

P.o.D: Contrast

What is Contrast

Contrast refers to the arrangement of opposites in a piece so as to create visual interest, excitement and drama.



Types of Contrast

- **Literal Contrast:** Focuses on opposite Elements of Art (light vs. dark colors, rough vs. smooth textures, large vs. small shapes, etc.)
- **Conceptual Contrast:** Focuses on the opposite ideas (up vs. down, good vs. evil, night vs. day)
- Looking at the picture to the right
 - how many ways is it showing Literal Contrast?
 - How many kinds of Conceptual Contrast does it show?



Placing one different SHAPE in a group of shapes that are the same will make the CONTRASTING shape stand out.

Black and white are so different in value they will CONTRAST against one another when placed together.

COMPLEMENTARY COLORS will CONTRAST when they are placed next to each other. Red/green, blue/orange, and yellow/purple are complementary colors.

Including one plain PATTERN in a group of patterns or one patterned object in a group of plain objects will make them CONTRAST.

Color

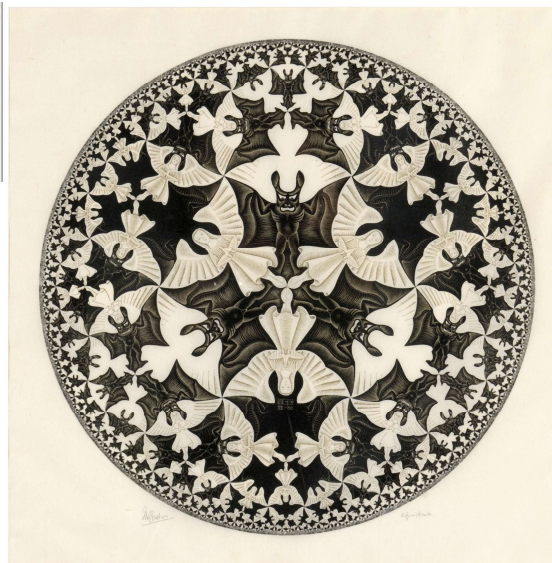
Shape

Size

Typeface

Line

Orientation



Here are just some examples to help give you a better idea of what Literal contrast can look like.

- The stuff up to the left are just some general ideas.
- The art pieces give you an idea of how artists apply contrast in abstract and realistic styles of art.
 - The one in the middle is a piece by Escher and the literal contrast focuses on color and shapes (abstract).
 - The piece on the right is by Caravaggio and focuses on value and color (realistic).

Literal Contrast

Conceptual Contrast

Here are just some examples to help give you a better idea of what Conceptual contrast can look like.

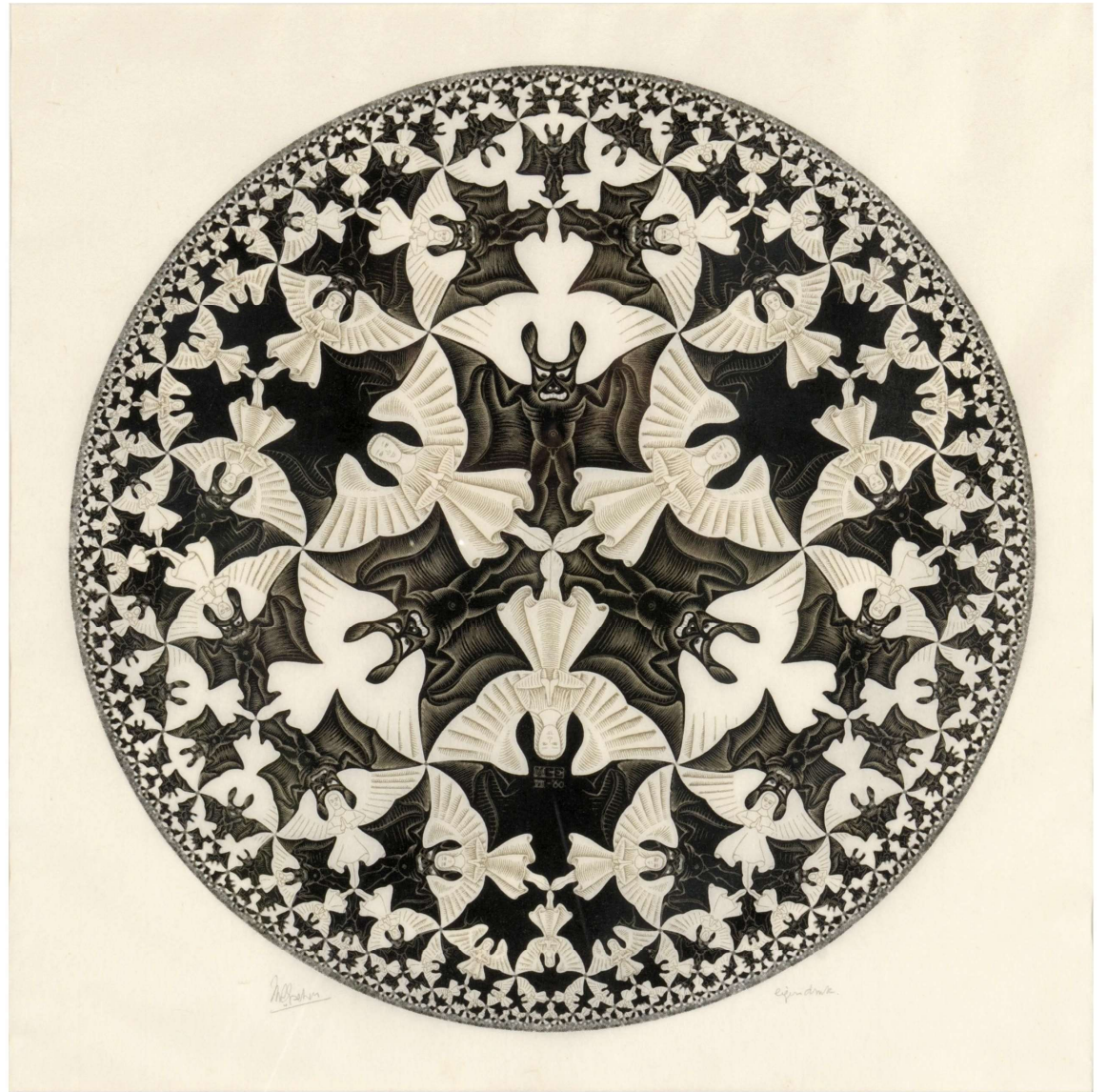
What Concepts could these pieces be contrasting? Is there more than one? What context clues are evidence for your argument?



Adding Context: M.C. Escher's "Angels Devils (No.4)"

Escher likes experimenting with complexity both literally and figuratively.

The big idea behind Angels and Devils is the relationship between Good and Evil. He uses Tessellation to show the connections between the two: in order to understand one you need to understand the other. Tessellation is an excellent metaphor for this idea because the negative space of one shape becomes the positive space of the other. In order to tell the shapes apart he adds darker values to the Devils and lighter values to the Angels. He also uses the circle to show the infinite debate of nature of "good and evil". He even goes to the extra step of using hyperbolic, fractal math that make the shapes look like they go on to infinity. Another interesting layer is understanding all of the definitions of Hyperbolic: exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally. So is he really trying to explore how "good and evil" really relate to each other or is just saying the whole argument is not to be taken literally and there is a lot more nuance to the argument than what appears to be a simple work of art?



P.O.D: Balance

What is Balance

the distribution of "weight" or visual activity in a composition

In other words: how objects are organized, laid out, or arranged in a work of art.



PARTY BALANCE

Wizard. Paladin. Knight.

Types of Balance

Symmetrical

- ◊ where elements are evenly spaced from an imaginary line in the middle of a piece.

Asymmetrical

- ◊ when elements are placed unevenly in a piece, but work together to produce harmony overall.
- ◊ In other words: No obvious symmetry but the composition still feels balanced.

Approximate

- ◊ Basically a mix of Symmetrical and Asymmetrical Balance.
- ◊ There is a point/line of symmetry however elements are not arranged exactly like they would be if they were perfectly symmetrical.

Occult

- ◊ stuff is pushed out of balance to the extreme.
- ◊ Occult: to hide something from view or be hidden from view
- ◊ Occult Balance: describes artwork's relationship between the elements in the back and the elements in the front- usually the background is overpowering the foreground.

Symmetrical Balance

There are 3 kinds

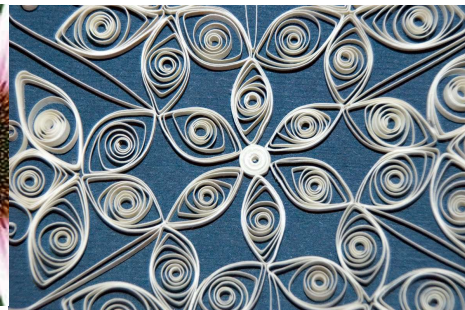
1. Exact (aka Bilateral)

- A mirror image or an exactly repeated design



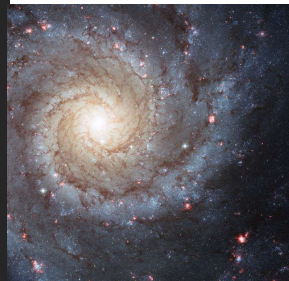
2. Axial

- Axial—having 2 opposing repeats, one on each side of an axis (think of a kaleidoscope)



3. Radial

- Radial—repeating a pattern by rotating around a center point (think of a spiral).



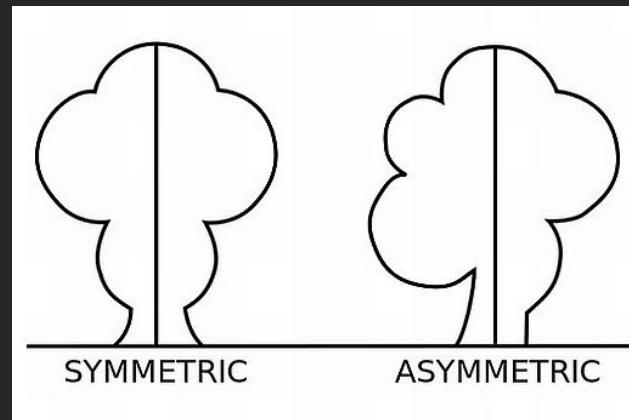
Asymmetrical Balance

In short it means "without Symmetry".

More advanced understanding of it is although there is no symmetry, it is still balanced.

The most common example is a Yin-Yang symbol. The White space is equal to the Black space.

In the Great Wave by Hokusai the area of the sky and land is about the same as the area of the ocean waves.





Approximate Balance

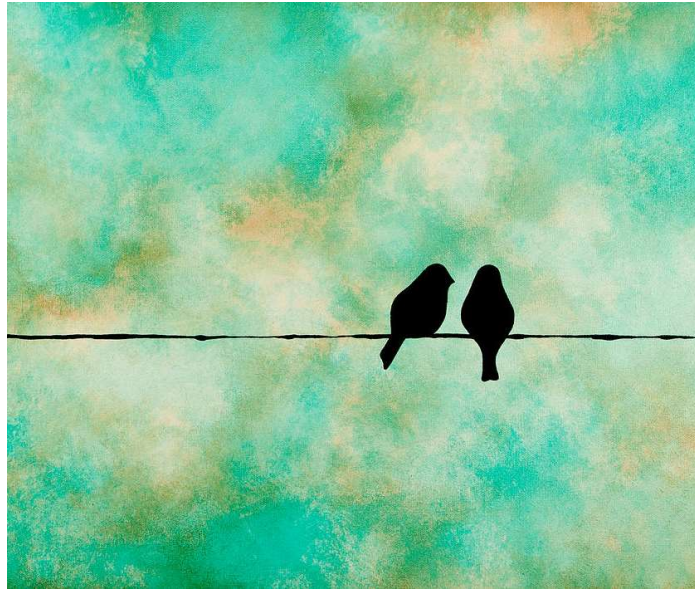


It's between exact and asymmetry. There is the idea of symmetry but it's not exact. At the same time it has more symmetry than Asymmetric Balance.

Occult Balance

This is more like the extreme version of Asymmetry

The balance of the composition is shifted to extremes



Mandalas

Religious rituals in Buddhism and Hinduism sometimes use creating artwork as a meditation tool to reflect on the various principles the religion teaches.

Mandalas are full of symbolism tied to their beliefs. Circles represent the universe because it is the only shape that has no beginning or end, it's infinite. Squares represent live on earth because there is a beginning and end.

Traditionally they are made out of sand which also represents the fragility and impermanence of live. To further this idea as soon as the mandala is created it is scooped up into a pile and the sand is taken outside and thrown into the air as an offering to the wind so it can become something else.

