VISUAL ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Just as written language uses letters, words, sentences, punctuation, syntax, etc. to organize information into understandable and expressive form, the visual arts use similar fundamental elements governed by organizational principles to create a coherent structural order. The list below is one system (there are others) for categorizing these aspects of <u>formal</u> <u>structure</u> in the visual arts. The process of combining these elements and principles, as well as the order that they produce is usually referred to as <u>composition</u> or <u>design</u>. This "visual language" is the skeleton upon which any painting, drawing, sculpture, etc. is built, no matter what its subject matter may be. It is the order that we feel when we look at a work of art. This list more or less corresponds with part two of your textbook "The Language of Visual Experience". As we examine works on the program I will be referring to these components regularly as they appear in various works.

VISUAL ELEMENTS:
Line
Shape
Mass
Space
Time and Motion
Light and Value
Color
Texture

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN:
Unity and Variety
Balance
Emphasis and Subordination
Directional Forces
Contrast
Repetition and Rhythm
Scale and Proportion