

**How should we read an image?**



**One eye sees, the other feels**

**Paul Klee**



Images usually tell us more than they show us.

Its elements provoke different associations depending on our experiences and the context itself and this brings us to different interpretations.

We do not all see the images in the same way and, therefore, we will not react to them equally



**WORLD PRESS PHOTO**

2nd Prize: "Whispering Whales" by Mexican photographer Anuar Patjane Floriuk.




The Pulitzer Prize



**POLISEMY**

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# POLISEMY

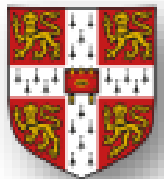
Capacidad que tiene una sola palabra para expresar distintos significados, dependiendo del contexto en el cual se encuentre

**POLI**

A lot

**SEMY**

meaning



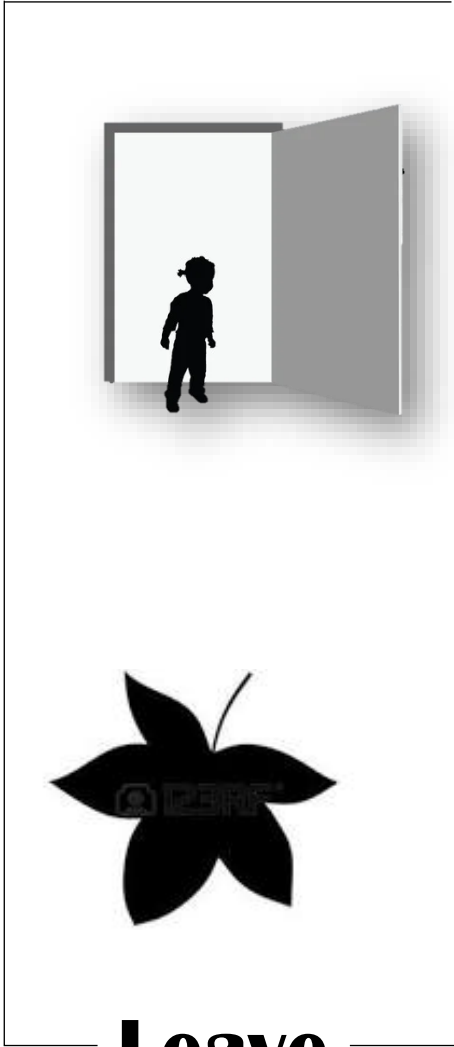
Cambridge  
Dictionary

polysemy

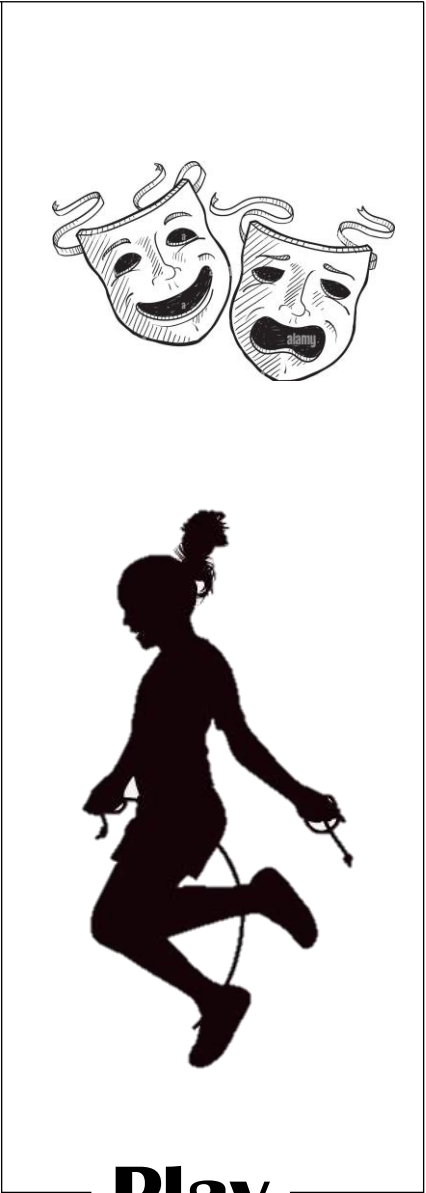
*noun* [U]

UK  /peˈlɪs.i.mi/ US  /ˈpɑːlɪ.siː.mi/

the fact of having more than one meaning



**Leave**



**Play**



**Type**



**What does it mean to read an image?**





## Read an image

Unhurried and slow observation

**Reflection**

Analysis of the elements

meanings  
**Subjectivities**



UNITED COLORS  
OF BENETTON.

ALEK WEK  
SUPPORTS THE UNHATE FOUNDATION  
[unhatefoundation.org](http://unhatefoundation.org)

**IMAGES: objects and people**

**Light, Color, Framing, Composition**

# What is the author's intention?



Mediterranium, 2014  
World Press Photo 2015 Massimo Sestini


**Visual analysis**

**UNDERSTANDING**



**Why is it important to know  
how to read the images?**

# Reading of images



**COMPETENCES** in audiovisual communication that must be acquired by every citizen of the XXI century.

**What story could we tell of what we are seeing in the images?**





**What story do we tell NOW?**





**What if we went into detail?**



Foto: Helena Almeida

## READING OF IMAGES

Develop  
comprehensive reading skills

## **READING OF IMAGES**

Allows criticism of  
**visual messages**

# **Representation of reality?**

## **IMAGES:**

# **ideology and values**

# IMAGES: ideology and values

Develops the ability to critically analyze  
**visual messages**

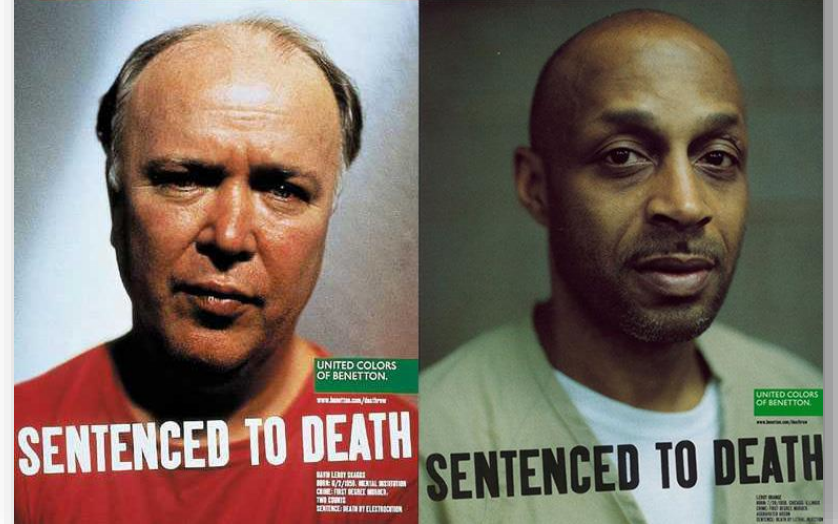
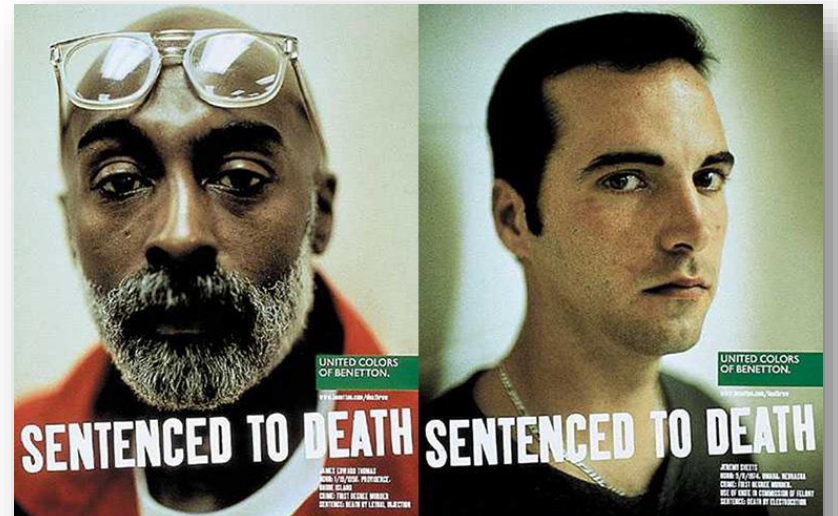
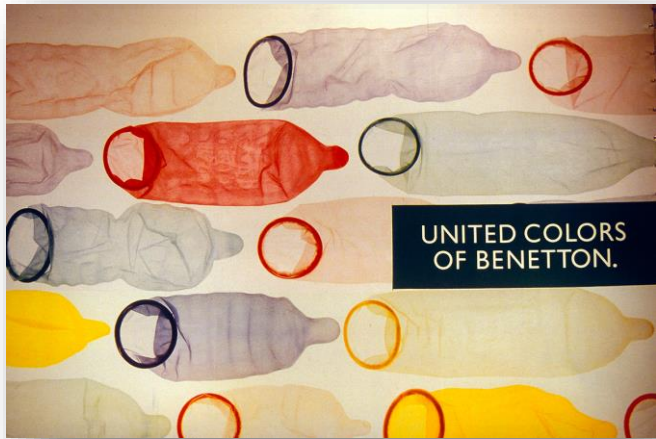
Expression and support of the  
interests, contradictions and values  
of society



HEISENBERG'S MAGIC MIRROR OF UNCERTAINTY



UNITED COLORS  
OF BENETTON.  
**O.TOSCANI**

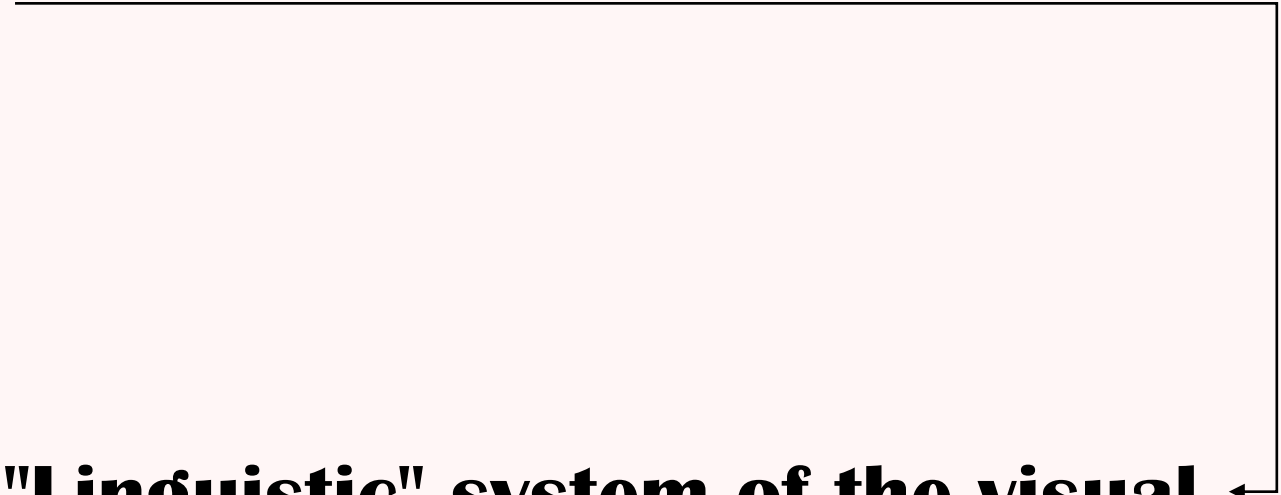


**How to read an image?**

**To read and be able to build images**



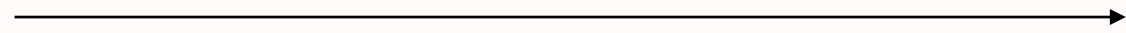
**"Linguistic" system of the visual**



# COMPOSITION

## Composition with static balance

Uniform and symmetrical images that confer harmony to the whole



## Composition with dynamic balance

The symmetry in the composition is broken and the contrast appears to be estimated.



# ELEMENTS IN IMAGES: THE POINT (focus)

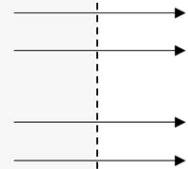
The situation of a point into the framing creates different perceptual relationships in the composition.



It is placed in the center and creates a  
**BALANCE RELATIONSHIP**

If it moves it breaks the balance

# Instability relationship



Objects continue **OFF** the canvas

Artist in his Studio, 1628  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston  
**Rembrandt**

# ELEMENTS in IMAGES: THE LINE

Graphic representation of a POINT in motion

## THE LINE

It transmits emotions, sensations and rhythms that we can interpret according to our own mood.

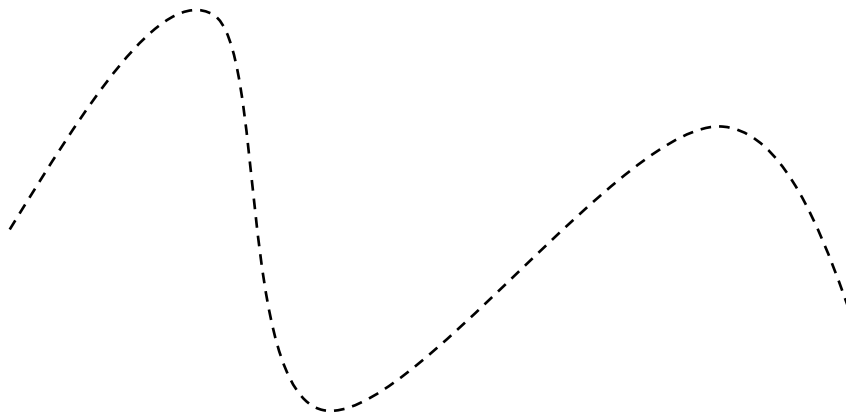


The direction of each line contains a **different expressive value**



## **Straight lines**

If the lines are continuous and unchanged, they transmit rigidity. If they are also broken, they produce instability and can become aggressive.



# Curved lines

They transmit movement, dynamism and vitality. Curved lines can also convey serenity and calm.



**LIGHT:**

**essential tool for the existence of the image**



**Diffused light:** Soft light, general and uniform light that diffuses shadows



# CHIAROSCURO

Hard light, spot light causes high contrasts and well-defined shadows

→ **MORE DRAMA**

In the image



DIOR

SECRET GARDEN IV - VERSAILLES  
LE FILM SUR DIOR.COM



It contains **directionality**, so the connotation of the image can vary depending on the direction of the light.



# COLOR RATIO

## Harmony

Arrangement of related colors and with soft variations. It generates calm and relaxing emotions.



# Contrast

Arrangement of colors without affinity, using complementary colors or combining cold and warm. Generates imbalance, stimulates and gets our attention



# COLOR PSYCHOLOGY

“Mere color, unspoiled by meaning, and unallied with definite form, can speak to the soul in a thousand different ways”

Oscar Wilde







Red evokes vitality, excitement, blood and violence.

Photo: American Beauty



Blue inspires confidence and is associated with fantasy. It is a cold and passive color sometimes associated with sadness.

Photo: Corpse Bride



Yellow conveys optimism and joy. It is also the color of envy, jealousy, insecurity and violence.  
Photo: Life of Pi



Green evokes nature and youth. It is also associated with the poisonous and the repulsive.  
Photo: The Lion King



Pink inspires delicacy, illusion and sweetness.  
Photo: The Grand Budapest Hotel

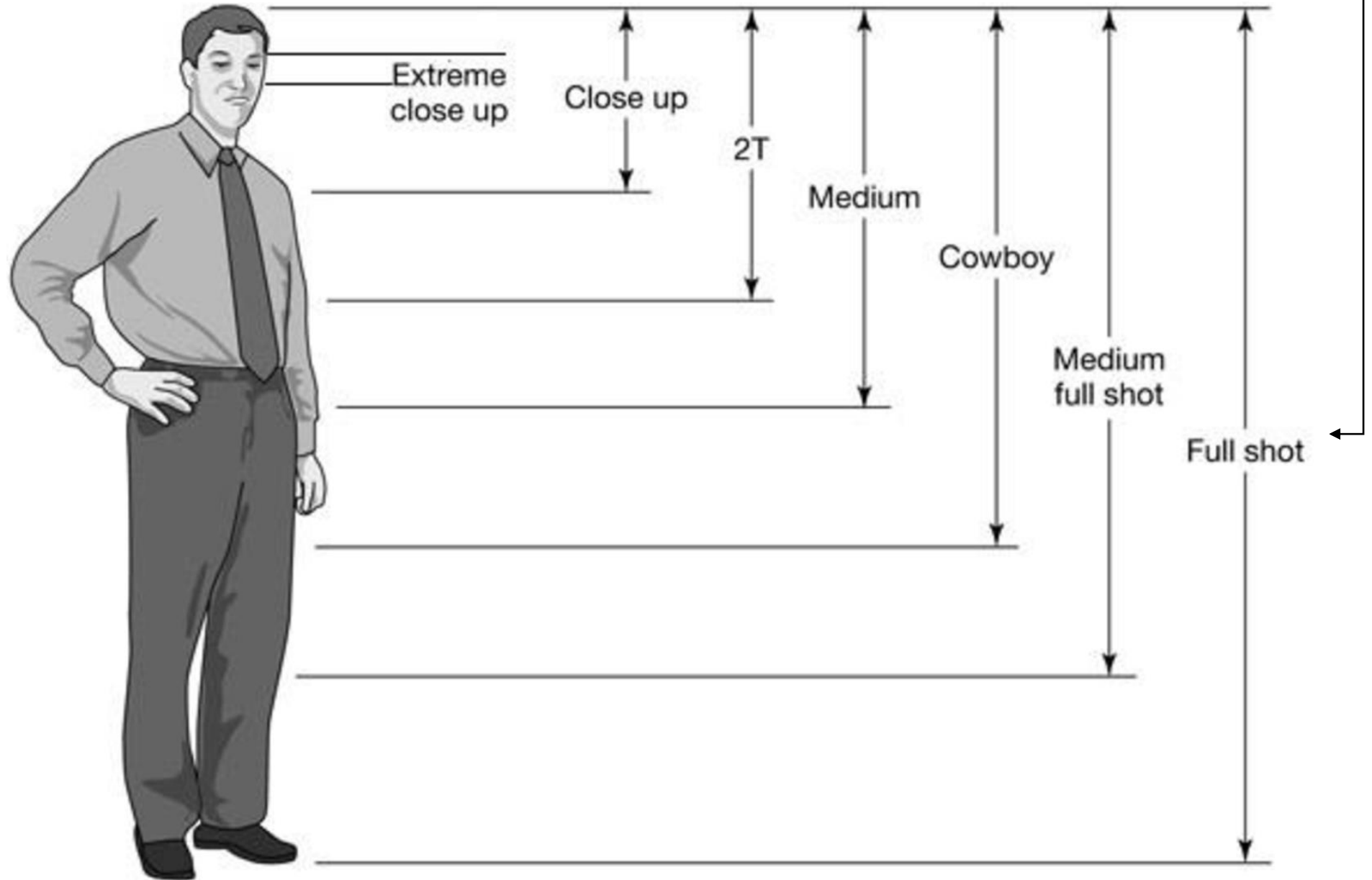


Violet is regarded as peculiar and extravagant. It is a color related to mysticism and magic.  
Photo: Monstruos S.A.

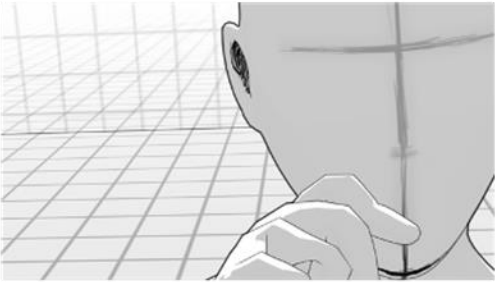


# **SPACE: THE SHOT**

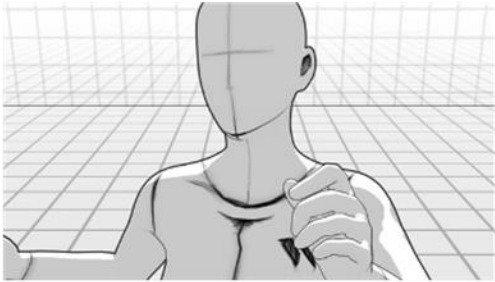
# Types of camera shots



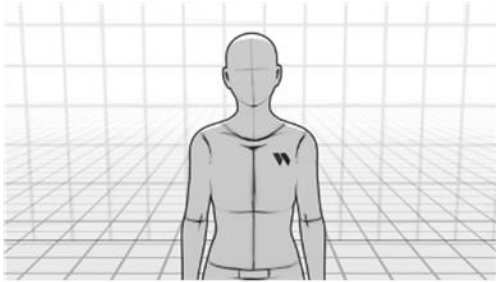
Scale



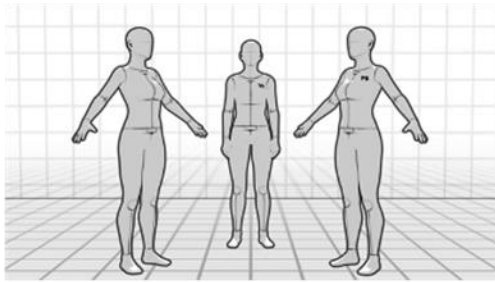
Extreme Close-up



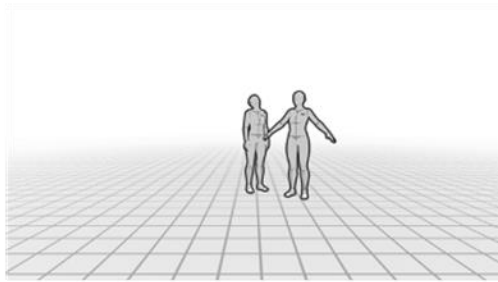
Close-up Shot



Medium Shot



Full Shot



Long Shot

**Types of camera shots**



The close-up is used to access emotions and become intimate with the characters.  
Photo: Les Misérables, by Tom Hooper



The Medium Shot and American Shot  
Photo: Tommy Hilfiger campaign



The Full shot is used when the film wants to show the surrounding environment and the actions that the character performs.  
Photo: The Shining



Extreme close-up  
Photo: Psicosis

# For the content visual analysis is necessary to attend in two levels

Denotative Level: This is the objective analysis of the image. You don't go into personal values. Only what is observed is described.

Connotative Level: It is the analysis intimately linked to subjective reading. It therefore depends on who looks at the image and therefore it will vary from one reader to another.

# Denotative Level:

- What does the image represent? (Detailed description of its elements)
- How is its composition?
- How are the characters presented and what is the relationship between them and between the other elements of the image?
- What kind of lines predominate?
- What kind of shapes (forms) stand out in the image?
- How is lighting proposed?
- What colors are proposed? Why?
- What is the point of view?

# Connotative Level:

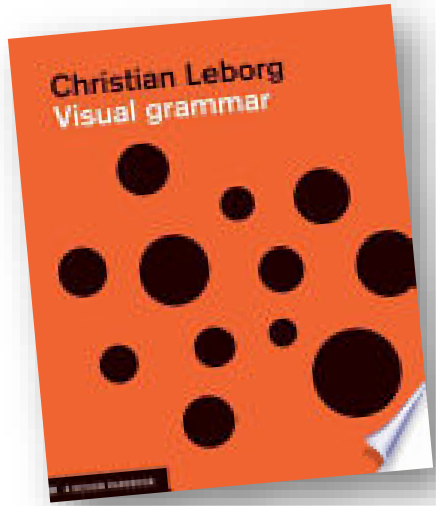
- What sensations does the image provoke in you?
- What do you think about when you look at the image?
- Is there something that does not appear but is intuited?
- What associations do the objects represented in the image create?
- Do you find any underlying messages?
- What kind of values, counter-values or models of behavior appear?
- What story do you think it tells?
- What is the purpose of the creator of the image?

**Let's analyze an image**



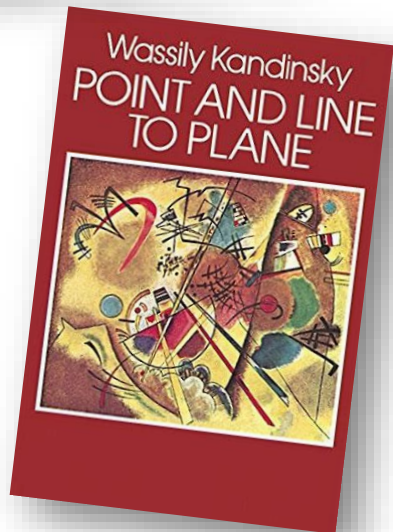


# Bibliography



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"Visual Grammar: A Design Handbook (Visual Design Book for Designers, Book on Visual Communication)" by Christian Leborg



"Point and Line to Plane" by Kandinsky

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