asks, 'What did you learn today?'  
Kid replies, 'Not enough. I have to go  
back tomorrow.'



# What are the Five Minds?

01

## Disciplined Mind

Mastered at least one way of thinking.

03

## Creating Mind

Puts forth new ideas, conjures up fresh ways of thinking, arrives at unexpected answers.

05

## Ethical Mind

Ponders the nature of one's work and the needs and desires of the society in which one lives.

02

## Synthesising Mind

Takes information from disparate sources, understands and evaluates that information objectively, and puts it together in ways that make sense.

04

## Respectful Mind

Notes and welcomes differences among human individuals and groups