

6

VISUALIZATION AND COLOR

OBJECTIVES

- 01 UNDERSTAND HOW VISUALS ARE CLASSIFIED
- 02 LEARN ABOUT SIGNS AND SYMBOLS
- 03 STUDY THE BASICS OF DESIGNING ICONS
- 04 BECOME FAMILIAR WITH MEDIA, METHODS, AND VISUALIZATION
- 05 LEARN ABOUT IMAGE CREATION, SELECTION, AND MANIPULATION
- 06 GRASP VISUALIZING FORM
- 07 ACQUAINT YOURSELF WITH DRAWING FOR DESIGNERS AND GRAPHIC INTERPRETATIONS
- 08 BEGIN TO LEARN ABOUT DESIGNING WITH COLOR
- 09 APPREHEND STORYTELLING THROUGH VISUALIZATION

Designers learn by doing. They can learn faster when someone gives them a way to do it. When they learn how, they can understand it.

—Paula Scher

Visualization and composition, major components in the design process, are driven by a design concept and communication goals. As Alice E. Drueding, Professor, Graphic and Interactive Design and Area Head of the BFA Program at Tyler School of Art, Temple University, points out, steps in the design process may not progress in an orderly fashion: “The order I emphasize with students is (1) concept, (2) general visualization (content, medium, style) and

(3) organization (composition, grid, golden section, etc.)—with the caveat that things don’t always work in such a linear manner.”

Steps in the process of conceptualization, visualization, and composition can happen simultaneously or with great overlap, with back and forth, modifying a concept as you make discoveries while visualizing. You can use visualizing for concept generation or whichever method best allows you to visually express your concept. During the course of visualization, you will find your preliminary decisions are subject to change. You may find your initial impulse overridden by intuition during the process, by a critique, by practical matters related to image quality, time, budget, by a happy accident that altered your thinking, or by any number of factors.

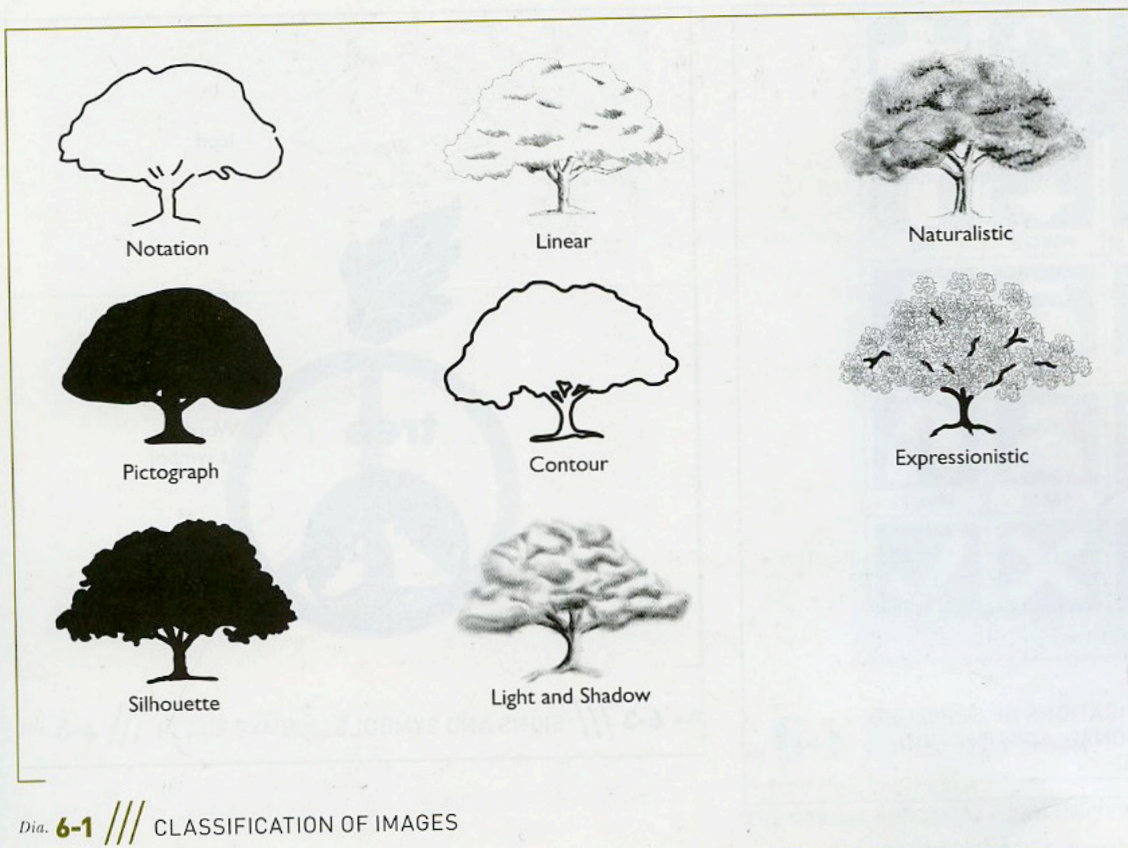
IMAGE CLASSIFICATIONS AND DEPICTIONS

Graphic designers work with two main components: type and images. As discussed in Chapter 3, type can be created in a variety of ways—computer generated, hand drawn, handmade, found, or photographed. **Images** is a broad term encompassing a great variety of representational, abstract, or nonobjective images—photographs, illustrations, drawings, paintings, prints, pictographs, signs, symbols, maps, diagrams, optical illusions, patterns, and graphic elements and marks; images are also called **visuals**.

In *Type and Image: The Language of Graphic Design*, Philip B. Meggs explains, with great clarity, how we classify images from the rudimentary to the complex.¹ Classifying images helps you understand the range and how to depict them to meet your communication goals (see Diagram 6-1).

→ **Notation:** a linear, reductive visual that captures the essence of its subject, characterized by its minimalism.

1. Philip B. Meggs. *Type and Image: The Language of Graphic Design*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 1992, p. 18.



Dia. 6-1 /// CLASSIFICATION OF IMAGES

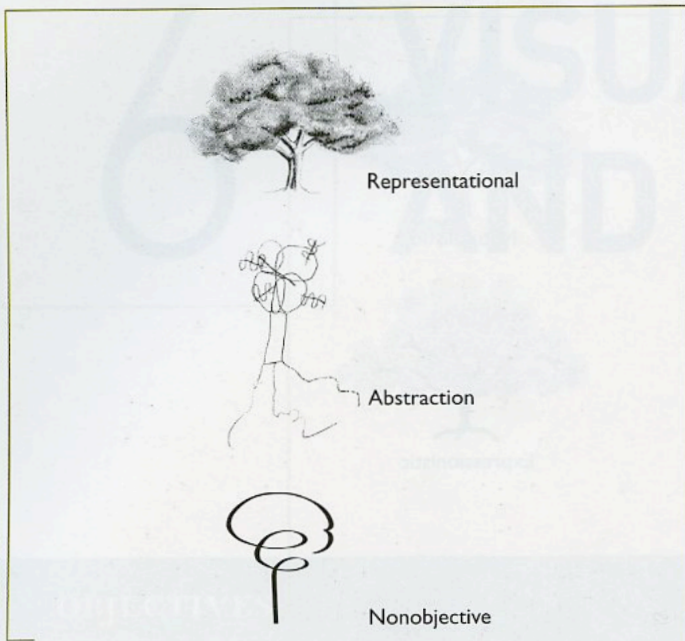
- **Pictograph:** an elemental, universal picture denoting an object, activity, place, or person captured through shape—for example, the images denoting gender on restroom doors.
- **Silhouette:** the articulated shape of an object or subject taking its specificity into account (as opposed to the more elemental form of a pictograph).
- **Linear:** a shape or form described predominantly by use of line.
- **Contour:** a shape or form depicted through the linear outline of an object's or subject's boundaries.
- **Light and Shadow:** using light and shadow to describe form and the illusion of three-dimensional space. This most closely simulates how we perceive forms in nature. Also, a logical flow of light, as it touches and describes forms, can help unify a composition. An extreme use of light and shadow is called *chiaroscuro* (also called *clair-obscur*).
- **Naturalistic:** a visual appearance or style created by full color or tone using light and shadow that attempts to replicate an object or subject as it is perceived in nature; also called *realistic*. (Please note, in modern and contemporary *fine art* theory and criticism, the terms *naturalism*

and *realism* are defined differently and represent different schools of thought.)

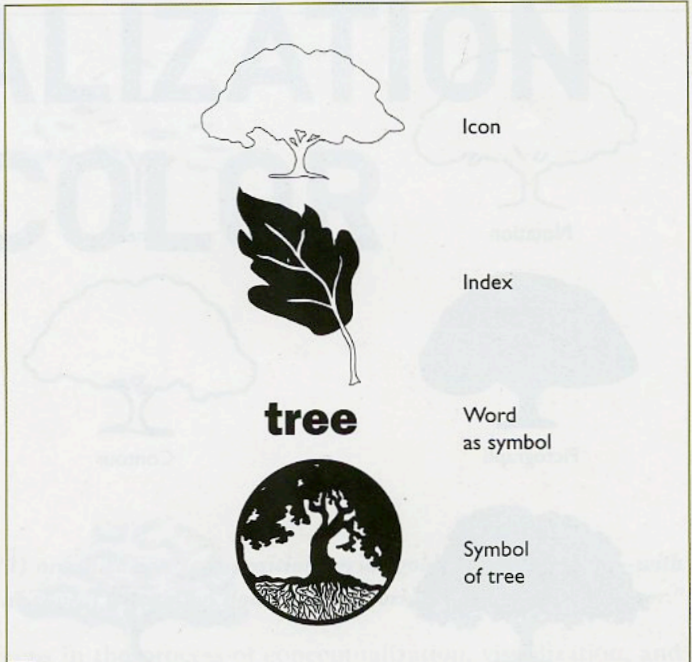
- **Expressionistic:** a style of visualization characterized by a highly stylized or subjective interpretation, with an emphasis on the psychological or spiritual meaning. There is no strict adherence to things as they appear in nature, as opposed to naturalism.

There are three basic classifications of depiction as they directly refer to and then move away from what we see in nature (see Diagram 6-2):

- **Representational:** a rendering that attempts to replicate actual objects as seen in nature. The viewer recognizes the image; also called *pictorial* or *figurative*.
- **Abstraction:** a simple or complex rearrangement, alteration, or distortion of the representation of natural appearance, used for stylistic distinction and/or communication purposes.
- **Nonobjective:** a purely invented visual that is not derived from anything visually perceived. It does not relate to any object in nature and does not literally represent a person, place, or thing; also called *nonrepresentational*.



Dia. 6-2 /// BASIC CLASSIFICATIONS OF DEPICTION: REPRESENTATIONAL, ABSTRACTION, NONOBJECTIVE



Dia. 6-3 /// SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

ABOUT SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

Graphic design signifies. Graphic design represents. Graphic design communicates. From the theory of semiotics, the study of signs and symbols, we have a classification of signs—what they mean and how they are used in graphic design.² (Please see Diagram 6-3.)

- **Sign:** a visual mark or a part of language that *denotes* another thing. For example, the word *dog* and a pictograph of a dog are both signs used to represent “dog”; the \$ denotes money; the written letter *H* is a sign for a spoken sound.
- **Icon:** a visual (pictorial image or symbol) to represent objects, actions, and concepts. An icon resembles the thing it represents or, at a minimum, shares a quality with it. It can be a photograph, a pictorial representation, an elemental visual (think magnifying glass desktop icon), arbitrary (think radioactive sign), or symbolic (think lightning bolt to represent electricity).
- **Index:** a sign that signifies through a direct relationship between the sign and the object, without describing or resembling the thing signified. There are a variety of ways

this happens: whether as a cue that makes the viewer think of the reference (for example, a pacifier is an indexical sign for an infant), by its proximity to it (for example, a diver down flag means someone is under water and you must steer clear of the area), by actually pointing to the thing signified (an arrow at an intersection on a roadside), or by being physical evidence of it (for example, a photograph of a hand or a hoof print on the ground).

- **Symbol:** a visual that has an arbitrary or conventional relationship between the signifier and the thing signified. We decode meaning through learned associations (for example, a dove has become accepted as a symbol of peace). Spoken or written words are symbols as well.
- Some symbols take on greater meaning than most other symbols due to their context and roles in religion, culture, history, or society. Examples include the cross in Christianity, the phoenix for eternal life, the ankh for life associated with ancient Egypt, the Star of David in Judaism, and the yin–yang, which is the Chinese symbol of the interplay of forces in the universe. It is hard to think of antiwar protest posters without thinking of the nuclear disarmament symbol designed by Gerald Holton in 1956. This graphic, a circle with a few lines in it, stands for something as profound as the idea of peace (Diagram 6-4).

2. Meggs. *Type and Image*, p. 8.



USE OF SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

Signs and symbols—reductive images—serve many functions in graphic design. They can be stand-alone images, such as a pictograph of a woman on a restroom door, a desktop or mobile icon, or most often, components of a broader design solution, such as a sign system that is part of a visual identity program. They serve as icons for mobile web and apps. Icons are also referred to as *symbol signs*.

So much information must be universally understood crossing language and cultural barriers. Signs or icons in the form of pictographs—visual, nonverbal communication—are characterized by elemental forms. These graphics depict universal, immediately recognizable objects, places, human gestures, and actions, which are easily deciphered by all; they are also called *pictograms*.

ISOTYPE, the International System Of Typographic Picture Education was developed in the twentieth-century by the Viennese social scientist and philosopher Otto Neurath as a method for visual statistics. Gerd Arntz was the designer tasked with making Isotype's pictograms and visual signs. Arntz designed around 4000 such signs, which symbolized key data from industry, demographics, politics, and economy. The pictograms designed by Arntz were systematically employed in combination with stylized maps and diagrams. Neurath and Arntz made extensive collections of visual statistics in this manner, and their system



Fig. 6-1 /// THE TALK CHART

THE DESIGN CENTER AT KEAN UNIVERSITY

- *Description of Work:* A communication device utilizing icons
- *Creative Director:* Alan Robbins, The Design Center, Robert Busch School of Design at Kean University
- *Designers:* Various dedicated students
- *Client:* Self-initiated

The Talk Chart was created and designed by university students in The Design Studio at Kean University under the direction of Professor Alan Robbins and is donated to local hospitals. Thanks to a generous grant from Sappi Paper, The Talk Chart is currently used in 2,000 hospitals throughout the United States.

became a world-wide emulated example of what we now term: **infographics**.³

—<http://www.gerdarntz.org/content/gerd-arntz>

Otto Neurath's goals were to aid people by directly illustrating information about the world for those who were illiterate, or could just barely read, as well as by designing information that could be universally understood, overcoming barriers of language and culture.

Information graphics in the form of icons are also used to help people navigate spaces or life issues. **Wayfinding systems**, used internationally, assist and guide visitors and tourists to

3. Gerd Arntz Web Archive. <http://www.gerdarntz.org>

X2 DESIGN, NEW YORK

The Disability Access Symbols were produced by the Graphic Artists Guild Foundation with support and technical assistance from the Office for Special Constituencies, National Endowment for the Arts. Special thanks to the National Endowment for the Arts. Graphic design assistance by the Society of Environmental Graphic Design. Consultant: Jacqueline Ann Clipsham.

—Graphic Artists Guild Foundation

find what they are looking for in museums, airports, zoos, and city centers. The Talk Chart, a communication device, is an example of information design (Figure 6-1). Using the 8½" × 11" laminated pointing chart, people in healthcare facilities who cannot speak due to stroke, aphasia, or other physical challenges can now make their needs known to family and staff by pointing to the graphic symbols or letters of the alphabet that appear on the chart.

The primary objective of the Disability Access Symbols Project is for organizations to use these to better serve their audiences with disabilities (Figure 6-2). The Graphic Artists Guild Foundation explains:

"The project was extremely challenging in terms of design because the client insisted on having organizations representing people with various disabilities review and comment on the proposed symbols. With the help of a disability consultant, we were able to reach consensus among all these groups and still achieve the primary objective—for organizations to use these symbols to better serve their audiences with disabilities.

"Several existing symbols did not meet the standards we established and needed redesign. For example, the old symbol for Assistive Listening Systems focused on the disability (an ear with a diagonal bar through it). The new symbol focuses on the accommodation to the disability, i.e., a device that amplifies sound for people who have difficulty hearing. Other upgraded symbols include Sign Language Interpreted, Access (Other than Print or Braille) for Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision, and the International Symbol of Accessibility. A new symbol for Audio Description for TV, Video and Film was developed which, through design, proved less likely to degenerate when subjected to frequent photocopying."

ICON DESIGN

Icons and icon systems are used for print, environmental graphics, or screen. They have become more ubiquitous due



to the proliferation of screen media and their significant roles in websites, mobile apps and more. Across media, you have many of the same considerations:

- Who is the *audience*?
- At what size will the icons be seen?
- What is the context and where will the icons be seen—on screen, close-up, lighted, from a distance, in print? At which perspective or angle?
- What are the communication goals? What do the icons represent—actions, figures, places, objects, creatures?
- How reductive or elemental do they need to be to work? Totally no-frills?
- Are the icons part of a system?
- Which style will work across the system and is appropriate for the entire design project?

When icons function as part of a larger design solution, such as a mobile app, a desktop application, a wayfinding program, or a website, their design is considered in relation to the broader context and project, ensuring they function as stand-alone solutions, achieving communication goals, and within the broader context.



Mobile media make great use of icons, as in this series of icons for Textons, a company that distributes mobile coupons through texting on mobile phone devices (Figure 6-3). Each icon reflects a business sector that would potentially offer mobile discounted coupons. “The style of the icons was meant to be casual, fun and simple—making it easier for the user to select types of businesses they like,” clarifies designer Travis N. Tom.

“This is a set of eleven icons (and preliminary sketches) for the human resources department for Georgia-Pacific Corporation (Figure 6-4) also by Travis N. Tom, an icon specialist, who explains his process, “Two to three pen and ink concepts per icon were presented to the project manager as jpgs for selection and approval. The icons were then digitally rendered in Adobe Illustrator and two rounds of revisions were offered before finalizing the look and feel of the icons. Some direction was offered—for example, they liked a color fill in some or all of the space that didn’t quite fill the outlines. The client also provided a screen shot of the site for the color scheme. Final color was explored and the icons were delivered

Fig. 6-3 /// TEXTONS ICON DESIGNS FOR A WEBSITE

TNTOMDESIGN.COM

- Designer, Illustrator, Icon Specialist: Travis N. Tom, Augusta, GA
- Client: Textons, Las Vegas, NV

“The icons were drawn directly in Adobe Illustrator without preliminary sketches. Final icons were delivered in jpg, png and eps formats to the client. An app icon, also, was requested by the client. With the presence of social networking and texting, advertising on mobile phone devices has made a huge impact on marketing for businesses.”

—Travis N. Tom

Fig. 6-4 /// **ICONS AND PRELIMINARY SKETCHES**

TNTOMDESIGN.COM

- Designer, Illustrator, Icon Specialist: Travis N. Tom, Augusta, GA
- Client: Georgia-Pacific Corporation



as jpgs and an eps file. The icons were rendered on my laptop in Adobe Illustrator while traveling.”

Designing a system requires a clear design concept and a consistent use of scale, perspective, shapes, and formal elements, such as line, color, and texture. The signs or icons in a system must look as if they belong to the same family. At times, more than one designer in a design studio will work to produce a system. It is imperative to establish a firm design concept, style, and vocabulary of shapes for the system to look like it was created by one hand and mind, as in the complete set of fifty passenger and pedestrian symbols developed by the AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts).

Icon Design Tips

- Accurately depict the shape of the object to allow users to recognize and decipher the icon at a glance.
- Aim for elemental form. Economy of form trumps intricacy or complexity. Details and any excess information may confuse the user, especially on smaller screens.

- Represent an image from its most characteristic angle.
- Select commonly recognizable images that people around the world will be able to understand.
- Select color and/or values for impact, legibility, meaning, brand storytelling, and context (for example, icons inside toolbar buttons are not in color).
- Treat all icons in a system consistently in terms of style of visualization, perspective, and near and far. For example, as a general rule, if one icon is cropped, they should all be cropped. If one icon is seen in full view from straight on, all should be depicted similarly.
- Use a consistent single light source on all icon objects, if using light and shadow to depict form.
- Visualize icons should work well on both white and black backgrounds.
- Scale the icon for different sizes (1,024 × 1,024 pixels; 512 × 512 pixels; 256 × 256 pixels; 128 × 128 pixels; 32 × 32 pixels; 16 × 16 pixels).

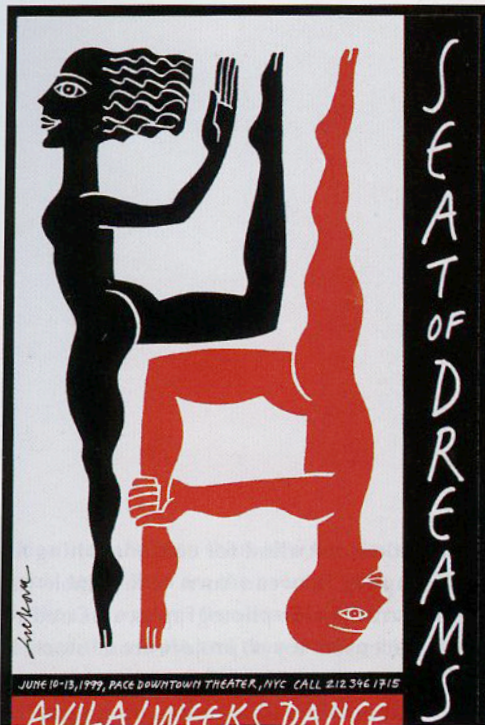


Fig. 6-5 /// POSTER: AVILA/WEEKS DANCE

LUBA LUKOVA STUDIO, NEW YORK

- Designer/Illustrator: Luba Lukova
- Client: Pace Downtown Theater

MEDIA, METHODS, AND VISUALIZATION

After you generate a design concept or several concepts for an assignment, you consider the content, which is the required text and image components. Then you make *preliminary* decisions about:

- **Media and Methods:** How the graphic components will be created, visualized, and displayed on screen or in print. Some media and methods include illustration, drawing and painting, photography, graphic illustration, collage, photomontage, layering, and type as an image.
- **Mode of Visualization and/or Style:** This is how you will render and execute the visuals and type for a project, including decisions about the characteristics of the form.

You can create imagery using a multitude of tools and media. The following list explains broad categories of producing and creating images.

- **Illustration:** a handmade unique image that accompanies or complements printed, digital, or spoken text, which clarifies, enhances, illuminates, or demonstrates the message of the text. Some designers, such as Luba Lukova (Figure 6-5), Robynne Raye (Figure 6-6), Frank Viva

(Figure 5-6), Lanny Sommese (Figure 7-11), among many others, also illustrate. Professional illustrators work in a variety of media and most often have uniquely identifiable styles. The AIGA notes, “Each illustrator brings a different perspective, vision and idea to play that, when married with great design, becomes an original art form.” When you are working professionally and need to hire an illustrator, you can find one through their representatives (agents) or in annuals, in sourcebooks, and through professional organizations. (On a historical note, prior to the invention of photography, and also when photography was in its infancy and the equipment cumbersome, illustration was the most popular form of imagery in visual communication.)

- **Photography:** a visual created using a camera to capture or record an image. Commercial photographers specialize in various genres, such as still life, portraiture, sports, outdoor imagery, fashion, journalist, aerial, landscape, urban, moving image, events, food, and others. When you are working professionally and need to hire a photographer, you can find one in annuals, sourcebooks, on the Internet, or through their agents. Fine art photography and journalistic photography are also utilized in graphic design. (Today, photography is probably the most popular form of image in visual communication.)
- **Graphic interpretation:** an elemental visualization of an object or subject, almost resembling a sign, pictograph, or symbol in its reductive representation. Although a graphic interpretation employs economy (stripping down visuals to fundamental forms), what differentiates a graphic interpretation from a sign or pictograph is its expressive quality; it is often more descriptive. *With the same skill set used to design logos or pictographs, graphic designers can capably create graphic interpretations.*
- **Collage:** a visual created by cutting and pasting bits or pieces of paper, photographs, cloth, or any material to a two-dimensional surface, which can be combined with handmade visuals and colors. A conventional collage

technique can be simulated and rethought for digital media using computer software (and its tools and capabilities) and hardware, a digital camera, a digital pen and tablet, and/or a scanner.

- **Photomontage:** a composite visual made up of a number of photographs or parts of photographs to form a unique image.
- **Mixed media:** a visual resulting from the use of different media—for example, photography combined with illustration.
- **Motion graphics:** time-based visual communication that integrates visuals, typography, and audio; it is created using film, video, and computer software, including animation, television commercials, film titles, and promotional and informational applications for broadcast media and screen media.
- **Diagram:** a graphic representation of information, statistical data, a structure, environment, or process—the workings of something. A **chart** is a specific type of diagrammatic representation of facts or data. A **graph** is a specific type of diagram used to indicate relationships between two (or more) variables, often represented on axes. A **map** is a specific type of diagrammatic representation used to depict a route or geographic area—to show location.

CREATING, SELECTING, AND MANIPULATING IMAGES

Imagery is either *created* by the designer, *commissioned* from an illustrator or photographer, *selected* by the designer from among obtainable stock imagery or the client's archives, or *found* by the designer.

When a budget does not allow for commissioning an illustrator or photographer, you can turn to available archives of preexisting illustrations or photographs, referred to as *stock*, which can be licensed for a project from stock houses (a creative resource for graphic design, advertising, and media professionals that provides illustration, photography, footage, and rights services). Broad collections of imagery, footage (a shot or sequence of shots on videotape or film), and music are available online from stock houses. Stock and image collections can be rights-managed (licensed, some with exclusive rights) or royalty-free (unlimited-use license). Always read the agreement from each stock vendor.

When you create your own image, you are in control. You decide what goes into the image or scene (point of view, colors, textures, people, pictorial space, clothing, setting, etc.). As a practicing designer or art director, when you commission an image from a professional illustrator or photographer, you also have input over the art direction of the image.

When you *select* a stock image, you either accept the image as is—as someone else conceived, visualized, and composed it—or alter it, *assuming the stock image provides rights for such alterations*. When you utilize a stock photograph, for example, you decide if everything in that photograph will enhance the communication. You may need to delete extraneous elements in the photograph if they detract from focus or meaning. Or you may need to alter (color or tonality, crop, silhouette, posterize, texturize, paint, etc.) the photograph.

The difference between creating an image and selecting an image is one of control. Every component of an image contributes to communication. For example, legendary American cartoonist Henry Martin explains his process:

I get the idea first and then think how the idea would look. What props would I need? Who are the people? What are their clothes? Where are they? In a room? On a boat? In America? Then I imagine the setting and the people and then start to draw. I usually do a rough drawing and then a finished drawing.

Some designers employ *found* imagery, utilizing openly available imagery or objects in environments, public domain, or copyright-free images (woodcuts, linocuts, etchings, patterns, rules, and more). There are historical images, ephemera, old postcards, old letters, old maps, family photos, old photos, old playing cards, old stamps, and old greeting cards. These and images such as old wrapping paper, old cigar box labels, other old labels, old signs, and so forth all include securing necessary rights if any are required.

Image making also involves manipulation. A common decision a designer must make is whether to use a visual *as is* or change it—manipulate it. Image manipulation includes:

- *Alteration*: a modification or change to the appearance of an image
- *Combination*: merging two or more different or related images into a unique whole
- *Cropping*: cut part of a photograph
- *Deliberated camera angle and viewpoint*: the perspective from which you position your camera (still or moving)
- *Economy*: a reductive visualization
- *Exaggeration*: a modification that embellishes, amplifies, or overstates
- *Silhouette*: removing the background of an image leaving only the outline of an object or figure

IMAGERY, IMAGE APPROPRIATION, AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Many students start the visualization process by searching through stock image websites. This route stunts thinking and visualization. Also, the ease of finding high-resolution visuals on the Internet has led to some significant issues concerning image appropriation and violating intellectual property rights. Other than copyright-free images that are in the public domain, most photographs, illustrations, and graphic representations found on the Internet or in print publications are intellectual property (original creative work that is legally protected) belonging to other visual artists. In a professional setting, a designer or art director would have to commission images from a photographer or illustrator for a design project and/or license stock images from an archive or a stock house.

Many design directors and creative directors prefer to see original visuals created by students themselves in their portfolio projects. Original work demonstrates a student's creativity, skills, individuality, range, and initiative. With the advantage of digital cameras, students can take their own photography and work in Adobe Photoshop™. Scanners allow students to scan in their own hand-made images and illustrations or illustrate using computer software. Digital drawing tools and tablets facilitate making images. Some use of stock imagery in your portfolio allows creative directors to see that a beginner can choose stock appropriately and well. Choosing appropriately and well entails understanding images—their denotative and connotative meaning, classification, style, shape, orientation, lighting, point of view/angle, color palette, and composition. It's best to focus on original work and include occasional stock images in projects to demonstrate your skills in both areas.

Certainly, you are free to change or manipulate your own illustrations or photographs. However, original artwork created by other illustrators or photographers *cannot* be changed without the creator's approval or the specific rights in the license with the stock vendor.

Fig. 6-6 /// POSTER: THE PRETENDERS

MODERN DOG DESIGN CO., SEATTLE

- Designer: Robynne Raye
- Client: House of Blues

The pixelated image of Chrissie Hynde corresponds with the treatment of the type to make an imaginative and unified visual statement.

BASICS OF VISUALIZING FORM

Study ways to describe forms as well as approaches to imagery to broaden your vocabulary for visualization.

SHARPNESS VERSUS DIFFUSION

Sharpness is characterized by clarity of form, detail, clean and clear edges and boundaries, saturated color, readable and legible typography, hyperrealism, photorealism, closed compositions, and limited type alignment. **Diffusion** is characterized by blurred forms and boundaries, transparencies, muted color palettes, layering, open compositions, and painterliness.

ACCURACY VERSUS DISTORTION

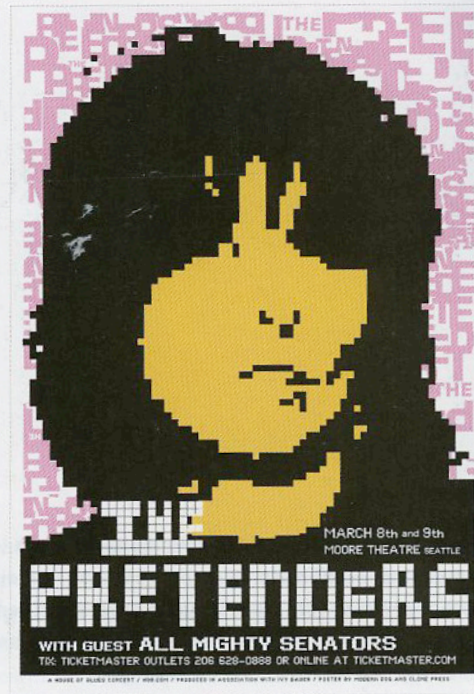
Viewers believe an object or subject to be *accurately* depicted when it conforms with what they know or to common knowledge of that form. When an object or subject is twisted, stretched, bent, warped, buckled, or significantly altered from its normal appearance, it is *distorted*. In the poster promoting a concert by The Pretenders, the image of Chrissie Hynde and the typography are pixelated, expressively distorting them (Figure 6-6).

ECONOMY VERSUS INTRICACY

Economy refers to stripping down visuals to fundamental forms, reducing them, using as little description and as few details as possible for denotation. It is employed for icons, pictographs, and symbols, for instance. **Intricacy** is based on complexity, on the use of many component parts and/or details to describe and visually communicate.

SUBTLE VERSUS BOLD

Using a subtle visualizing treatment is about restraint. *Subtlety* can be created through low contrast, muted color palettes



or tints, static compositions, transparencies, layering, limiting typefaces and alignment, and atmospheric perspective. **Boldness** can be conveyed with big, brassy, aggressive movements and compositions, saturated color palettes, thick lines, high contrast, cropping, or images that are near. Related to this is *understatement versus exaggeration*. An understated visual is less dramatic, subtle, and restrained, whereas an exaggerated depiction uses visual hyperbole and might be bigger, grander, more prominent, more dramatic, embellished, or amplified.

PREDICTABLE VERSUS SPONTANEOUS

Pattern, symmetry, absolute consistency of elements and their treatment, stable compositions, even weights, among other things would be considered *predictable*. Sketchiness, abrupt movements, asymmetry, changes in pace, staccato lines, open forms, changes in case, or blurring of edges could communicate *spontaneity*. In Figure 6-7, the spontaneous quality in Ed Fella's *Low and Behold* poster is conveyed through whimsical changes in the sizes of letters, hand-drawn letters, and forms. You can see why in *Graphis*, Stuart Frolick titled his article about Fella "Design Doodler."

OPAQUE VERSUS TRANSPARENT

Opaque elements are dense, seemingly solid, and not seen through. Elements, type, and visuals can be **transparent**, which means see-through from one image to another, from one letterform to another, or from one color to another, as in the free-form shapes constituting the visuals in Figure

ED FELLA



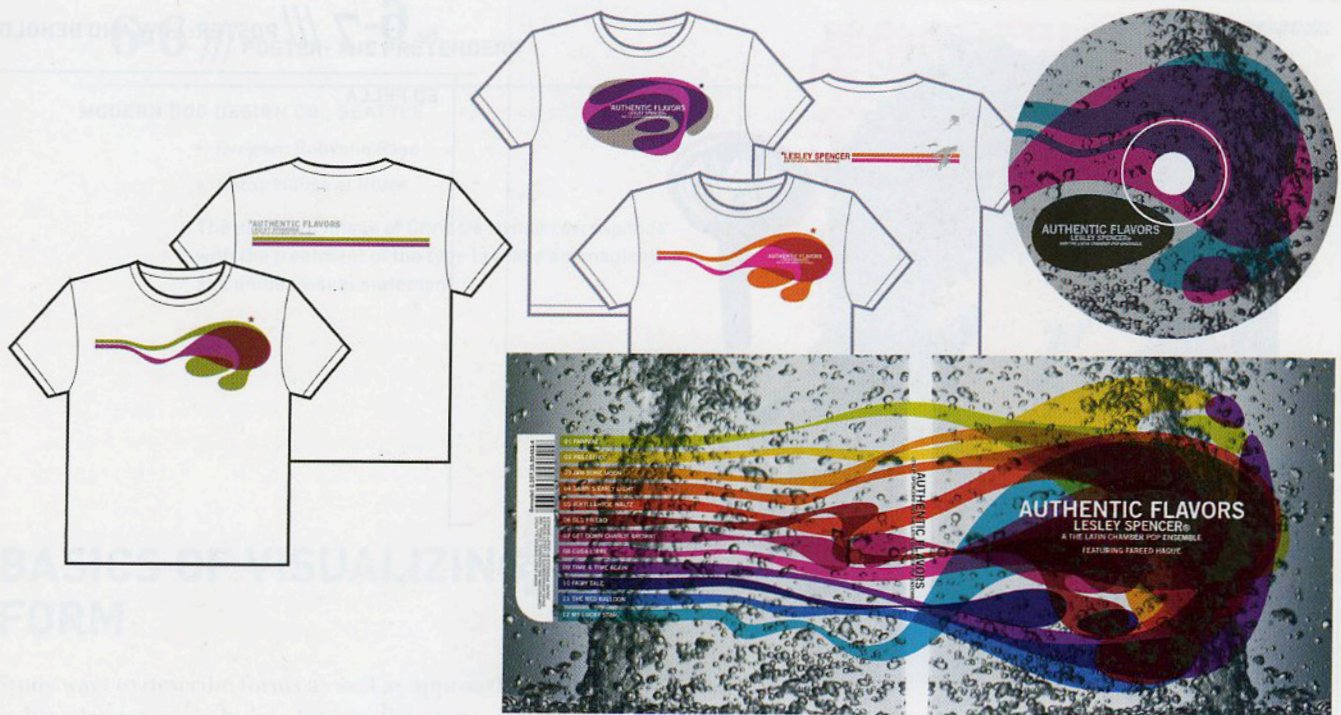
6-8. Seeing through could imply space to various degrees of graphic depth. *Digital transparency* involves altering the opacity of any graphic element or image in print or motion. The contrast of an element is lowered so that it appears transparent in relation to its original opaque form. You also can juxtapose transparent and opaque elements for contrast or another expressive purpose.

Patterns often employ *graphic transparency* where layers of lines, shapes, textures, forms, letterforms, or fields or bands of color overlap. Related to graphic transparency, *linear transparency* refers to transparent layering of linear forms or lines or outline type.

LINEAR VERSUS PAINTERLY MODES

A linear mode is characterized by a predominant use of lines to describe forms or shapes within a composition. In graphic design, painterly modes are characterized by the use of color and value to describe shapes and forms, relying on visible, broad, or a sketchy description of form rather than the specificity of lines. Utilizing a linear or painterly mode can also contribute to unifying a composition.

In his seminal work *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art*, Swiss art historian Heinrich Wölfflin describes linear versus painterly modes of



One of a series of Digipak CD sets for Lesley Spencer. This one is Authentic Flavors with t-shirts. AUTHENTIC FLAVORS LESLEY SPENCER AND THE LATIN CHAMBER POP ENSEMBLE FEATURING FARIED MADRID

Fig. 6-8 /// CD COVER: AUTHENTIC FLAVORS

SEGURA INC., CHICAGO

- Designer: Carlos Segura

Segura utilizes related visual elements (unity with variety) on the CD cover and the CD itself, as well as on promotional items such as T-shirts.

representation in fine art, which help us understand how form and style communicate meaning and how they are shaped by culture, time period, and context.

HARD EDGE VERSUS BRUSHY

In painting, hard-edge visualization is almost diametrically opposed to works in a brushy, painterly style. For the unique “Day Without Art” symbol, by contrasting a brushstroke X with the hard-edge delineation of the square representing a picture frame, meaning is enhanced (Figure 6-9).

PROXIMATE VISION VERSUS DISTANT VISION: MODES OF REPRESENTATION

In this must-read essay “On Point of View in the Arts,” philosopher José Ortega y Gasset offers “proximate vision” and “distant vision” modes, accounting for the difference in how visual artists describe forms that they see. He explains the point of view of artists in relation to what is seen, representative of changes during eras reflecting the culture, religious beliefs, and philosophy of their time periods.

All images are rendered in focus and in detail in *proximate vision* regardless of whether they are near or far in space. There is no evidence of the effect of the atmosphere on what is seen. We see every form and shape with clarity and in detail no matter how far from us it is.

In *distant vision*, the effect of the atmosphere between the artist’s (and viewer’s) vision and the thing seen is in evidence. There is one point of focus (in any given moment, we can only focus on one thing at a time) with surrounding elements somewhat obscured. Distant vision is usually partnered with a painterly mode.

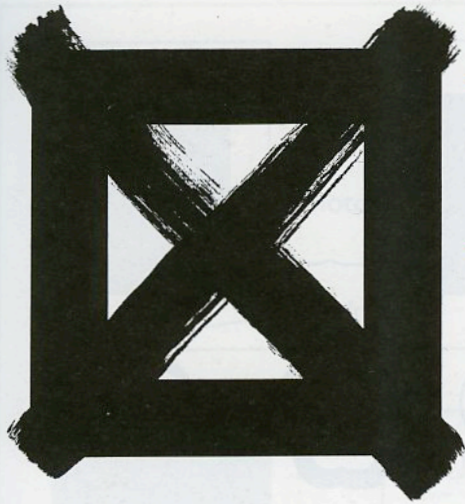


Fig. 6-9 /// SYMBOL: "DAY WITHOUT ART"

MATSUMOTO INCORPORATED, NEW YORK

- *Art Director:* Takaaki Matsumoto

This logo was for the first annual demonstration day, titled "Day Without Art," sponsored by Visual AIDS, a nonprofit AIDS awareness organization.

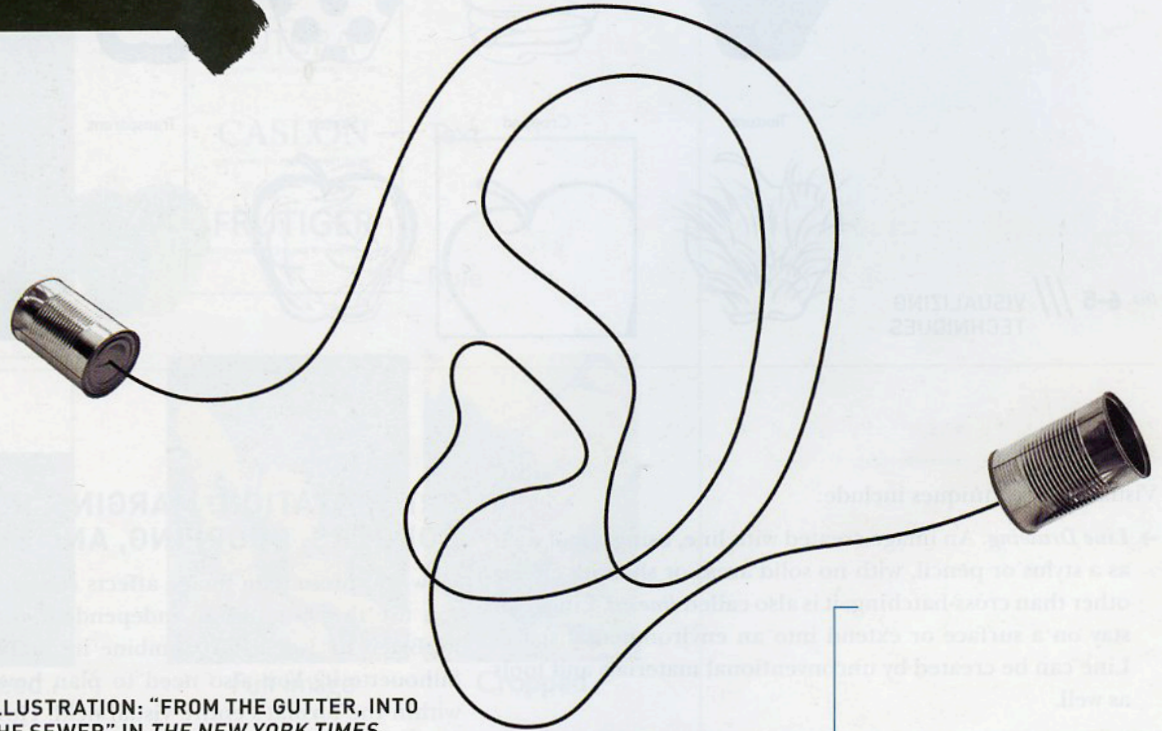


Fig. 6-10 /// ILLUSTRATION: "FROM THE GUTTER, INTO THE SEWER" IN *THE NEW YORK TIMES*

TOPOS GRAPHICS, BROOKLYN

- *Art Directors/Designers:* Seth Labenz, Roy Rub
- *Client:* The New York Times

This image complemented an article by A. C. Grayling about a phone hacking scandal in Britain.

DRAWING FOR DESIGNERS AND GRAPHIC INTERPRETATIONS

Drawing as visualizing for graphic design, in which communication is primary, is different from drawing as a fine art discipline, in which form and personal expression are primary, although similar competencies are necessary. Designers utilize a variety of visualizing techniques (Diagram 6-5). They also use visualizing as a creative process of visual thinking and during concept development and design development. Creative visualization gives expressive form to an idea, as in Figure 6-10.

SINGULARITY VERSUS JUXTAPOSITION

Whether you look at any religious icon—for example, any saint depicted during the Middle Ages—or at a contemporary poster using a single visual, you can see how a singular image can be employed to communicate a message or to symbolize or represent an idea. You can juxtapose two or more images for contrast or in a synergistic way.

Light and Shadow



Linear



Outline



Open



Geometric



Silhouette



Spiral



Pattern



Icon



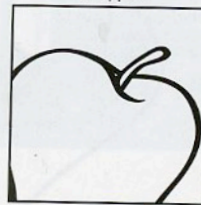
Changing Line Weight



Texture



Cropped



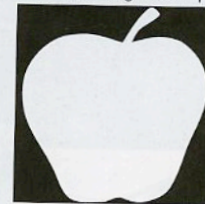
Sketch



Transparent



Positive and Negative Shapes



Di. 6-5 /// VISUALIZING
TECHNIQUES

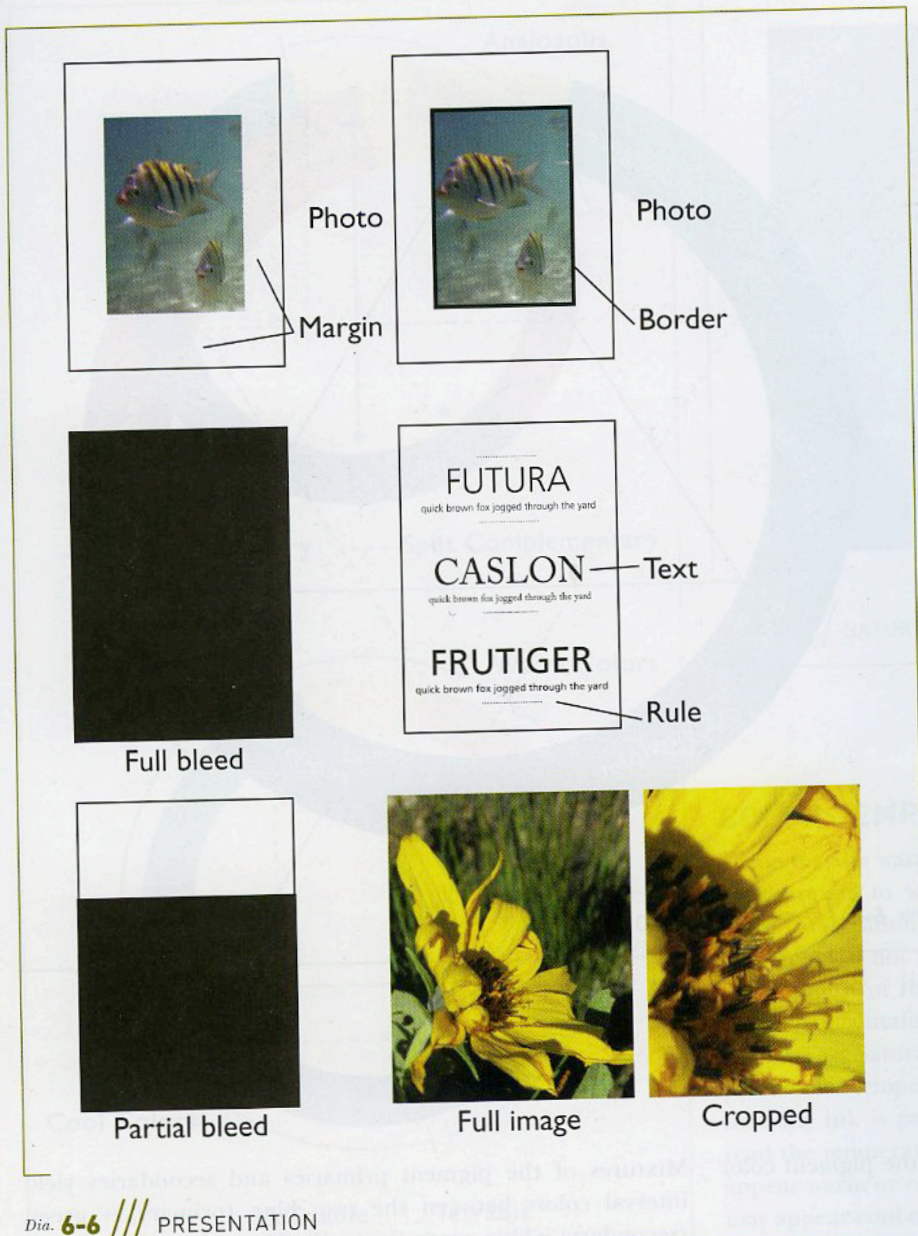
Visualizing techniques include:

- **Line Drawing:** An image created with line, using a tool such as a stylus or pencil, with no solid areas or shading effects other than cross-hatching; it is also called *line art*. Lines can stay on a surface or extend into an environmental space. Line can be created by unconventional materials and tools as well.
- **Contour Drawing:** Emphasis is given to the outline of an object or figure, to its specific contour, to render mass and form.
- **Elemental Flat Shape:** Basic shape rendering of a form using flat colors or neutrals.
- **Tonal Drawing:** A form is depicted through varying tonal values, through shading, rather than through line.
- **Sketches:** A rapid visualization technique; a quick, rough drawing method used to communicate concepts and to present layouts and plans.
- **Rendering:** Drawing to define three-dimensional spaces or objects.
- **Cartoon Drawing:** Simple rendering of figures and situations.
- **Caricaturing:** Drawing that captures particular expressions and features.

PRESENTATION: MARGINS, RULES, BORDERS, CROPPING, AND BLEEDS

How you present an image affects communication. How will you use the visual as an independent entity? Will you crop it? Bleed it? Isolate it? Combine it? Juxtapose it? Frame it? Silhouette it? You also need to plan how you will utilize it within the format's entire visual field. How will the visual be composed on the page? Considerations include:

- **Margins:** the blank space surrounding a visual on the left, right, top, or bottom edge of a page can frame a visual, almost presenting it in a formal manner. Margins also afford space for page numbers, running heads in publications, notations, captions, headings, titles, and credits.
- **Rules:** thin stripe(s) or line(s) used for borders or for separating text, columns of text, or visuals. Most often, rules function best when used to separate, as *dividers*, attracting little notice.
- **Borders:** a graphic band that runs along the edge of an image, acting to separate the image from the background, like a frame, by something as simple as a thin rule or as ornate as a Baroque frame. Borders can also act to emphasize the boundaries of an image. *A border should never overwhelm or distract from what it frames.*



Dia. 6-6 /// PRESENTATION

→ **Cropping:** the act of cutting an image, a photograph, or an illustration to use only part of it, not using it in its entirety. Crop an image to edit it, to improve it, or to delete visual information that might distract the viewer from the communication. You can crop for effect. Cropping alters the original visual. It alters its outer shape, its internal scale, how the inner content is framed, and can change its focus.

→ **Bleed or full bleed:** type or a visual that extends off the edges of the page, filling the page with an image. A *partial bleed* can run off one, two, or three sides (see Diagram 6-6).

USING COLOR

Responses to color vary depending on culture, region, gender, and personal preferences. Color is elusive; its meaning is tied to specific experiential contexts. It has optical properties that change. Color is physical and also lives in the digital realm.

Some designers have an affinity for using color. They create unique color palettes and understand the potential of color to communicate on a symbolic, brand, and visceral level. Others have to study color. Although we design for print and screen,