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Animation
التحريك

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Introduction

The process of making an illusion of motion is known as animation. The illusion or apparition is created by the change in rapid series of sequential images that actually differ from each other.Animation, which is basically a form of pictorial presentation, has become the most prominent feature of technology-based learning environments. It refers to simulated motion pictures showing movement of drawn objects. Recently, educational computer animation has turned out to be one of the most elegant tools for presenting multimedia materials for learners, and its significance in helping to understand and remember information has greatly increased since the advent of powerful graphics-oriented computers.

Fig (1) Animation

Types of animation

1. Traditional animation

In traditional animation, every frame is hand drawn for creating an animation image sequence. It consists of large numbers of hand drawings called "Frames". In the past, the drawing occurred on a big light table. It was a drafting table with a big light section in the central point of it. The animator drew the image sequence on it, and the light allowed the animator to see his earlier drawings all the way through the paper to get a better look of his animation. The 2D or traditional animation is generally animated at 12 frames per second with more frequent and rapid animated actions at 24 frames per second.

2. 2D Animation

Vector-based animation is referring to 2D animation. This is all around preferred configuration from most recent couple of years with the expanding clients. 2D animation software is easy to use as it is for entry level and has a user-friendly interface.

3. Computer Animation

Computer animation is also known as 3D animation. It is the common form of animation. 3D animation works in a totally extraordinary manner from traditional animation, all the animators are considered to be associated with a standard organization and has certain level of creative development. In 3D animation, the artist moves the character in a 3D program by manipulating controllers, which are associated with each body part, for example, hands, elbows, lips and etc. Like 2D animation, an animator in 3D program doesn't have draw to move every frame. Animators set the key frame on the timeline when the models are ready to animate. Proceed to move forward in timeline and move all those controllers again to create another key frame in the 3D program. Then the program calculates and animates the frames between those two key frames. Animators take maximum time to clean the curves for a detailed and smooth animation, which helps for the development of various body parts later on. The body parts are constantly present and contemplate. In 2D animation, the character draws for each edge. At the point when the character is seen from the side portion of its body is not appearing and in this manner not drawn.

4. Motion Graphics

Motion graphics is considered as a type of graphics animation. Motion graphics is somewhat not quite the same as alternate part of animation. Unlike any animation, it is not character- or story- driven. It is the craft of imagination of moving realistic components or content which is mainly

used for business or promotional purposes, enlivened logos, introduction recordings, TV promos or even film opening titles. The abilities for motion graphics do not vitally means alternate sorts of animation since, they don't require information of body mechanics or acting. However, they do have a few characteristics in similar manner. For example: Presenting great arrangement and extremely imperative camera motion.

5. Stop Motion

A standout amongst the most well-known structures is clay animation. Working with mud characters can undoubtedly be controlled for animation. The animation process is similar to 2D animation, creating poses of movements and moving it little step by step while taking pictures of each movement. Then the pictures are used to play equentially, which creates illusion of motion. The characteristics of the characters can be supplanted in light of the articulations or be controlled inside the rig.

principles of animation

Walt Disney Studio's animators developed the twelve principles of animation in 1930. Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston distributed them in their book "The Illusion of Life" Disney Animation, in 1981. Those standards came due to their goals to make sensible animations, through the development and articulation of the character. The standards taken after the essential laws of material science additionally manage more issues which are conceptual. These principles were utilized as rules to make toons and are still used today in numerous animation studios, Principles are:

1. Squash and stretch

This is the rule that defines speed, energy, weight and mass of any animated subject. This is the most important principle of animation. Squash and stretch also use too exaggerated facial expressions and when you are animating dialogue you can apply it in any simple objects. For example, bouncing balls

and very difficult creations like characters face muscles. It is the principal strategy for artists.

2. Anticipation

This is the point when a character gets ready for action guiding audience what is going to happen next. It makes the activity seem more sensible. When a character is going to hop, before jumping into the air he needs to get ready for the activity by hunching down. To fabricate the vitality, it is resembled with a spring that loops up before discharging. A character's hopping with no anticipation is extremely unreasonable, in light of the fact that the vitality to bounce appears unexpectedly.

3. Staging

Running pose holding for a second before taking off. Anticipation also utilizes rather than quickly extending up the face squashes initially to anticipate the extent and give it more power anticipation imparts activities to the group of onlookers by setting them up for the following activity. This can occur from numerous points of views. In the event that a character is going to remove something from their pocket, they arrange the position of their hand exceptionally obvious and not yet decided before going into the pocket. The most important thing is that the viewer notices the hand and the pocket so the character cannot perform any competing actions. Staging is the introduction of guiding the gathering of people's thoughtfulness regarding what is essential in the scene. The extreme expansive guidelines are totally unmistakable as they cover a large number of zones of animation. It can apply to acting, timing, camera edge position and setting. During animation, you need to be in full control of where people are looking at. You are basically saying to take a gander at this, the control is accomplish through staging, the majority of the components of the scene cooperate to move the watcher's eyes around the scene.

4. Straight ahead and pose to pose animation

This rule portrays two strategies used to animate drawings. The main technique is drawing the principal drawing and then moving on to the second drawing and so on. Then, sequentially arrange them by outlining from the beginning. The second technique is 'pose to pose' in which you draw the starting and end of every principle pose and later on fill in the drawings at the middle called in-between poses. There are advantages to these two strategies but 'pose to pose' is by far better for most activities since it gives the maximum control to what the activity will resemble. In pose to pose technique, you could do the fundamental poses to check whether it feels right and if you can get issues at an opportune time straight ahead animation. It is also useful for animation, which is flighty. A few cases of this incorporates fire, water, particles, dust and storms blasts explain the motivation behind straight ahead functions, which admirably is on the grounds that there are laws of material science that work at a steady rate and it is difficult to foresee them. Another method is animate using pose to pose, then going through, and adding the years using straight ahead. This is good because you can focus on the figures' movements without the distraction of having to do it and you can focus on the physics of the particular movement without the distraction of his body's movement.

5. Follow through and overlapping action

This is the strategy of having body parts and different parts behind, whatever remains of the body and keeps on moving, a few sections of the body lead the action, and others follow the development. Drag is another main stream method where the following parts of the body take a couple of more casings to get the primary lead parts.

6. Slow in and slow out

This rule alludes to the way practically all development begins gradually, constructs speed and completes gradually. This stands out amongst the most imperative procedure of accomplishing life like a motion without moderate in and moderate out feel mechanical. It is in light of the fact that robots are one

of the main things that really move their parts at a consistent speed to utilize. This principle in 2D animation is your extraordinary poses that attract a solitary between and then just in the middle of the drawings nearest to the extremes until the point that you're happy with the measure of moderate in and moderate out. With 3D animation and motion graphics having moderate in and moderate out issue, can be solved by changing the motion bends from straight to spline, modifying the Bezier handles to create a smooth curve in graph as time advances, the protest begins moderate gets quick.

7. Arcs

Every action follows an arc, either you swing arm, throw a ball or chew a food. Curves make the animation feel normal and realistic. Arc in motion helps to define momentum too. Any object not following its natural arc will not look fluidic but erratic for example you cannot make sharp turn in a speeding vehicle rather than a slow moving vehicle.

8. Secondary Action

It implies something altogether, different secondary action portraying helps the fundamental action to add more measurement to the character animation. The secondary action commands the essential action. Secondary action helps in characterization or expressing emotion like a tensed man is walking left and right with hands in his pocket, joyful person walking with swinging hands and whistling, a horse is running so its tail is waving fast following the movement of body. The principle of staging is also very vital in secondary action.

9. Timing

Timing means the speed of action which gives the quantity of in-betweens i.e. between two keys. It includes picking the quantity of edges that will be used to animate a scene. The quantity of edges demonstrates the speed of the action on the film. The less casings and action the animation has, the speedier and crisper it will get. On the off chance that an action has many edges, it will be moderate and smooth. Timing adds surface and enthusiasm to

the development of your characters. A decent approach to rehearse this method would be considering the acting and development of on-screen characters and entertainers in front of an audience and utilize it as reference while animating.

10. Exaggeration

Each action poses and articulations are taken to the following level to build the measure of effect on the watcher. The early artists at Disney would get confounded on the grounds that Walt would instruct them to, which includes more authenticity yet when they transformed it. He would ensure the outcome since it was not overstated enough.

11.Solid drawing

This principle is tied with ensuring that structures feel like they are in three-dimensional space with volume and weight. Adjusting one thing that makes animating simpler is having the capacity to draw a figure from all points. This requires learning of three- dimensional drawing. For instance, when drawing a line on a circle, it must follow the shape of the circle's surface. A straight line right away makes the circle look levelled when drawing blocks abstain from making parallel lines. Lines are ought to be twisted towards the vanishing point, otherwise it will resemble a level.

12.Appeal

The last principle of animation is appeal. Characters that you animate ought to be some degree satisfying to take a look at. They should have some sort of magnetic angle about them to be liked. A character's appeal doesn't generally mean attractiveness, it may be based on its look or characteristics.

Stages of creating an animation

The stages for creating an animation, it has to go through phase's like:

- **Pre- production**
- **Production**
- **Post-production**

These stages are sub-divided into parts and the animators execute their work as decided.

1. Pre-production: Pre-Production is the period of time during which work is done on a show prior to the first rehearsal. During pre-production, you make decisions that dictate how the rest of the production comes together. During pre-production, following things are finalized so that all the obstacles are removed to get a smooth production.

- Writing the story
- Production plan
- Character development
- Story board
- Creating premises
- Scene planning
- Sound track

2. Production: This is the most challenging stage of creating an animation film. At the stage, you get to see the actual result of the treatment given to the story and the visual achievement of the director's imagination.

- Recording the dialogue
- Layout designing
- Background designing
- Animating

3. Post Production : Post Production is the process of compositing and editing both the pictures into an organized matter.

- Compositing
- Digital compositing
- Computer effects
- Sound
- Editing
- Mixing audio-video
- Final mixing

Motion and Graphic

Motion design is an emerging field that combines both motion media and graphic media. Motion media includes disciplines such as animation, film, and sound. The defining quality of motion media is change that happens over time. Graphic media includes disciplines such as graphic design, illustration, photography, and painting. Graphic forms of media do not change over time. They appear static through a defined viewport. Because change happens over time, motion design is often called a time-based media. Change can happen over the course of a few frames, seconds, minutes, hours, or even days. Interactive motion, installation art, and new media art may not even have a fixed duration, or may possess a shifting timeline. Motion offers the opportunity to play with qualities of rhythm and tension. Regardless of the actual duration, an understanding of how to create interesting contrasts over time is essential for strong motion design.


Fig (2) Motion graphics

Art and Design

There are two different extremes of motion design: motion that is more like fine art and motion that is more like design or commercial art. Motion in the realm of fine art evokes qualities of mystery or ambiguity. Motion in the realm of commercial art aims at communicating certainty. Of course, there is motion design that has aspects of both fine and commercial art. For instance, a commercial may start with art and mystery, but will finish with design and

certainty. The first twenty-five seconds of a thirty second commercial takes the viewer on a journey that inspires emotions and ideas. The final five seconds invariably ends with a logo animation that leaves the viewer with no uncertainty about who has delivered the message.
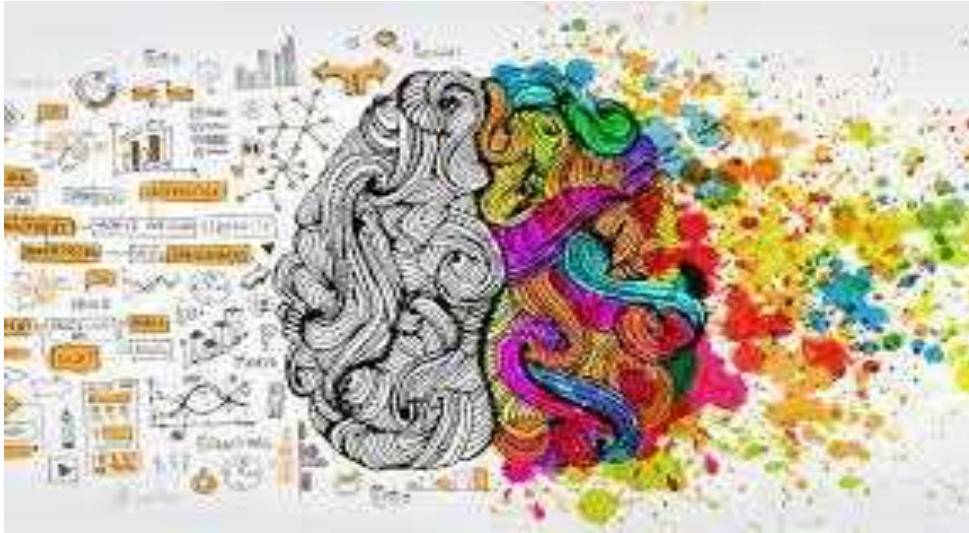
Fig(3) Art VS Design

Graphic to Motion

The relationship between motion and graphic is vital to motion design. Beautiful motion begins with a beautiful graphic image. A still image defines space, depth, and a focal point. This single frame shows a moment in time for a motion design project. It also illustrates the visual style. By starting with a single frame, a designer can imagine and plan for animation. Effective compositions are more easily created in graphic form, which can then be translated into motion. Regardless of the style of a graphic image, a strong composition is required to generate interest in a viewer.The principle of contrast and tension as a method for creating interest is shared between motion and graphic.

Contrast Creates Tension

Tension draws a viewer into a piece. It can be expressed through concept, story, and image composition. Typically, when we watch a show, or read a novel, we hope to be told a story that grips us in some way. We want to be transported and moved emotionally and intellectually. As designers of motion, we need to

create tension in order to successfully produce this experience. Contrast is the key to delivering tension in a piece: disparity in composition between positive and negative space, dark and light values, large and small scale, etc. is what helps to create visual interest

Fig (4) Visual Tension in Graphic Design

Varying Compositions

Motion design creates varying compositions over time. These changing compositions allow for rising and falling tension, unexpected surprises, and impactful communication. In order to be effective with motion, one must first be effective with composition. This precept is one of the primary principles that links motion and graphics. In addition, a motion designer must learn how to change composition with intention. Compositions can change with subtle grace or with shocking abruptness. This description is the essence of how motion transitions over time. As motion slows down, it begins to become more graphic or static. The tipping point between motion and graphic is the exact point where change can be perceived through a viewport. This combination of motion and graphic media mirrors the overlap of studio business models that work in the motion design industry.

Design-Driven Production

Design-driven production is a relatively new term used to describe a business model that has arisen from motion design. It is a hybrid of traditional film production companies and design firms. Some also include qualities of traditional advertising agencies. The entire range of preproduction, production, and post-production can be found in design-driven studios. Some of the creative roles in design-driven production are designers, animators, editors, art directors, writers, creative directors, and live-action directors. On the production side, there are talent coordinators, producers, and executive producers. There may also be sales representatives, recruiters, or other types of production roles, like production assistants. Design-driven production companies service a range of creative industries like advertising, film, and digital or interactive. Types of motion design projects include commercials, film titles, network branding, broadcast show packages, digital signage, projection mapping, video game cinematics, webbanners, user experience design, and interactive motion design.

What is Design for Motion?

Design for motion is the marriage of image-making and storytelling. It is the first creative stage of a project in a designdriven production. Before we begin to make things move, either in camera or through animation, a certain amount of planning is required. A project needs a strong concept, a visual style, a story or narrative, and specifications for output and delivery. As the project moves from the design stage into motion, the creative boundaries are mapped out for the production team. We begin this process by developing a concept through techniques—such as free writing, word lists, mind maps.

Design for motion

Beautiful motion begin with beautiful design

Motion design is a container for visual compositions that change over time. A graphic designer understands how to create harmony in a single image, whereas a motion designer creates harmony across a sequence of images. This sequence of images is translated into motion by an animator or team of animators when a project moves into production. The designer's job is to create a unified visual style for a project. They also establish visual hierarchies that direct the viewers' focus. A motion design piece without a strong designer will at best have elegant movements. More than likely, it will fail to connect with viewers and fail to communicate effectively. Figure 5 is an example of design for motion. Every frame feels like it belongs in the design board. The unified visual aesthetic is created by clear and consistent design choices such as the color palette and illustrative line quality. The sequential layout of frames communicates a visual narrative and a plan for how the story changes over time. Contrast is used throughout the design board both visually and conceptually. There is a strong contrast between light and dark elements, positive and negative space, and emotional tones of sadness and happiness.
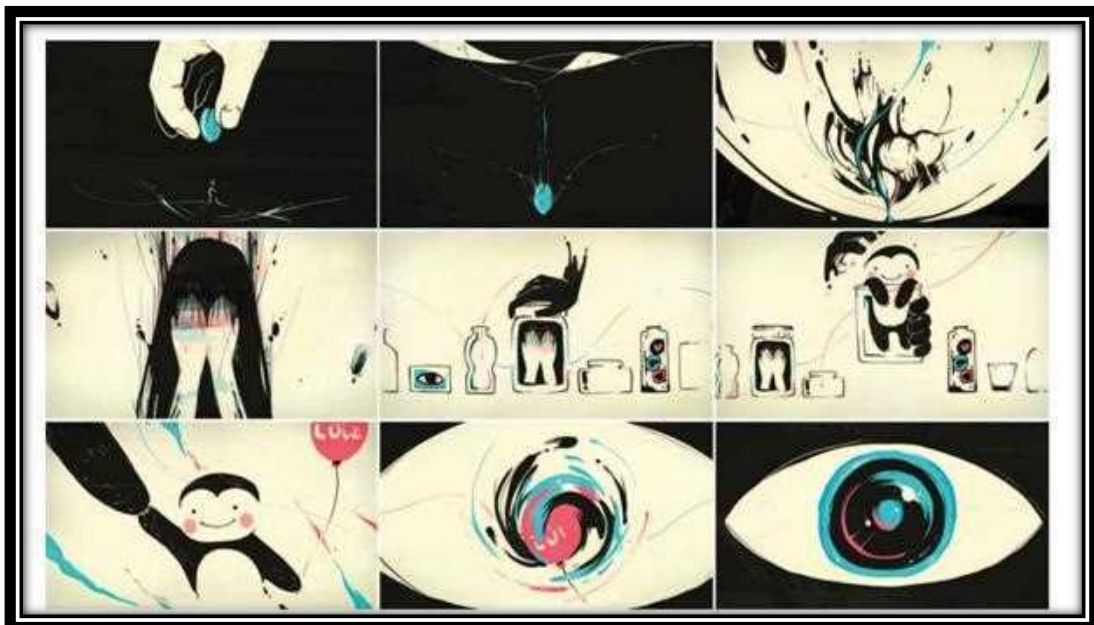
Fig (5) DESIGN BOARD

Building on Traditions

As a creative discipline, motion design is relatively young. It is also very eclectic, as it builds on the traditions of many other creative fields. Ultimately, motion design and specifically design-driven production build upon the tradition of the atelier, or classical workshop. The price of hardware, including computers, cameras, and storage devices, continues to go down, while the processing power and capabilities of these devices increases. This technological revolution made the field of motion design accessible to a wide range of creative types.

Motion design needs strong designers to concept ideas, create unique visual styles, and tell interesting stories. Motion design needs people who understand how to effectively communicate. Professionals working in graphic design, photography, advertising, animation, visual effects, editing, film, and interactive design can find professional opportunities in motion design.

Graphic Design

Graphic designers are trained to create effective visual layouts, work with typography, and communicate messages clearly. All of these skills apply to motion design, and design for motion is an excellent introduction to the industry.

Fig (6) Graphic Design

Illustration

Illustrators do very well in motion design. They are trained to create strong compositions across a range of visual aesthetics. They are the quintessential image-makers of the creative world. Illustrators that learn about the language of design for motion, or how to think sequentially, can play a very creative role in design driven productions.

Fig (7) The Association of Illustrators

Sequential Art

As creators of comic books, graphic novels, and hand drawn storyboards, sequential artists already think about images changing over time. They understand storytelling and cinematic changes that make a visual narrative interesting. These skills are essential to design for motion and can be combined with digital illustration to create style frames and design boards.
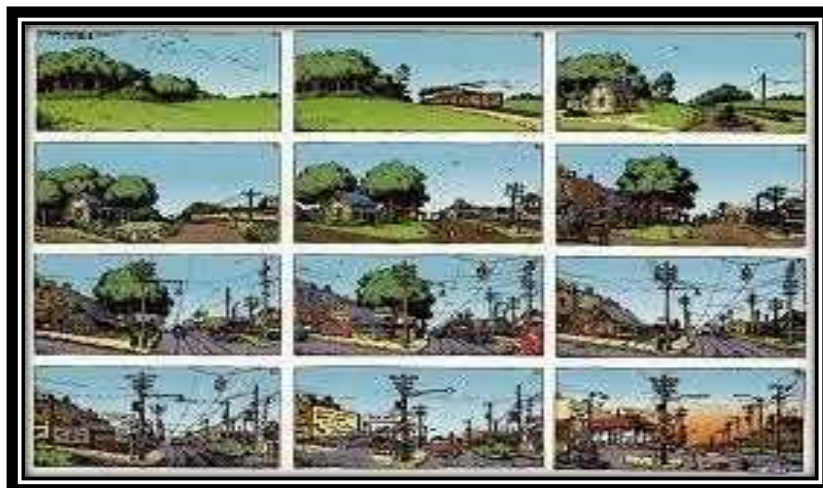

Fig (8) The Sequential Art

Photography

Image-making is rooted in frame composition. Photographers are trained to see and capture strong compositions through the lens of a camera. They understand how to frame a scene through a viewport. They also have a strong foundation in lighting and value, which is essential for any kind of image-making. Compositing live-action or photography with design elements is a common aesthetic direction for many motion design projects.

Advertising

The advertising industry is one of the primary employers of design-driven production studios. Advertisers work directly with clients to formulate strategies and big picture ideas for marketing campaigns. Advertising uses motion design for everything from prototyping to executing commercial projects. Design for motion and advertising are similar as they both serve the purpose of giving form to creative ideas.

Fig (9) The advertising

Creative Writing

Writing is an extremely important part of motion design. Conceptual development and narrative development rely on writing to record ideas. As a time-based media, motion design tells a narrative or story. This process requires the ability to write a script or treatment. For communication purposes, it is essential that a designer is able to write descriptions about his or her work. Many design-driven studios employ writers to help brainstorm projects, prepare presentations, and develop scripts for larger productions.

Animation

Motion design is a form of animation. However, traditional animation tends to focus on character development and literary narrative. Motion design focuses on art direction and uses a wide range of design assets. Also, traditional animation is typically long format, whereas motion design projects are relatively short. Despite these differences, animators and motion designers work side-by-side in many design-driven production studios.

Fig (10)Motion design

Visual Effects

Like animation, visual effects has similarities to motion design. Many of the same tools and principles are applied to both disciplines. The key differences exist in how they fit in the production workflow. Visual effects artists bring an incredible attention to detail and mastery of technical skills. In the film industry, they tend to work on specific shots for a project over a long period of time. Visual effects artists are very valuable in motion design because of their highly specialized skill sets.

Fig (11) visual effects

Editing

Strong film editing skills are essential to motion design. Motion design must be arranged in a manner that takes the viewer on a journey. Editors understand the rhythm of storytelling and how to create dramatic tension through a viewport. All motion designers can benefit from education and training in editing.

Film

Directing and cinematography are also essential to motion design. Although motion designers may rarely direct talent, they are always directing the movement and expression of visual elements. Some motion designers are quite comfortable directing live-action, and they can move fluidly between live talent and digital media. Cinematographers paint with light and record beautiful compositions through a camera lens. These skills translate directly into motion design as an understanding of light and dark help a designer to direct the focal point of a scene. Design for motion draws heavily from the art and language of cinematic storytelling.

Interactive Design and User Experience

Students and professionals of interactive design and user experience can also utilize motion design. Both disciplines rely on the principle of change. In motion design, change is something witnessed by the *viewer*. With interactive and user experience design, change is something that is initiated by the *user*. Although there are different considerations in terms of passive and active change, motion design can be used to enhance the experience of interactivity.

Style frames

A style frame is a snapshot of a finished frame as it would look within a longer animation. It aims to capture the overall look and feel of an animated or live action video, but in a still image. Style frames can help capture the colors, mediums, textures, photography, and assets that you plan to use in your video. The storyboard and style frames is an excellent way to expect the look of the project.

What is a style frame

A *style frame* is a single frame or image that depicts the look and feel of a motion design project. Style frames are the visual representation of what a motion piece will look like prior to any animation. They are one of the primary outcomes and deliverables of design for motion. Style frames are important for a number of reasons. Most importantly, style frames help to win pitches for commercial projects. A single image can be the difference between a studio or designer winning a project, or losing out to another studio/designer. Because style frames help to win jobs, the designers who create them play an extremely important role in design-driven productions. Aside from their financial importance, style frames guide a production team's efforts. They provide a visual solution to the needs of a creative, thus establishing the boundaries of a project. Style frames contain conceptual ideas and glimpses of broader narratives. The art of composing style frames allows a designer to communicate a message with clarity, potency, and purpose. Style frames are the medium a designer uses to present the look of a project before the motion phase begins.

Fig (12)Style frames

Visual Patterns

A style frame defines the visual pattern of a motion design project. Style includes choices such as color palette, materials or mediums, textures, typography, and cinematic conventions. These choices help to form creative borders around a project. These borders specify what stylistically belongs in a motion design project and what does not, which is beneficial to the production team of animators, compositors, cinematographers, editors, and producers, as well as the client. Young designers will often rush through this phase of aproject, or skip it altogether. That is a bad idea. It is very easy to tell when a designer has not spent time on concept or style frame development. Concepts are not fleshed out; compositions are boring; stories are uninteresting; transitions are not considered; and the motion is weak. Conversely, when designers invest time and effort into style frames, they create beautiful projects. The function of a style frame is to establish a unique visual pattern that provides a foundation for a motion design project. A style emerges when this visual pattern becomes recognizable, thus creating the feeling or sense that every element in the frame or viewport belongs together. Style frames also represent the stage where a project goes from the potential of *being anything* to definitively *becoming something*.

Fig (13) visual pattern

Stylistic Guides

In addition to winning projects, style frames also serve as a guide for the production team for the final look of the project. A *style guide* is extremely important for a commercial production. Style guides provide clear parameters about the specified usage of visual elements such as color, typography, texture, etc. They are especially important when working with large teams of animators, compositors, and 3D artists. Everyone on the project needs to be working toward creating the established design aesthetic. For a large-scale production, there will ideally be a style frame for every scene or setup within a project. For smaller productions, or even solo projects, style frames are just as important.

Fig (14) Style frame Guide

Form express the function

Style frames should be beautiful, but, more importantly, they should always express a concept. Style frames give form and shape to ideas. But weak ideas will be eye-candy at best, even ifthe style is beautiful. This kind of design falls into the category of *form over function*—an error that occurs when a designer focuses only on making something look great. The main idea or concept becomes a secondary consideration to establishing a visual aesthetic. The design may be eye-catching, but it lacks an impactful message or purpose. However, a beautiful design coupled with a strong concept is powerful. This concept illustrates the classical idea of *form expressing function*. *Design Like a Champ* For the purpose of learning, it is suggested that you do not worry about animating or producing the style frames and design boards that you make using the exercises and assignments in this textbook. Of course, you can animate them if you wish. In design-driven productions, it is common for large teams to work together to bring an

original aesthetic to life. This means that ,in addition to designers, a production can include live-action directors, cinematographers, animators, compositors, 3D artists, editors, and producers. All of these creative people work together to bring a project to life with motion.

Fig (15) Style frame

Young designers can become discouraged if they cannot create motion of the same caliber as they can make style frames and design boards. But it is not realistic to expect that a single person can create in motion what a large team can create in a design-driven production company that is working with a budget.

Motion design is a serious business and requires a professional attitude, especially in the realm of commercial art where design-driven production is powered by financial budgets, teams of creative artists, and producers. However, this professionalism does not mean that we cannot enjoy the process. We will probably create better work if we are having fun. We should always do our best and strive for the strongest outcomes. We need to produce interesting concepts, beautiful style frames, surprising transitions, and successful design boards.

Fig (16) Style frame

A moments in time

Style frames are containers for moments of time within a scene or project. A style frame should feel like a still that was pulled from a finished motion design piece. Style frames are also the starting point of a narrative, and, in practical terms, the bridge to *design boards*. A sequence of individual style frames laid out in a linear fashion is a design board. Design boards utilize the "language of cinematic storytelling" to pre-visualize an entire motion design piece prior to production. The concepts must be strong and meet the needs of the client, and our designs must also be beautiful. However, strong design always makes a good impression. Regardless if we win or lose, we should not be satisfied until we have created a unique and beautiful style that expresses a strong concept.

Fig (17) the style frame represents the idea of a single moment of time pulled from a motion design .visual elements such as composition , color, depth, camera position and low- polygon 3D geometry bring this frame to life
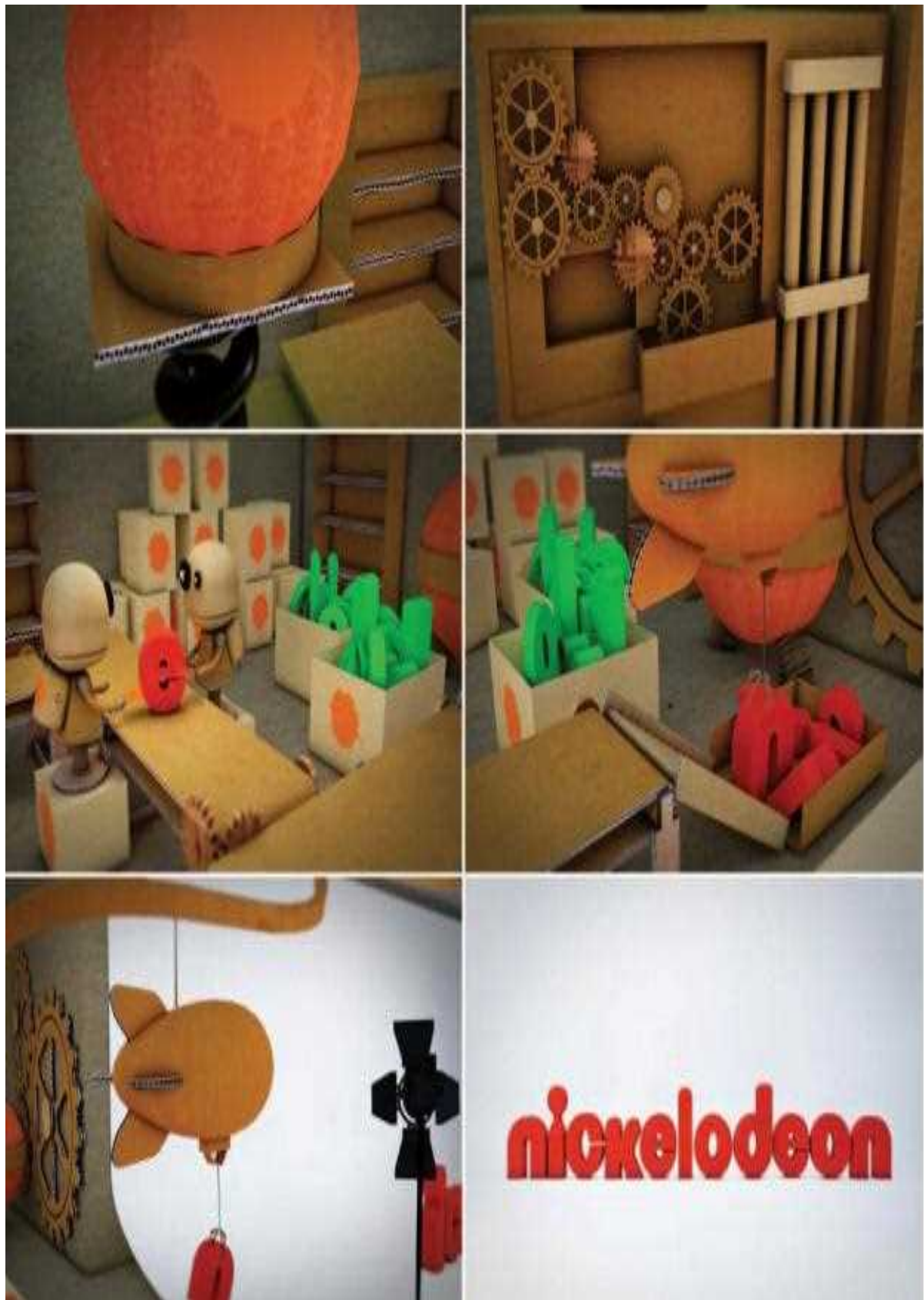
Fig (18) DESIGN BOARD CLEARLY ILLUSTRATING A VISUAL STYLE, THE CINEMATIC POSITIONS AND MOVEMENTS OF A CAMERA, AND THE NARRATIVE PLAN FROM THE BEGINNING UNTIL THE END OF THE PIECE.

Design board

A *design board* contains a sequence of style frames that tell a narrative or a story. In many ways, they resemble hand-drawn storyboards. Each frame represents the viewport or the camera eye. Design boards typically read from left to right and from top to bottom. They contain the visual narrative for a motion design project as well as the direction of cinematic changes. These changes include information such as camera angles, camera distance from the focal point, camera movement, and overall composition throughout the piece. Every frame shows a key moment in a scene that communicates a significant quality or turning point in a project's storyline. The difference between a design board and hand-drawn storyboard is the depiction of the visual aesthetic or style. Each frame in a design board is a fully realized style frame. As previously stated, style frames should feel like stills pulled from a completed motion design project. In a design board, the aesthetic is firmly established, the narrative is clearly illustrated, and how scenes transition should at least be suggested if not fully boarded out. The design board represents clear answers to the questions posed in the *creative brief*—the summary of the questions or problems posed by the needs of a project.
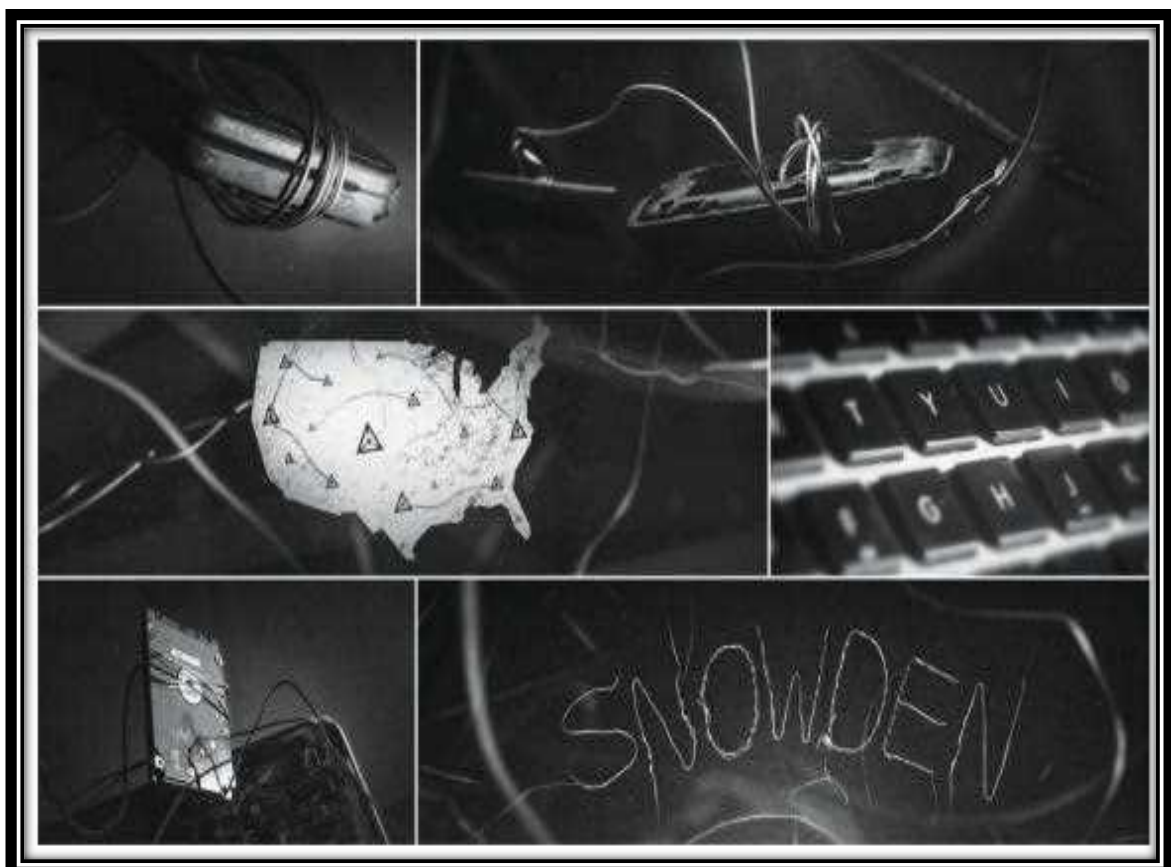

Fig (19)DESIGN BOARD

The Importance of Style Frames and Design Boards

The importance of style frames and design boards in the world of commercial art cannot be stressed enough. Clients *award* projects based on the strength of a concept and its visual presentation. When a client awards a project, they are essentially buying that style, story, and/or concept. Style frames and design boards are the method of pitching concepts and visual solutions to creative briefs. As the primary deliverables of design for motion, style frames and design boards are the first impression a client sees of a motion design piece. Additionally, clients will typically want to see and approve of a project's design style prior to investing money in a production. The bigger the budget, and more high profile the project, the fiercer the competition will be for the client's business.

Promise to the Client

Style frames and design boards are like a promise, or a visual contract, that a studio makes with a client. There is an expectation that the final outcome of a motion design piece will look like the style frames and design boards that the client signed off on. Client approved changes and adjustments may be made along the way. However, there should not be a major disconnect between the aesthetic established in a set of style frames and the final motion piece, unless it is requested and approved by the client. Also, a studio needs to be able to deliver in motion what they present to a client in the design phase of a production. So it is important to be confident that your design aesthetic is appropriate for the production.

Insurance Policy

Another important role of style frames and design boards is they serve as an insurance policy for an artist or a studio. Because design-driven productions can be very time consuming and costly it is vital that the client signs off on the design aesthetic prior to making anything move. The last thing an artist or studio wants to do is to spend weeks building assets, compositing elements, and creating motion only to be told by a client that they want a different look and feel. Now, if the client is willing to pay for these changes and push the deadline for delivery of the project, then there is something to negotiate. However, even under the best circumstances for the artist or studio, it is difficult to switch aesthetics halfway through a project. Style frames and design boards offer the

opportunity to be sure that the client and studio are on the same page regarding the visual feel of the project before production gets under way.

Using Design Boards

Style frames and design boards win jobs. They are the visual tool of pitching, planning, and guiding productions. Design boards allow a studio or artist to give a client a glimpse of what a motion project could become. In a competitive pitch, a client will view a variety of design boards from different artists or studios. A fun slang term used by industry designers to describe the process of creating and pitching design boards is "board battle." Although this term is a playful description, with some projects there may be hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars at stake. The pressure can be pretty intense to quickly produce high-quality design boards with a strong concept and interesting narrative in a short time. Even with refined art and design skills, the ability to think like a director, and the gift to tell stories, a motion designer also needs to be able to stay cool under pressure. These are skills that take time and effort to develop.
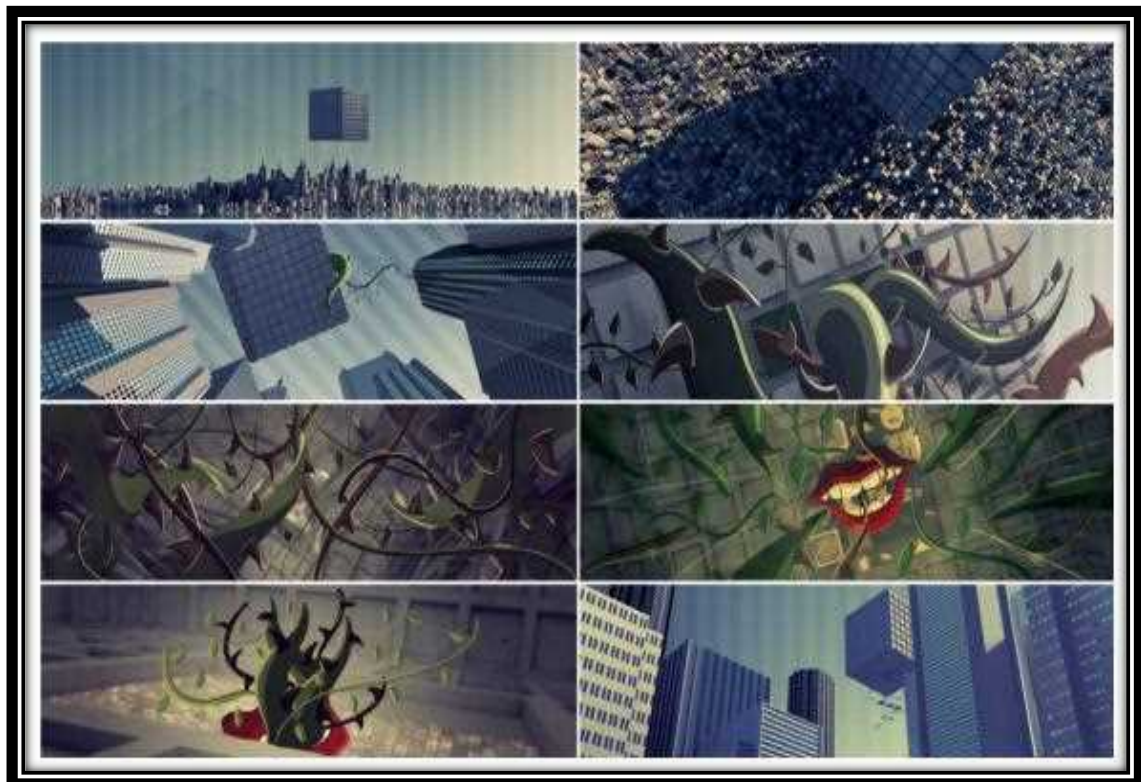

Fig (20)DESIGN BOARD

Guiding productions.

Like style frames, another vital function of design boards is to plan and guide productions. Design-driven productions are a fusion between traditional design studios and film production companies. This means that some of the needs and structures of both studio models will overlap. The design board is a representation of this overlap, combining image-making and storytelling. Motion design projects can be very expensive and time consuming. It is imperative to have a clear and logical production process. Design boards serve to establish an agreement and common understanding between a client and the motion design studio. They establish the parameters for the visual style and narrative. For the studio, the design board keeps all members of the creative and production team on the same page. The design board is a map that defines key moments in a motion piece, as well as being a design style guide. A team can include any combination of designers, 2D animators, 3D animators, compositors, editors, directors, producers, art directors or creative directors. There are a lot of moving parts in every production, and ideally they all need to move in a unified manner. The design board helps to ensure that each member of the team is clear about what needs to get done. Throughout a design-driven production, all members of the team can refer back to the design board for reference and consistency

Unified Visual Aesthetic

The same visual pattern that unifies the look and feel of a style frame needs to translate across an entire design board. Every frame in the design board needs to feel like it belongs- certainty to the audience. Design for motion can be described as a combination of image-making and storytelling.

Storytelling

Design boards contain the visual narrative of a project. The term design board is derived from storyboarding. Storyboarding is a practice that originated in cinematic productions as a way to plan the action of the story, characters, and camera movement. In some ways, design boards resemble sequential art or comic books. A story is told through visual frames. Change is understood to happen as we move from frame to frame. However, design boards are not nearly as long as comic books or graphic novels. They are condensed narratives, usually not more than a single page of frames. The various types of frames or shots in a design board also draw upon the tradition of cinema.
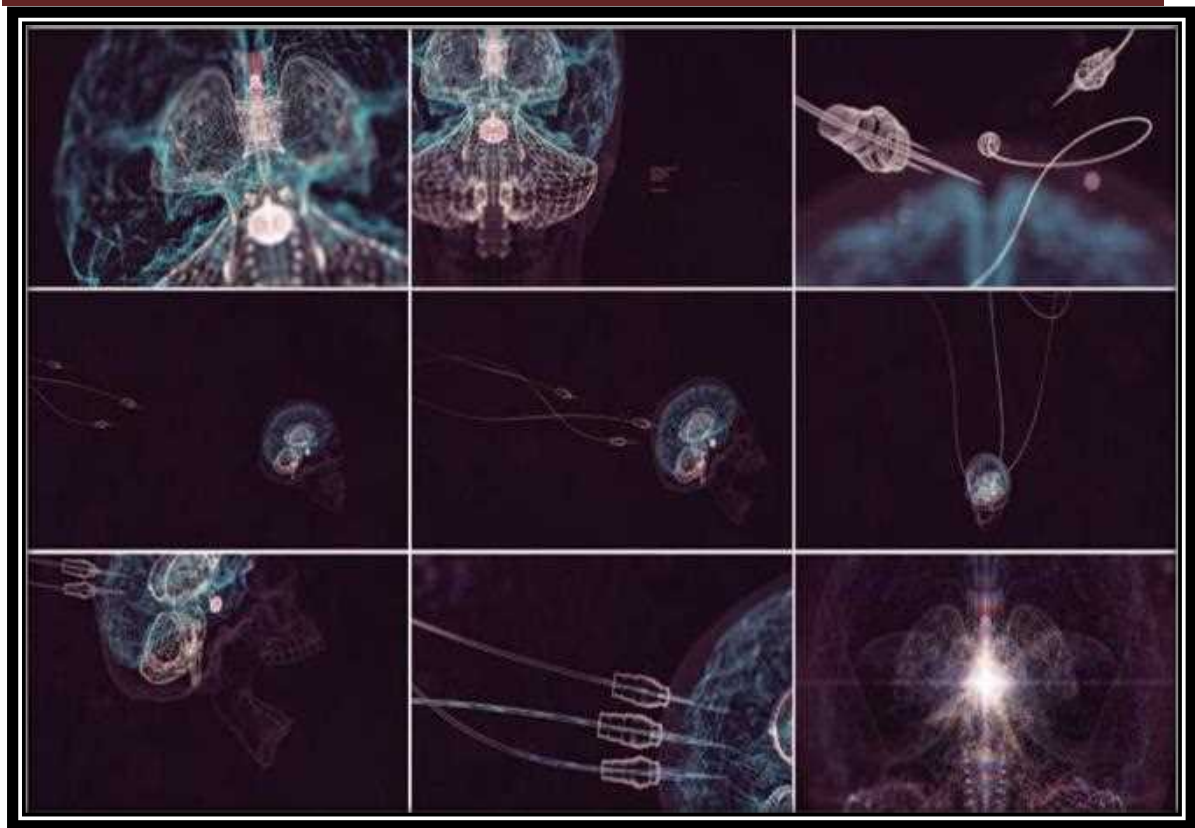
Fig (21)DESIGN BOARD

Finishing Touches

As we prepare to present and deliver a design board, we should apply any finishing touches. Now is the time to pay attention to details and refine our work. We should trim anything extraneous that does not enhance the over all concept. Do all the style frames feel like they belong in the design board? Does the design board need a final pass of color correction or color grading? A few simple adjustments to color, conceptually, visually, and sequentially—in order to create a cohesive piece. This pattern requires design consistency in areas such as color, texture, typography, material, and cinematic qualities. Be sure that every frame in your design board looks like it is part of the overall aesthetic. This unification is accomplished by defining a distinct visual pattern that repeats in every style frame in the design board. Visual principles such as color and texture contribute to defining a visual pattern. Assets such as photography, illustration, typography, or 3Dalso add to the design style. If the sequence of events is not clear in the design board, then it will fail to deliver. As the complete realization of the visual plan for a motion piece, design boards need to communicate clarity and certainty.

Fig (22)DESIGN BOARD

Fig (23)DESIGN BOARD

Fig (24)DESIGN BOARD

Developing concepts

What is a Creative Brief?

A creative brief states the needs of a project. These needs include emotional, intellectual, narrative, and technical specifications. Additionally, the brief provides the initial spark, or impetus, to begin the creative process. A question, problem, or urge to make something is at the center of the creative brief. The word "brief" refers to the idea of something that is concise. Rather than having a document with pages of research and data that would take a lot of time and effort to decipher, a creative brief provides a clear sense of the needs of a project in a relatively short amount of time.

Types of Creative Briefs

Creative briefs either come from an external source, like a client or a teacher, or they originate internally from a designer's desire to create something. A designer must be able to interpret a creative brief, especially one that comes from an external source. *If the brief is not clear*, be prepared to ask questions. Sometimes, a client may not know exactly what they want they just have an idea, a question, or a product to sell. In these instances, you have to ask the client, "Who are you trying to reach? What are you trying to say? What are the specifications for your project? What do you want to avoid?"

Sometimes creative briefs are very detailed, and other times they can be quite sparse. It takes time and practice to become well versed in discerning what is most relevant, but it is vital for a designer to be able to identify the key needs of a project. In the event that you are given a brief with very little detail, it is your responsibility to construct a creative brief that you can work with. For a personal project, where there is no external source such as a client or teacher, the drive or desire to make something serves as the creative brief.

The Form of a Creative Brief

Sometimes you will be given a brief and sometimes you will not. A client or teacher may provide a detailed text document or a PDF file filled with reference images, a specific list of deliverables, a script, or a brand style guide. It makes a creative challenge a lot easier when you clearly understand the needs of a project. However, you may not always be given a complete creative brief, or any tangible brief at all.

Even if a creative brief is incomplete or intangible, you are still responsible for producing the project. If a client does not provide a creative brief, then write your own. Gather as many relevant facts about the project as you can, and put them down in a form that is organized and accessible to you. In a production, a producer is responsible for many of these things. But, if you are working on your own, it will be up to you to produce for yourself. Always be sure to take note of the specifics of a project, such as the schedule for reviews and final delivery, the correct aspect ratio, and mandatory branding elements such as logos or copy. The purpose of the creative brief is to contain the creative needs of a project. Whatever the form of the brief, it must be something that works for you.

The Needs of a Creative Brief

Every project has different kinds of needs. The emotional needs of a project describe what the designer wants the viewer to feel. Do you want the viewer to feel happy, sad, hopeful, excited, or serene? Having a clear sense of what emotions you want to produce in your audience will help you to shape the direction of your concept. When working with a client, try to get a clear picture from them about the emotional tone that they want to evoke. Creative briefs also have intellectual needs. These intellectual needs have to do with messaging and ideas. What do you want the viewer to think after seeing your project? Do you want the piece to be reflective, ironic, political, or comedic? The possibilities are endless. So again, talk with your client about the ideas they want to convey the narrative needs of a project are related to storytelling and the sequence of events. Motion design is defined by change, and the narrative is the container for how change happens within a piece. Is the story about transformation, discovery, tragedy, or friendship? Be clear with yourself and the client about what kind of story you want to tell. If the project is more abstract, then identify the shape of the narrative and how it changes over time. Specific needs describe the technical specifications of a project. What is the size or aspect ratio? What is the length or duration of the piece? These details have to be outlined so you can create content and artwork at the proper specification. In addition,

there may be other mandatory elements like client logos, brand guidelines, or copy that must be included. The creative brief holds all of these requirements, which a designer will then use as a reference for the starting point questions that direct and guide both the concept development and the aesthetic design of a project.

How to Use a Creative Brief

The creative brief directs and helps the designer to stay focused on the task at hand. It provides a structure for the entire project, from concept development through design, production, and delivery. Every project begins with a starting point—a question. Once you have a creative brief, you can begin concept development. The creative brief will help you to maintain the creative borders of a project. Do not be afraid to ask a client questions about the creative brief. If their needs are not clear to you, it will be difficult to come up with a solution to their problem. By asking the client to clarify their needs, you are asking them to participate in the process.

Fig (25) *Castor& Pollux* trailer. Designer

Fig (26) *NIP* Kinetic Typography

Good ideas are hard work

Coming up with good ideas is hard work. First, we need to be able to sit with the questions posed by a creative brief. This period of contemplation can be uncomfortable, as questions without answers create uncertainty. Many designers feel the urge to rush into designing style frames as soon as they have a creative brief. It can be easy to grab hold of the first idea that comes to mind and start making style frames. However, we may end up spinning our wheels if we go in a direction that does not meet the needs of the client. Also, we may miss an opportunity to develop a truly interesting concept. Allow the creative brief to metaphorically digest before beginning to design style frames.

A designer of motion spends a lot of time creating images. It will be a more rewarding experience if the images we create are inspired by powerful concepts. With a lot of practice, our ability to create style frames quickly will increase dramatically. Rather than rushing into a project, put effort into making concept development a regular part of the design process. Time spent researching and writing in the beginning of a project will most likely produce a solid concept. Build a tolerance to sitting with the unanswered questions of a creative brief. Learn to be comfortable with ambiguity.

What is Concept development

Concept development is the process of how we come up with ideas. There are countless theories, methods, and books about how to ideate. However, there is not a single right way to come up with ideas. Designers approach concept development in their own way and must discover what works best for them. Although concept development is an individual endeavor, there are patterns and approaches that have universal benefits. Curiosity, courage, and awareness are traits that will aid you in the process.

Fig (27) CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES

Questions and answers

A creative brief poses questions about what a project will be. A concept is the answer to those questions. So, an important aspect of design for motion is the ability to create concepts that answer the needs of a creative brief. A designer needs to be able to interpret exactly what the brief is asking. Though it may sound simple, it sometimes takes a while for a designer to learn this skill. It is important to listen during a project kick-off, or initial meeting with a client. Do not be afraid to ask questions, especially if you are uncertain about the needs of a brief. Time is money in the world of commercial art, and a question not asked could waste a lot of time. Do not rush directly into the design phase of a project. Give yourself time to allow your ideas to develop.

Concepts contain the essential qualities of a project—such as ideas, emotions, stories or narratives, and the stylistic look and feel. In addition, concepts serve as a focal point for these essential qualities to orbit around. If an idea or a direction gets too abstract or vague, the concept can help you to stay on task. However, before you begin to design a project, you must have an idea about what you want to make. This idea includes a visual aesthetic and a story. A concept is a starting point for what a project can become. Once you have a starting point, it needs to grow. This is where development comes into play. Concepts begin with an initial spark of an idea, but, ultimately, they need space to grow.

Development

Development has to do with growth and expansion. In the beginning stages of a project, there are unlimited possibilities about what it can be. It is important to explore a range of potentials for a concept. Running with the first idea that pops into your head may result in having a really shallow concept. It may look beautiful, but it may lack a powerful story or potent meaning if not given enough time to grow. A client will pass on a weak message in favor of a concept that connects with their intended audience. As a principle, growth implies stages of development and change. A seed starts out as something small, but has the potential to become a fully formed flower. Along the way to becoming a flower, it goes through stages such as growing roots and emerging from the ground as a seedling. Leaves sprout and buds blossom as part of the process. In addition, the seed needs nourishment in the form of sunlight and water. A concept is like a seed; it needs to be nourished in order to grow and unfold into something that blooms. Time, curiosity, awareness, and courage are nourishment for a concept.

Fig (28) *God of War: From Ashes* commercial.

Fig (29) *Magic Trip* Documentary Film. Stills shown are from the main title sequence and the "VA Hospital" sequence. The piece is set to audiotapes of Ken Kesey experiencing an acid trip as part of a government experiment.

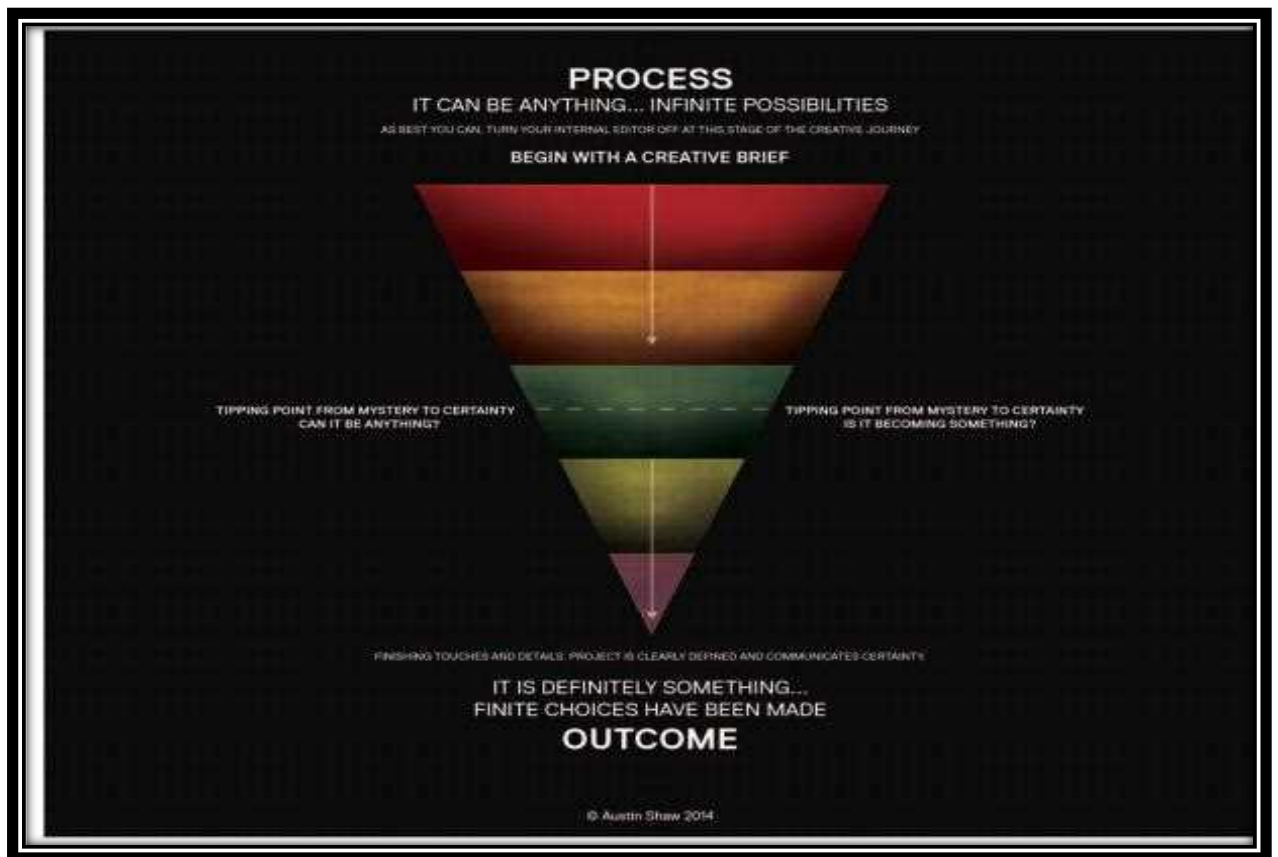
Fig (30) PROCESS-TO-OUTCOME SPECTRUM INFORMATION GRAPHIC

Process-to-Outcome

The graphic visualizes an idea of how to approach creative projects. It was developed to help keep the creative process enjoyable, while still delivering the best possible outcome. The Process-to-Outcome Spectrum can help you generate ideas, structure and manage time, and feel less stress over the course of a project.

The graphic is made up of an upside down triangle that is widest at the top and narrows to a point at the bottom. The vertical axis represents the timeline of a project, from the beginning until the end. The top of the graphic shows the start of a project and the bottom shows the conclusion. A project begins with some form of a creative brief, which is indicated at the very top of the information graphic. Just below that is the word *Process*, which encompasses the top half of the graphic. On the bottom is the word *Outcome*, which is the final destination of a project. In the middle of the information graphic, there is a line that signifies a tipping point from Process-to-Outcome. A complete project must move from a place of potential to a place of definition. There are two questions in the middle of the graphic, which influence the direction of the spectrum:

1. "Can the project be anything?"

2. "Is the project becoming something?"

These questions help to determine if a project is in the processor outcome stages of production. They also help to determine if you need to transition from *Process* to *Outcome* based on your project schedule. The shape of the information graphic represents starting broad and gradually refining toward a specific outcome.
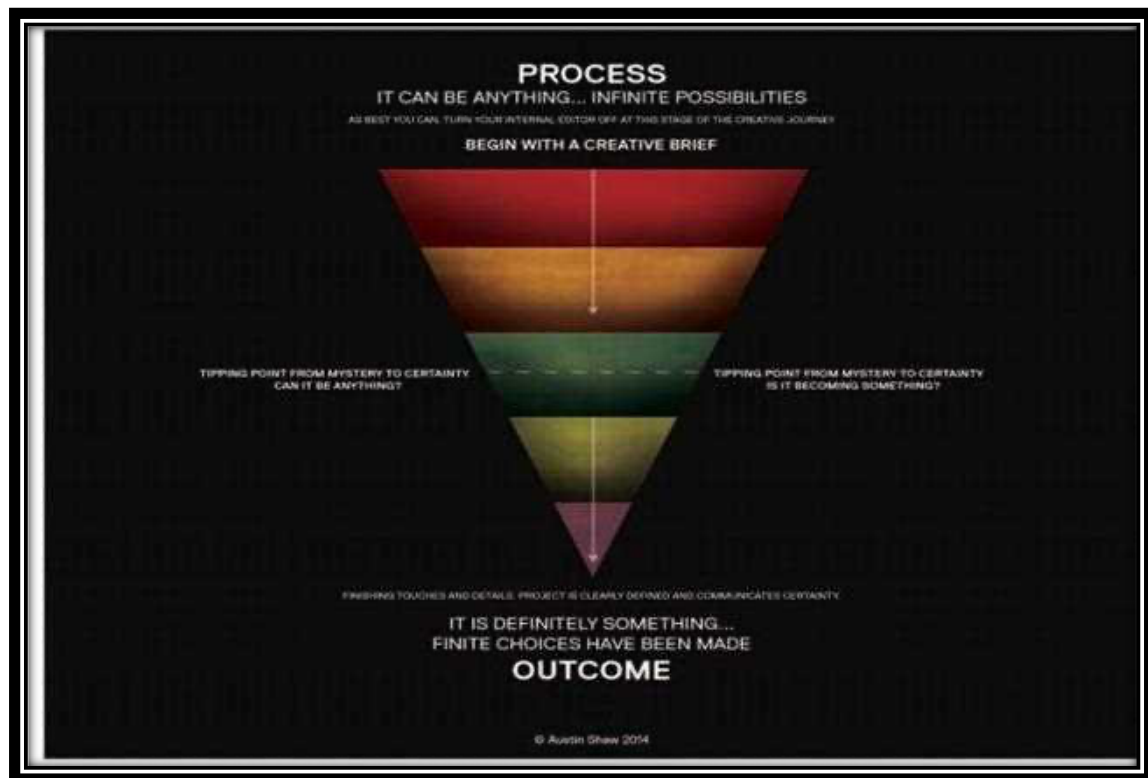
Fig (30) PROCESS-TO-OUTCOME SPECTRUM INFORMATION GRAPHIC

process

Process is defined as the beginning stages of a project, phase, or exercise. The defining qualities of the process stage are infinite possibility and potential. The process stage can also be characterized with ambiguity and mystery, as the project can become anything. A mind-set that is open and curious will be helpful. Sitting with uncertainty at the beginning of a project can be very challenging. You may have many questions: What is the best solution to the creative brief? Will my designs win the job? Will the client like it? We all have an internal editor that asks these kinds of questions when we begin a project. It is suggested that you turn off your internal editor as best you can during the process stages of a project, phase, or exercise. That means whatever voices of worry, concern, or anxiety about the outcome of the project should be *silenced*. This can be achieved with gentle reminders like, "*I will address those questions about how the project will turn out at a later time, while I am making design choices and refining the project.*" Or, if your internal editor is very loud and defiant, try reminders like, "*I do not care about what the project will end up looking like right now. I care about exploring and discovering interesting ideas and inspiration.*" Process is a starting point of a creative

journey, and an attitude of curiosity allows for maximum enjoyment and innovation. Process is placed at the widest side of the Process-to-Outcome Spectrum information graphic, toillustrate the openness that is suggested during this stage.

Outcome

On the other side of the Process-to-Outcome Spectrum is the idea of *outcome*. The outcome is defined as *the tangible result of the project*. The realized form, final product, or deliverable are a few terms that describe outcome. Outcome is the end result of a creative journey that starts in a place of "possibly anything" and finishes as "definitely something."Finite choices have been made, and a sense of clarity rather than mystery needs to be conveyed by the outcome. Simply put, outcome clearly defines a project and communicates certainty. The internal editor needs to be unleashed in full force during the outcome stage, as opposed to the process stage. Openness of possibility and ambiguity are not helpful at this stage. Outcome is not a time to freely explore what a project could be. Rather, it is the time to deliver maximum design certainty. Hence, *outcome* is placed at the narrowest side of the Process-to-Outcome Spectrum information graphic to illustrate the definition and clarity that is needed to successfully deliver a project.

Value of Process-to-Outcome

Outcomes are the concrete results of projects in the real world. An outcome connects people to the meaning contained within a project. However, the problem was may be a matter of too much focus on the outcome combined with a poor sense of timing. *therefore you must be learn that there is a time to focus on the process and a time to focus on the outcome*. It is a vital skill for a designer to become aware of time in relation to the Process-to-Outcome Spectrum. The ability to know where you are in a project provides a structure of where to place your energy. Before I was aware of this spectrum, my journey through a project resembled more of a straight line. Rather than beginning wide and gradually refining toward a finished point, I had a very narrow focus from the kick-off straight through to completion. I was constantly thinking about the outcome. What will the design style look like? What will the client think? Would it win the pitch?

Again, all of these questions are important, but not to the detriment of the project as a whole.

Be Comfortable with Ambiguity

One of the qualities of the process stage is *uncertainty*. The kick-off of any project will exist in the realm of uncertainty to varying degrees. That is the nature of the beginning of a project. It is not formed yet; hence, the need for a creative brief to find and create a solution for this uncertainty. Now, uncertainty can be very exciting—ripe with potential and possibility. Uncertainty can also be extremely uncomfortable and down right terrifying. Uncomfortable feelings that may arise during uncertainty can prematurely drive you straight out of process to ward outcome. It is no small task to be presented with a creative brief asking you to come up with a concept and a visual look. Add deadlines, pitching, payment, and client approval and you may want to arrive at that solution as fast as possible. Sitting in the open spaces of process is not easy, especially when you have a client waiting for you to provide a solution. So, how exactly does one navigate this challenge?

Know Where You Are

The first step is awareness. Just ask yourself where you are in the project. If it is the beginning, then be in the process. Fully engage your concept development with as much openness to ideas and emotions as you can muster. Turn your internal filter off, and be a courageous explorer of the unknown. If, on the other hand you are approaching the completion or deadline of a project, be in the outcome. Focus on creating as much certainty as possible as you refine and polish the project. The trick is to know where you are in the project. Too much stress about outcome in the beginning will narrow your creative options and kill the fun. Too much ambivalence during the outcome and the project will lack clarity and definition. The Process-to-Outcome Spectrum information graphic is a tool to help remind you where you are throughout a project.

Fig (31) The Killing title sequence.

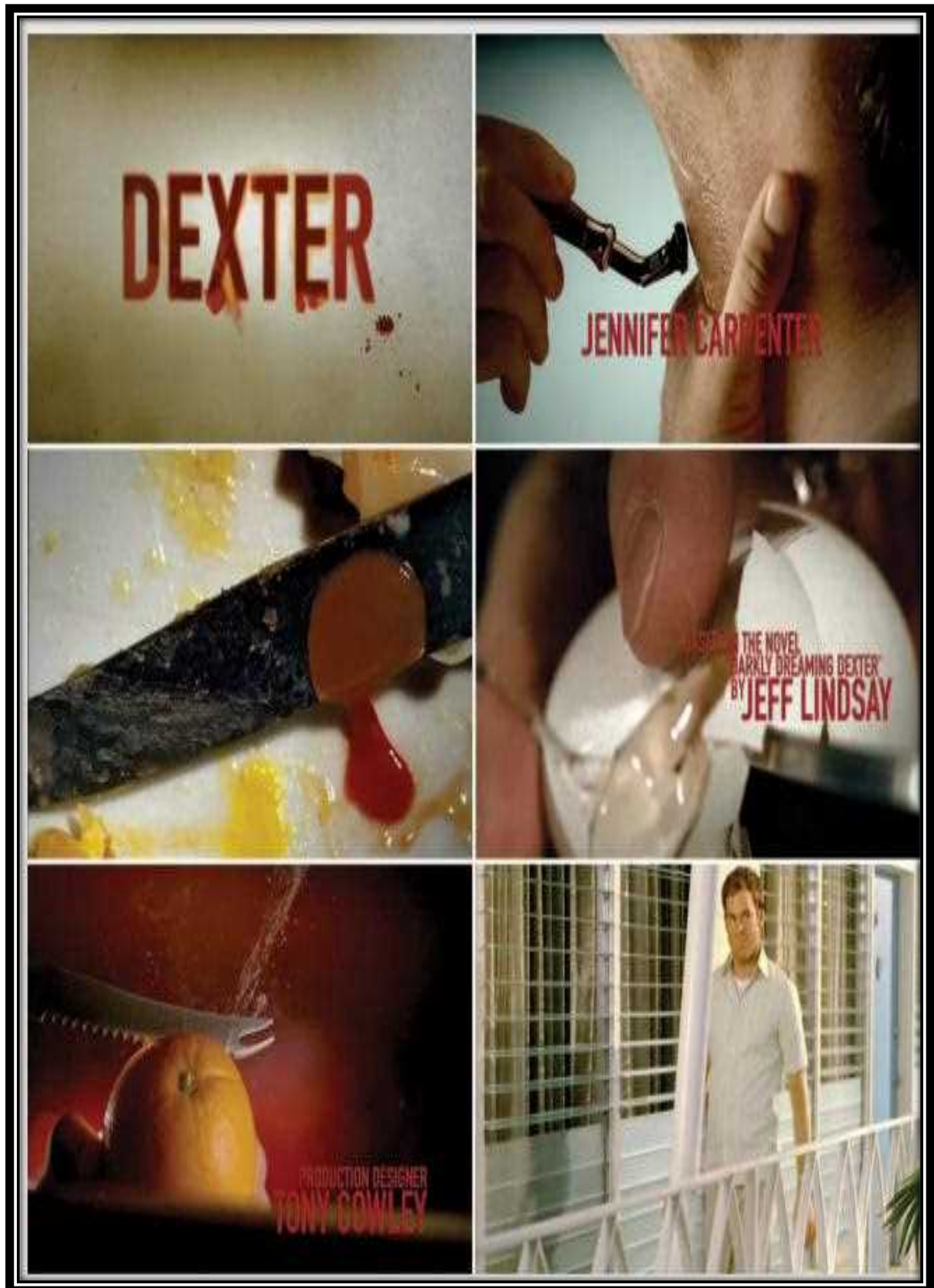Fig (32) Valspar: White commercial.

Fig (33) Dexter main title.

The Inner - Eye

The internal editor

It is the voice inside our heads that makes judgments. For most of us, editing ourselves andcarefully choosing our words is a regular part of our lives. However, in the realm of creativity, an overly active internal editor can easily stifle ideas and kill the joy of the process. Too much doubt, fear, or uncertainty will make anyone self conscious, and the creative mind even more so. During the early stages of concept development, allow the internal editor to take a break. Explore ideas with freedom and curiosity.

Free Writing

Free writing is an unedited continuous stream of consciousthoughts written down on paper or typed on a computer. Free writing will often bring up unexpectedideas, thoughts, emotions, or memories. It is these unknown andunconscious realms for which we are searching. By writing freely,you release the more restrained parts of your mind and allow them to come out and play, at least for a short time.

Looking Inward

During concept development, it is useful to have a balance between internal and external exercises and references. Free writing is a tool we use to look within ourselves for ideas andinspiration. It is the most internal and unrestrained exercise in the Process-to-Outcome Spectrum. With it, we can look inside ourselves to make connections to help form our concepts. As words and ideas resonate within us, they ripple out and create new associations. Free writing can open doors to unique ideas and pathways. We can follow these paths and build bridges to unexpected insights and possibilities. Free writing offers an opportunity to explore and make discoveries within our internal landscapes.

Stream of Consciousness

Free writing encourages the unrestrained exploration of the contents of the mind. These contents include your thoughts, feelings, ideas, memories, inspirations, desires, etc. During a free write, we put the continuous flow of our minds into words. Let your words pour out with freedom. Do not judge the content of your mind. Just write your thoughts downDo not attempt to edit yourself or worry about correct spelling or proper grammar. A free write does not have to make sense. You do not need commas, periods, or complete sentences. The goal is to let your words flow with as much freedom as possible. Many artists and designers utilize these kinds of automatic writing processes to jump-start their creativity.
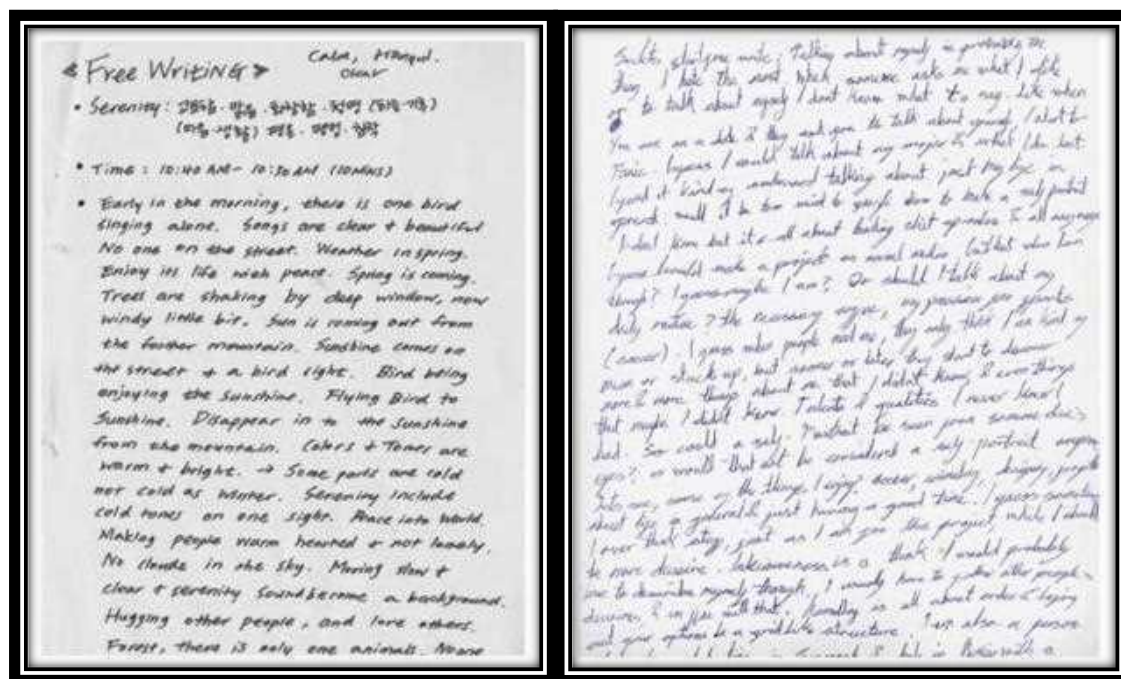
Fig (34) FREE WRITING EXAMPLES

Free Writing and the internal editor

There are times when the internal editor is very useful. A free write is not one of those times. Remind yourself to let go of caution and write without inhibition. If the internal editor shows upduring your free writing, gently ask it to go away. We will utilize the internal editor during other stages of concept and design development.

How to Free Write

There is no wrong way to free write. However, there are a few suggestions that will help maximize the benefits of the process. It is advised that once you begin a free writing exercise, you do not stop writing until the exercise is over. You can choose to write for a set amount of time, or to write a specific number of pages. Commit to the process. Eliminate as many distractions as possible, and give yourself the time and space to be engaged inthe free write. Some people prefer to free write in their sketchbooks or on paper. They enjoy the tactile experience of writing by hand and feel like they can express themselves most naturally in that form. Others are more comfortable free writing on a computerby typing at a keyboard.

What are word lists

Free writing stirs the pond of creativity and causes words to rise from the depths of our minds and imagination. Many of these words can help our ideas to flow, but only a few will have the power to be truly impactful to the concept. Word lists contain *keywords*, words that are most

relevant to your concept and creative brief. They conjure images, ideas, emotions, and stories. For our lists, we seek the words that are most potent.Keywords also open metaphorical doors. They allow us to access and enter new realms of meaning. Like sign posts, they direct and guide us during concept development. Putting keywordsinto lists helps to structure our thought process. The word list is the first step in organizing the creative potential of what a project can become. Begin to use your internal editor to make creativedecisions about which direction the concept will go. However, a great amount of flexibility is recommended at this stage as the concept is still forming.
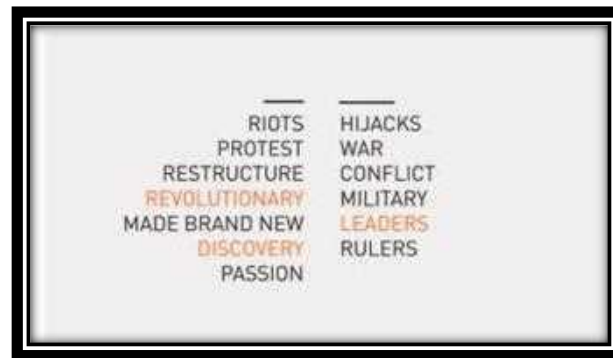
Fig (35) WORD LIST FROM

Words are Powerful

Keywords tell us which doors to open and which doors to keep shut. It is up to you to choose which worlds or meaning you wish to explore, and keywords can help you. The path of discernment requires effort, focus, and reflection. The advantage of doing a free write first is that you can write down a lot of words and ideas without worrying too much about outcomes or results. You can then look back over your free write and choose the words that feel most alive with meaning. Of course, it is not mandatory to do a free write prior to making a word list. Some people choose to start with word lists during concept development. The word list helps to find and organize keywords. Keywords are exciting and awaken a thirst to explore potential directions for a concept.

Spectrums of Meaning

The next step is to make your keywords stronger by creating contrast. You can do this by listing the opposite meanings. Imagine a continuum that connects the extremes of a word or idea. Themeanings are connected, but they exist on opposite ends of a spectrum. This opposition is extremely important, as contrast creates interesting tensions within a concept. For example, if one of your keywords is *hope*, an opposite keyword could be *despair*. Imagine a motion design piece that begins in a de-saturated world filled with images of death anddecay. Then, a tiny green seed opens up, and a small yellow flower blooms amidst the gray and lifeless world. This image of hope contrasted with despair is more impactful than just showing a flower in a field of green on a sun-filled day. Concepts are made stronger when dualities of meaning are explored.

Fig (36) WORD LIST FROM A PROCESS BOOK

How to Make a Word List

Word lists can be written on paper or typed on a computer. Many designers use their sketchbooks to create word lists, and then transfer them into a more design-oriented layout for their process books. Some people like to write them in really organized columns, while others are more chaotic with their lists. However, the form of the word list is less important than taking time to reflect on the keywords that most relate to your concept.In terms of a process book and presentation of your work, a word list shows your creative thinking and your approach to problem-solving. It will enhance the quality of your presentation and demonstrate that you put time and effort into thinking about the questions and challenges posed in the creative brief. In the Process-to- outcome Spectrum, word lists are a first step in defining creative boundaries for a project. Word lists also provide the source material for the next step in concept development mind maps.
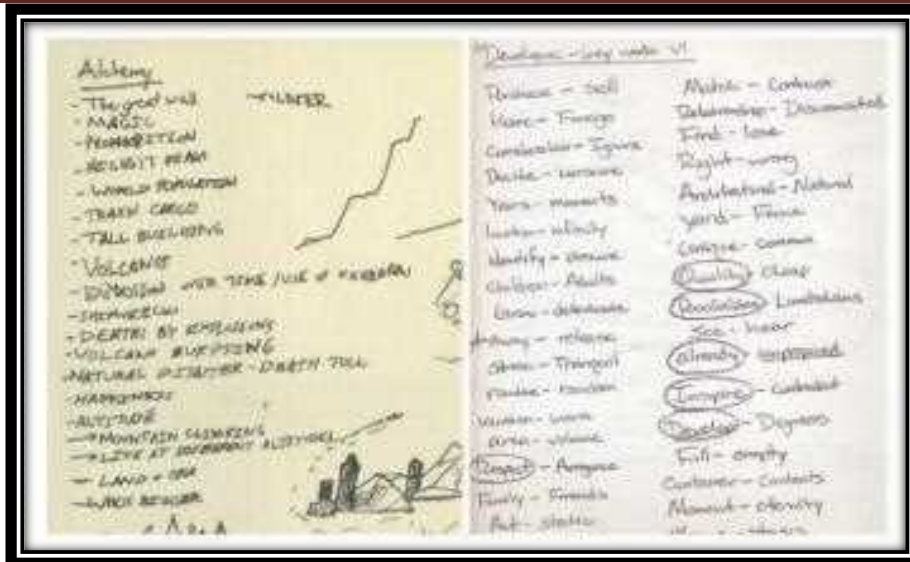

Fig (37) WORD LIST FROM A PROCESS BOOK

Fig (38) WORD LISTS FROM THE SKETCHBOOKS

Mind Maps

A *mind map* is an information graphic that displays the inner landscape of your mind. It is a visual way to represent your thoughts and ideas. When created after a word list, a mind map provides an opportunity to create associations between your keywords. Although it is not required to make a word list prior to a mind map, there are benefits to working in this sequence. A word list takes you through a process of reflection and discernment to find keywords that resonate with your concept. Mind maps are containers that organize keywords and ideas into thought structures or idea families. A mind map needs a focal point, a center from which your keywords and thought structures can orbit. A simple mind map can contain a main keyword written in the center of a page, with lines branching out and connecting to other keywords. The starting point of a mind map is very important. Not only does it kick-off the creative organization of ideas, but it also serves as an anchor, or center point of certainty. A mind map helps you to bring yourinternal world of ideas into an external form. It also continues the process of discovery and the overall direction of a concept.
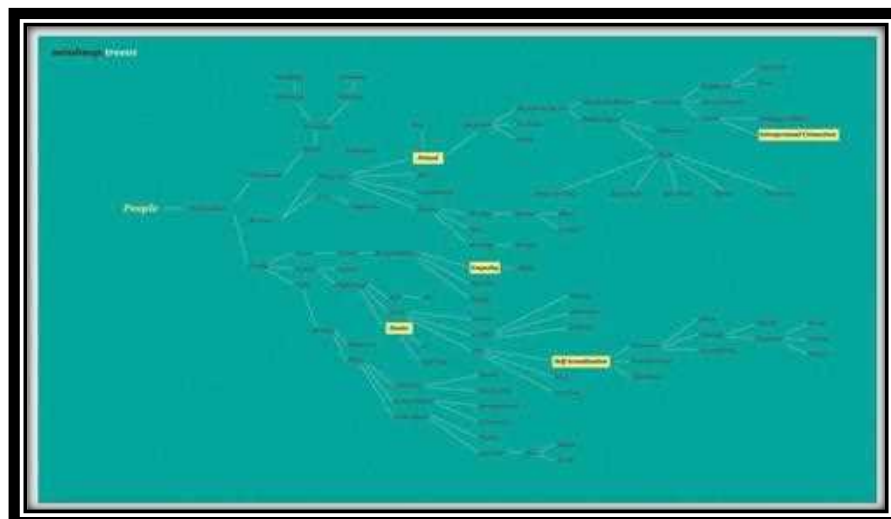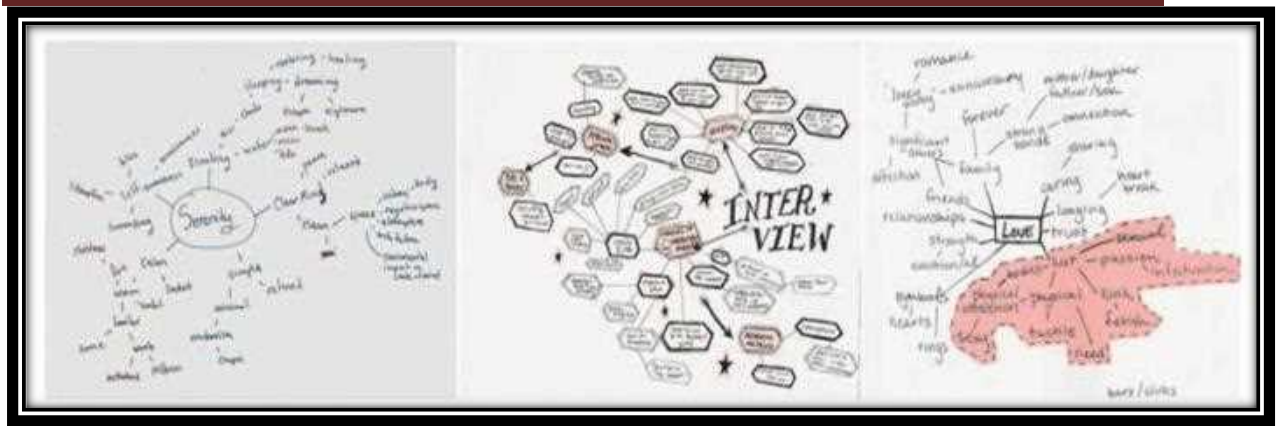

Fig (39) MIND MAP FROM A PROCESS BOOK
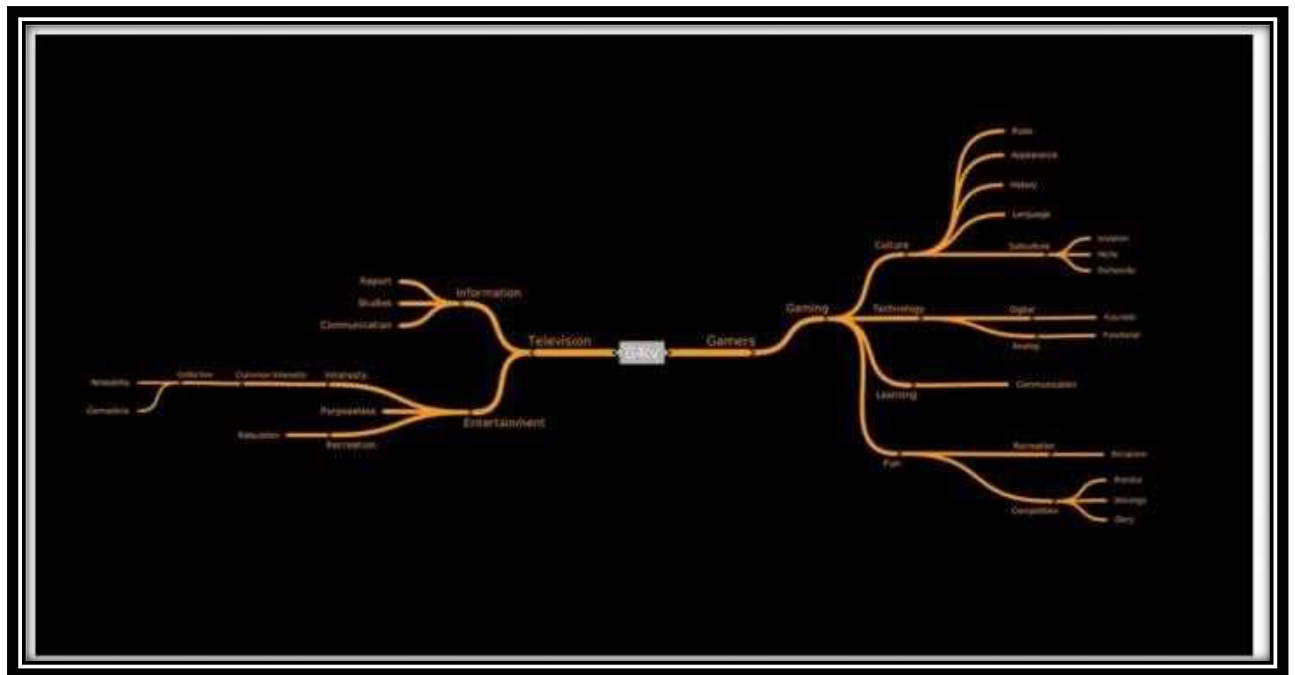
Fig (40) MIND MAPS FROM PROCESS BOOKS

Fig (41) MIND MAPS FROM PROCESS BOOK

Using Contrast and Tension

Now, just as contrast can be used to refine and strengthen the meaning of a keyword, it can also be used to highlight the important differences of thought structures contained in a mind map. By mapping out opposing thought structures, you can visualize the full spectrum of meaning. Adding contrast and tension allows us to begin crafting a narrative. Strong narrative needs conflict, and a mind map offers the opportunity to visualize dynamic contrast.

Fig (42) MIND MAP FROM A PROCESS BOOK

DOs & DON'Ts list

A *DOs & DON'Ts list* is a collection of words that clarifies your intentions for a project. On the DOs side, you should list desiredoutcomes. On the DON'Ts side, you should list qualities that you want to avoid. It is a simple exercise that roughs out a tangible plan for your project. It is suggested to make a DOs & DON'Ts list after making a mind map. Mind maps expand possibilities and display associations, while DOs & DON'Ts lists reduce and amplify a project through specific choices

Fig (43) DOS & DON'TS LIST FROM A PROCESS BOOK

Creative Borders

All projects need creative borders at some point. We begin the Process-to-Outcome Spectrum with an open mind and a spirit of adventure. Our concepts can be anything, and we should strive to embrace this ambiguity with enthusiasm. However, a project must cross the threshold of becoming something, or it will be unfinished. A DOs & DON'Ts list moves a concept toward the tipping point from mystery to certainty. With definitive choices comes the elimination of ambiguity and procrastination. The guidelines that emerge in a DOs & DON'Ts list need to specify what you want your audience to feel, think, see, and experience. A DOs & DON'Ts list helps to transition between the initial stages of concept development and the search for visualinspiration and storytelling. As a concept is fleshed out, the Dos & DON'Ts list outlines what to aim for in the design and narrative phases and what to stay away from. On the design side, we make choices about color palette, style, fonts, and materials. The DOs & DON'Ts list informs our stylistic direction. For narrative development, the DOs & DON'Ts list contains decisions about how the story will unfold, and what kind of story we want to tell. Cinematically, we can list our desired camera angles and movement. We can begin to think about where the tension will riseand fall and if the narrative will be linear or non-linear.

Fig (44) DOS & DON'TS LIST FROM A PROCESS BOOK

Fig (45) DOS & DON'TS LIST FROM A PROCESS BOOK

Be Engaged in the Process

The shape of a concept forms as we combine concept development exercises. The point of using methods like free writing, word lists, mind maps, and DOs & DON'Ts lists is to delve into our ideas and creativity. These methods are but a few examples of concept development exercises that have long traditions and have been employed in a variety of usages. These exercises are designed to explore possibilities and to help you to make unexpected associations, as well as to define the creative borders of a project. These concept development exercises are laid out in an intended sequence. There is a rhythm between unedited freedom and intentional refinement. Tools like free writing and mind maps assist in the unedited side of the spectrum. These exercises encourage expansion and exploration without hindrance, the free write being the most unconstrained. On the other side of the spectrum are the word list and the DOs & DON'Ts list. These serve as containers for the gems that we discover in our concept development. We can organize keywords that resonate with our concept and begin to rough out the shape of the concept.

Tipping Points

In the kick-off stages of a project, the concept can be anything in relation to the needs of the creative brief. I encourage my students to try and embrace the ambiguity and mystery of this phase of a project. Sometimes it is difficult to manage the uncertainty, especially if there is external pressure, such as deadlines and competitive pitches. Our internal pressure can be just as bad, if not worse, particularly if we are perfectionists and place high expectations on ourselves. A healthy dose of unedited concept development can contribute greatly to the quality of a project. But at some point, we need to begin moving the project toward definition and certainty. At this stage, the concept is like a seed. It has the potential to become something, but there are still a lot of options in terms of which direction it grows. We want to be sure to plant the seeds of our concepts in fertile ground and nurture them with plenty of metaphorical light and water. This brings us to the next stages of concept development: mood boards and written treatments. As the shape of the concept forms and we become clear about the focal point of our idea, we can direct our energies with efficiency and purpose. As we move into gathering visual references for mood boards and creating a written treatment, the shape of the concept can guide us. Here are a few questions to consider before you begin to make a mood board and craft a narrative for your concept: Does your concept have an interesting shape? Do you have a clear focal point you can refer to if you wander too far off course? Is this a concept you want to invest more energy and time into? Does it have enough contrast and tension to be compelling for a viewer? If the shape of your concept is not clear, you may want to revisit your concept development exercises. Alternatively, you may find clarity as you seek visual inspiration for a mood board. Be open, and, above all else, be engaged in the process.
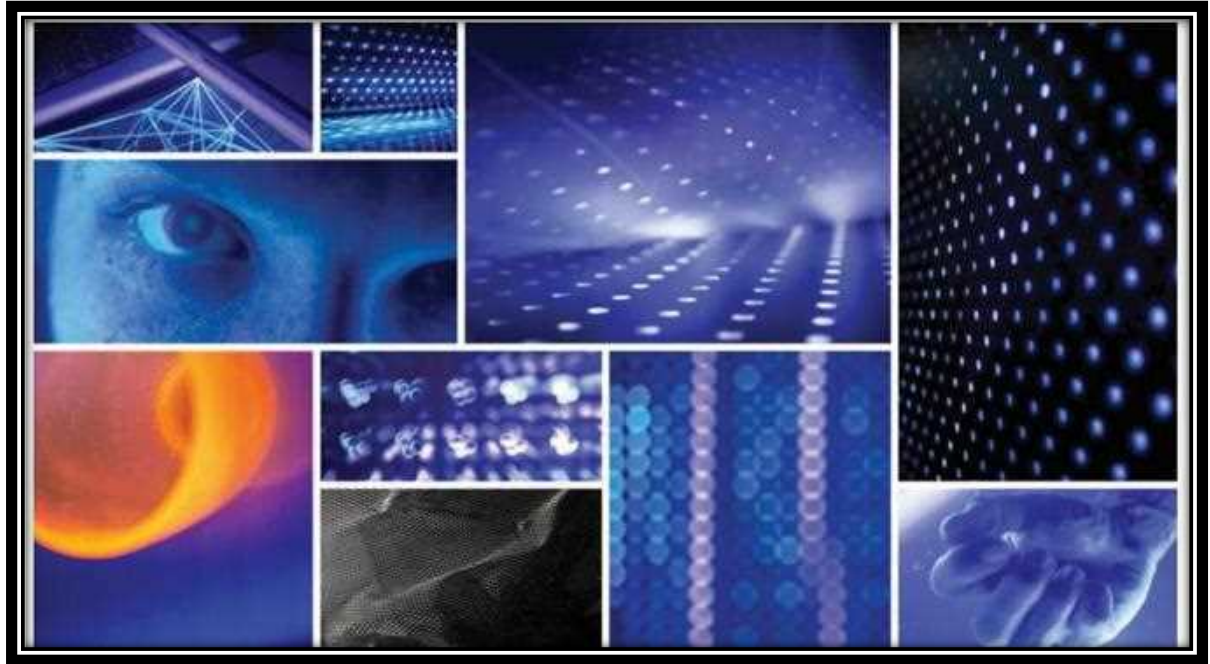
Fig (46) EXAMPLE OF A MOOD BOARD, PHOTOS AND LAYOUT COURTESY OF PETER CLARK. THIS MOOD BOARD DEMONSTRATES A COLLECTION OF INSPIRING LIGHTING EFFECTS ANDPHOTOGRAPHS THAT INFORM EMOTIONAL TONES AND QUALITIES.

The Outer– Eye

Mood Boards

Mood boards inspire and inform concepts. They contain images that influence the visual aesthetic and art direction of a project. Additionally, they can inspire narratives, emotions, and ideas. Creating them is a process of gathering and organizing images into combinations that create a specific mood or feeling. Mood boards are used across a wide range of creative disciplines. In the motion design industry, they are extremely effective because they can convey a designer's stylistic direction for a concept very quickly and efficiently. From a creative perspective, using mood boards eliminates the need to "reinvent the wheel" every time you sit down to create a design style. Rather, finding and grouping images that resonate with your concept can help you kick-start the design phase of a project. As the concept and direction of a project solidifies, you will need to define what it will look like. Creating a mood board helps to establish the visual look and feel of a project.

Internal and External

A designer needs to be aware that there is a continuum between the *inner eye* and the *outer eye*. In other words, there is a balance between the spectrum of looking inside one's self for inspiration and looking outside of one's self for inspiration. The exercises and tools that precede a mood board put a lot of focus on looking inward for inspiration. However, a mood board is a toolthat embraces the outer eye. We look outside ofourselves for stimulation by tapping into the collective stream of creativity and gathering images that harmonize with our concepts.Although mood boards are very useful, it is vital for a designer to maintain a personal vision for a concept. Do not rip-off other artists and designers by directly imitating their styles. At

thesame time, rejecting the influence of other artists and designers is not practical and maybe not even possible. Designers are a part of a visual tradition that spans back to the beginning of image making. You can honor the creative efforts and contributions of others by building on the traditions of what they have created.

Efficiency

Design-driven production is fast-paced and demanding. In the world of commercial art, speed is valuable. Mood boards help designers to arrive at creative solutions quickly and efficiently.Designers are often expected to rapidly brainstorm and design creative solutions. You may be asked to produce a design presentation in as little as a day. A valuable quality of a moodboard is that it can help you to arrive at your design goals in an efficient timeframe. By finding images that resonate with your concept and allowing them to inspire your aesthetic choices, suchas color, material, and typography, you will give yourself a running start as you jump into the design phase. In relation to the Process-to-Outcome Spectrum, understanding the creative brief will help you to determine how much time to allocate to each stage of design production. If givena full week to produce a design board, you may spend the first two to three days on concept development. You may be able to dedicate a full day or more on gathering inspiring images for amood board. On the other hand, if you are only given two days to produce a design board, you will need to scale back the structure of your time. Instead of dedicating a whole day to mood boards, you may spend one to two hours. However, it is important to dedicate time to making a mood board, as it will prove invaluable in informing the design direction you choose.

Fig (47) EXAMPLE OF A MOOD BOARD

How to Make a Mood Board

There is really no wrong way to make a mood board. A simple way to begin is to search for visuals that inspire you. When looking at images, seek to be moved in some way by theimages you choose. Select the ones that make you think or feel. While gathering images and making a mood board, trynot to be overly concerned with how your project is going to turn out. The project still has the potential to be anything. Do not let your internal editor drive your search for images. Looking forimages and making a mood board should be fun. Searching on the Internet makes finding images very easy. Createand organize an inspiration folder within your *project structure*. A project structure is a way of keeping all of your digital assets and project files organized in one place. Once you have gathered what you need, go through your images. Select images that relate to your concept and inform the direction of your visual aesthetic. The next step is to create the actual mood board.Before desktop publishing and the digital revolution, mood boards were made by hand. Today, we are fortunate tohave efficient digital tools and software at our disposal to create mood boards. The idea is toplace

images in such a way that you can see them easily. This can be very structured, like a gridof images, or more random, with pictures overlapping in a collage style. It can be helpful to group images in categories based on similar visual qualities like color, style, or material.
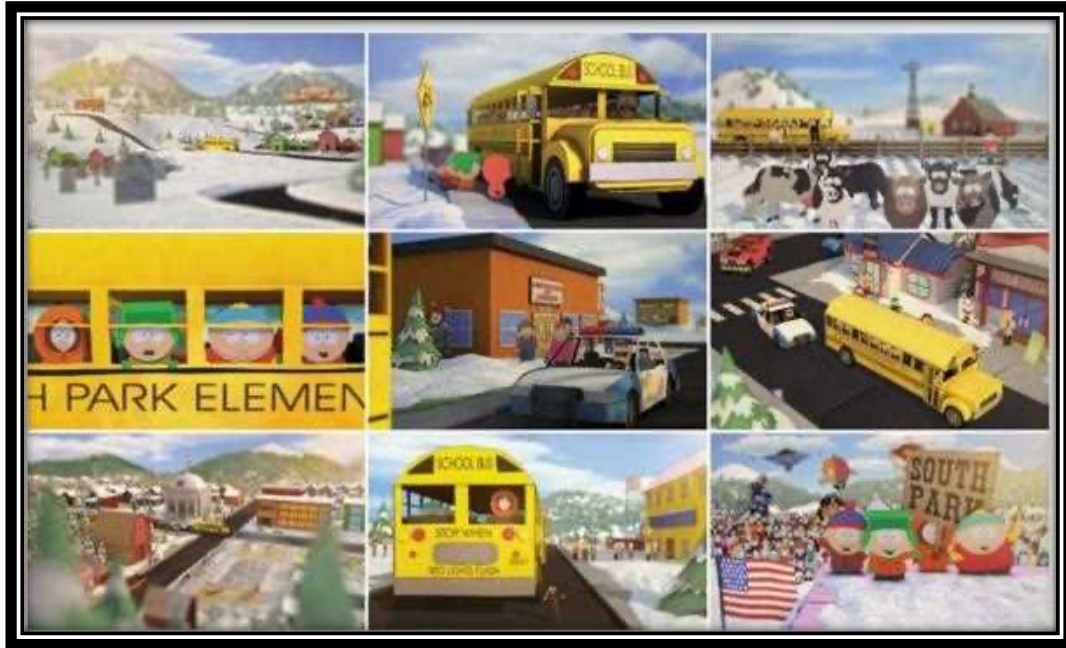

Fig (48)*South Park* intro

What are Written Treatments?

Writing is such an important part of the design process. Written treatmentsare the container of a project's narrative structure. They convey the intended story and vision of a concept through words. The ability to write descriptions for concepts is invaluable for motion designers. Writing allows you to communicate your ideas with others. Designers create beautiful images, but sometimes that is not enough to sell a concept. Theability to express yourself through writing will make you more versatile and valuable on a creative team. For presentation purposes, written treatments help to summarize the overall concept and supplement visual solutions. In some instances, an idea may be too big to illustrate solely with style frames and a design board. A written treatment can help to craft a well-rounded presentation. A written description can help to include any vital information that is left out of a design board. In the world of commercial

motion design, studios need to sell concepts to stay in business. Written treatments make up a significant aspect of communicating solutions to a creativebrief

Writing for development

Creative writing benefits concept development in a number ofways. First, free writing is a great tool to kick-start the creativeprocess. A written treatment is the next step to givingshape to aconcept with words. Although written treatments are further alongthan free writing within the Process-to-Outcome Spectrum, theycan still be approached with an attitude that is open and relaxed.A designer can begin an inner dialogue by putting their ideas downon paper. A concept and story evolves with revisions and editing.Writing for conceptdevelopment is a low-cost investment interms of time and resources.

Narrative Structure

When designing for time-based media, a basic awareness ofnarrative is needed. A narrative contains a sequence of relatedevents connected over time. This sequence of events can alsobe described as a beginning, middle, and end. Storytelling isone of the many creative traditions included in motion design.Motion designers need to be familiar with the traditional narrativestructure of introduction, rising tension, climax, falling tension,and resolution. The traditional narrative structure is a pattern thatcan play out in infinite variations. The two most common types ofnarrative are *linear* and *non-linear*.Linear narrative is where the piece follows a clearprogression from the beginning until the end. Non-linearnarrative is more abstract in relation to time. The story canunfold with sequences of time arranged randomly. Eitherway, the message and visuals are delivered in a hierarchy ofimportance. Motion design can easily adapt to either narrativestructure.

Another basic element of storytelling is thetransition.Transitions show change in motion design. In terms of narrative,transitions allow events to unfold in either a seamless, or adisjointed manner. This decision will depend on how you want theviewer to experience the piece. The look and feel of transitionsis usually determined in the design phase of a project.

The Shape of Stories

When we go to the movies,watch an episode of a show, or read a novel, we are hoping to bemoved in some way. We are seeking to experience a dramaticchange. A story that does not change is typically boring. In motiondesign, we are creating stories and narratives on a smallerscale than movies or novels. However, our stories still need tobe interesting and dynamic. Motion designers need to be ableto create stories that contain dramatic change, contrast, andtension. Written treatments can help to craft and communicatethe general shape of a story.

Scripts

Written treatments offer broad stroke summaries for narrativesand concepts. However, some projects need a more detailedapproach. Scripts contain a refined plan for the action of a motiondesign piece. They organize the exact sequence of events as wellas coordinating specific points in time. Scripts also help to developa *shot list* that can be used to schedule a production. Shot listsorganize all the various shots that need to be captured in a live action production, or created in post-production. Scripts can alsocontain dialogue and voiceover, as well as direction forcameramovement. A designer or animator can use a script to plan thesyncing of visuals with audio.
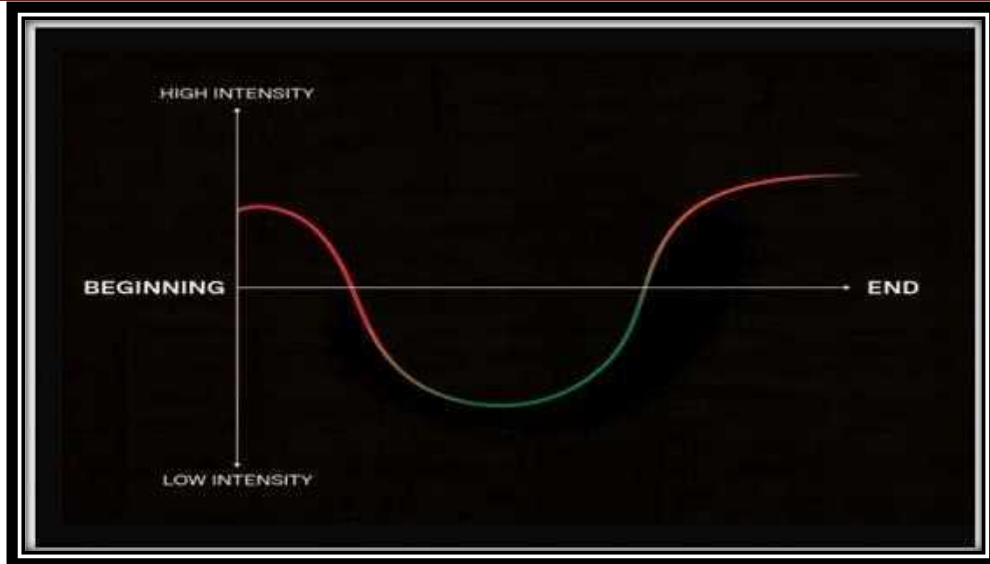
Fig (49)INFORMATION-GRAPHIC REPRESENTING KURT VONNEGUT'S "*THE SIMPLE SHAPE OF STORIES*."
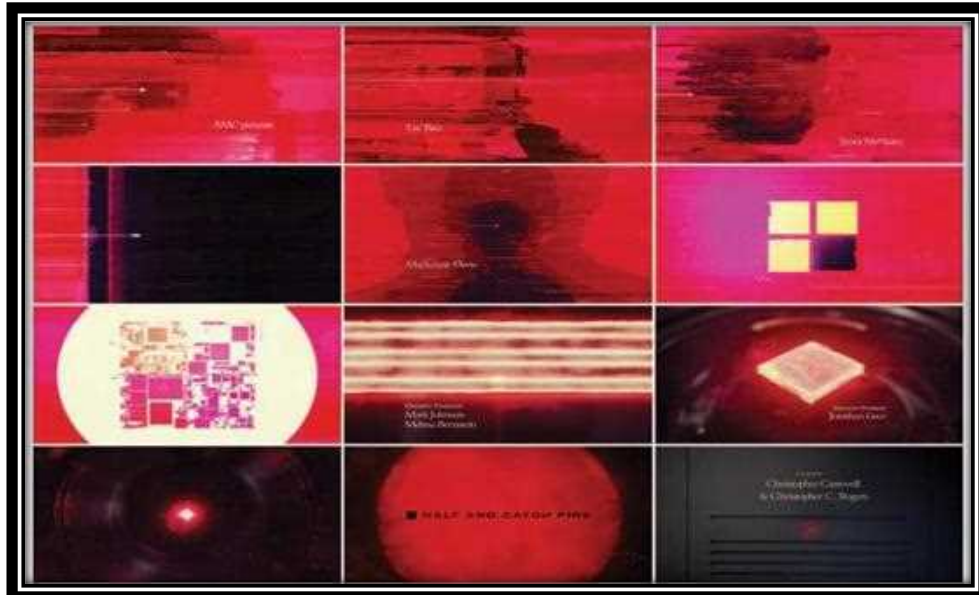

Fig (50)*Halt and Catch Fire* title sequence.
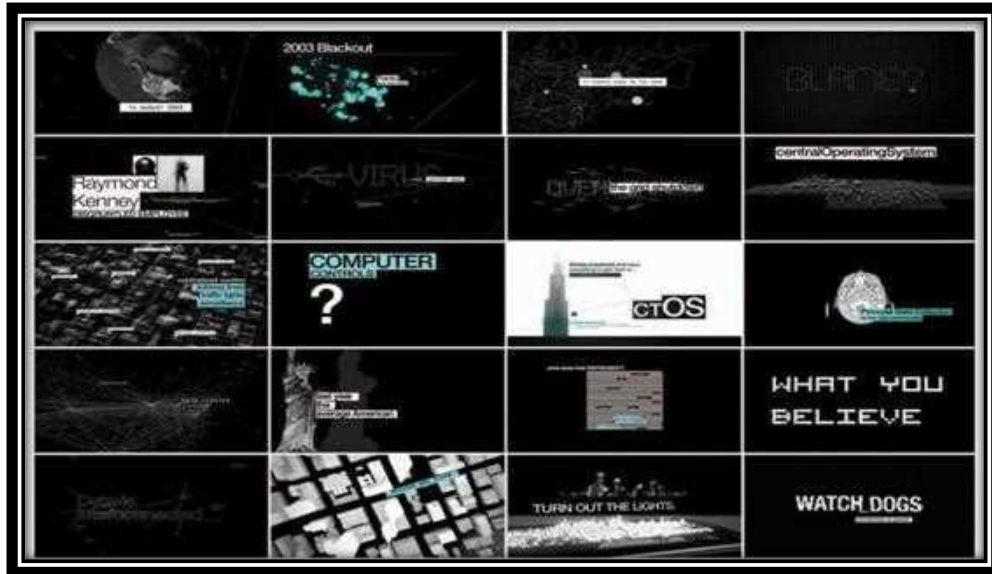

Fig (51)*True Detective* title sequence.

Fig (52)*Watch Dogs* game trailer.

Fig (53)*Stuxnet: Anatomy of a Computer Virus* Infographic.

Image Making

Image Making and Design for Motion

When we make style frames, our goal is to create beautifulimages. Successful style frames contain strong compositions.The more dynamic the composition of a frame, the more likely itwill attract the eye of the viewer and communicate its intendedmessage. Designers of motion need to develop the ability toboth recognize and create effective compositions. Recognitioncomes first, as designers must be able to discern betweenstrong and weakcompositions. Thegoal is to consistently create strong style frames. In order to dothat, we must first develop our sense of what makes an imagebeautiful.The tradition of *image-making* began with early man andcave paintings. The act of making marks, strokes, and lines ona surface to depict somethingobserved in nature or imagined inthe mind is at the root of humankind. Images represent ideas,emotions, and experiences. They serve as symbols of meaningthat an artist wishes to express, indicating what a viewer shouldbe thinking or feeling. Images have the power to connect withviewersacross time and space. Even pictures that are thousandsof years old are still impactful. Today, the World Wide Weballows these images to be accessed instantly, no matter whereyou are.Art and design share common principles that need tobe mastered in order to create beautiful or successful imagesconsistently. Most art and designschools teach foundationclasses in the first year of study. Fundamental principles includecomposition, value, contrast, color, and space.Additionally, anunderstanding of form, shape, line, and texture are required tobecome proficient with image-making. It takes proper instructionand hard work to develop these skills.

Composition

From a design perspective, style frames allow a designer toestablish a *hierarchy of visual importance*. Style frames direct theeye of the viewer toward specific focal points. A designer needs tounderstand how to do this by arranging compositional elements.Color, value, scale, depth, shape, line, and texture all contributeto defining what should stand out and what should sink into thebackground.Perhaps the single most important principle of image making is *composition*. Composition is the arrangement of visual elements in a space. The essential elements ofcomposition are thespectrums, or ranges, between positiveand negative space, and between symmetry and asymmetry.How these visual elements are composed affects how theyrelate to each other. The designer is responsible for directingthe eye of the viewer. If you change a single element in a frame,all of theelements change by varying degrees. The moredramatic the change, the more the composition as a whole isaffected.
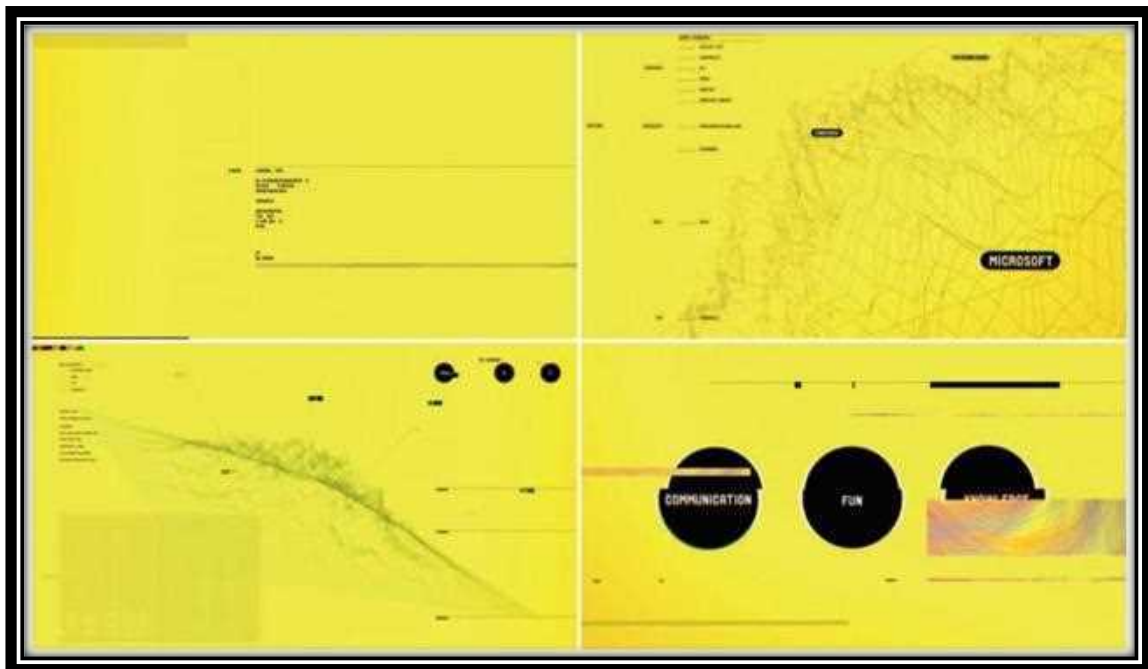

Fig (54) STYLE FRAMES

Fig (55) STYLE FRAMES

Positive Space and Negative Space

The interplay between *positive space* and *negative space* is at theessence of composition. The balance between what is seen andwhat is not seenpermeates every aspect of design. This concepttranscends the realm of design and motion. An understanding ofhow to manipulate the relationship between what is there and whatis not there is essential to creating strong compositions. *Negativespace* is one of the most important terms used in critiquing styleframes. The viewer's eye needs areas of empty space in order to bepurposefully directed toward the focal point of an image. Understanding and being able to play with positive andnegative space is vital for making strong compositions. The inability to focus creates feelings of confusion anduncertainty. Looking at an image that is too busy is like being in acluttered room.When an image contains too many elements, it will appearto flatten out. All of the visual elements are shouting for attention.The viewer will not have a clear visual path to follow, and certaintywill be watered down. In other words, what you leave out is just asimportant as what you put in. This means that the negative spaceplays as large of a role as the positive space. The empty spacescan support and frame focal points in a composition.

Symmetry and Asymmetry

The other essential spectrum that needs to be considered whenmaking a composition is the continuum between *symmetry* and*asymmetry*.Symmetry is an arrangement of positive and negativespace in such a way as to create maximum balance and certainty.Design-oriented compositions are often symmetrical, makingthem easy to read with little doubt about the intended message.Think about advertisements such as posters, print ads, and endtags for commercials. In general, logos and title treatmentsare centered in the composition. Around these focal points,there is plenty of breathing room in the form of negative space.Hence, the final three tofive seconds of a 30 second commercial almost always employsa composition that is tipping toward being symmetrical, with theadvertiser's logo as the focal point.Asymmetrical compositions are considered to be more inthe tradition of fine art, where the arrangement of visual elementsis off-centered or unexpected. Contrary to symmetry andcertainty, an asymmetrical composition is most effective to createa sense of mystery in an image. Asymmetry has the potential to be more dramaticand potentially more interesting. These kinds of compositionsdraw a viewer in and produce emotional and intellectual reactions.Knowing when to employ a symmetrical or asymmetricalcomposition is key for a motion designer.

Motion

Motion design is composition changing over time. An interestingdynamic in motion design is the contrast between mysteryand certainty. Thecomposition in a still or graphic image isoften considered either fine art or commercial art. However, in motion design we can work with bothkinds of compositions. The element of time allows us to changecompositions, giving the option to move from mystery to certainty,or vice versa. Additionally, the transitions between art and designcan happen

multiple times in a single piece. Many commercialpieces work in this way, starting in a place of mystery that thentakes the viewer on a journey. The commercial almost alwaysconcludes in a place of design certainty with a logo resolve.
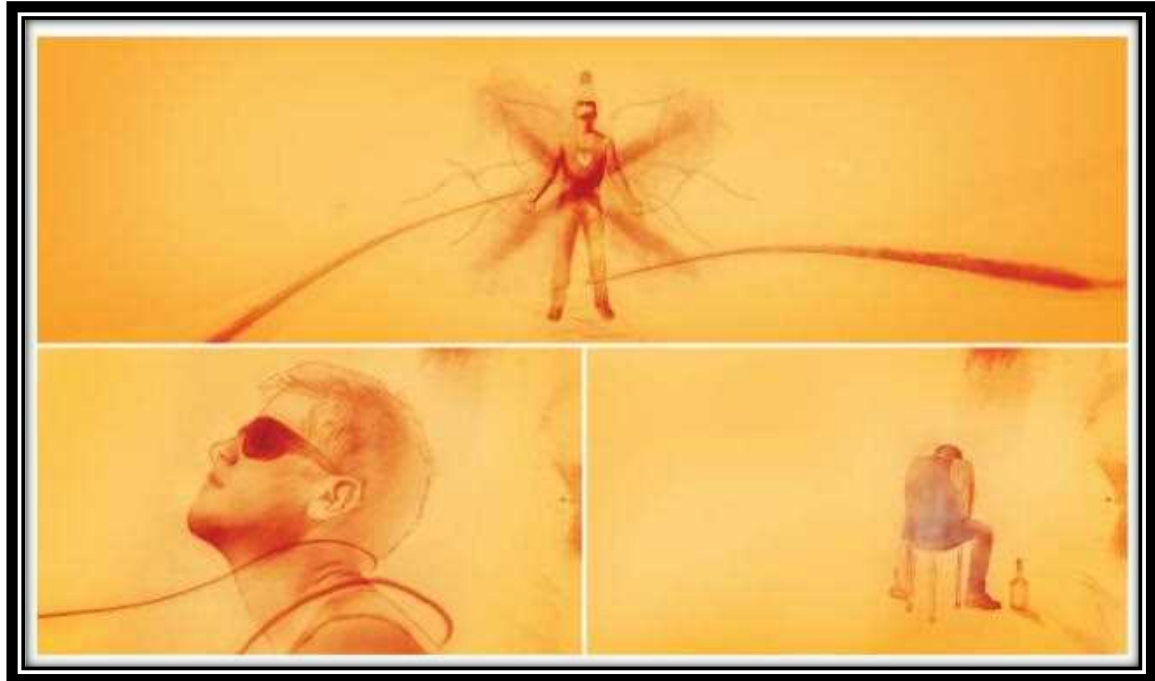

Fig (56) STYLE FRAMES

Fig (57) *Coke* "*Happiness Factory*" commercial.

Fig (58) *Coke* "*Happiness Factory*" commercial.

Fig (59) *Twinings* "*Sea*" commercial.

Fig (60) *ING* exploratory.

The range of intensity from light to dark

In addition to positive and negative space and symmetry andasymmetry, a designer needs to understand *value*. Value can bedefined as the range of intensity from light to dark. Withproperuse of value, we can create depth within a composition. Images without aninteresting juxtaposition of light and dark values lack contrast andappear flat. The ability to render value allows an artist or designerto create the illusion of three dimensions on a two-dimensionalsurface. Value is a principle that is independent of color andsaturation, although all colors have ranges of value.

Value and color

All colors have value, meaning a range of intensity between lightand dark, but they also have varying degrees of hue and saturation.In order to render an image in color that has depth and a directedfocal point, a designer needs to understand how to translate notonly value, but also the correct hue and saturation. This skillis especially important in photo real images where elementsare coming from sources with different lighting setups. Images can very quickly fall apart if color and value are not handledproperly.
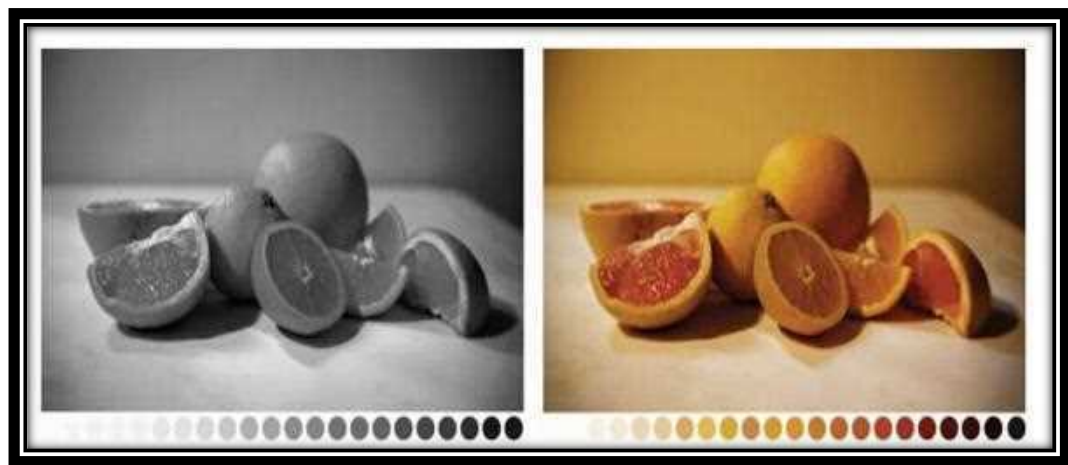

Fig (61) VALUE STUDIES IN BLACK AND WHITE AND COLOR,

Value and Line

Value can be translated and expressed through line weight.Illustrative design styles often utilize line as a primary visualelement to create images. Variation between thick and thin lineshas a similar effect to gradations of light and dark. Thicker, bolderlines come forward, whereas thinner, lighter lines recede. Adesigner can create a lot of movement and even depth solely withline by creating contrast with value. This effect can be achievedusing analog or digital tools.

Value in Nature

To explore value is to explore the beauty in life. When you lookat the sky, do you just see blue? Or can you become aware of thegradations of

color in the sky? If you look, you will see a range oflighter and darker shades of blue. If you look for a while, you willnotice how these gradations change over time. Subtle variationsin value are qualities inherent in analog visuals. If you want animage to feel organic or tactile, it needs to have a high gradationin value.

Contrast For Image-Making

Contrast is a principle that is utilized in every aspect of motiondesign. From concept development and design through productionand post-production, contrast creates tension. Oppositions havethe potential to produce dynamic relationships when composedeffectively. For image-making, tension is important because itcreates visual interest. The more dramatic thedifferences arebetween elements in an image, the greater the contrast. An artistor designer who understands how to work with contrast can directthe eye toward points of interest.Contrast can be applied to every singlevisual principle.

Fig (62) STYLE FRAME

Color

Color is a fundamental principle of image-making. Color servesas a unifying element that defines the visual pattern of an image.This element is commonly known as a color palette. A designermust be able to choose and define color palettes to answer theneeds of different kinds of creative briefs. Color palettes also helpto establish the creative borders and boundaries of an image style.A color that is too far outside a chosen color palette will feel out ofplace.Color can give an image life and vibrancy. A designercan communicate ideas and feelings with their color choices.Colors have distinct personalities and characteristics.A general rule about colors is that warm colors will comeforward in space and cool colors will fall backward in space.Warm colors include reds, oranges, and yellows, whereas coolcolors include blues and greens. Purple is somewhere in betweenand can be warm or cool, depending on the amount of red or blue.Warmer colors tend to be more exciting and active while coolercolors tend to be calmer. An image becomes really interestingwhen colors interact in dynamic ways. Color combinations, suchas complimentary colors, create contrast. This color contrastevokes tension and establishes a visual flow and hierarchy withinan image. Additionally, gradations of value and saturation in colorwill add depth and dimension to your compositions. Additionally, creating mood boards for color reference has neverbeen easier. You can gather images from various design blogsor online resources, and organize them by inspirational colorpalettes.

Depth

A designer needs to have an understanding of *depth* in order tosuccessfully create dimensionality in an image. Depth is the senseof space within a frame or viewport. Value is a key ingredientin creating the illusion of depth. The gradation of lights anddarks produce a sense of moving forward orbackward in space.

Depth of Field

Depth of field is another visual principle that a designer of motionneeds to understand. Depth of field relates to how the focus of alens affects the appearance of a scene. Depth of field is defined as"the range of distances of the object in front of an image-formingdevice (such as a camera lens) measured along the axis of thedevice throughout which the image has acceptable sharpness. Planes that are in focus will appear sharp and clearwhereas planes that are out of focus will be blurry. The farther aplane is from the focal point of the lens, the blurrier the objectson that plane will look.

Perspective

The types of perspective that are particularly useful to a motiondesigner include *linear perspective*, *atmospheric perspective*, and*color perspective*. Linear perspective is a fundamental techniquefor image-making defined as "the technique or process ofrepresenting on a plane or curved surface the spatial relation ofobjects as they might appear to the eye."9 This approach providesguides for where to position elements so that they appear toexist realistically in space. The frame or viewportrepresentsthe viewer's eye or a camera lens looking into a scene. Visualelements that are closer to the lens of the viewport will appearlarger in scale, and elements that are farther away will besmaller. Working with perspective is mandatory if you wish tocreate images with some measure of realism.

Fig (63) AN EXAMPLE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC DEPTH OF FIELD. PHOTOGRAPH

Atmospheric Perspective

Atmospheric perspective emulates the way we naturally see. Thisform of perspective, also known as aerial perspective, is definedas a "method of creating the illusion of depth, or recession, ina painting or drawing by modulating color to simulate changeseffected by the atmosphere on the colors of things seen at adistance. The earth's atmosphere is filled with dust, haze,water vapor, and scattered light. These particles makeobjectsin the distance appear to lose contrast of value and definition.The farther away an object is from a viewer, the more neutralthe values will appear. The closer an object is to the lens ofthe viewport, the higher the contrast of darks and lights. Thistechnique is useful to create more realistic depth and dimensionin an image.

Fig (64) EXAMPLES OF ATMOSPHERIC AND COLOR PERSPECTIVE.

Color perspective

Color perspective works in a similar way to atmosphericperspective. However, with color perspective, the affected visualprinciples are color and saturation. Again, due to natural particlesin the environment affecting how we see, colors appear to losesaturation the farther away they are in space. Also, elements thatare extremely far away will take on the color of the sky.

Fig (65) EXAMPLES OF ATMOSPHERIC AND COLOR PERSPECTIVE.

Fig (66) *Semi-Permanent 2013* conference titles.