The 12 Principles of Design

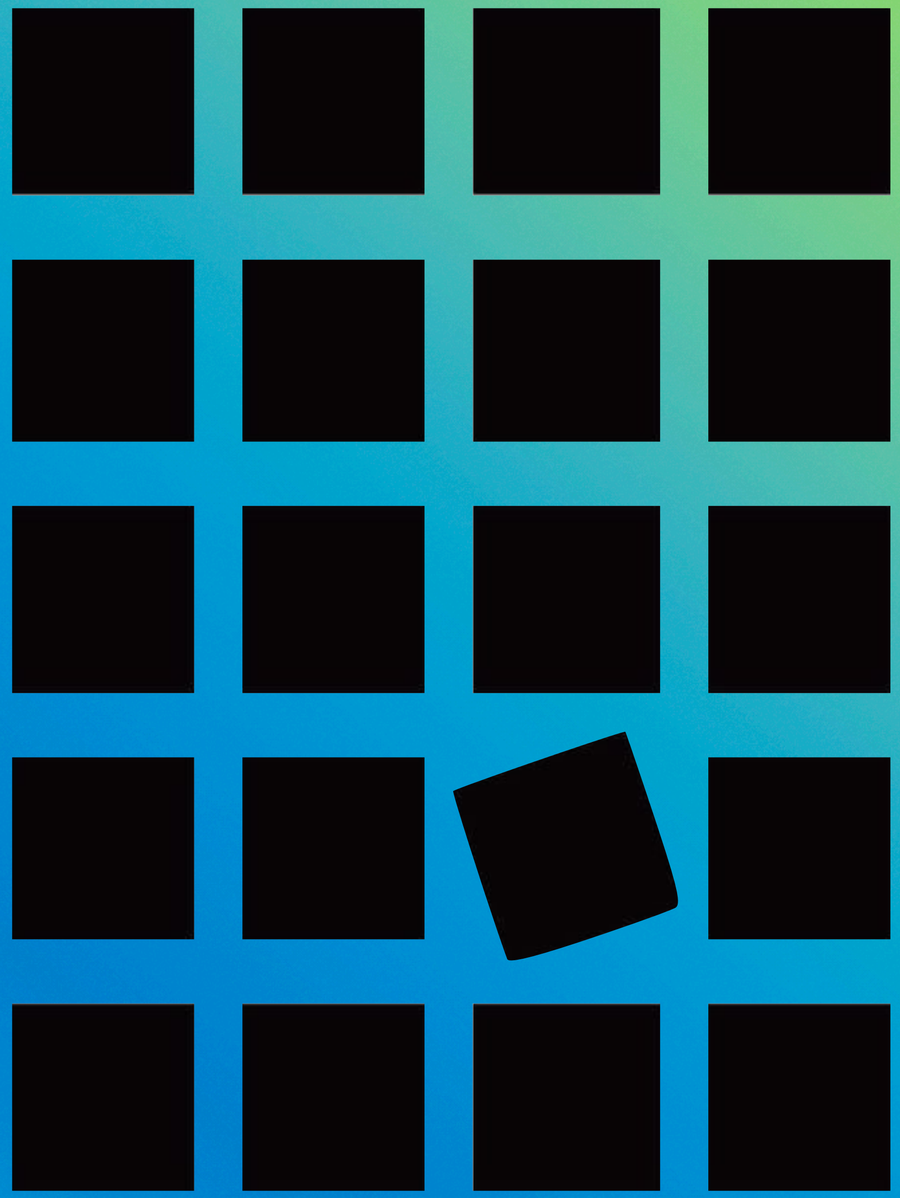
John Delacruz, Associate Professor of Advertising Creative

SJSU HONORS

So what are we doing

By the end of this session you'll know EVERYTHING there is to know about the 12 principles of design

Definitions and examples



What are the 12 Principles of Design

12

Contrast
Balance
Emphasis
Proportion
Hierarchy
Repetition
Rhythm
Pattern
White Space
Movement
Variety
Unity

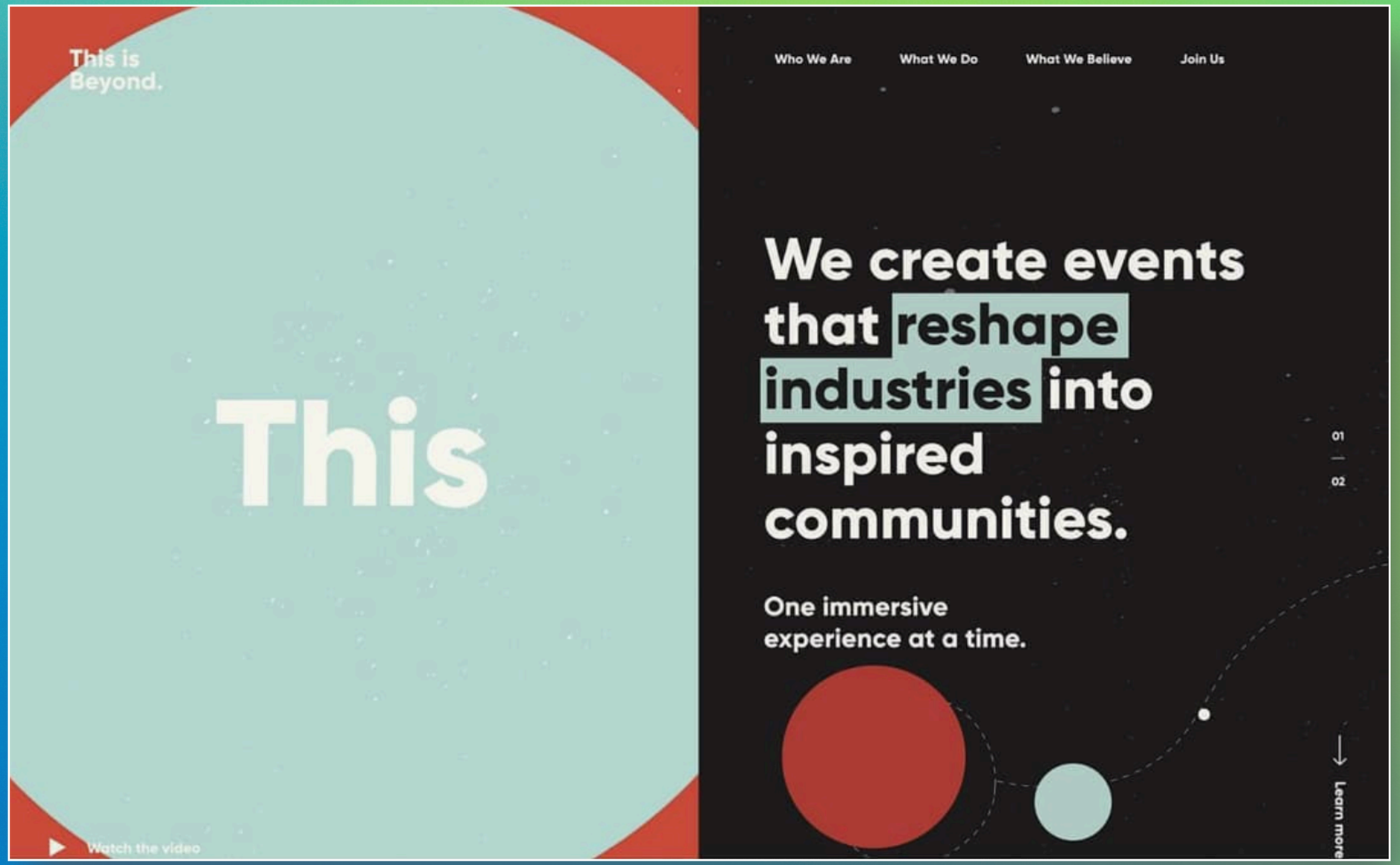
1

Contrast

Contrast

2 elements on a page are different:

- different colors between text and background
- heading set in a big, bold, grungy font combined with a sans-serif font for body text
- difference between large graphic and small graphic
- rough texture combined with smooth texture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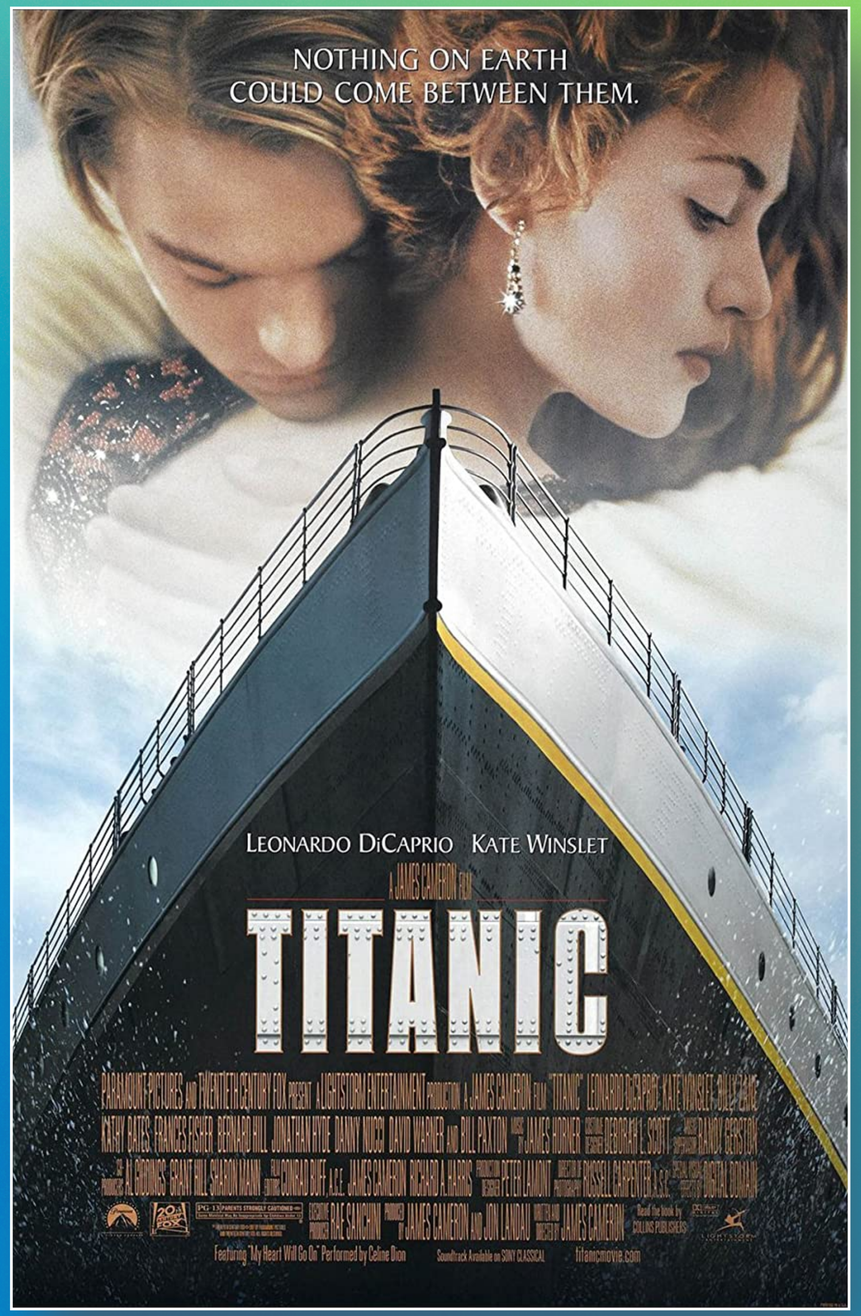
2

Balance



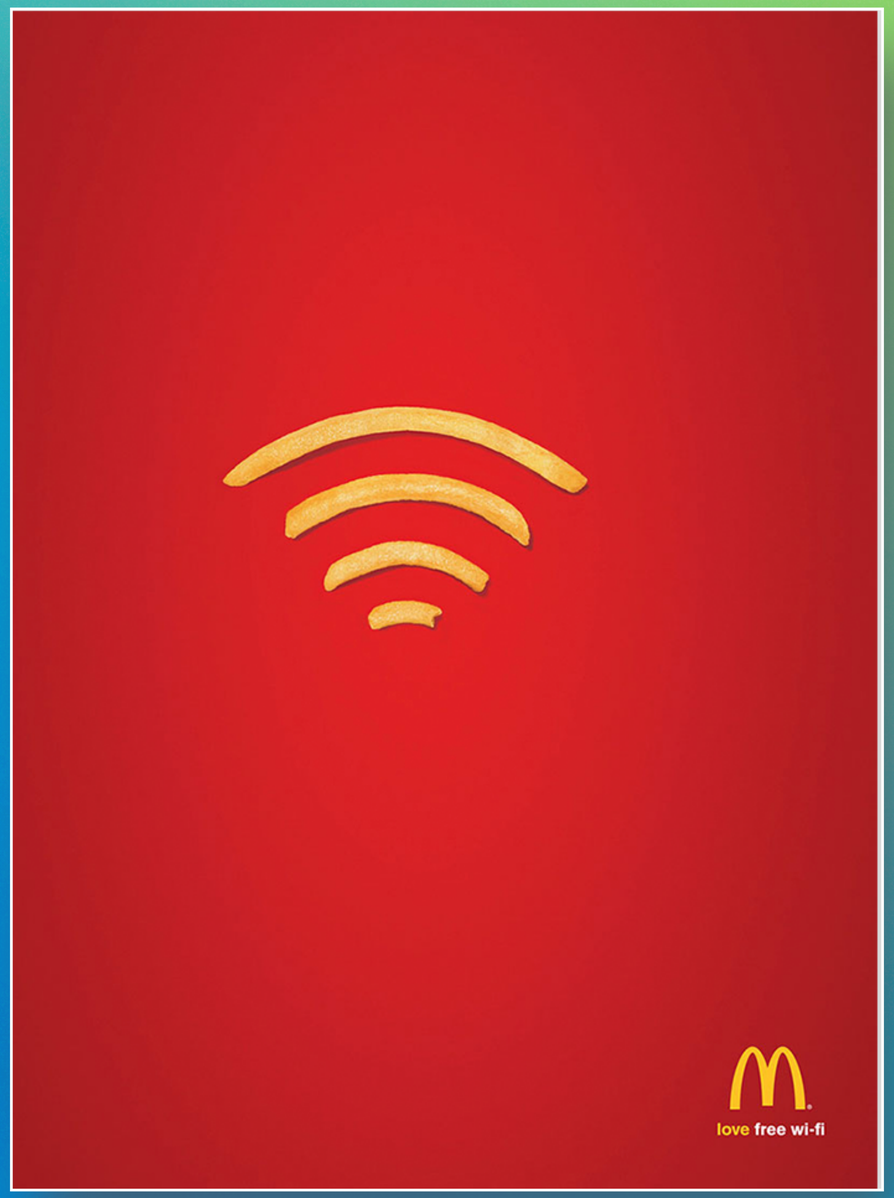
Balance

- distribution of visual weight of objects, colors, texture, and space
- elements should be balanced to make a design feel stable

SHS
Operative Beratung
auf Augenhöhe.

Zeit für Veränderung.

3
Emphasis



Emphasis

- making a specific element stand out or draw attention to the eye
- placing elements on the page where the eye is naturally drawn

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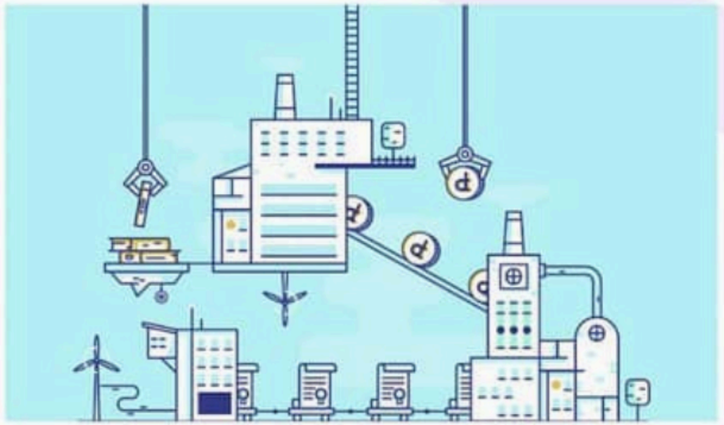

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4 Proportion

Proportion

- size of elements in relation to one another
- larger elements seen as more important than smaller ones

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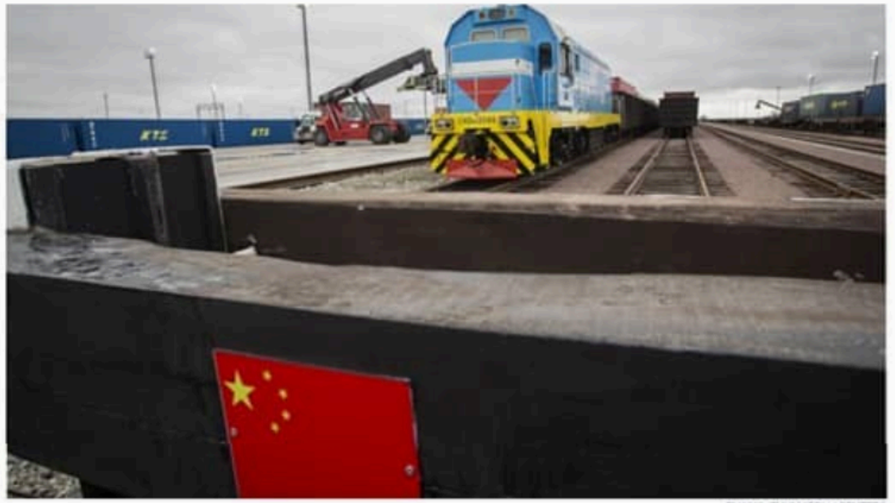

SHAMIL ZHUMATOV / REUTERS

China's World-Building Foreign Policy, As Seen From the Middle of Nowhere

The Khorgos Gateway was once touted as one of the most ambitious projects in the Belt and Road Initiative, but it has come to represent the limits of Beijing's global push.

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KATHY GILSINAN

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DAVID A. GRAHAM

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SHIRLEY LI

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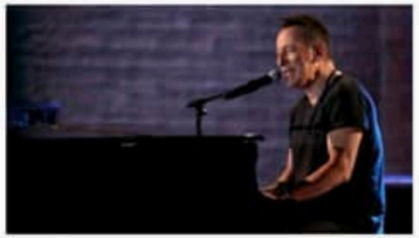
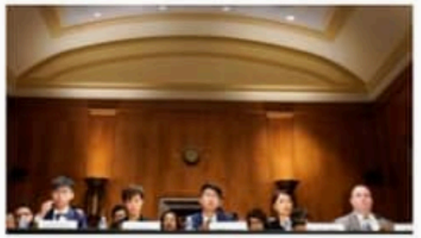
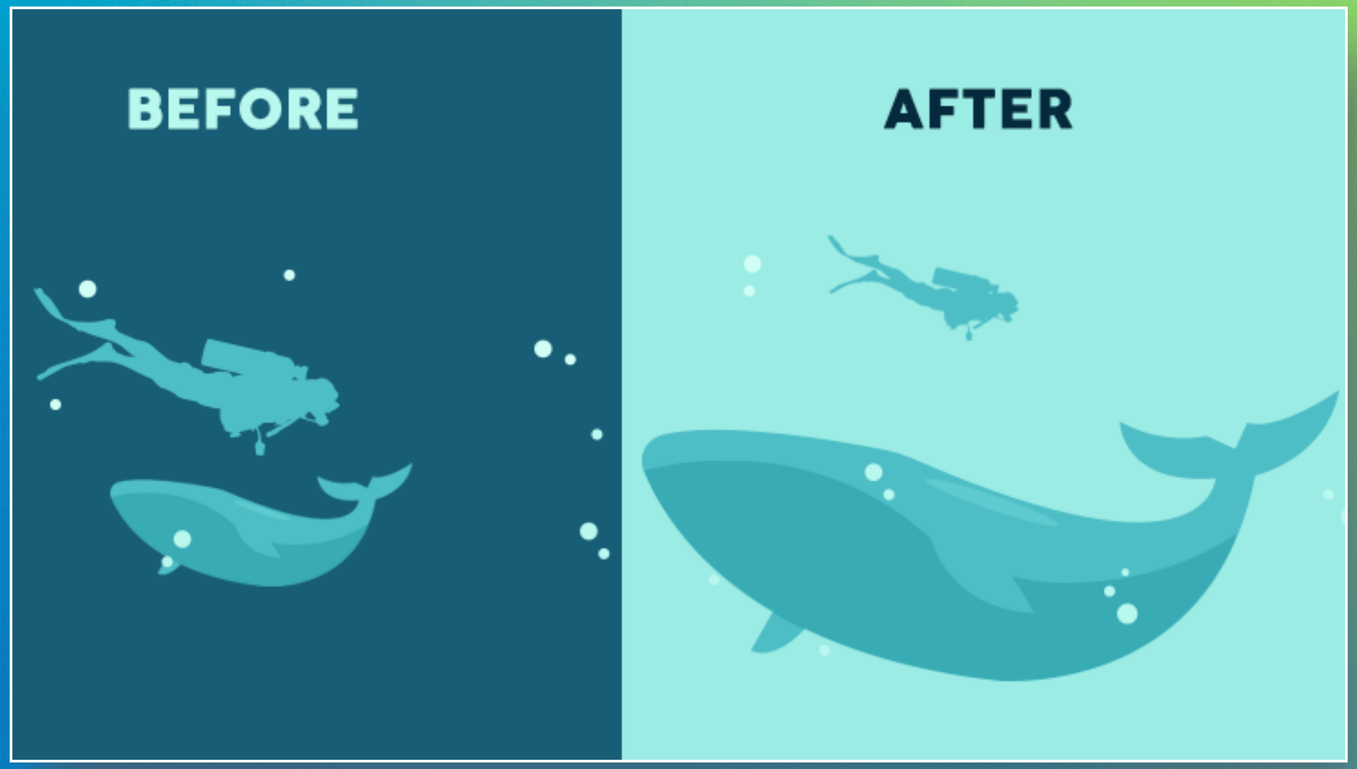


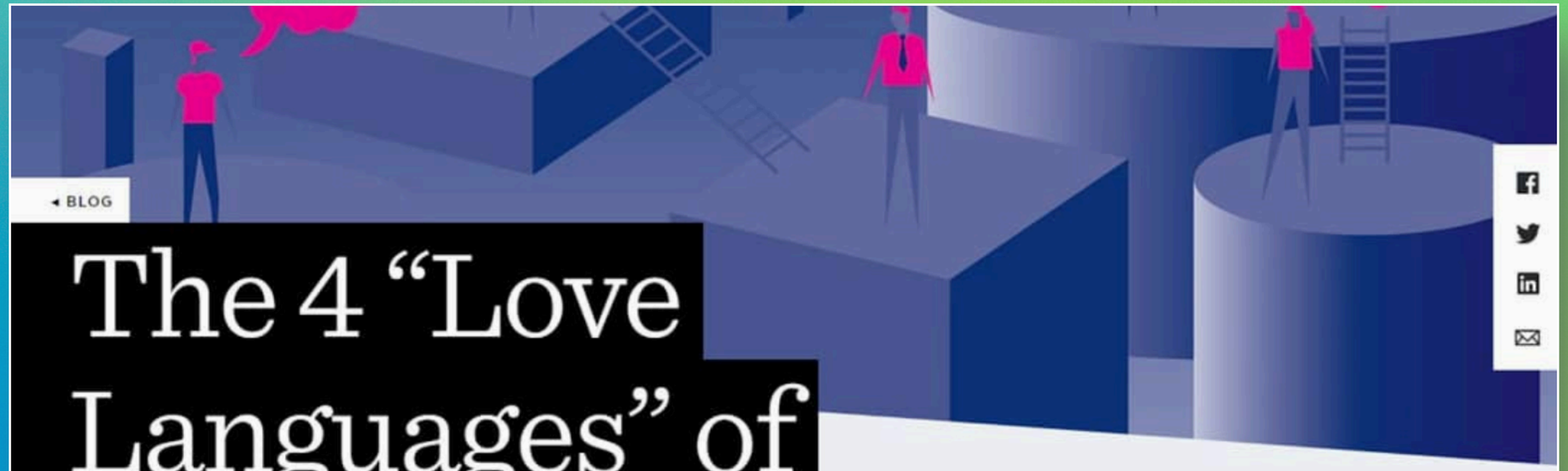


5 Hierarchy

Hierarchy



- importance of elements in a design
- size impacts visibility



◂ BLOG

The 4 “Love Languages” of Design

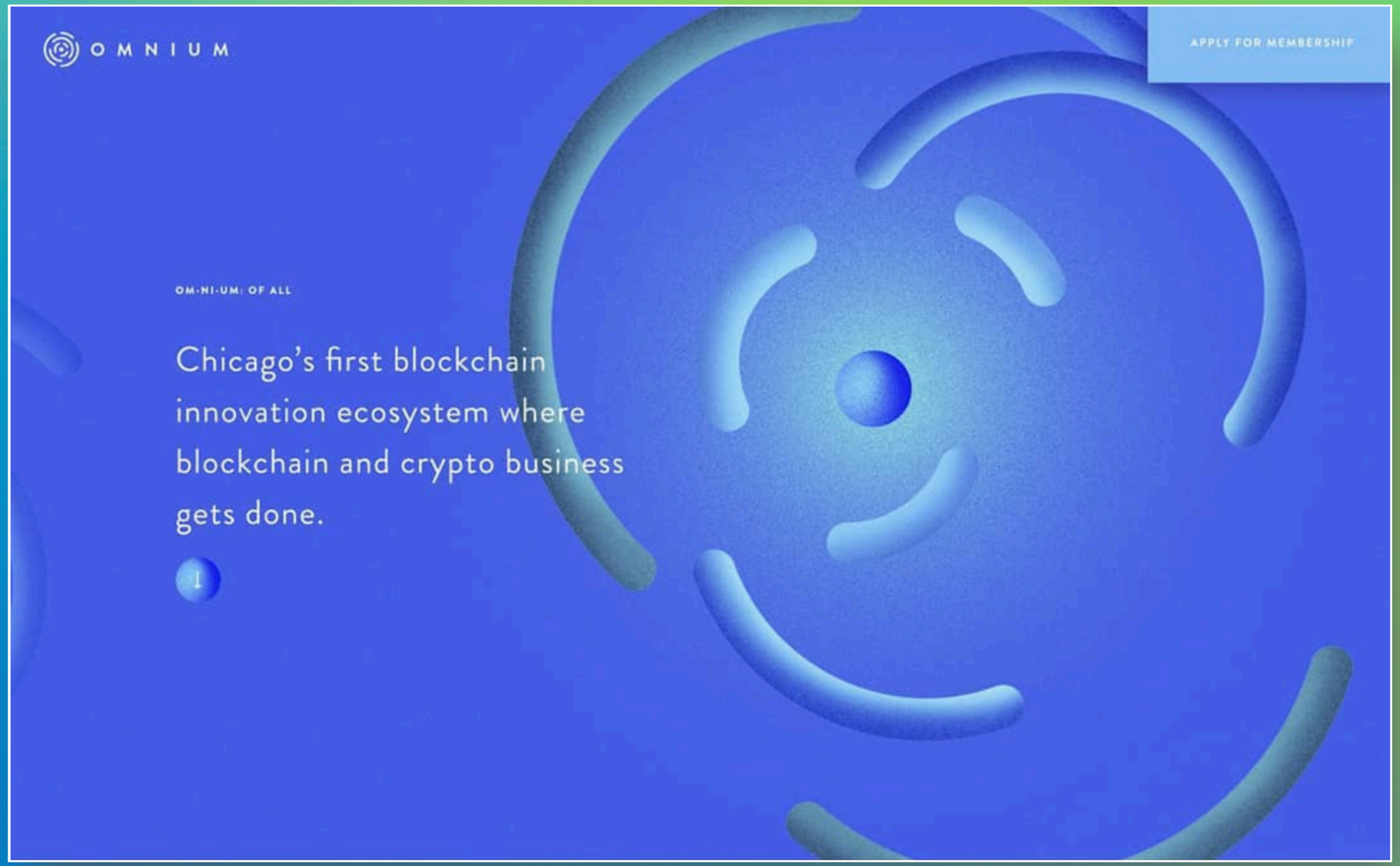
AUG 16 2019 BY MARCELLE VAN BEUSEKOM

Language matters. That’s an obvious statement for anyone working across cultures, and it especially holds true in design. As a designer, I’ve always used my skills to create tools that enable shared understanding. This mainly came about out of necessity: I was born and raised in the

6
Repetition

Repetition

- reinforces an idea perception
- **repeat some aspect of the design throughout the entire piece:**
- a bold font, a thick rule (line), a certain bullet, design element, color, format, space
- anything a reader will visually recognize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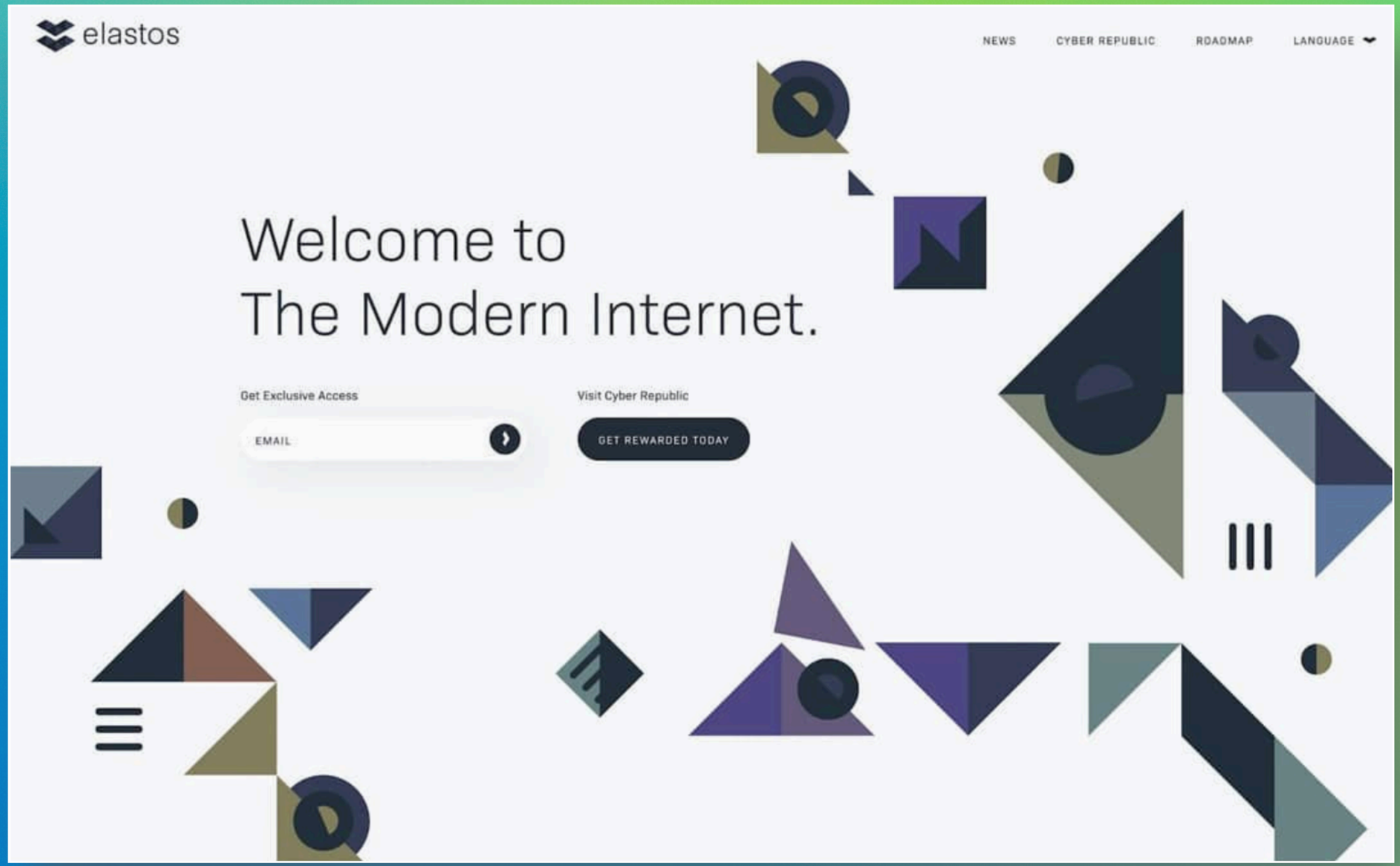
7

Rhythm

Rhythm

- spacing between elements can create rhythm
- creates a variety of emotions
- calmness: regular
- excitement: irregular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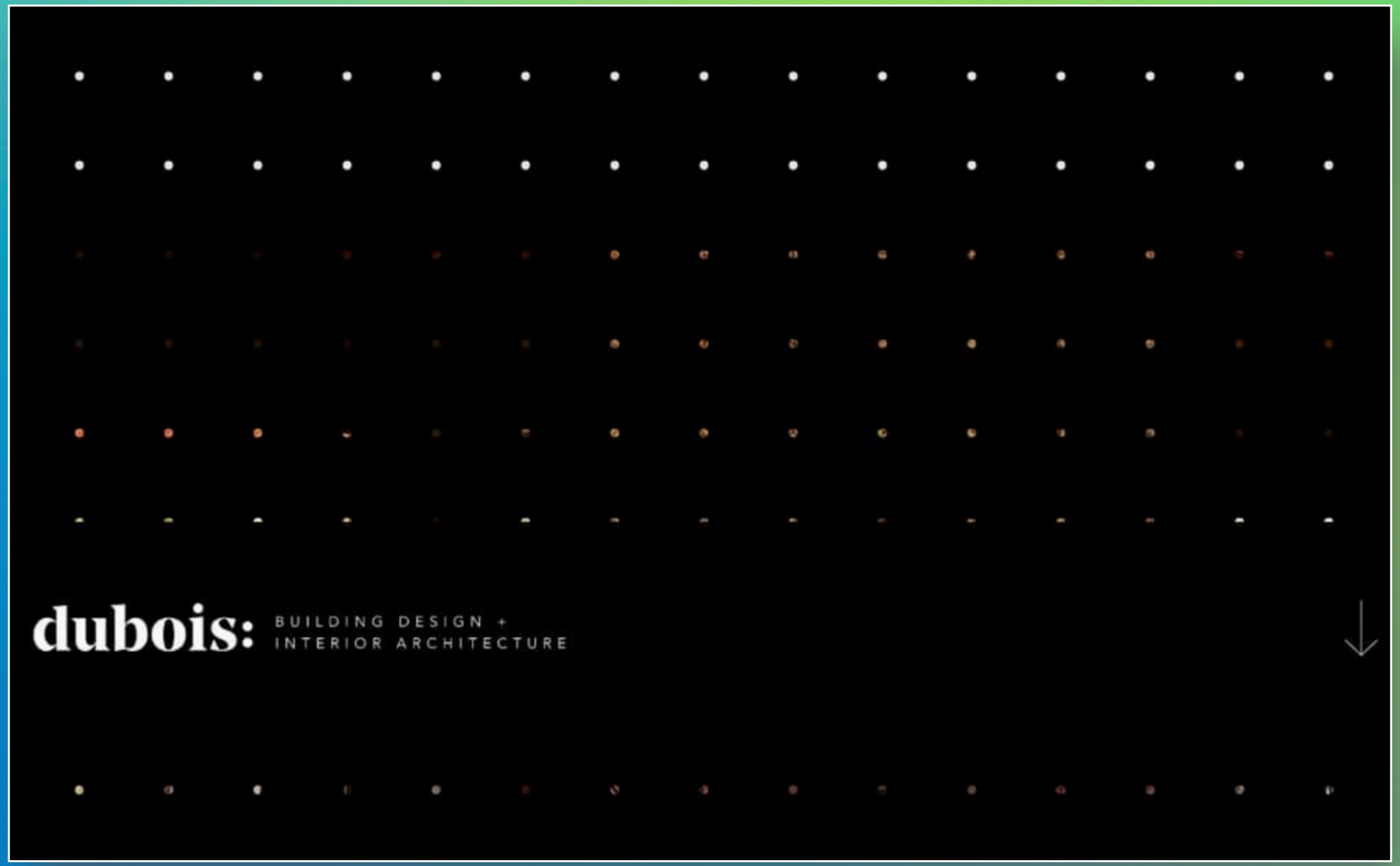
8

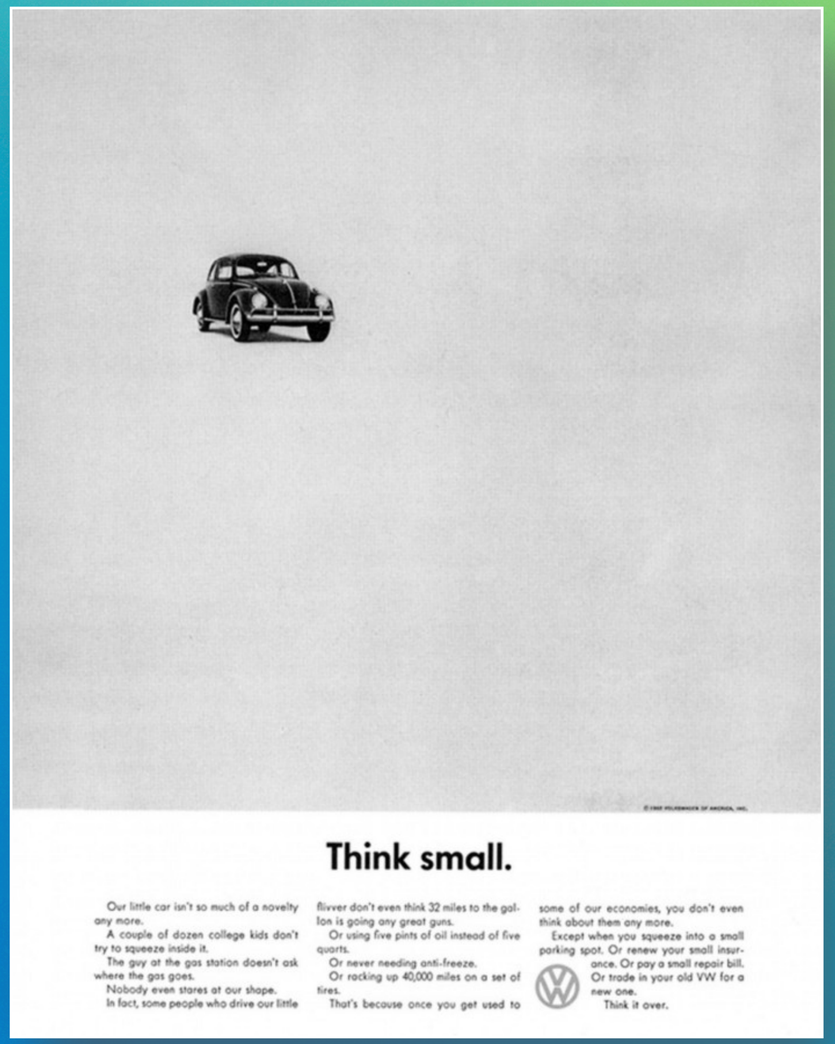
Pattern

Pattern

- repetition of design elements
- set standards
- scrolling and reading f-pattern and z-pattern


dubois:
BUILDING DESIGN +
INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

9 White Space



White Space

- same as use of silence in music
- without white space design is cluttered and noisy making it difficult to communicate and ineffective

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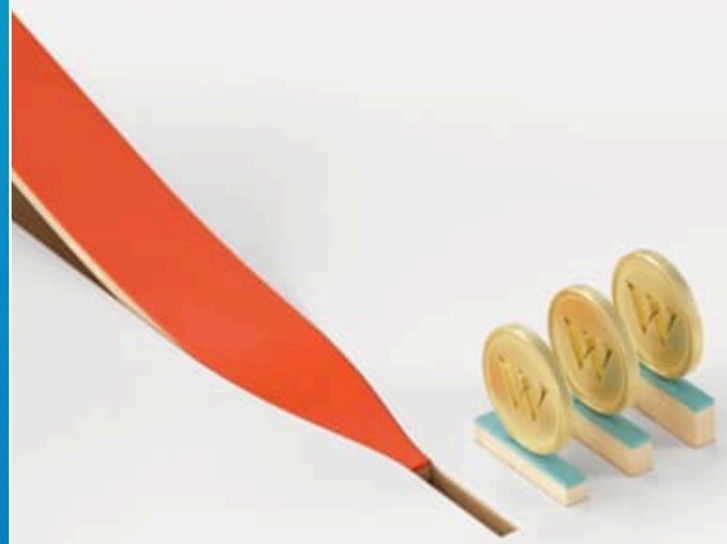

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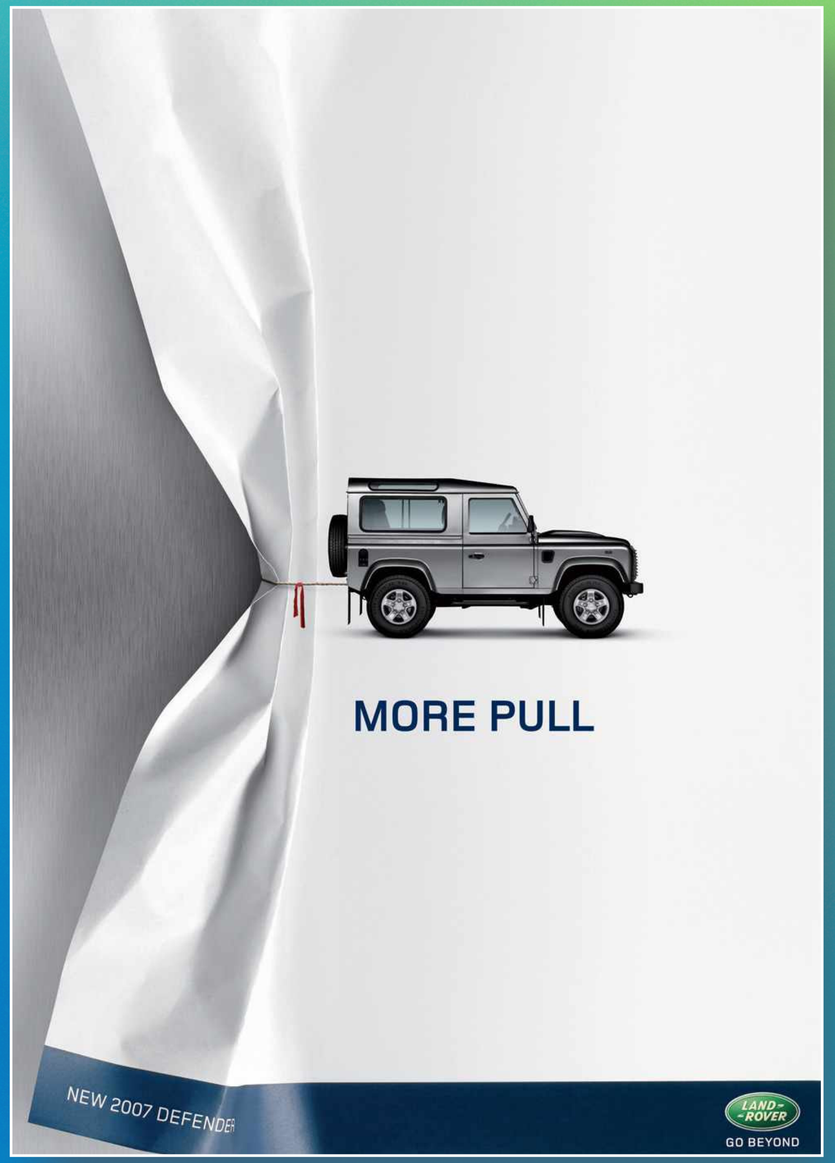
10

Movement



Movement

- the way a person's eye travels over a design
- can be done via positioning, emphasis and other design principles

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11

Variety

Variety

- creates visual interest in a design
- can be done via typography, color, images, textures and other design elements
- prevents monotony

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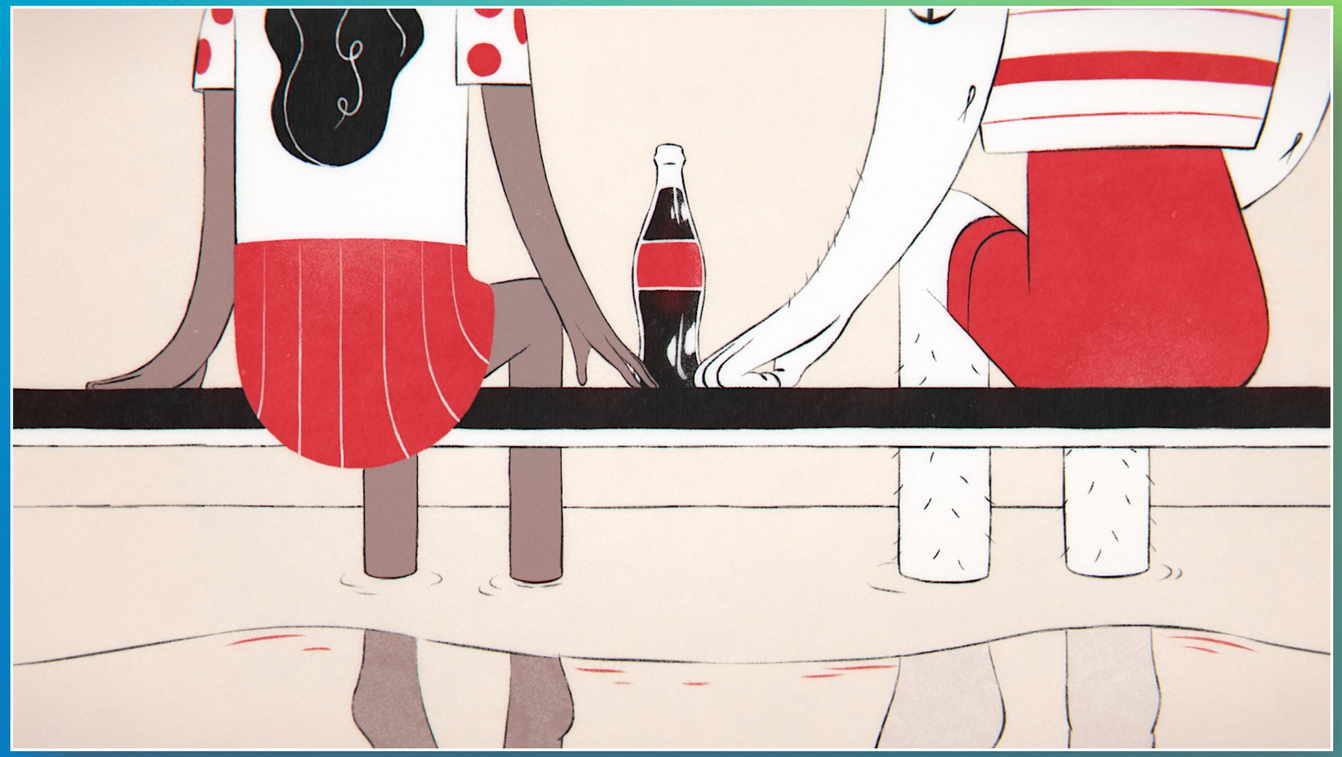
12

Unity

Unity



- designers use unity to make elements in a composition *appear to belong together*
- *w*hen each elements has a clear visual relationship to one or more other elements, the composition is unified

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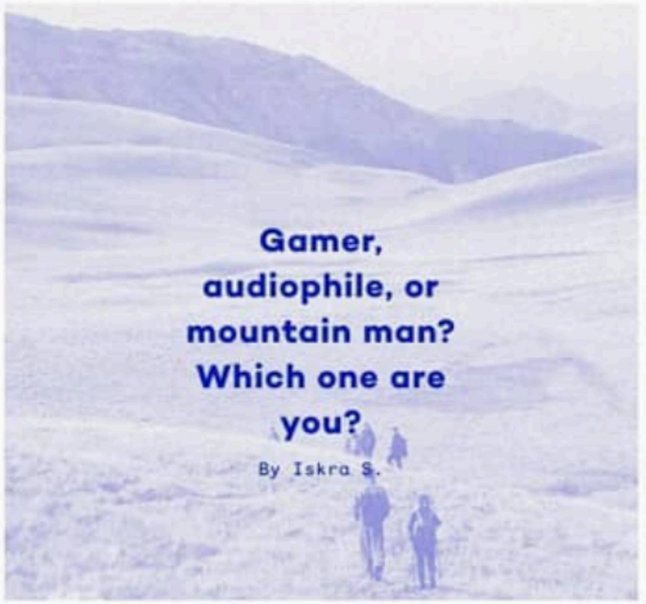

These principles of design work together to create something that is aesthetically pleasing and optimizes the user experience.

https://www.toptal.com/designers/ui/principles-of-design