

Composition Practice with Harmony & Chaos

Composition refers to the visual structure and organization of elements within a design. Composition involves seeing the whole as greater than its parts, and is just as important as the individual elements that make up a design.

Harmony in visual design means all parts of the visual image relate to and complement each other. Harmony pulls the pieces of a visual image together. Harmony can be achieved through repetition and rhythm. Repetition reemphasizes visual units, connecting parts and creating an area of attention.

Chaos is disorder, disarray, disorganization, confusion, mayhem, bedlam, pandemonium, havoc, turmoil, tumult, commotion, disruption, upheaval, uproar, maelstrom; muddle, mess, shambles, free-for-all; anarchy, lawlessness, entropy;

Assignment:

Materials: 2 sheets of 8.5 x 8.5 paper square and 5 black squares for each (10 total)

Using only 5 black squares positioned within the larger white ones, express the concepts of harmony and chaos. The black squares can be any size, and you can position them however it feels meaningful to you. You may position a black square partially off the edge of the white square if it makes sense to you.

Once you achieve a successful composition, paste your squares down and trim any edges if necessary to keep the composition to 8.5 x 8.5.

Share with your elbow partners and answer the following questions:

1. Did you achieve balance in any composition? If so which one and how?

2. Paying attention to the negative space that is created when you crop squares off the edge of the page or overlap them, how is your negative space compared to the positive space? Is it more, less, balanced?

3. Were your solutions similar to those of the people sitting next to you? What was similar or different?

4. Did you achieve the goal of expressing harmony and chaos? If not, what could you have done differently?
