



THE VISUAL QUALITY of linear, drawn imagery corresponds closely to the linear quality of typography, especially in this case where the type has been outlined as well.

Finest Magma Germany



## RESIDENTIAL WIRING SPECIALISTS INC.

THE DRAWING OF the house using simple lines becomes symbolic by transforming the lines into circuits.

Drotz Design United States



In this study, the same subject is presented in varying degrees of realism and stylization. Toward the realistic end of the spectrum, the subject's literal

meaning takes on more importance; as it becomes more stylized, its literal meaning becomes less important, while the gesture, the quality of the

marks, and associations or symbolic messaging that these impart become more important.

Real, Unreal, and Otherwise

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ILLUSTRATION ALLOWS FOR varying degrees of abstraction and complex, invented spatial arrangements. The flat, hard-edged style of the illustrated elements creates a modern, industrial feel appropriate to the city, while using a map and coat of arms figure adds historical messaging.

Dochdesign Germany



AGAIN, ILLUSTRATION doesn't limit the designer in terms of inventing space and combining disparate elements that would otherwise be empirically impossible. In contrast to the Munich poster (left), the style is painterly and representational, but the space is no less abstract.

Cyr Studio United States



**Illustration** The choice of illustration over photography opens up tremendous possibility for transmitting information. The designer is not only unencumbered by the limitations of real-world objects and environment but also given the potential to introduce conceptual overlay, increased selectivity of detail, and the personal, interpretive aspect of the designer's visualization—through choice of medium, composition, and gestural qualities. ■ As with all types of images, an illustration can be concrete, objective, or realistic in how it presents its subject, or it can become abstracted and symbolic; the designer can add details that normally would not exist in a real scene or can exaggerate movement, texture, arrangement,

space, and lighting. Choosing illustration for image presentation, however, means potentially sacrificing a kind of credibility or real-world connection for the viewer. Despite the fact that most audiences realize that a photograph might just as easily be manipulated and therefore made misleading, the audiences will still instinctively respond to a photograph as though it were "reality." ■ The power of illustration over photography, however, is to communicate with a visual sensitivity that is emotional, poetic, organic, and innately human. An illustration can also integrate with other visual material, such as type, abstract graphic elements, and even the paper stock or other finishing techniques, on a textural level that is impossible with a conventional photograph. The designer must weigh these aspects carefully and select which mode of representation will best suit the communication.

**Drawing and Painting** The directness of hand-generated images is universally appealing. Through a drawn or painted image, the designer taps into a viewer's own sense of creativity and connects on an extremely personal level—there is a genuine, honest, and warm quality to an illustration that might be lacking in the slick and seamless realism of a photograph. An illustration's success lies in the appropriateness of its style to the subject matter at hand. The majority of illustration is contracted from specialists, who cultivate a particular style to find a niche in the market, but this doesn't preclude designers themselves from taking on the role of



**THE SCRAGGLY OUTLINE** and cartoonish forms of this illustration mix humor and pathos.

Ames Bros. United States



**THE DECISION** to illustrate the vegetables on this label, rather than to photograph them, ensures their absolute perfection and freshness.

Wallace Church United States



**A TEXTURE OF ILLUSTRATED** insects reveals a numeral 5 in this panel from a parking garage signage system. Illustrating the insects gives the designer control over their visual presentation, rather than relying on finding or photographing images of real insects.

Studio Works United States



illustrator. A designer wanting to illustrate will be intimate with the subject matter of the project and other relevant graphic elements—including type and finishing techniques. As a result, the designer might be able to build images that are even more appropriate and integrated with other elements than would be likely if working through an outside source.

**Realism and Beyond** An illustration might be a concrete depiction that calls upon the traditions of classical drawing and painting—its goal being to reproduce the empirical world in a way that responds to actual conditions of light, form, and perspective. Alternatively, an illustration

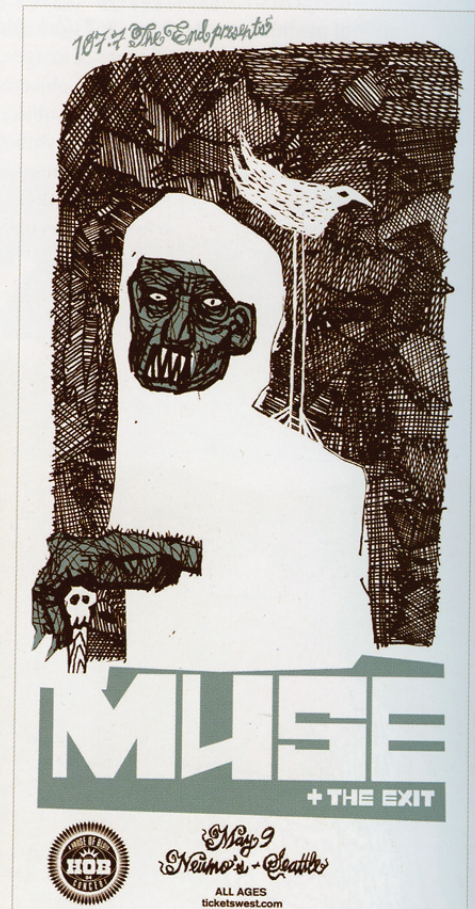
might be a graphically stylized image that approaches abstraction, referring to the real world as a grounding point but favoring the expressive qualities of gesture, ambiguous space, and the process of making the image. Between these two extremes lie the possibilities of mixing elements of each state.

Real, Unreal,  
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**SCRATCHY, ALMOST DISTRAUGHT** cross-hatching, produced with pen and ink, enhances the mysterious and slightly sinister quality of the image.

Ames Bros. United States

**THE RICH, ALMOST** collagelike mixture of tools used to create this image—airbrush, pen, digital images, flat ink—contributes textural contrast and multiple layers of meaning to consider.

Maciej Hajnrch Poland



**The Medium Is a Message** A line is a line... or not. Every drawing and painting tool makes characteristic marks and affords a designer a specific kind of visual language. The language of the tool has a powerful effect on an illustration's communicative value, not just on its visual qualities relative to other elements in a design solution. Above and beyond the fundamental selection of subject matter components, composition, and degree of stylization, the medium a designer chooses with which to create the illustration

carries meaning—in terms of feeling (softness, hardness, fluidity, and stiffness) and, sometimes, conceptually (for example, using a drawing tool native to a certain region or historical period for a project related to that region or period).



Charcoal



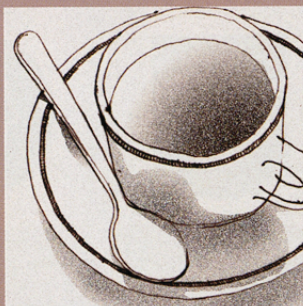
Graphite



Ink



Gouache



Etching



Linocut



Silkscreen

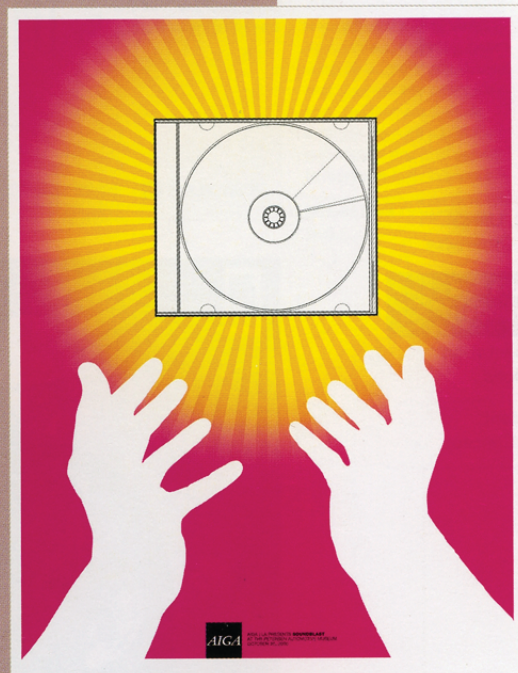
Experimenting with the mark-making possibilities intrinsic to different tools shows the endless possibilities of, as well

as the opportunities for controlling, the expression of an illustrated image. Here, the same subject is illustrated

using different tools to show how powerful the effect of the medium is on communication.

**THE SLICK, DIGITAL** quality of the linear drawing, gradations in color, and sharply defined silhouetted hands impart a contemporary, technological feel to this poster.

344 Design United States







**Collage: Old and New** Assembling graphic elements in a free pictorial composition, called “collage,” is a relatively recent development in illustration. It derives from the evolution of representation in fine art from depicting a strictly singular viewpoint through the construction of multiple viewpoints, or cubism, into incorporating multiple viewpoints of several, possibly physically unrelated, scenes or references. Collage was initially used to add two-dimensional printed or found material—labels, fabric, bits of newspaper, flat pieces

**COLLAGE OFFERS** the designer of this book tremendous variety in formal qualities that add contrast and vitality to simple shapes. Typography, found engraving, paint marks, transparent overlays, and crinkled texture all combine to resolve the movement and spatial interaction of the composition.

Andreas Ortag Austria

Real, Unreal,  
and Otherwise

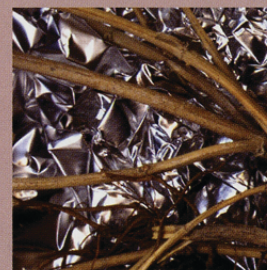
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**THE CUTOUT LETTERS** of the word “democracy” hint at the political dialogue inherent in that social system. The addition of the scissors and the work gloves gives evidence to democracy’s constructive nature and creates ambiguous scale and spatial relationships.

Studio International Croatia



Examples of collage show the varied possibilities in combining material: cut and torn paper; found text and images; three-dimensional material.

Digital collage allows for photographic effects—transparency, blending, blurring, intricate silhouetting, and masking not possible with conventional, cut-and-paste techniques.



of wood, and so on—into paintings; but, with the rise of photography as a medium, it quickly incorporated photographic images. Collaging photographic images, rather than illustrative images, is usually called “photomontage” and has been a popular method of illustration since the 1920s. ■ Collage is a highly intuitive illustrative approach that takes into account not only the possibility of disparate subjects appearing in one space but also the nature of the combined elements—meaning how exactly they were made. Drawn and painted components can coexist with cut or torn pieces of textured paper, cropped images, scraps of fabric, parts of actual objects, and other drawn,

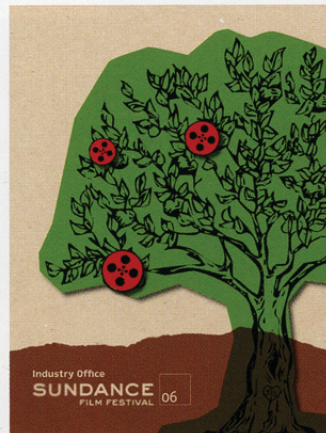
painted, or printed material. Given that the pictorial space in a collage is abstract because of its fragmented construction, the designer must resolve compositional issues similar to those in any other image; but he or she must also address each item’s internal visual qualities—overall visual activity, flatness of color relative to texture, and recognizability of the source material (such as printed words or croppings of image). ■ In particular, because the source components of a collage might be recognizable, the conceptual relationship between abstract and representational elements is extremely important. Integrating recognizable imagery, with its own subjects and messages, helps direct the message and

adds degrees of meaning. ■ Collage is still a common approach to illustration and page layout in the digital environment, where not only scanned images of found or hand-generated material can be combined with photographic material, but also where photographic effects such as transparency, multiple exposure, blurring, and silhouetting—techniques made possible only by the computer—can be investigated.



**THIS PROPOSAL FOR** a currency design digitally collages complex linear, textural, and typographic material, exploiting the computer’s ability to integrate complex color and transparency into the collage process.

Benjamin Myers Laguna College of Art and Design, United States



**THE MEANING OF** the elements brought together in a collage is important—and not just what the images portray but their medium of creation as well. In these two posters for a film festival, the film reel is iconic and modern and both times portrayed as an apple whose symbolic meaning is one of knowledge. The engraved images connote a connection to history, and the photographic transparencies and gradation changes suggest the element of light.

AdamsMorioka United States



In this study, the message changes as the content of the collage’s components are changed. As the content



becomes more recognizable, the collage transmits a more literal—and, therefore, more specific—message.



The World of Images





**Photography** The “pure” photographic image has become the preeminent form of illustration in recent years. One reason for this might be the speed at which photographs transmit information—their realism and directness allow a viewer to enter the image and process it very quickly, rather than get distracted by abstract pictorial issues such as texture, medium, and composition. Access speed in imagery has become important because the flood of visual messages encountered by the average viewer requires images to compete robustly for attention. ■ While composition plays an important role in the quality of the photographic image and its messaging

potential, its presence as a mediating phenomenon is much harder to recognize and, therefore, is often overlooked on a conscious level by the viewer. This suggests another reason for the primacy of photographs as communicators: the fact of the image’s mediation (or manipulation)—through composition, selective focus, lighting, cropping, and other techniques—is secondary to the acceptance of photographic images as “real.” This provides the designer with an upper hand in persuasion, on behalf of a client, because the work of convincing a viewer that he or she can believe or trust the image is already well on its way to being achieved: “I saw it

A



B



Because photographic images are so readily perceived as depictions of reality, the designer has incredible leeway in manipulating them without sacrificing believability. Despite the surreal situation depicted in the top image (A), for example, viewers will find it easy to accept the scene as credible. Further, this automatic assumption about the veracity of a photograph permits designers to evoke sensory experiences through their manipulation. Presenting a graphically exaggerated photograph of an object, as seen in the lower example (B), trades on its believability and the corollary common understanding of its function to create an immediately recognizable aural experience.

# Josse De Pauw

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with my own eyes.” ■ Today’s average viewer, although much more sophisticated and attuned to the deceptive potential of photography than viewers in previous generations—who were unfamiliar with photography’s use to disguise, manipulate, or enhance—is still much more likely to accept the content of a photograph as truth than that of an illustration, simply because the illustration is obviously contrived; the contrivance possible in a photograph is not so readily appreciated.

A



As with any other imagery, photographic content must be decisively composed. The photographer has two opportunities to control the image’s composition, however: first, within the frame of the cam-

B

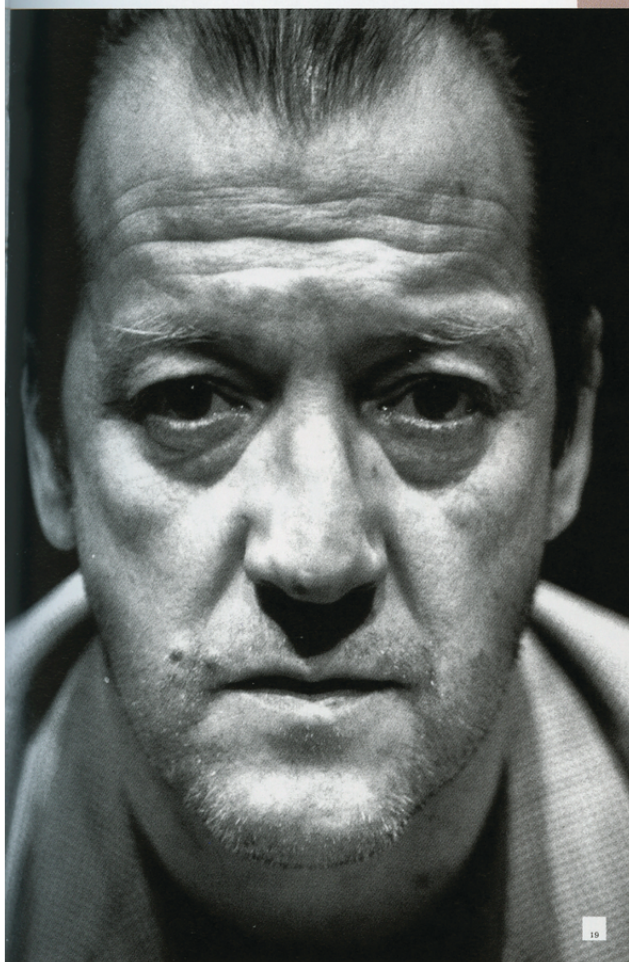


era’s viewfinder; and second, during the printing process in the darkroom (or in cropping a digital photograph using software). In this study, a minor shift in camera angle produces a variation on an

C



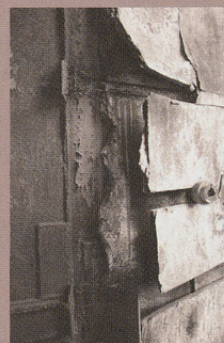
already decisive composition of elements (B). Radically changing the viewpoint (C) creates a very different composition while retaining the identity of the content.



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**A PHOTOGRAPH IS** considered well-shot and compelling when it exhibits a strong and varied tonal range—from deep shadow areas, into rich middle tones, and into bright highlights.

Martin Oostra Netherlands



In photography, tonal range—the number and depth of gray values—is of particular concern. Traditionally, a “good-quality” photograph includes a clean, bright white; deep black; detail present within shadow areas; and a fluid range of grays in between. This same range, from darkest shadow to brightest highlight, also is desirable

in color photographs. Pushing the tonal range toward generally brighter values decreases the contrast in the image and, to some degree, flattens it out; pushing the tonal range toward the shadow end also tends to flatten the image but increases contrast and causes highlight areas to become brighter and more pronounced. These effects

of tonality shift are shown in the accompanying images, in both black-and-white and color. Note the contrast differences between corresponding images.



A



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D

EDITORIAL

C



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**Pictorialization** When type becomes a representation of a real-world object, or takes on the qualities of something from actual experience, it has been pictorialized. In illustrative pictorialization, forms are drawn to appear to be made out of a recognizable material or to form part of a recognizable object.



**Form Alteration** Changing the structural characteristics of type elements to communicate a non-literal idea is another strategy. Distorting letter shapes or proportions in an adjective, for example, can change the quality of its description. Such alteration may have a syntactic quality as well; setting the word "exaggerated" with distorted, oversized Gs exploits their sound and the word's meaning.



**Pictorial Inclusion** Illustrative elements brought into the type forms so that they interact with its strokes or counterforms are said to be *included*. The type retains its essential form, but the pictorial matter is integrated by reversing out of the type or by replacing the counterforms within or between the letters.



**Form Substitution** Replacing a type form with a recognizable object or another symbol is referred to as a substitution. Many real-world objects share visual structure with letters. Circular objects are often substituted for a letter O, for example. Images aren't the only elements that may be substituted for a type form—replacing a letter with another character is also a common strategy for substitution.

A Pictorialization

LSD Spain

B Pictorialization

Jelena Drobac Serbia

C Illustrative pictorialization

Sagmeister United States

D Ornamentation

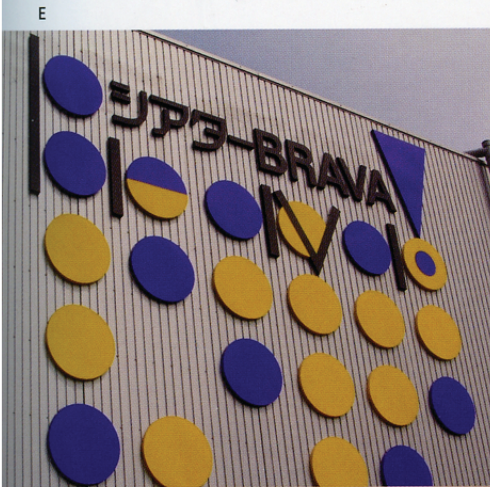
Finest Magma Germany



**Type as Image** When a letter or word takes on pictorial qualities beyond those that define their form, they become images in their own right, and their semantic potential is enormous. Words that are also pictures fuse several kinds of understanding together: they are supersigns. As their meaning is assimilated through each perceptual filter—visual, emotional, intellectual—they assume the evocative stature of a symbol. Understanding on each level

is immediate, and a viewer's capacity to recall images makes such word-pictures highly effective in recalling the verbal content associated with them. ■ As is true with so many aspects of strong typographic design, making type into an image means defining a simple relationship between the intrinsic form of the letters and some other visual idea. It is easy to get lost in the endless possibilities of type manipulation and obscure the visual message or

dilute it. A viewer is likely to perceive and easily remember one strong message over five weaker ones—complexity is desirable, whereas complication is not. ■ Type can be transformed into an image by using a variety of approaches. Each provides a different avenue of exploration, and several might be appropriate both to the desired communication and to the formal aspects of the type itself.



**Ornamentation** Typography can be transformed with ornaments—borders, dingbats, dots, lines, and geometric shapes—either structural or purely decorative. If the ornaments are symbolic in nature, they might take on the aspect of an inclusion and therefore be more strongly connected to the meaning of the word. An ornament's style might affect the viewer's sense of the historical context of the type; for example, a flourish or antique dingbat from a particular period.



**Syntactic Deconstruction** Changing the visual relationships between the parts of a word or a phrase is a deconstruction—the inherent structure of the word is called out or changed by being deformed—and the fact that it is related to the nature of meaning makes it a syntactic deconstruction. The cadence of the spoken word, the word's syllables, the prefix, the suffix, and individual letters are all sources for deconstruction.



**E** Form alteration  
Shinnoske, Inc. Japan

**F** Pictorial inclusion  
MV Design United States

**G** Form deconstruction  
Leonardo Sonnoli Italy

**H** Form substitution  
Raidy Printing Group Lebanon

**I** Pictorial inclusions with  
form substitution  
C+G Partners United States

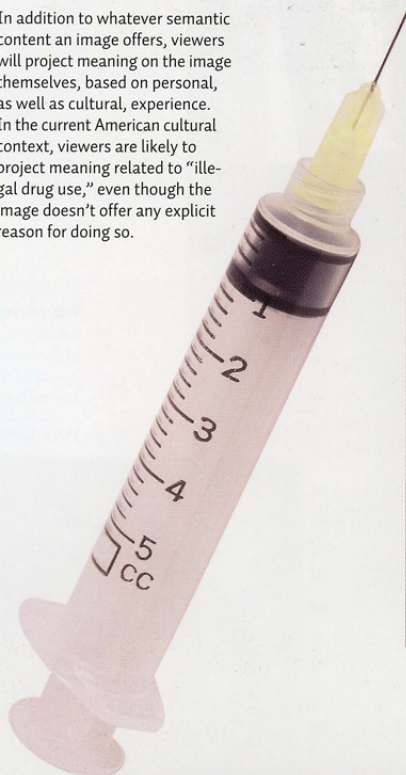
**J** Illustrative pictorialization  
Stereotype Design United States

**K** Form alteration  
Mixer Switzerland

**L** Form alteration and  
substitution  
Paone Design Associates  
United States



In addition to whatever semantic content an image offers, viewers will project meaning on the image themselves, based on personal, as well as cultural, experience. In the current American cultural context, viewers are likely to project meaning related to "illegal drug use," even though the image doesn't offer any explicit reason for doing so.



The same image changes semantically—in varying degrees—each time it's paired with an image carrying its own semantic meaning. In the first pair, the semantic gap is quite

small and the resulting narrative subtle. In the second pair, the semantic gap creates the same narrative but dramatically alters some assumptions about the meaning of the base image.

The third pair offers a semantic gap that forces the narrative in a completely unrelated—and unexpected—direction.

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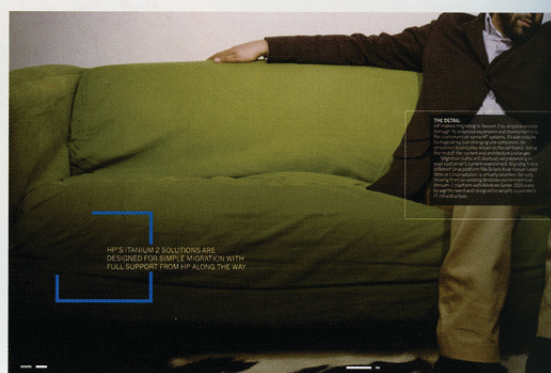
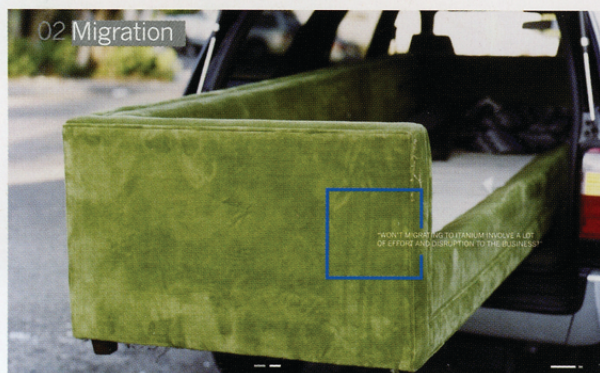
Presentation  
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#### 04 Risk



#### 02 Migration







**Narrative Interplay** A single photograph delivers a powerful punch of “semantic” content—conceptual, verbal, and emotional meaning that likely includes messages that are not literally represented in its subject. Putting photographs together increases their semantic power and creates narrative, or storytelling; the instant two images can be compared, whether juxtaposed or arranged in sequence, a viewer will try to establish meaningful connections between them. ■ Every photograph will influence any others around it, changing their individual meanings and contributing to a progression in narrative as a result. For example, a viewer might see an image of a biker and a second image of a man in a hospital bed and construct a story about a

biking accident. Neither image represents this idea; the narrative occurs in the viewer’s mind. Even concluding that the man in the hospital bed is the same biker is an assumption the viewer creates. This distance between what is shown in two images and what the viewer makes happen internally is a kind of “semantic gap.” Substituting the hospital image for one that shows a biker at the finish line of a race changes the narrative. The semantic gap is smaller and therefore a more literal progression, but the gap exists because the viewer still assumes the two bikers are the same person. ■ As more images are juxtaposed or added in sequence, their narrative reinforces itself based on the increasingly compounded assumptions initially made

by viewers. By the time viewers have seen three or four images in a sequence, their capacity to avoid making assumptions decreases and they begin to look for meaning that completes the narrative they have constructed. ■ This “narrative momentum” increases exponentially to the point that viewers will assume the semantic content of any image appearing later in the sequence must be related to that delivered earlier, even if details in the later image empirically contradict those of the first images.

#### SEQUENCING RELATED IMAGES

from one spread to the next creates distinct narratives in each set of two page spreads shown at left. In both sequences, the repetition of recognizable, remembered subject components—the cheerleader, the couch—creates narrative momentum: the viewer recognizes a kind of cause and effect because the same object appears in each step of the narrative. In the cheerleader sequence, the semantic or narrative gap is relatively small: the cheerleader is in flight and then is caught and is assumed safe. The gap in the couch sequence is more extreme: we don’t see the couch move from one location to the next, but it exists in a very different state in the second spread. We assume that it has been moved and now is being put to use.

Loewy United Kingdom



In this comparison of two sequences beginning with the same base image, the narratives are wildly different, but the narrative momentum of each concludes with assump-

tions that you, the viewer, has made that aren’t necessarily true. The rubble in the last image of the lower sequence is not, empirically, that of the building shown earlier in the

sequence. What assumptions have been made about the information in the other sequence that cannot be proven true?



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rfd

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**THE TYPOGRAPHY** of this card is a metaphor for the client's area of practice.

Maris Bellack United States

**PRESENTING THE NUMERALS** as large architectural elements is a kind of photographic pictorialization that metaphorically supports the subject matter of the poster but also transforms the text—verbal ideas—into concrete constructions.

Studio International Croatia

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**Ever Metaphor?** In writing and speech, a metaphor is an expression—a word or phrase—that refers to an unrelated idea, creating additional meaning. Images can be used in much the same way: a designer may present an image that means something else entirely, refers to a much broader concept, or combines concepts to evoke a third concept that is not explicit in either of the combinants. ■ A symbol is a simple example (see page 171), but such “visual metaphors” may be very complex in their associations. One option for creat-



**TRANSFORMING** lipsticks into bullets creates a metaphorical dialogue about the nature of gender relations and aggression.

Thomas Csano Canada



ing a visual metaphor is to use an object to define the form of something else—for example, laying out an invitation to a travel-themed fundraising event to look like an airline ticket, using the type styles, colors, and other visual details of such tickets as a source. Another option is to depict one thing behaving, pictorially, like another—presenting products in an urban cosmetics brochure, for instance, configured as a city skyline. Yet another possibility is to combine two or more seemingly unrelated images to suggest another form with its own meaning, implying some narrative

connection between ideas—showing a corn cob with wheels to suggest the idea of plant-based auto fuel. A designer may also consider altering one image by having another act upon it—chopping the first image up, mixing it into a texture, pushing it out of the way, making it vibrate, and so on. ■ There are as many ways to create metaphors as there are ideas and images—in short, an endless array limited only by imagination. While the literal content of images provides a baseline communication, a thoughtful designer can use images to evoke higher-level concepts above and

beyond what they merely show. The result is a richer, more inventive, and more memorable and meaningful experience for the audience.



**THE GRAPHIC SHAPE** of the cigarette creates a focus of attention, letterboxing the action in this sequence of frames from a public service commercial. It also confines and traps the people, and then metaphorically burns them to ash.

2Fresh Turkey

**IN THIS CONCEPTUAL** promotional piece, small cubes of sugar are wrapped in typography that expresses ideas about “sweetness” from a survey and packages them together.

Coma Netherlands

**THE PLACEMENT** of the repeated, green logotype at floor level along the glass wall creates a grassy environment, bringing the outdoors inside and vice versa.

BBK Studio United States

