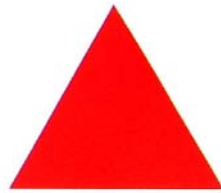


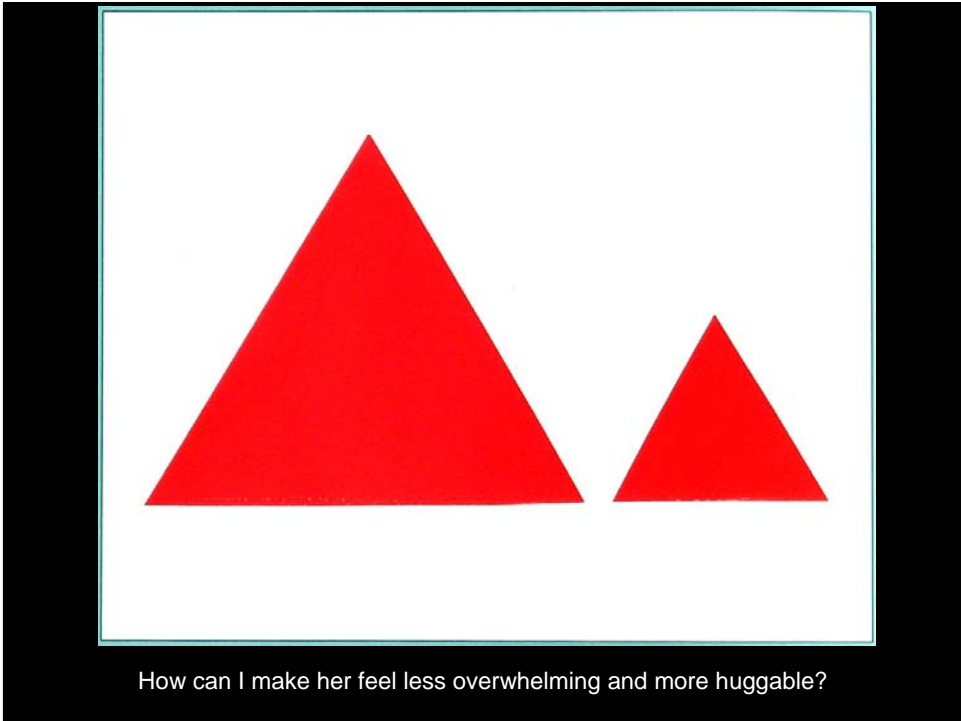
PICTURE THIS

HOW PICTURES WORK

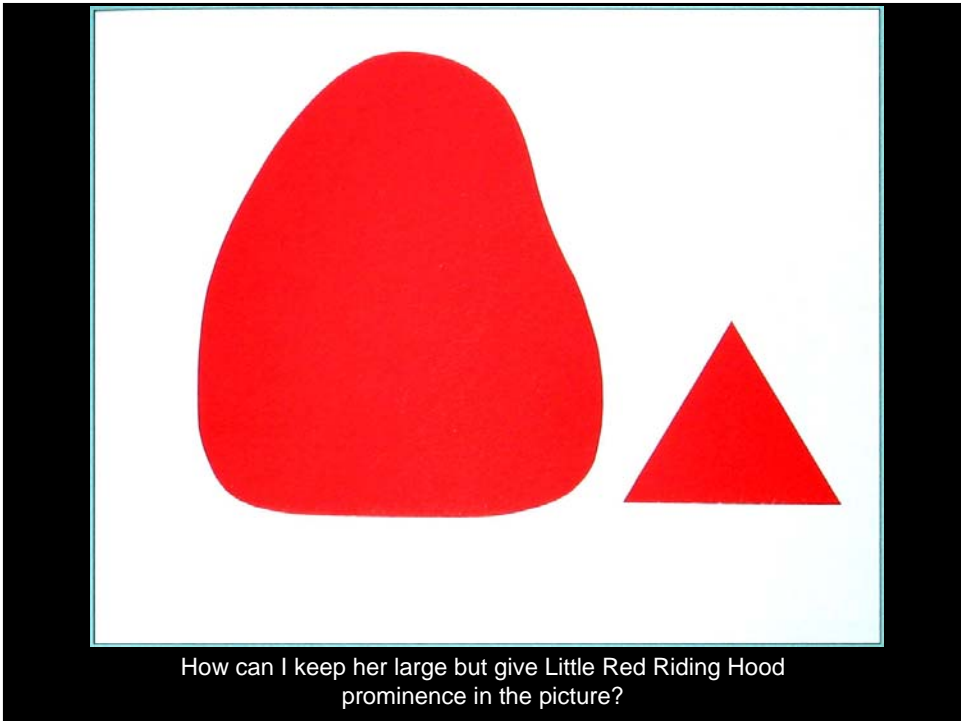
by Molly Bang



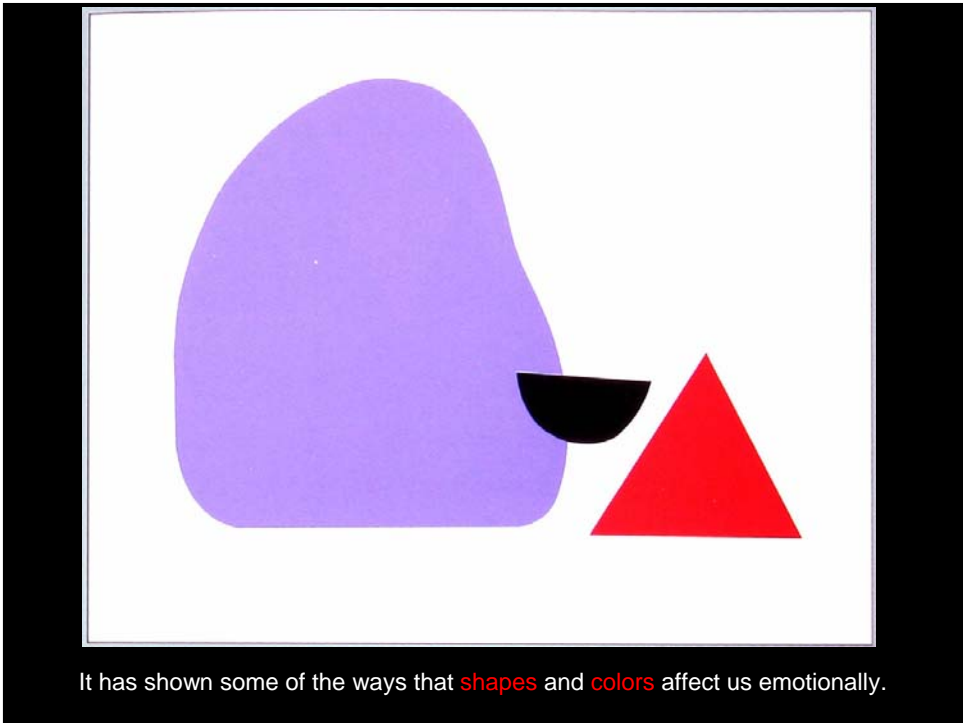
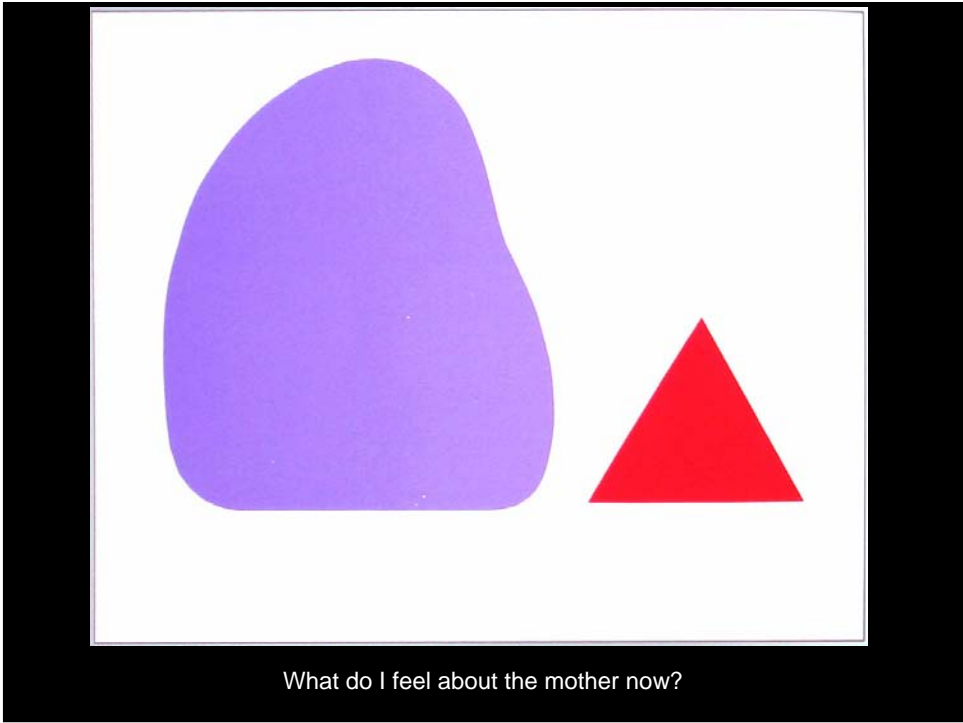
Do I feel anything for this shape?

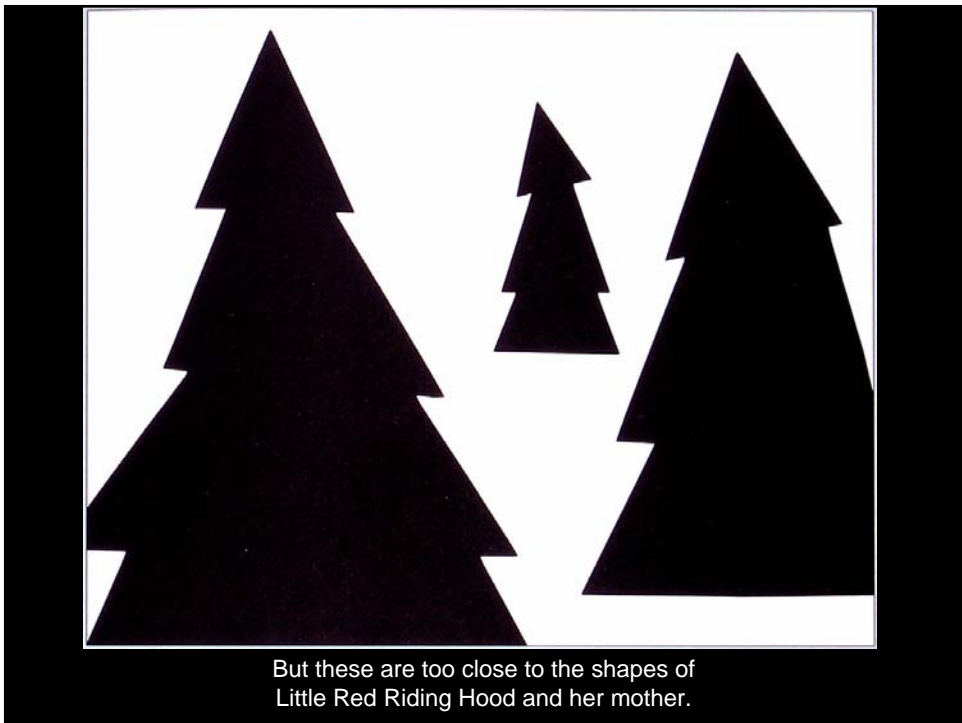
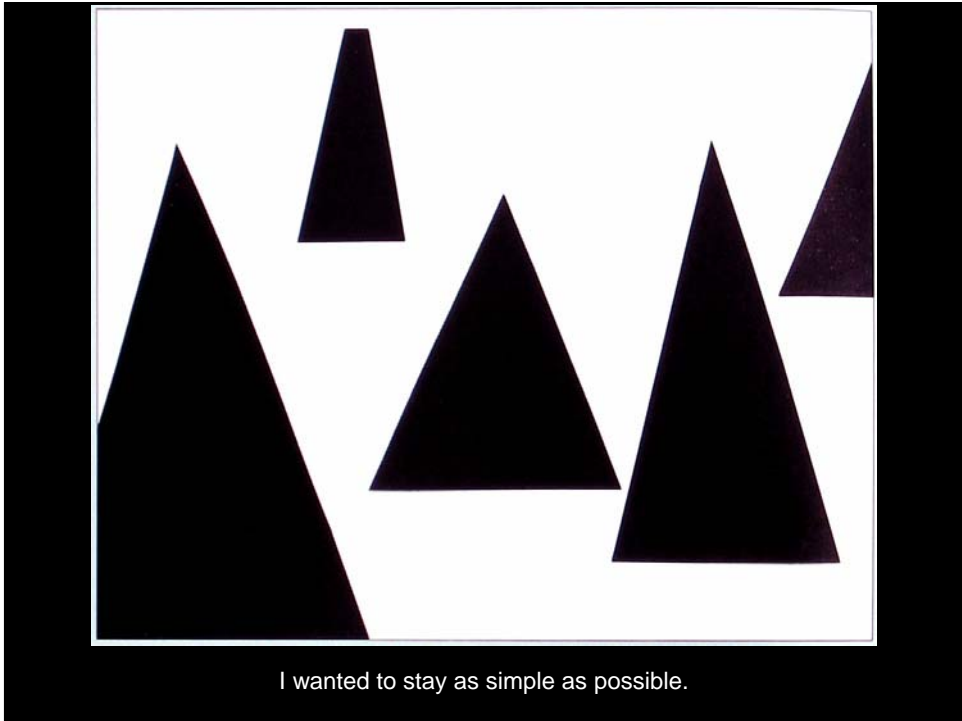


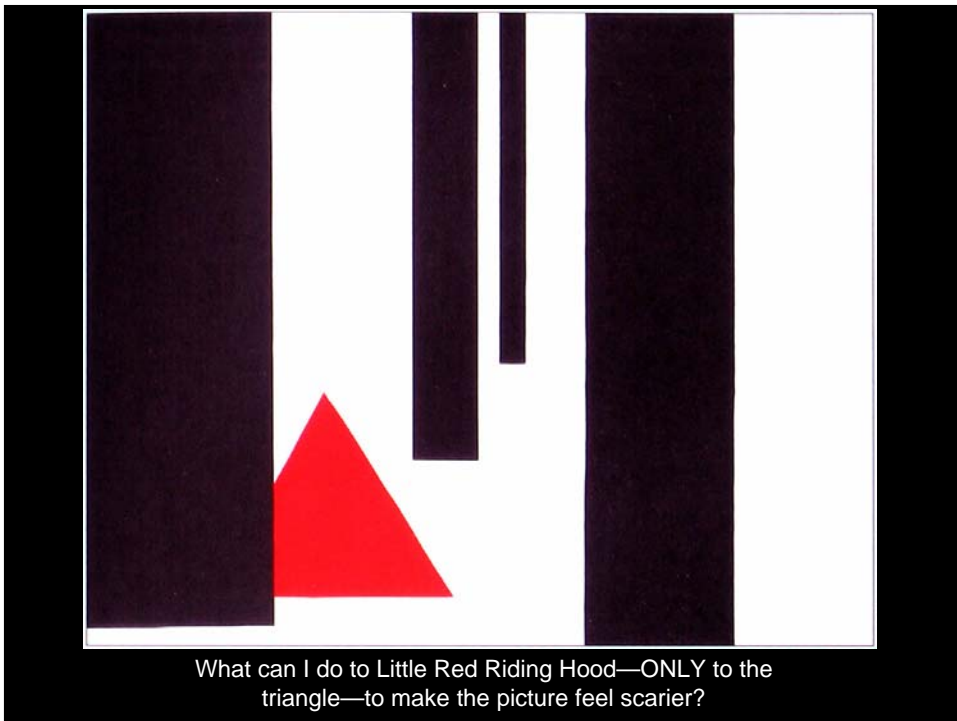
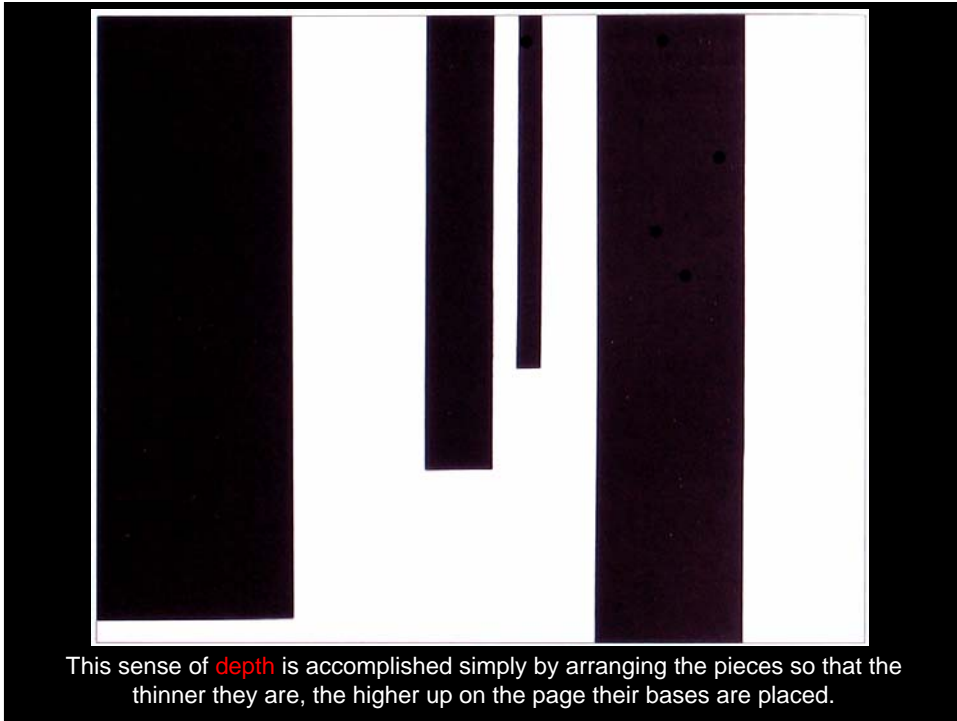
How can I make her feel less overwhelming and more huggable?

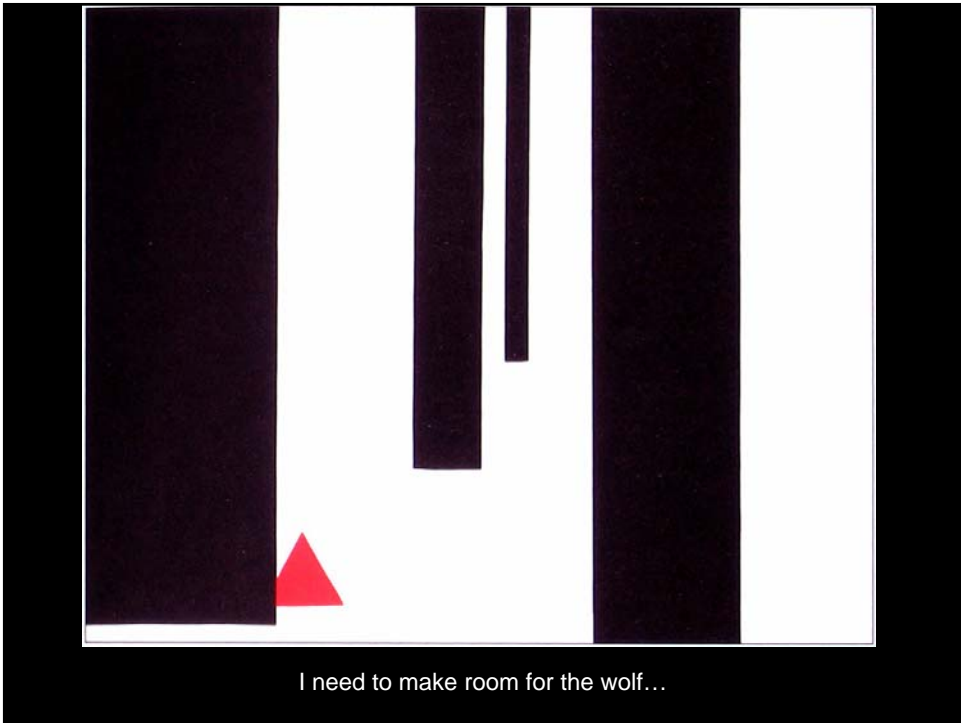
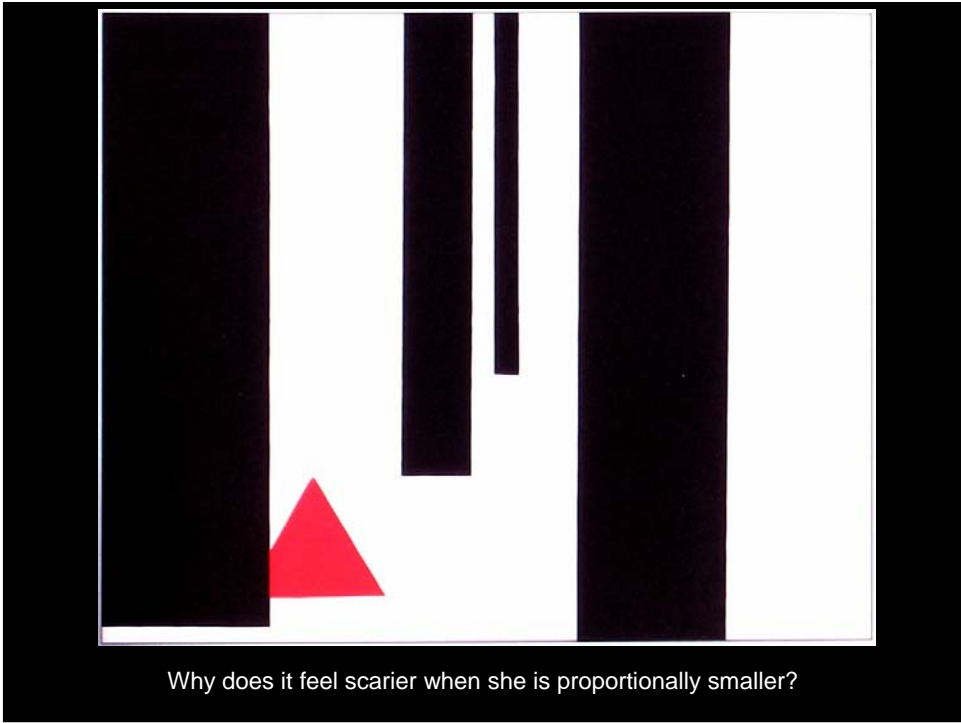


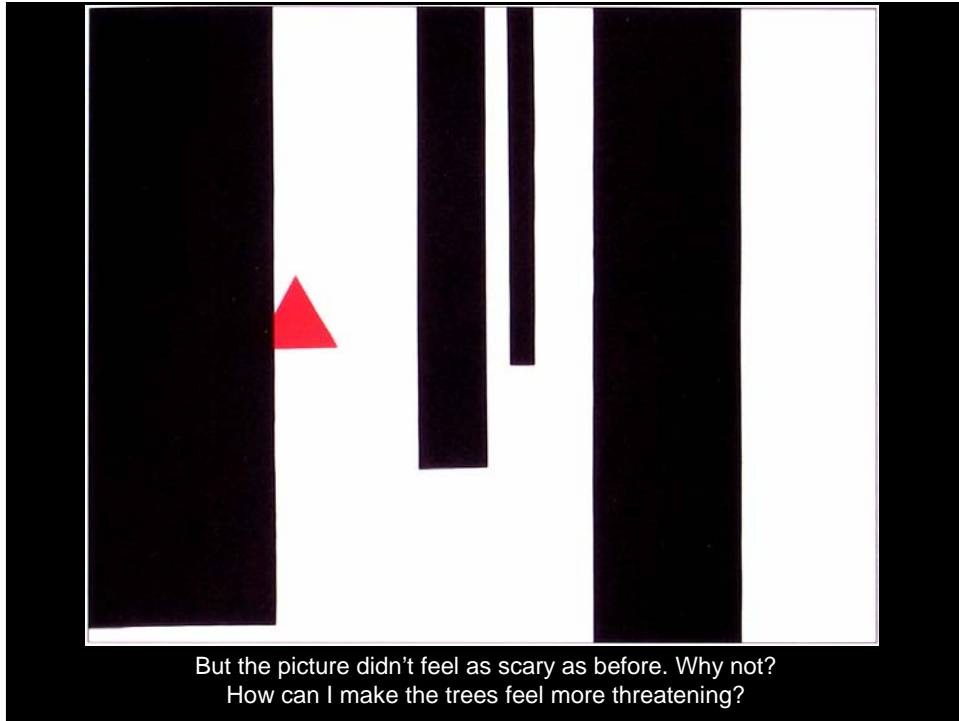
How can I keep her large but give Little Red Riding Hood prominence in the picture?

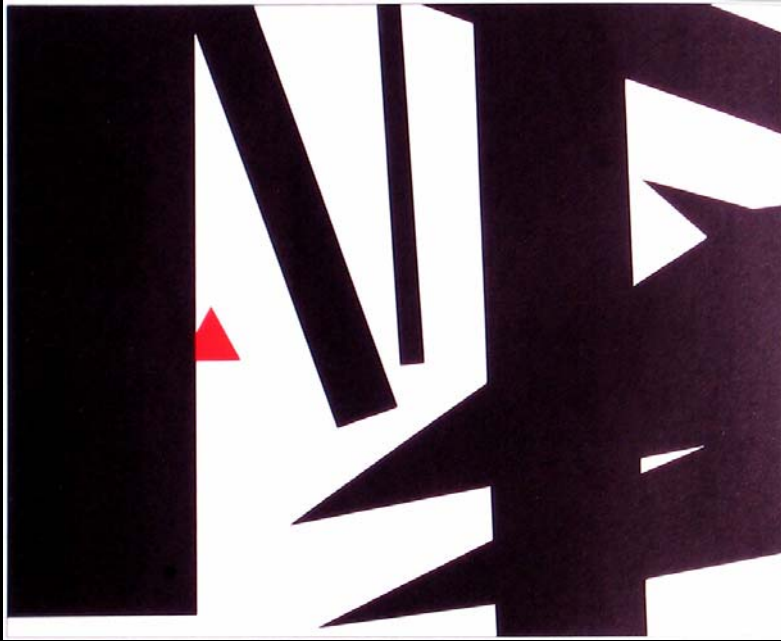




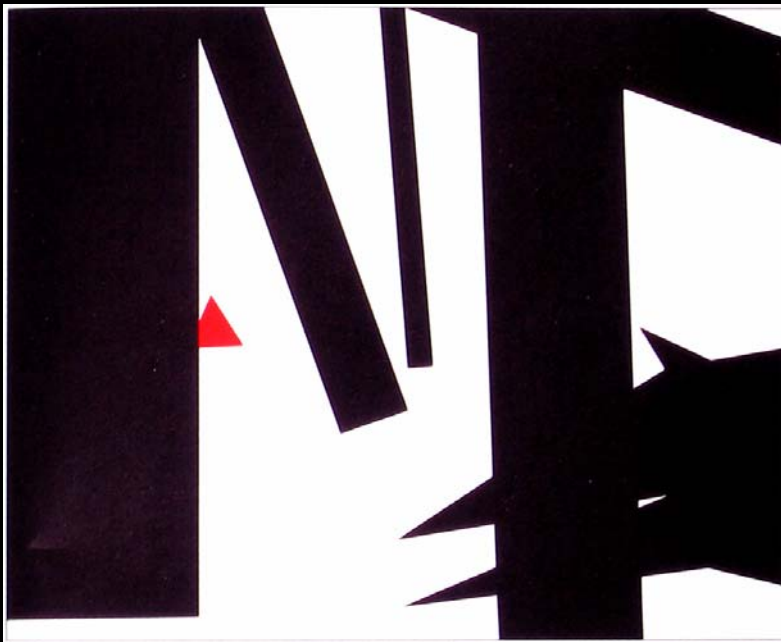




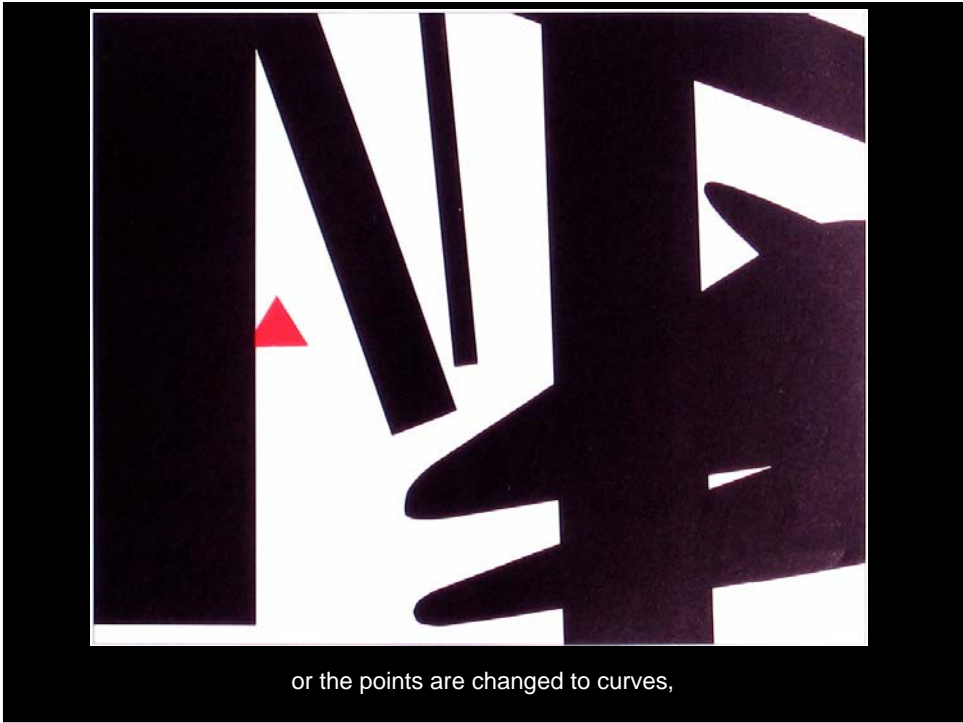


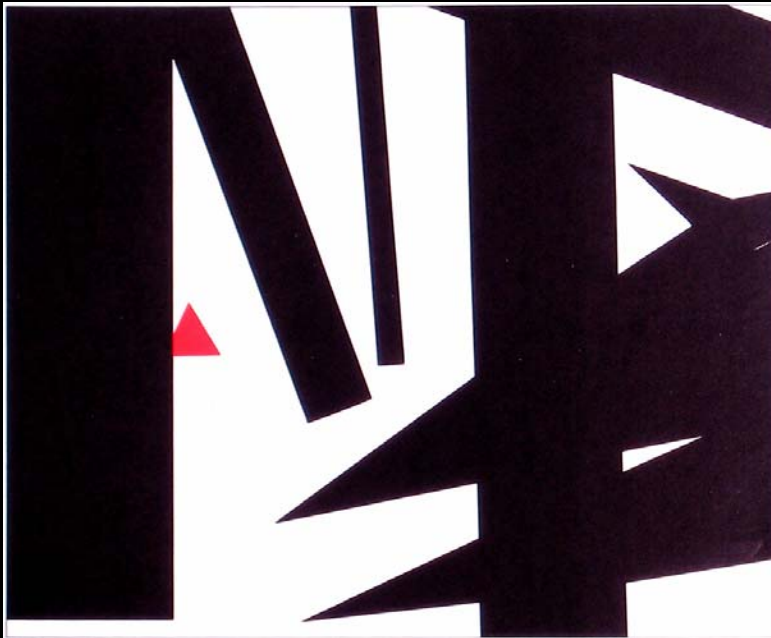


Why do these triangles look so scary?

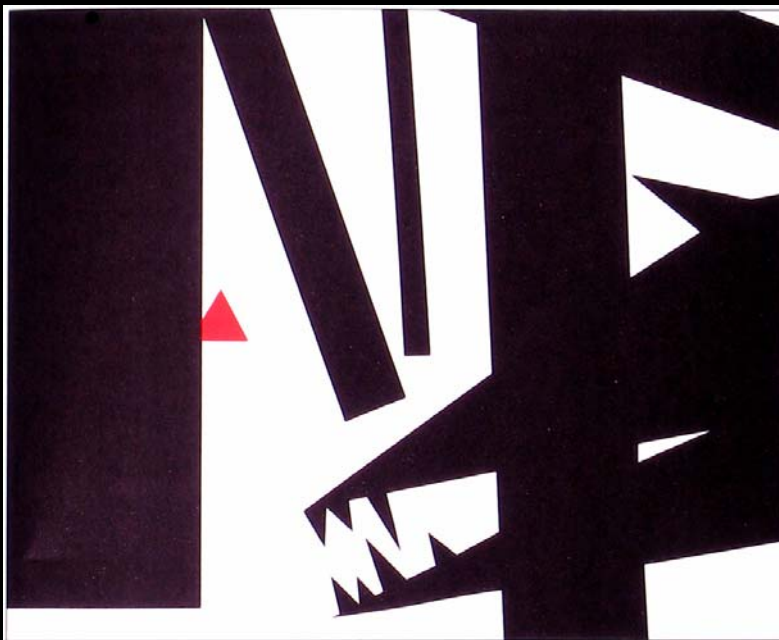


I feel very differently when the wolf is made much smaller,

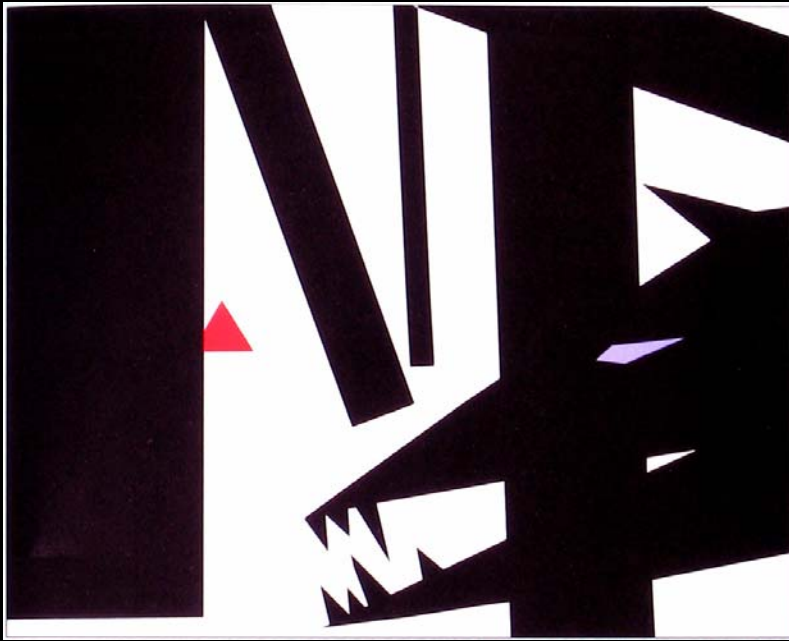




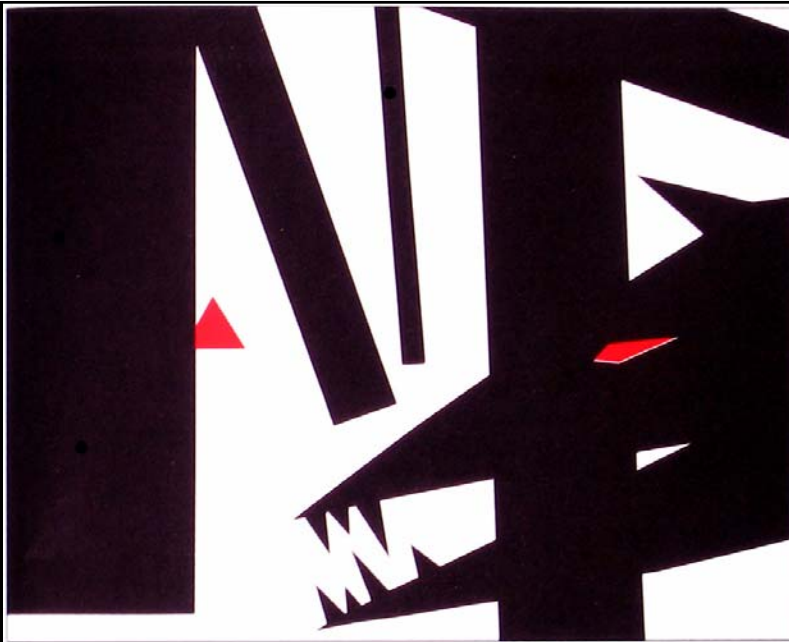
What are the features of wolves that make them so frightening to us?



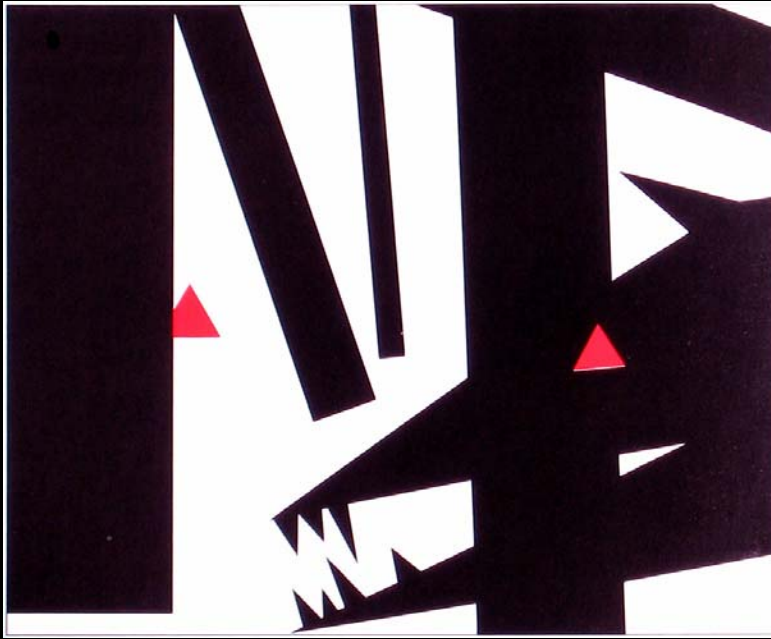
What else does the wolf need in order to look more wolfish?



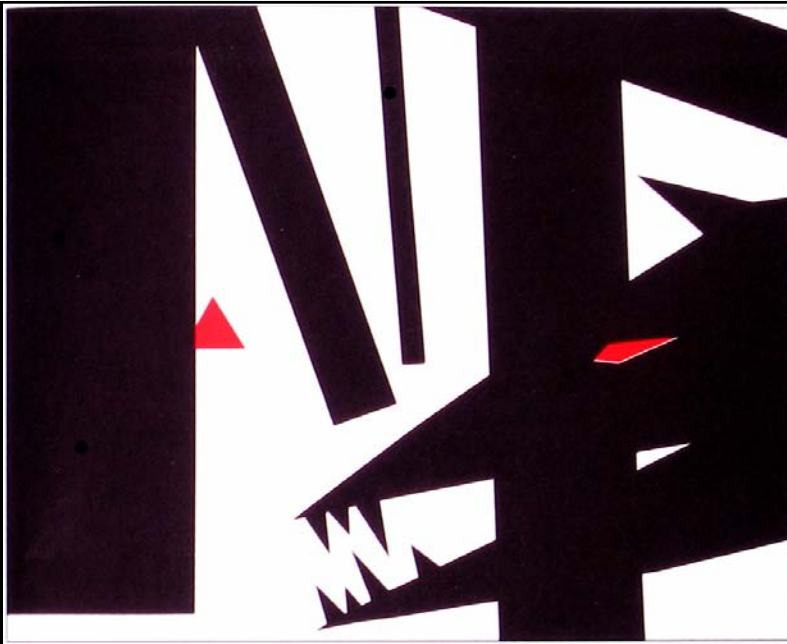
But even though wolves' eyes are often pale blue, it didn't look right.



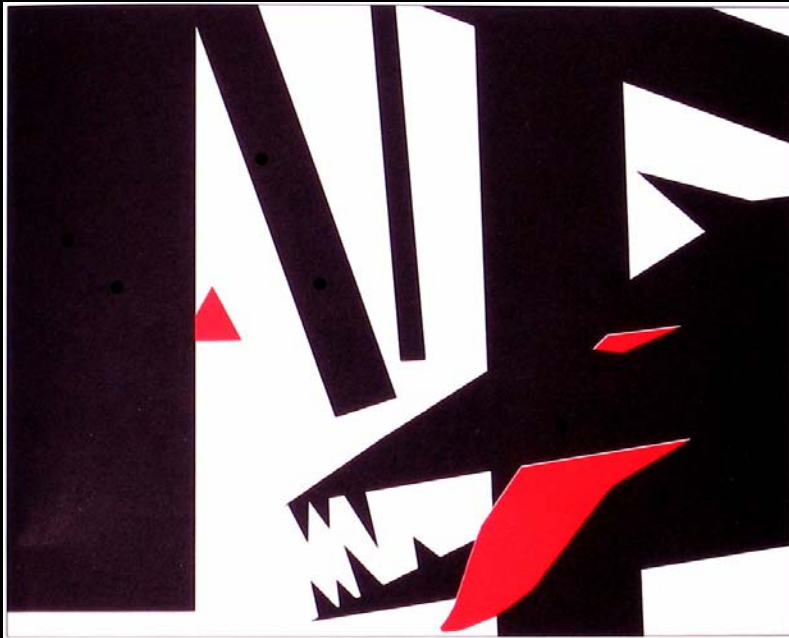
What happens if the eye is made exactly the same color and shape as Little Red Riding Hood?



The picture feels very different, and yet all that has changed is the shape of the eye.



What feature could I add to the wolf to make it yet more frightening?



When two or more objects in a picture have the same color, we associate them with each other.



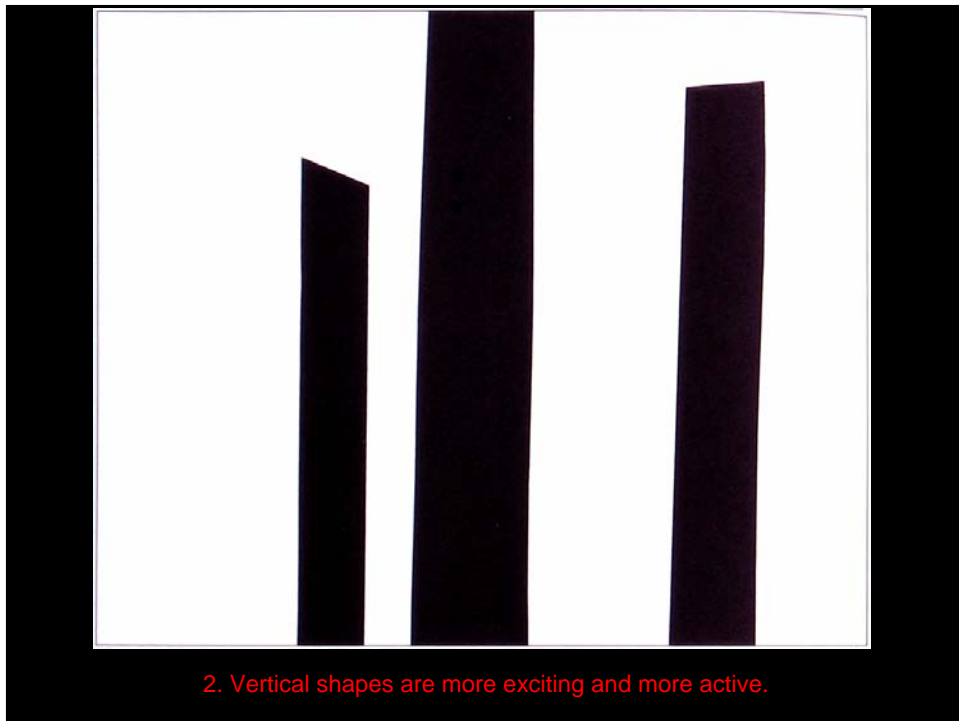
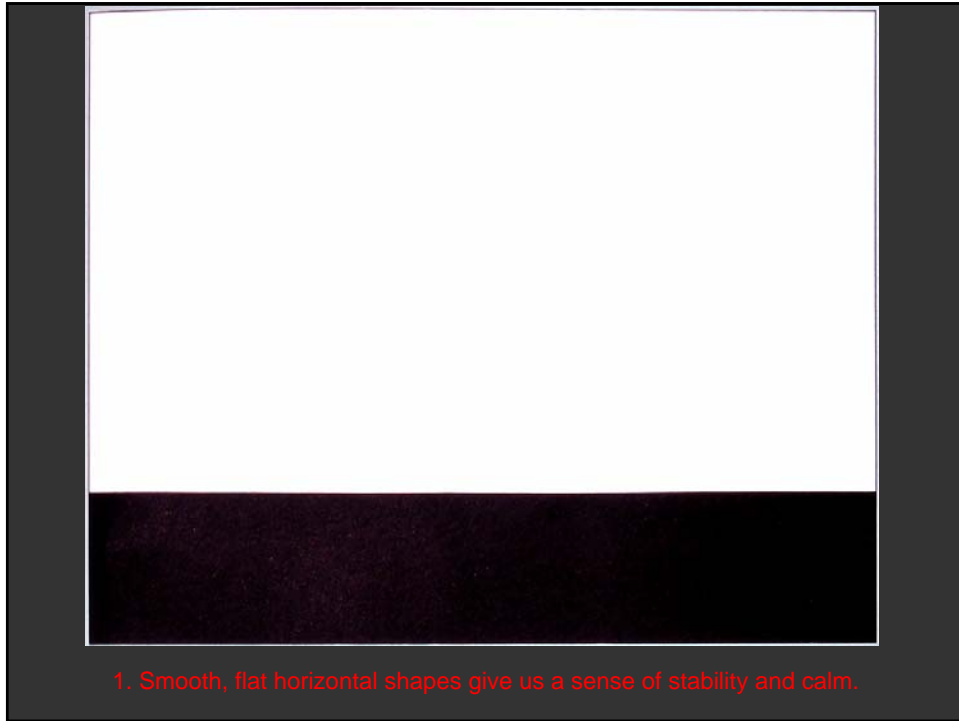
Why does the picture feel more threatening?

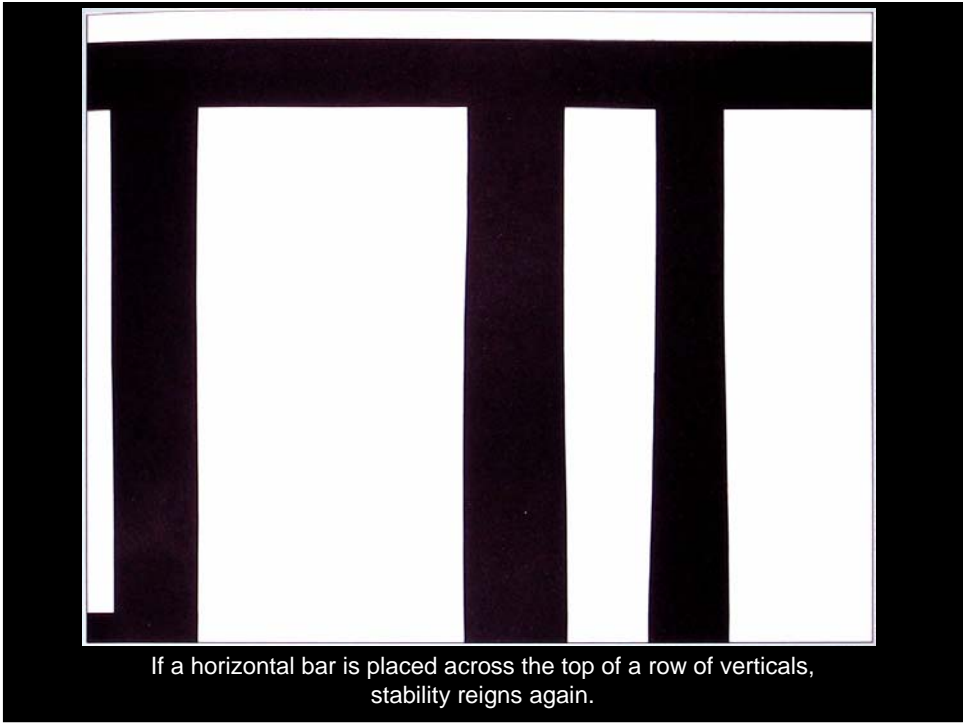


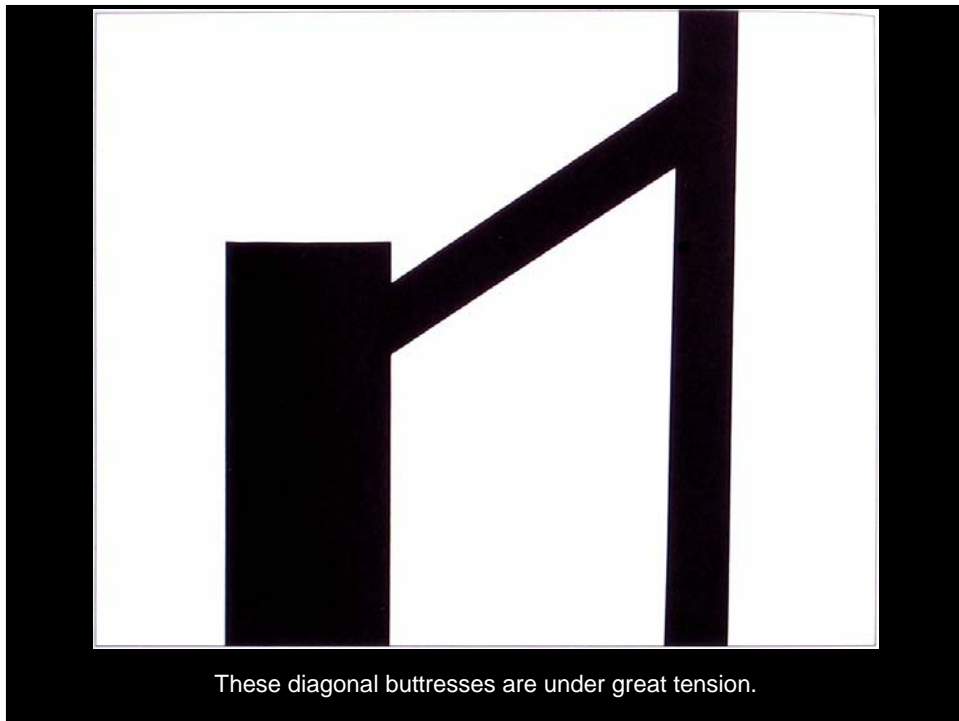
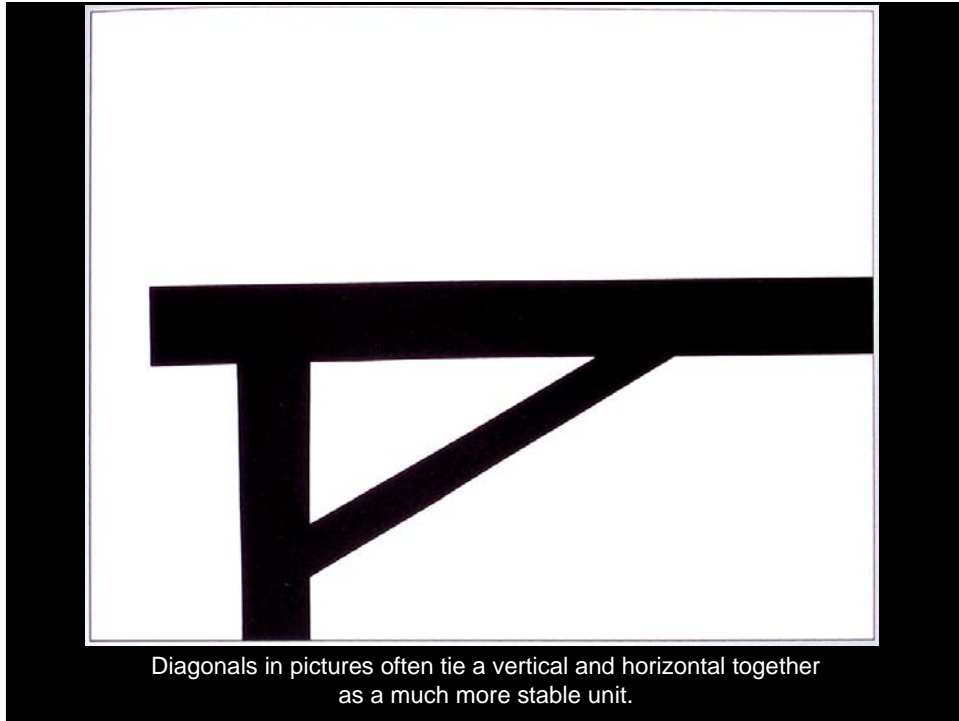
What has happened now that the teeth are white?

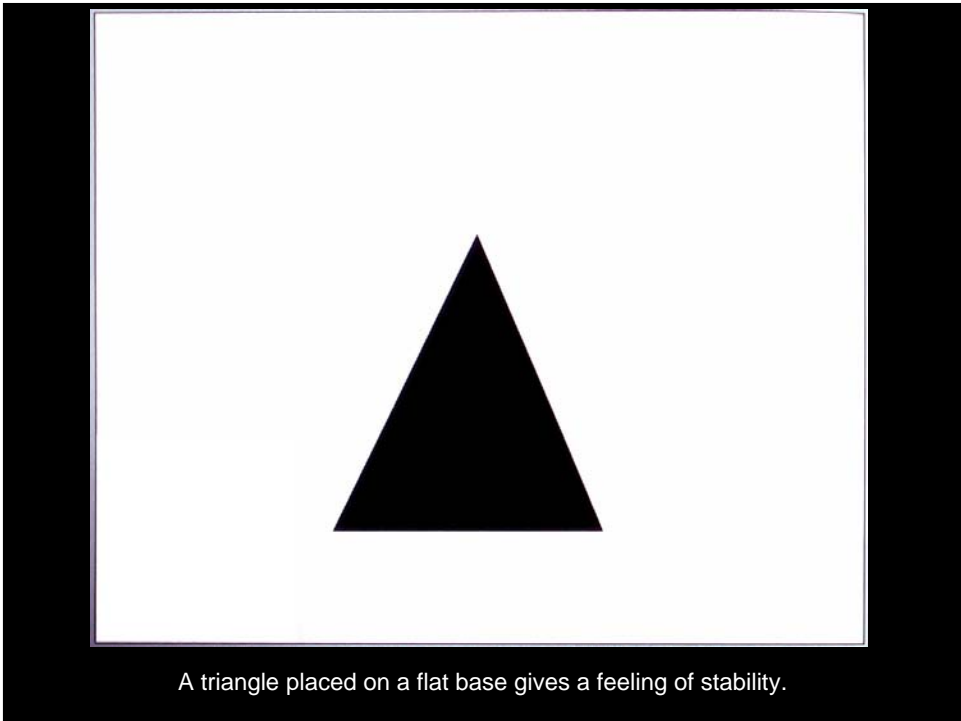
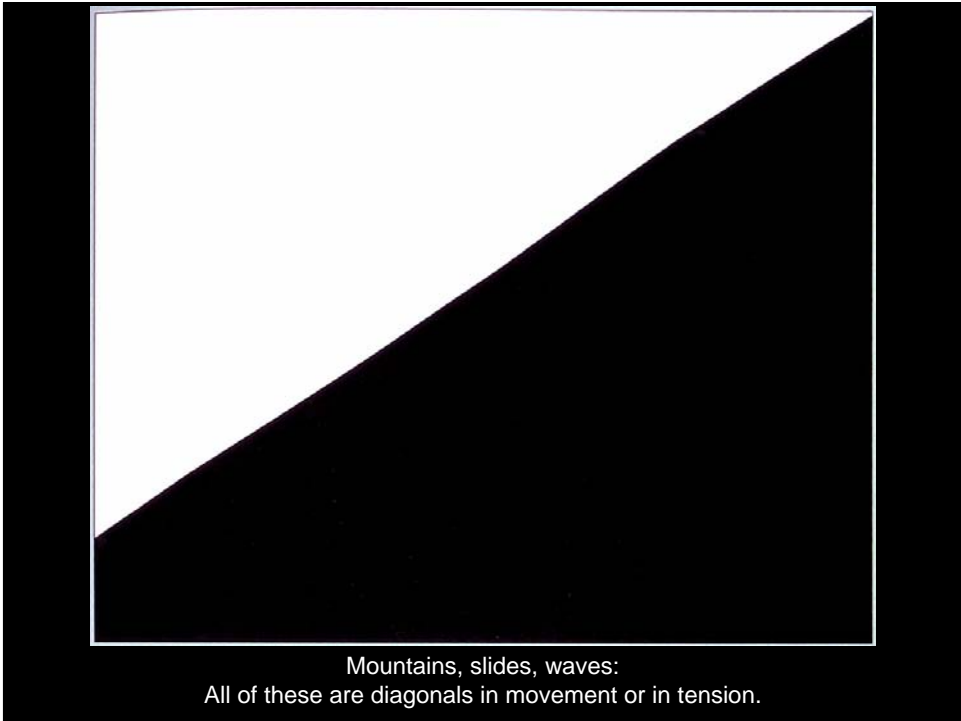
THE PRINCIPLES

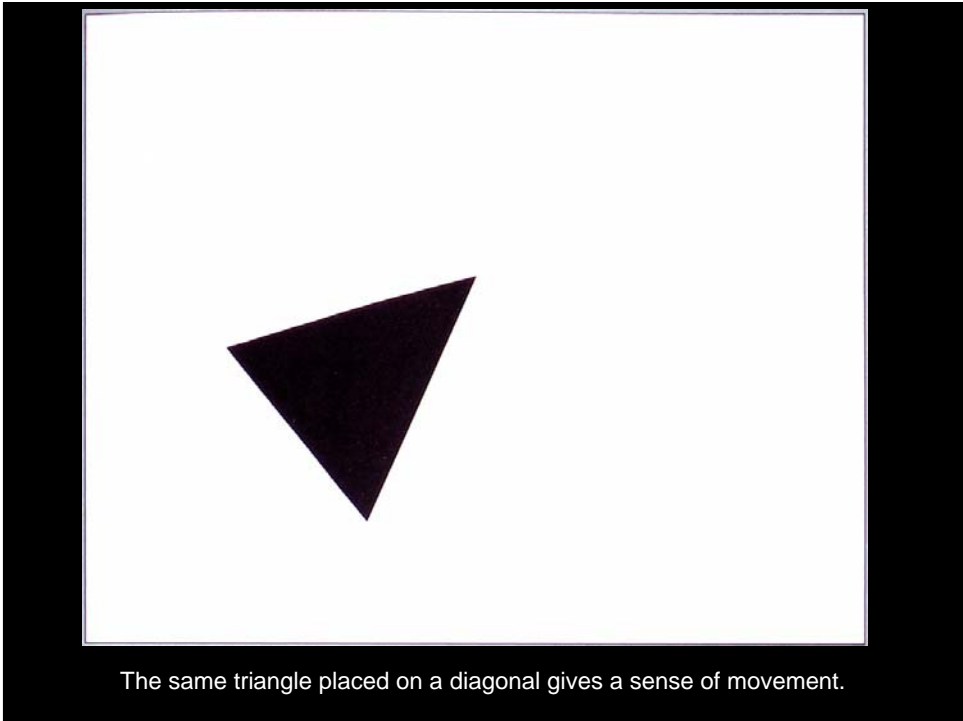
Make note of the principles printed in red.



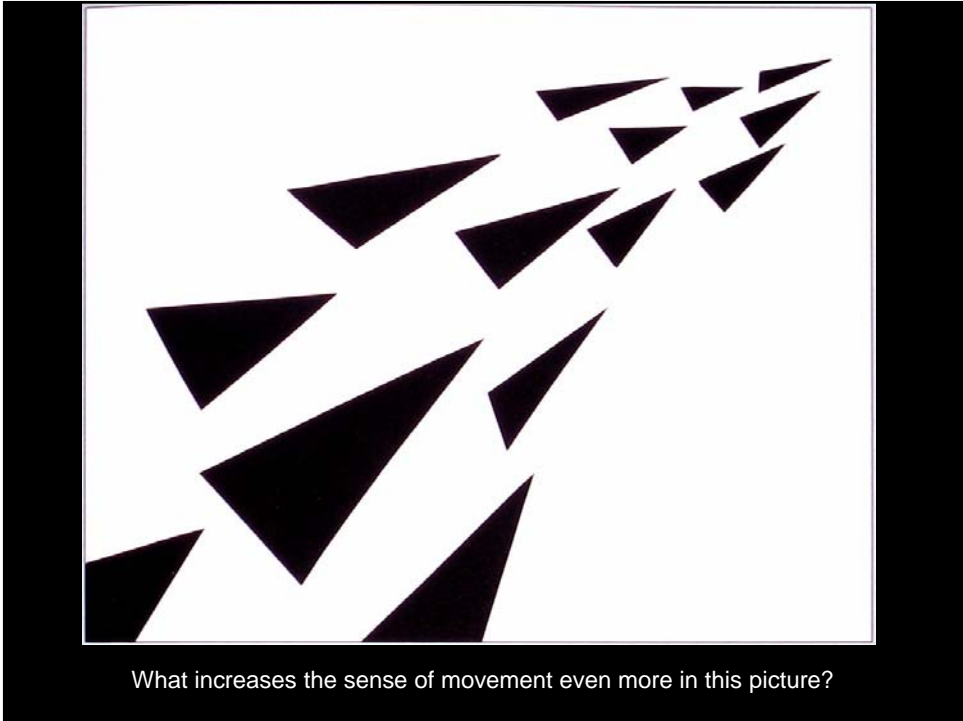




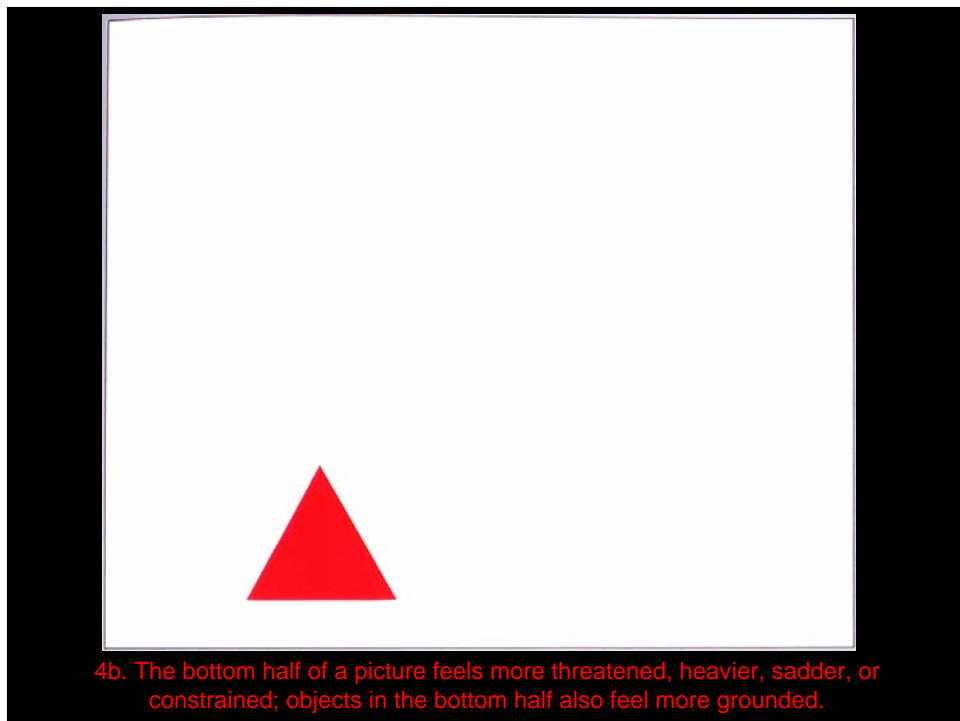
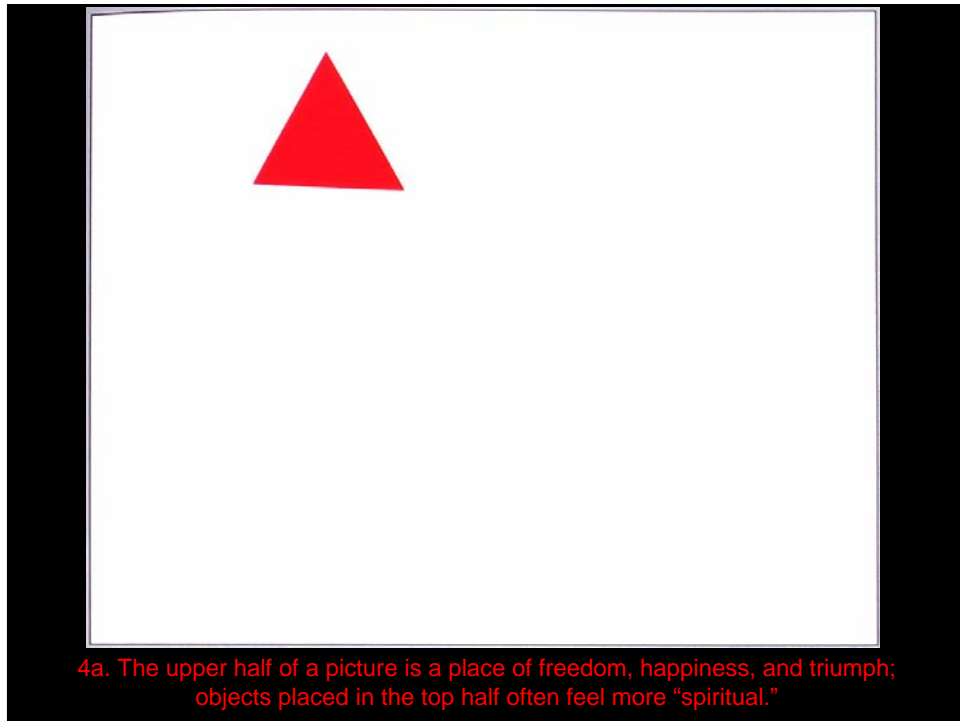


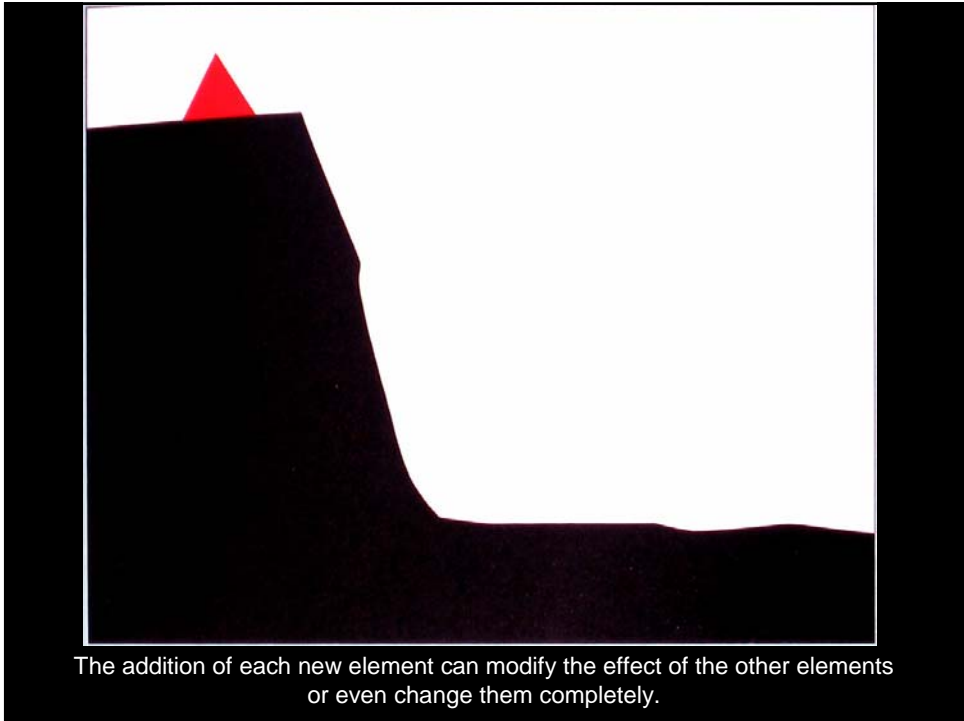


The same triangle placed on a diagonal gives a sense of movement.

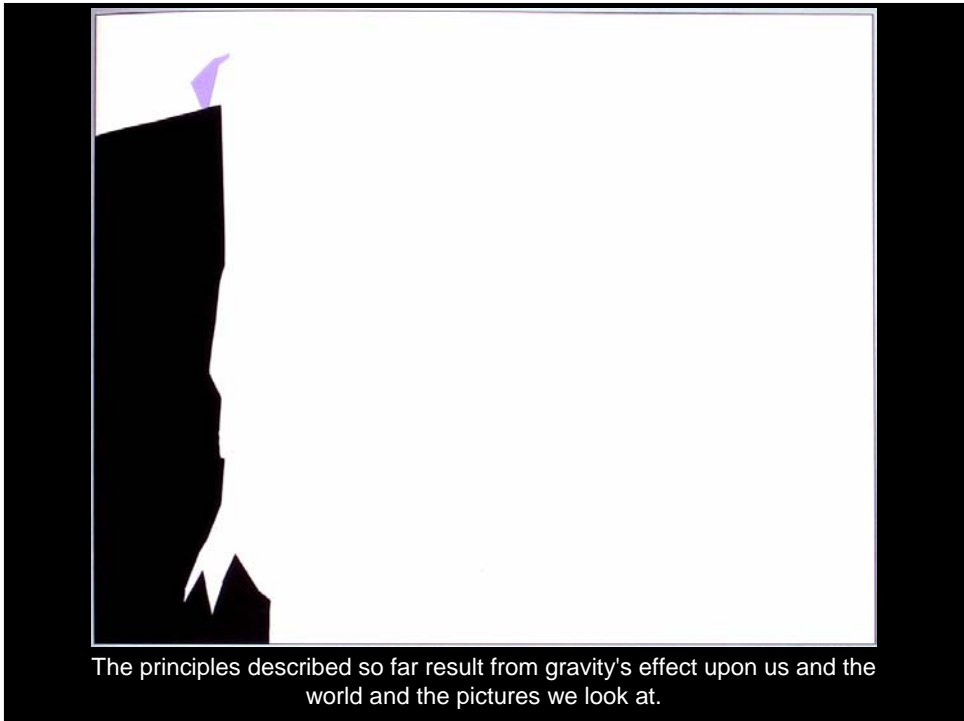


What increases the sense of movement even more in this picture?



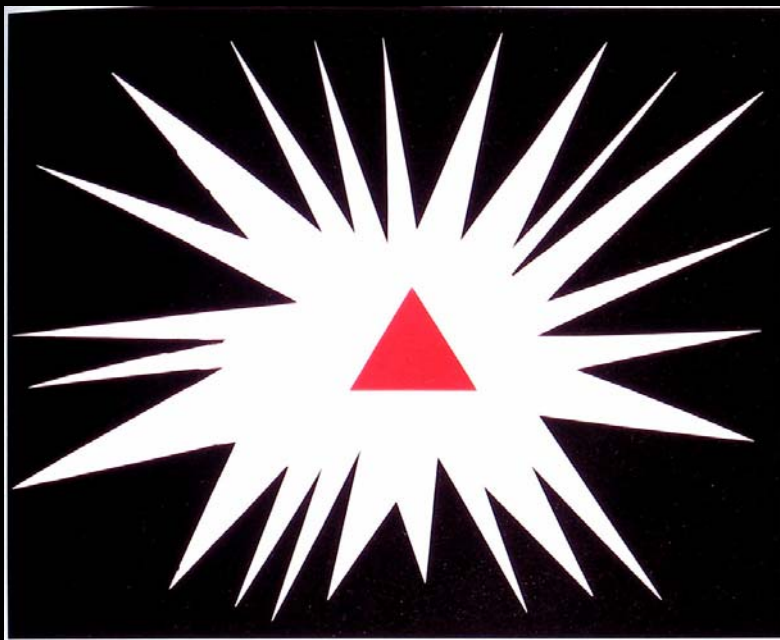


The addition of each new element can modify the effect of the other elements or even change them completely.

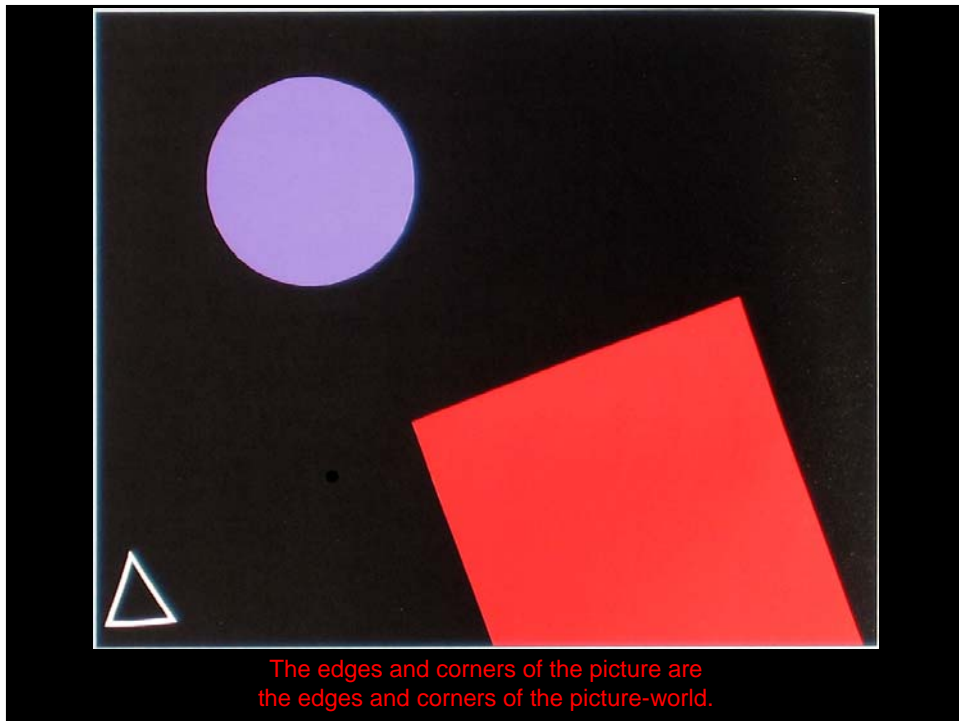
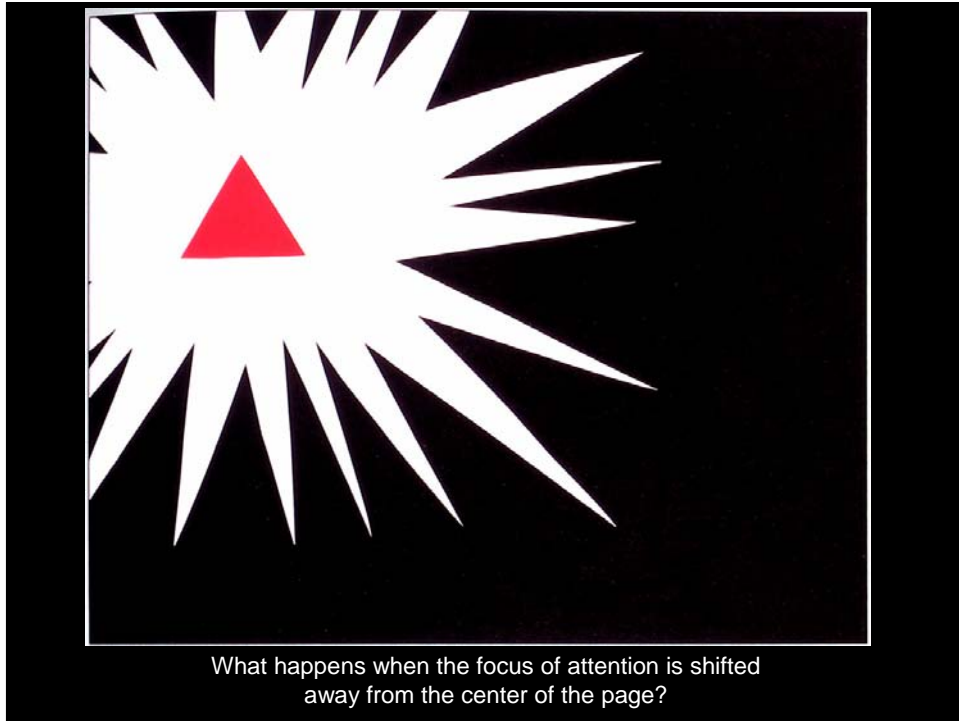


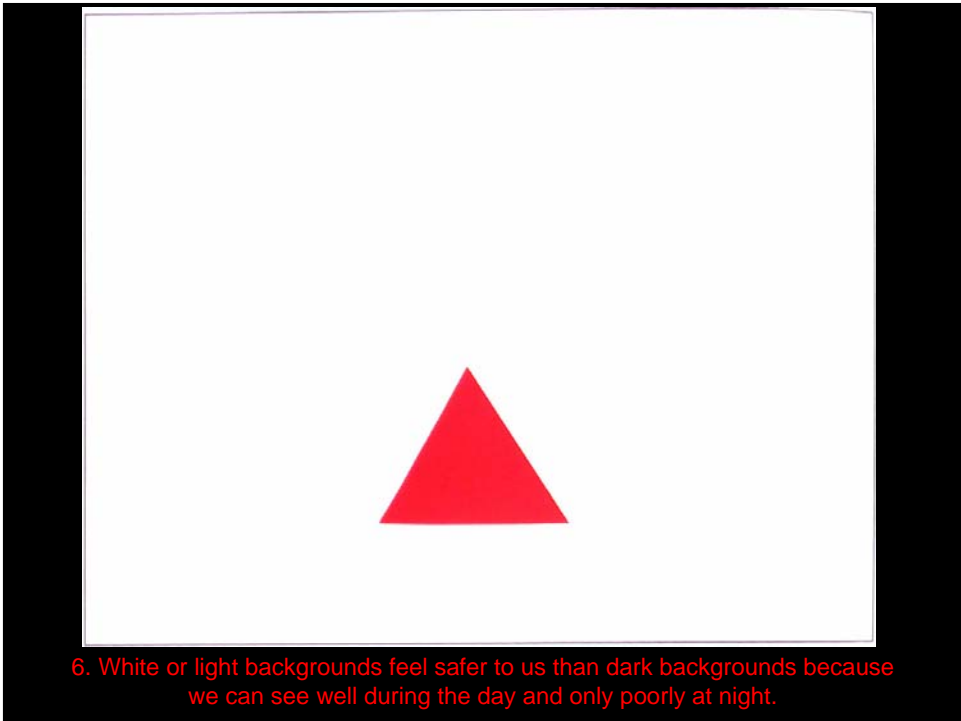
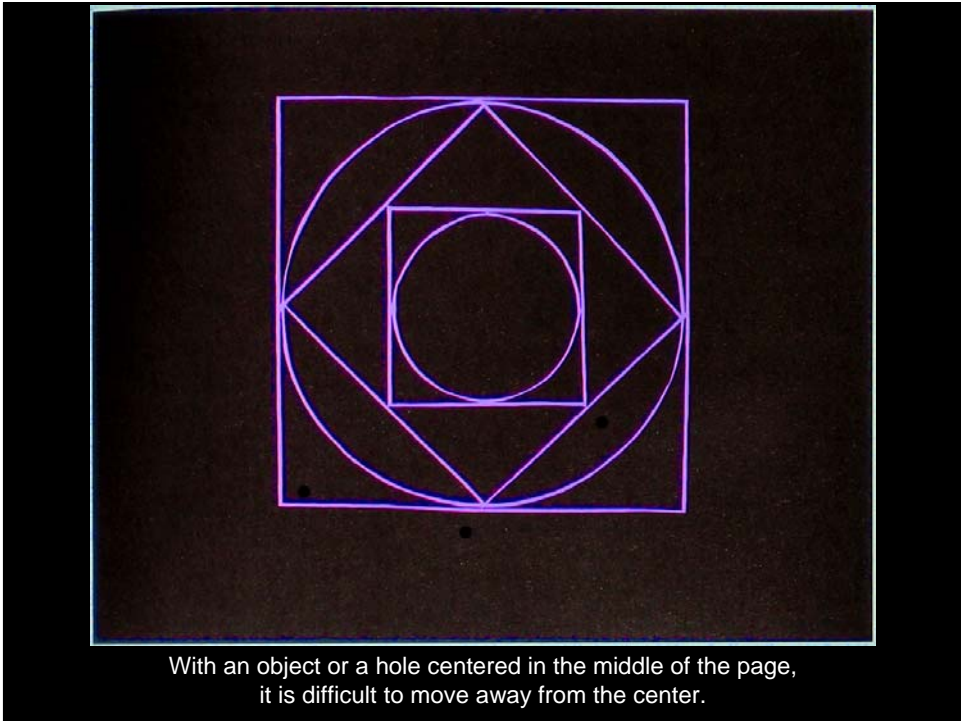
The principles described so far result from gravity's effect upon us and the world and the pictures we look at.

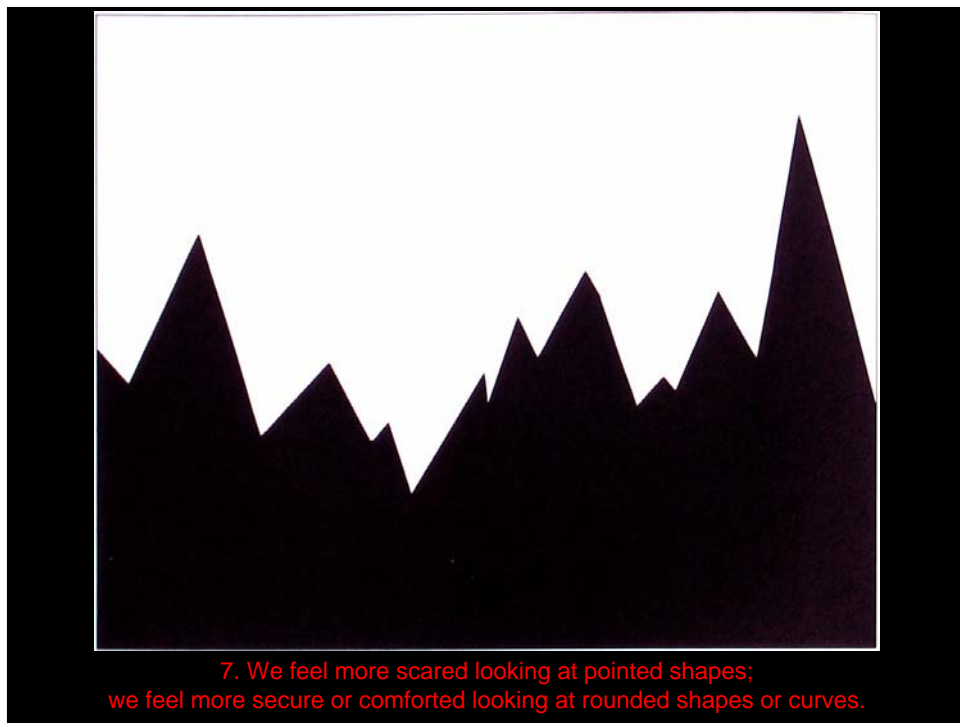
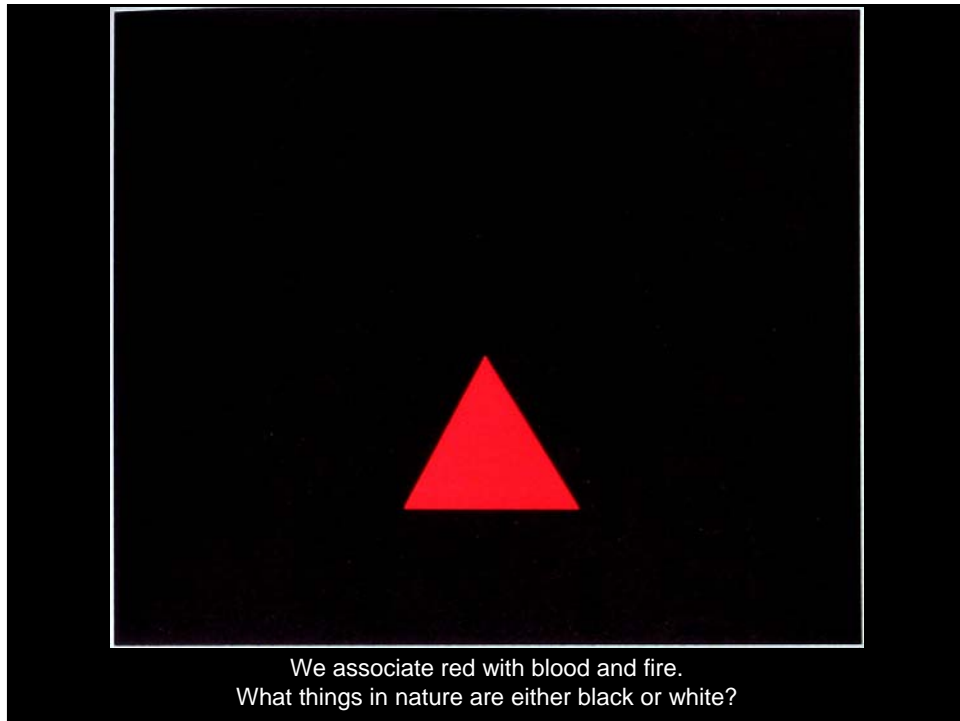
The next principles have to do with the picture as a world of its own.

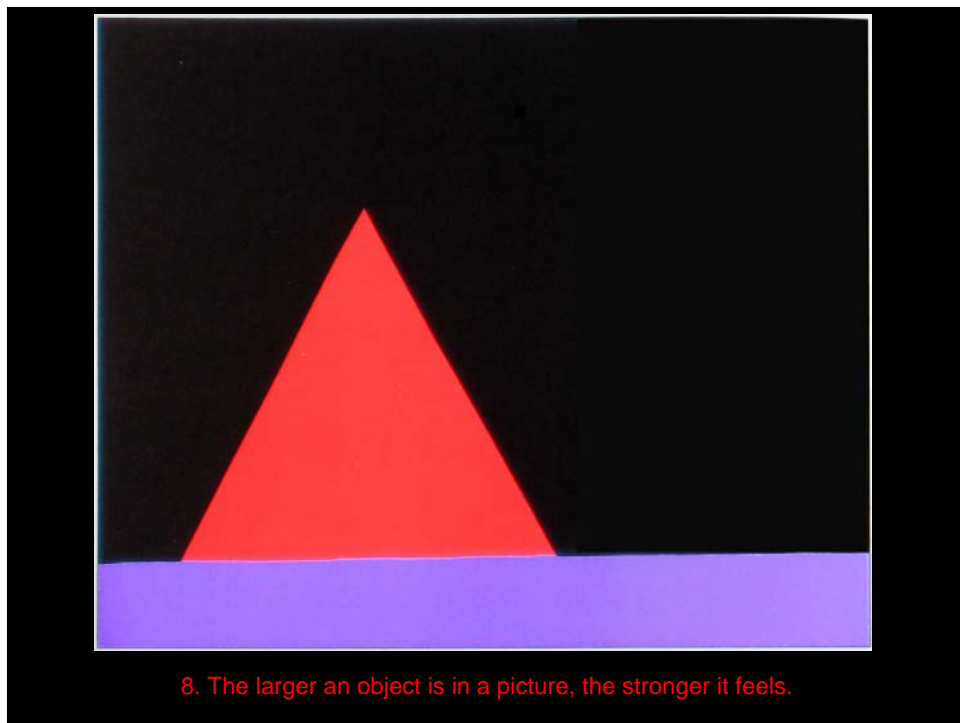
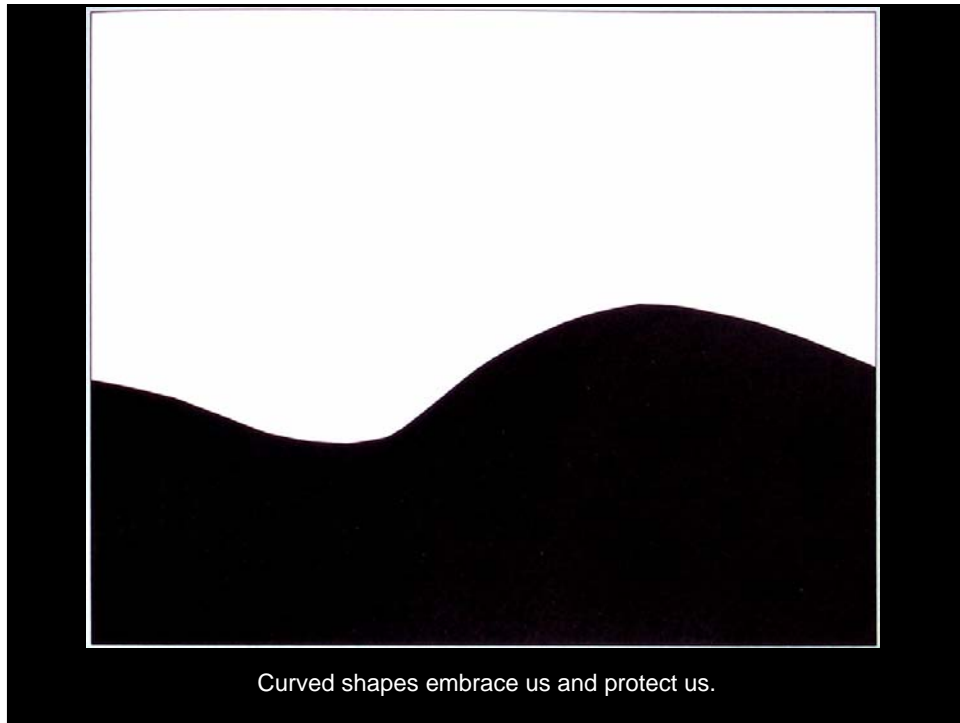


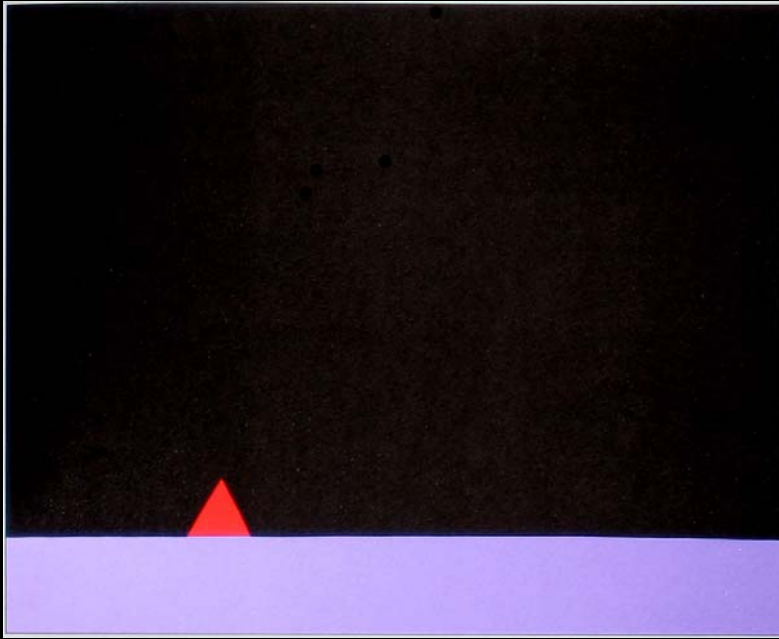
5. The center of the page is the most effective "center of attention."
It is the point of greatest attraction.



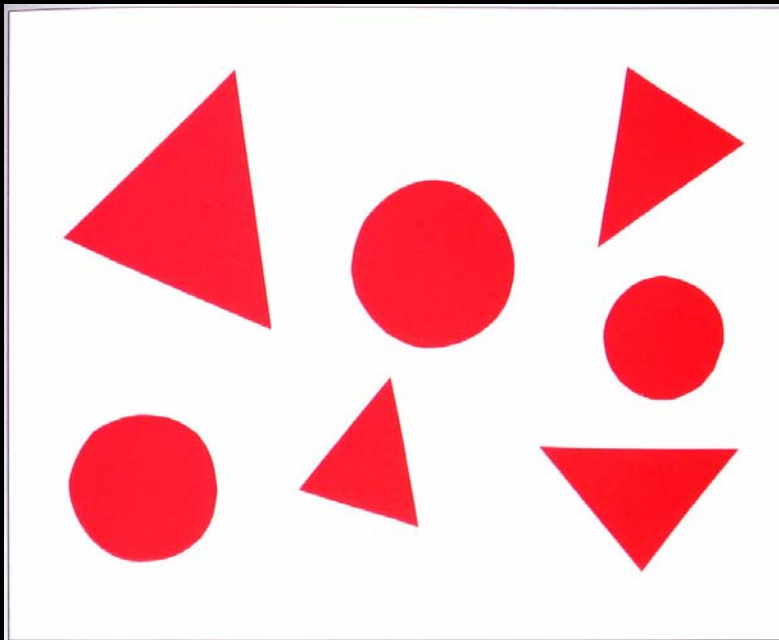




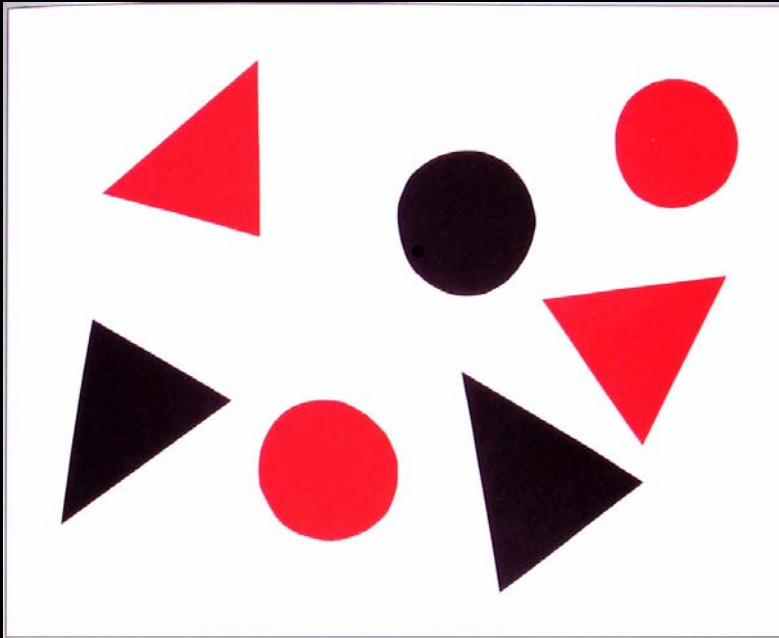




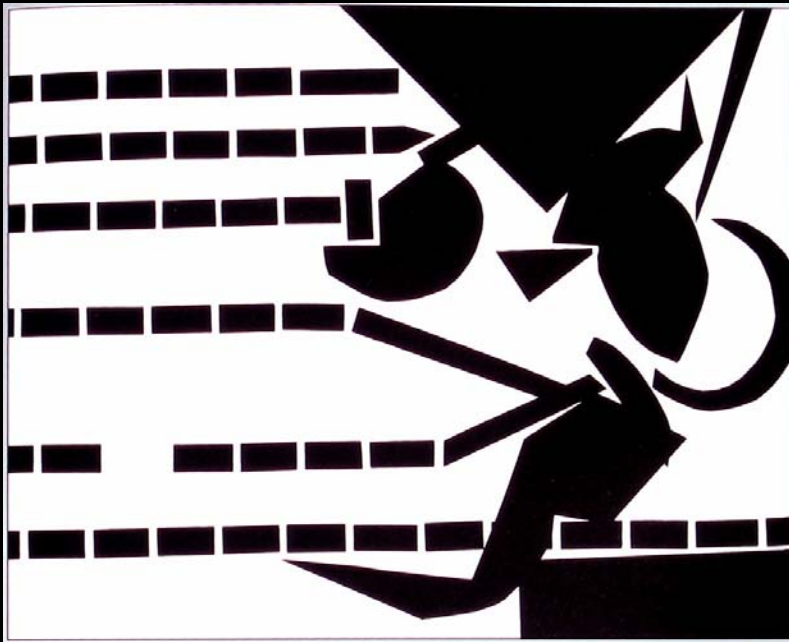
The same figure appears much more vulnerable if it is made very small.



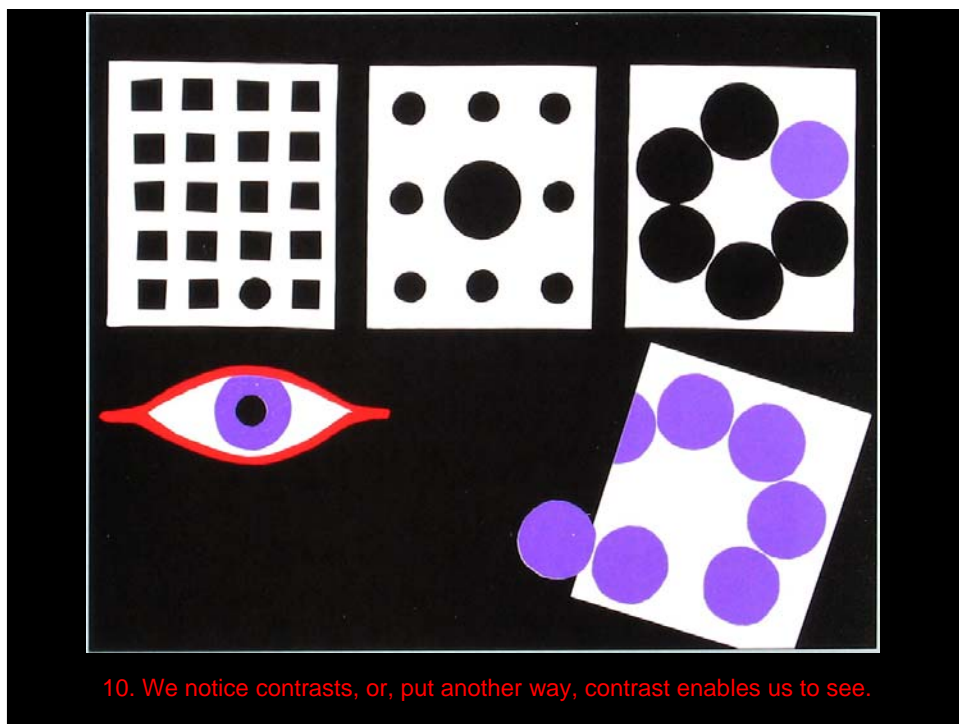
The teacher asks you to separate all of these shapes into two groups of similar elements. How do you divide them?



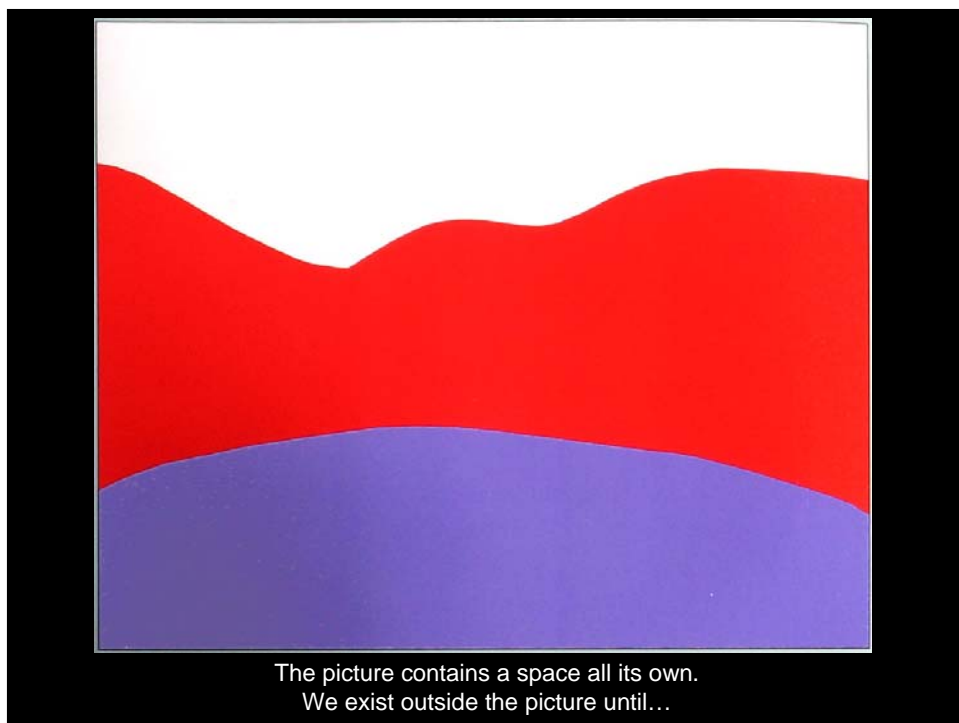
9. We associate the same or similar colors much more strongly than we associate the same or similar shapes.



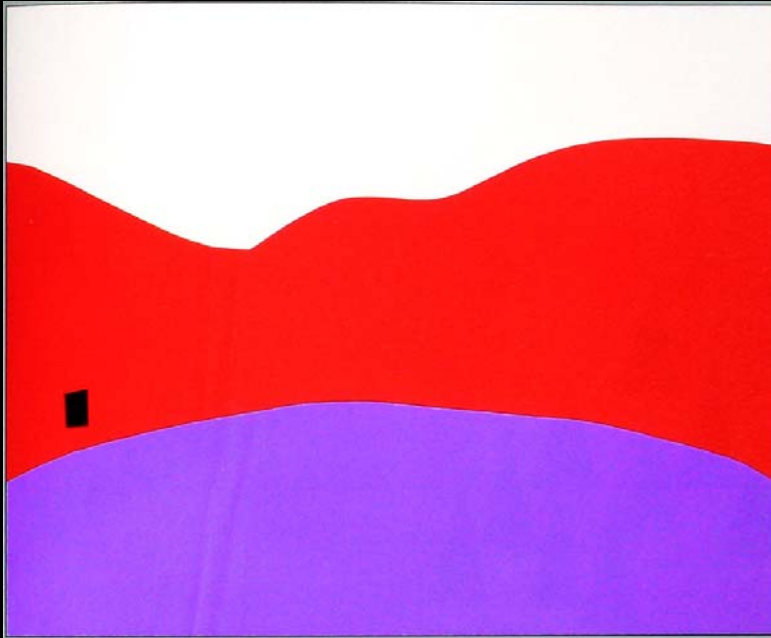
How do these two sorts of patterns make us feel?



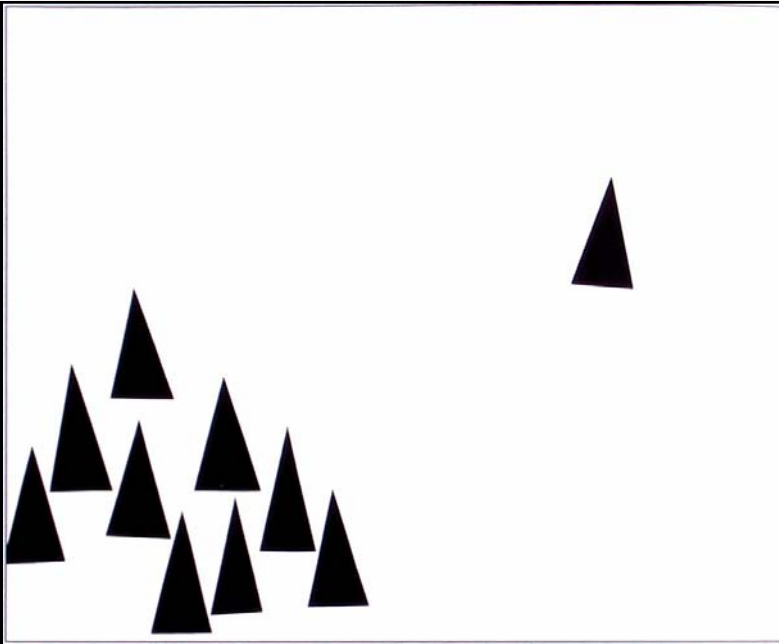
10. We notice contrasts, or, put another way, contrast enables us to see.



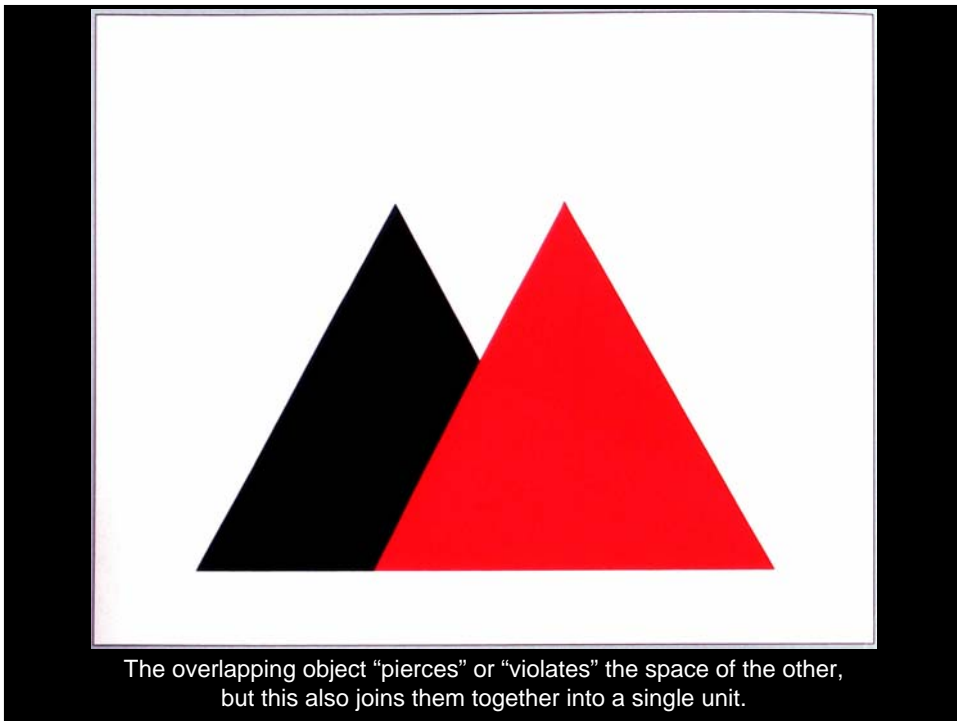
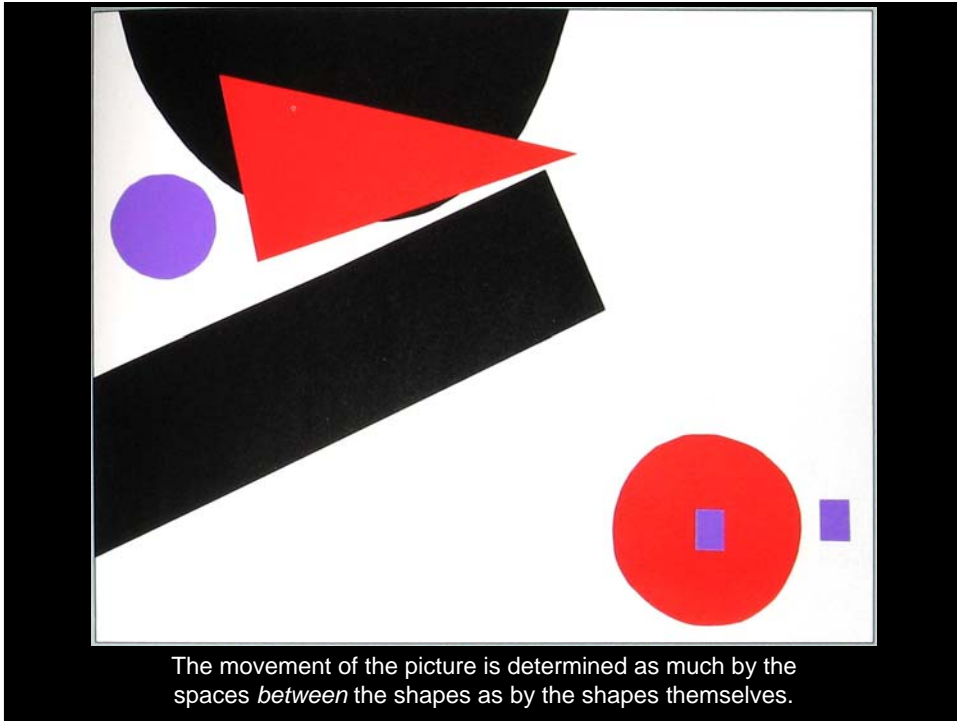
The picture contains a space all its own.
We exist outside the picture until...

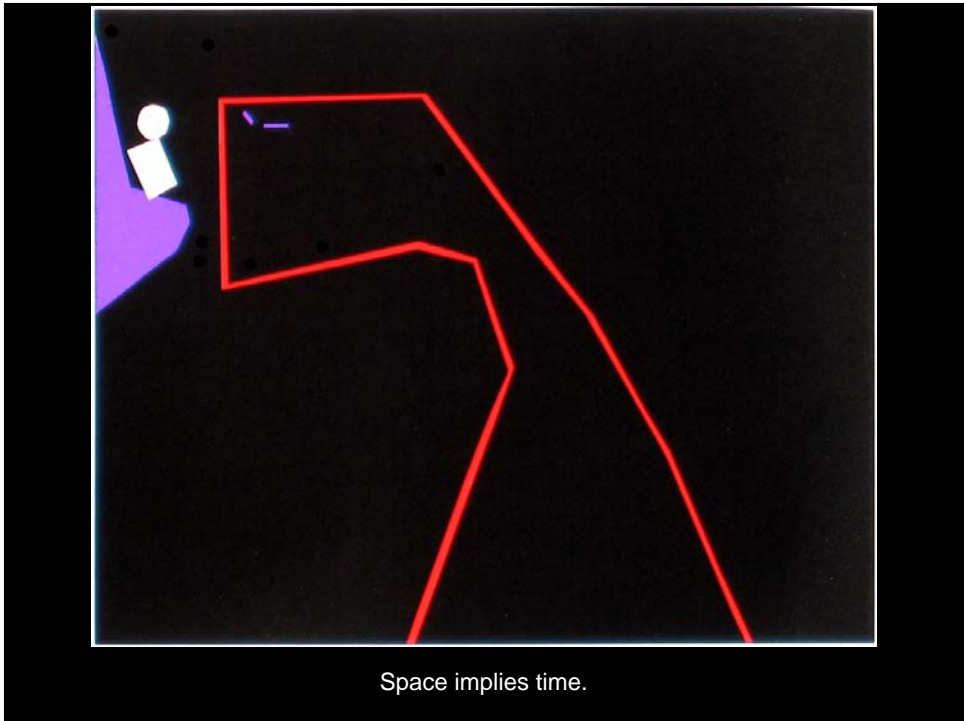
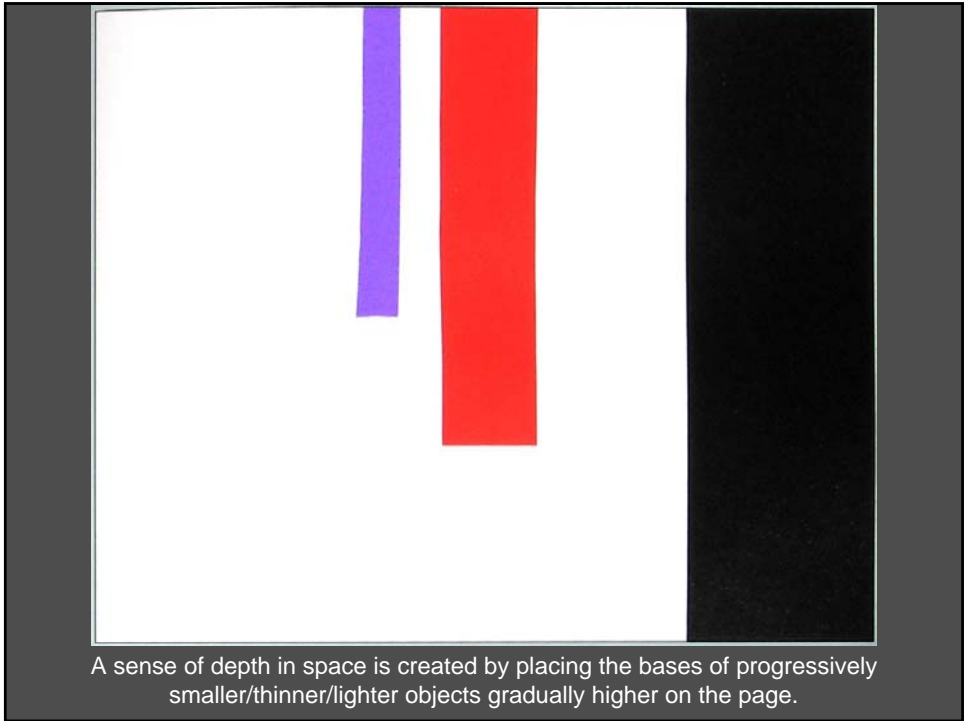


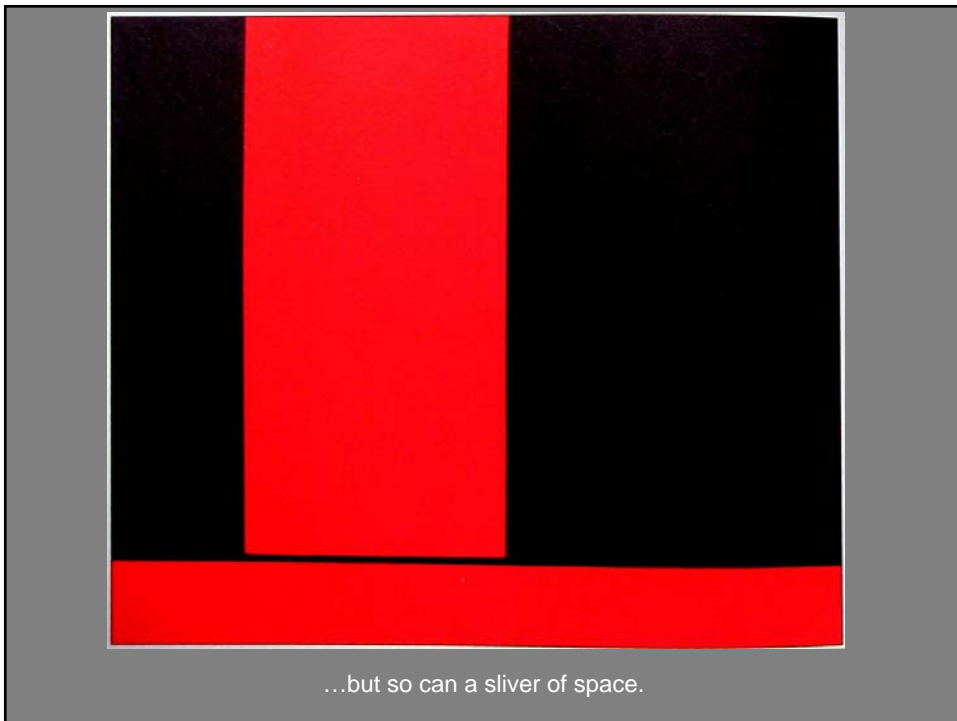
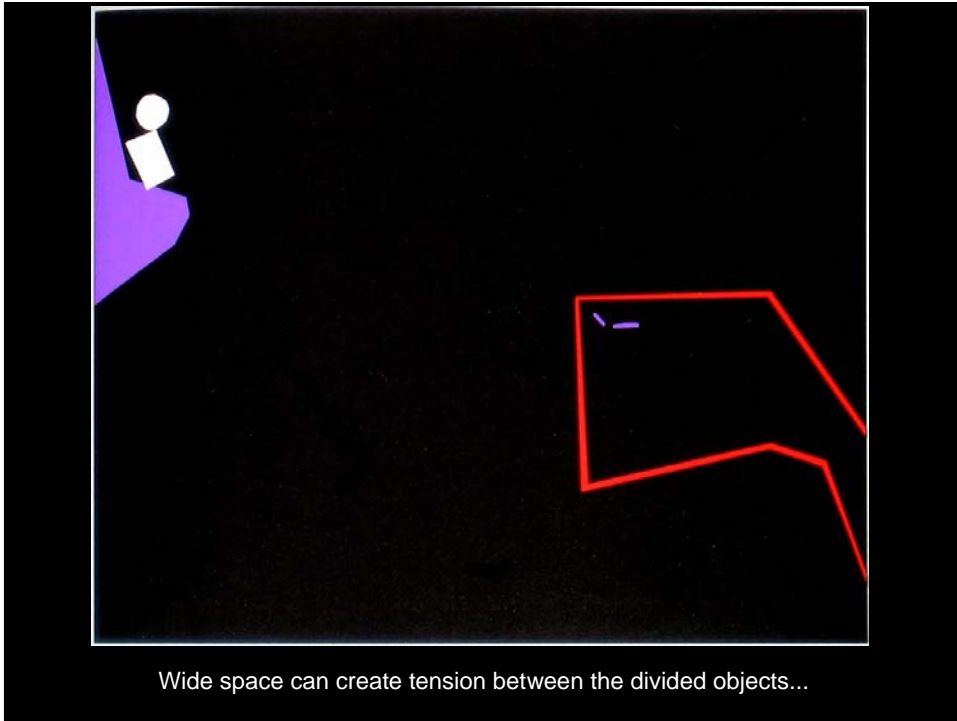
...our eyes fix on and "capture" an object inside it like a prey—
but the prey in turn draws us to itself inside the picture space.



Space isolates a figure, makes that figure alone, free, and vulnerable.









Open-Notes Quiz

1. Smooth, flat, horizontal shapes give us a sense of _____ and _____.
2. Vertical shapes are more _____ and more _____.
3. Diagonal shapes are _____ because they imply _____ or _____.
4. The upper half of a picture is a place of _____, _____, and _____; objects placed in the top half often feel more _____.
The bottom half of a picture feels more _____, _____, _____, or _____; objects in the bottom half also feel more _____.
5. The center of the page is the most effective _____. It is the point of greatest _____.
The edges and corners of the _____ are the edges and corners of the _____.
6. White or light backgrounds feel _____ to us than dark backgrounds because we can see _____ during the _____ and only _____ at _____.
7. We feel more _____ looking at pointed shapes; we feel more _____ or _____ looking at rounded shapes or curves.
8. The larger an object is in a picture, the _____ it feels.
9. We associate the same or similar colors much more _____ than we associate the same or similar shapes.
10. We _____ contrasts, or, put another way, contrast enables us to _____.

Assignment #1

Image: a bird or birds attacking a victim

- Groups of three or four
- Each student creates an separate image
- The group uses three colors plus white
- Scissors and colored paper only (no pencils!)
- Keep the shapes as simple as possible
- Avoid a realistic representation of body parts

Before you begin, ask yourself two sets of questions:

1. SUBJECT AT HAND
What is the *essence* of the person/creature/thing I want to represent?
What specific elements in this situation evoke strong feelings in me?
How can I accentuate these?
2. EMOTIONS and PRINCIPLES
What feeling do I want to evoke with this picture?
What principles might I use to do this?

Keep returning to these questions when your picture doesn't seem to be working.

Do not glue down the pieces until the whole picture really works.

"Okay" is not good enough.