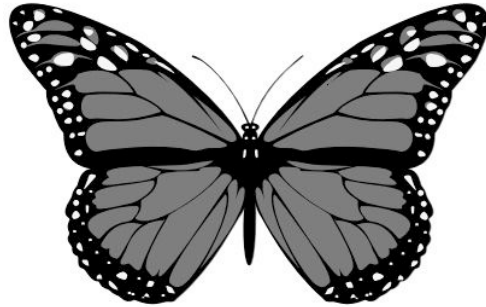


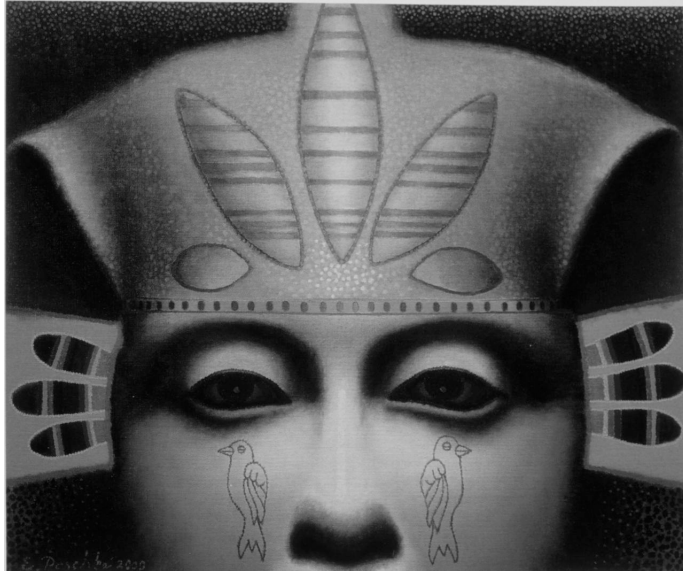
Balance

the distribution of the elements

Symmetry - a mirror image



Symmetry is one system for controlling balance. A vertical axis is required for symmetry. It is also called Formal Balance. The result of symmetry is usually predictable, formal, orderly and organized.

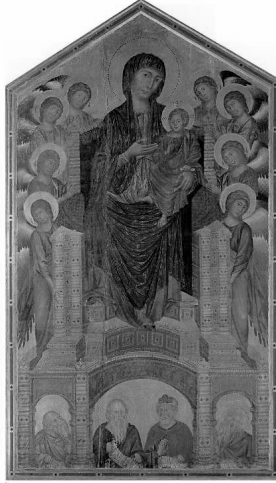


Ed Paschke

symmetrical balance

Approximate Symmetry

This type of symmetry is also called near symmetry. In this type of balance, the two sides are not quite the same. There is more potential for variety. It is also used in many graphic images, because text is rarely symmetrical. It was often found in early Christian art, as in this Cimabue painting.





Red Pharaoh, 2000, oil on linen;

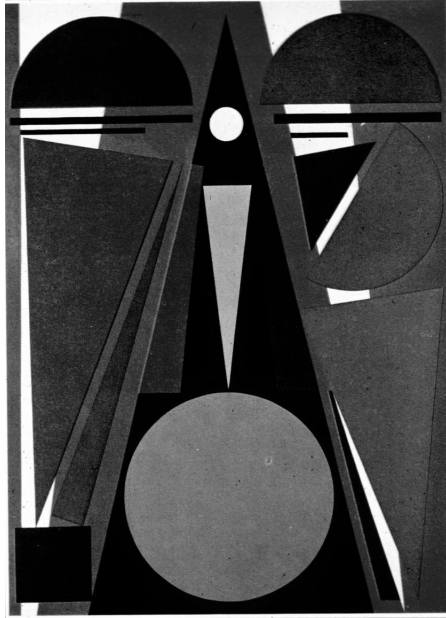
Ed Paschke

approximate symmetry



Ed Paschke

approximate symmetry



approximate symmetry

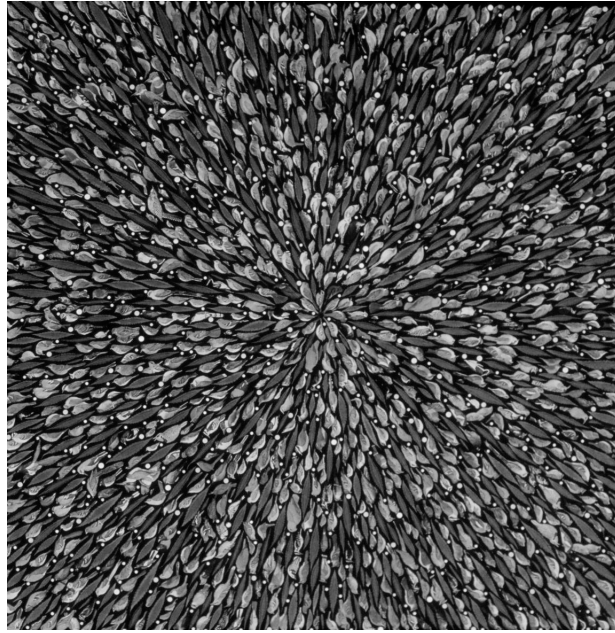


Keith Haring

approximate symmetry

Radial Symmetry - an image “radiates” out from a center like spokes on a wheel. It is possible to have multiple axes of symmetry, horizontal, vertical, and diagonal. Such a system might be used for a snowflake or a Kaleidoscope.



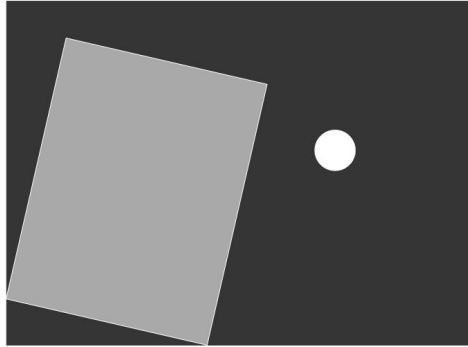


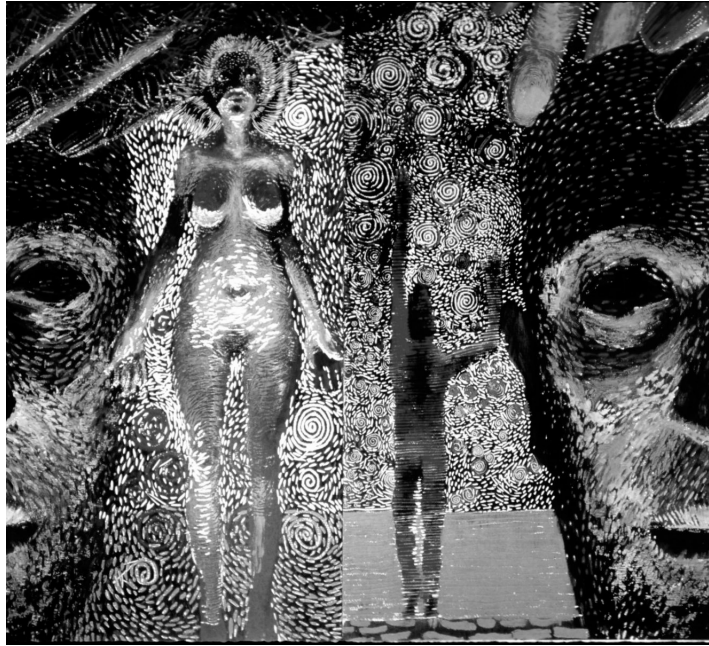
radial symmetry



Lichtenstein radial symmetry & approximate

Asymmetry - “a” means without, so this is balance “without” symmetry. It is also known as Informal Balance. In this type of balance, elements that are unequal can have different visual weights to “counter-balance” one another. For instance, a small shape of high contrast can “balance” a large shape of low contrast value.





Frank Hyde

"Night Vision"

asymmetry

This composition is set up almost on a symmetrical axis. The large head on the right "balances" the large figure on the left of the central axis. I think it still is asymmetry, rather than approximate symmetry.



Greg Kondos

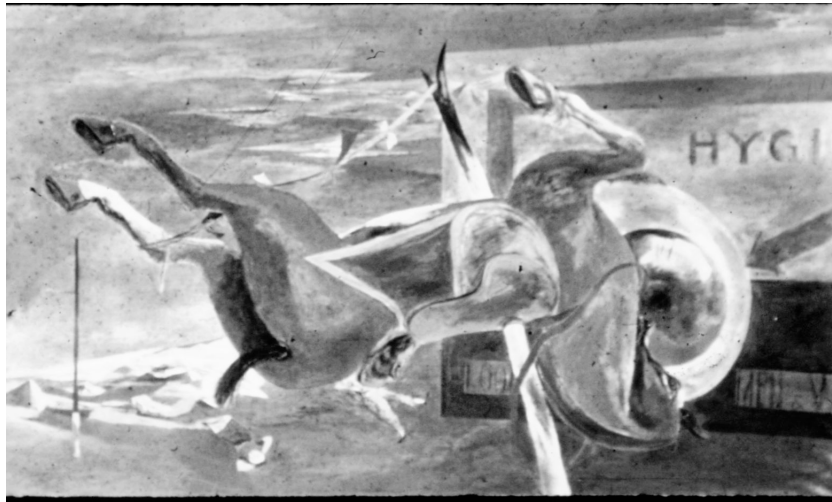
asymmetry

This is an example of positive forms or “figure” balancing negative space or “ground.” The color, size and detail of the figures and the leaning umbrellas on the right are the major focal point and are comfortably balanced by the large expanse of sand and landscape on the left of center axis.



Jacob Lawrence "The Migration" asymmetry

This painting begins to set up compositional rhythm through the use of repetition. The multiple soldiers are balancing the repeated bursts of color (gunshots?) in the upper portion of the composition. The x'd shapes on their backs also seem to repeat the motion of the starburst shapes. Opposing diagonal lines create a riotous movement throughout this composition. What role does the hand in the lower corner play in terms of balance? Block it out and see if you think the action becomes too 'weighted' to the right.



Kuniyoshi

"Festivities Ended"

asymmetry

Here is another example of the heavier shapes/forms on the right obtaining balance from the detail and tension of near touching of the stick and hooves on the left. Also the eye is led left through the diagonal of the carousel post and the flags and perspective lines of the sign along with the arrow. This is a good example of what is meant by shapes and forms being in 'dynamic equilibrium' is asymmetry.