

## Rhetoric and the Visual Image: A Resource Unit

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Ours is a visual age. The image seems to have taken over the written word as we are confronted more than ever before with visuals in our everyday lives: photographs, posters, pamphlets, billboards, images on television and film. The structure and principles of rhetoric can help us understand how these visual images function in our society and how they affect us.

We may not be accustomed to thinking about art or visual elements as rhetoric, and they are not often studied as such; these may constitute two major roadblocks to acceptance of art as within the scope of rhetoric. But a definition of art easily becomes extremely rhetorical if it is viewed as the production or arrangement of sounds, colors, forms, movements, and other elements in a manner that affects or evokes a response.

The process by which a visual phenomenon creates a response is similar to that of verbal discourse. A painting, for example, through its specific presentation, creates a particular reality or world, the meaning of which emerges only through interaction between the artist and the viewer.<sup>1</sup> As a result of the cooperation between the artist and the viewer, a community of action is established in which both respond in similar ways to the visual symbols. This identification occurs only insofar as the artist speaks the viewer's language by tonality, order, image, attitude, and idea.<sup>2</sup> The artist makes choices in terms of size of canvas, type of paint, method of application, and elements selected to express the reality; all of these choices may or may not induce the audience to accept the artist's particular vision of the world. We see, then, a process that is quite similar to that which occurs between speaker and listener, a process familiar to rhetorical theorists and critics.

Although there still are some rhetorical theorists who do not believe that the visual image is a form of rhetoric, more and more we find agreement that the symbolism of the visual image needs to be studied as much as verbal discourse, that we no longer can confine ourselves to the study of verbal symbols. Burke, for example, has pointed out that symbolicity includes not only talk, but "all other human symbol systems, such as mathematics, music, sculpture, painting, dance, architectural styles, and so on."<sup>3</sup> Duncan argues that to study communication in society, we "must study art, for the highest (because most complete) incorporation of natural forces and operations in experience is found in art."<sup>4</sup> Dewey also saw art as communication; in fact, he believed that works of art "are the only media of complete and unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience."<sup>5</sup> Even Ehninger, whose standing among "traditional" rhetoricians is undisputed, proposed as a contemporary definition of rhetoric "the rationale of symbolic inducement; as that discipline which studies all of the ways in which men may influence each other's thinking and behavior through the strategic use of symbols." Appropriate subject matter for rhetoricians to study includes art, architecture, dance, and dress.<sup>6</sup>

My purpose here is to assist instructors of rhetoric in the generation and

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development of methods of teaching this rhetoric of the visual image and to become aware of the ways in which visual phenomena can become the focus of a unit in a course dealing with rhetorical theory. Such a unit might be called "Contemporary Rhetoric and the Visual Environment," "Rhetoric and the Visual Image," "Rhetoric and the Visual Arts," or "The Visual Image as Rhetoric."

### UNIT OBJECTIVES

The unit is designed primarily to teach theories of contemporary rhetorical theory through visual elements—whether these are found in the visual arts such as drawing, painting, and sculpture; architecture and interior design; or the larger environment of malls, parks, public squares, parking lots, streets, neighborhoods, and cities. It focuses on the theories of individuals such as Chaim Perelman, Kenneth Burke, Richard Weaver, Stephen Toulmin, Erving Goffman, Marshall McLuhan, and I. A. Richards, although the methods and exercises proposed here could apply as well to studies of classical theories of rhetoric.

The unit also is designed to help students learn to think rhetorically—that is, to approach their visual environment from a rhetorical perspective. It should increase their awareness of how visual phenomena affect them and decrease their tolerance for those elements that they decide cause them to respond in negative or unproductive ways.

In addition, the unit is designed to make students feel more comfortable about viewing and evaluating their visual environment. While this unit certainly will not deal in any detail with theories of art and the process of art criticism, it will provide students with some confidence as they learn to approach a visual phenomenon using specific concepts and methods that have been tried and tested over centuries of the rhetorical tradition.

### INSTRUCTIONAL FORMAT

Assuming that students already have become acquainted with contemporary theories of rhetoric as offered by Burke, Weaver, Toulmin, Perelman, McLuhan, Goffman, Richards, and others, the unit is composed of two parts. In the first, guest lecturers (perhaps arranged for by the students themselves) will discuss visual elements in their practical application. These speakers might include a city planner, an arts administrator, an architect, an artist, and an interior designer, each speaking about how the decisions they make in their work result in certain kinds of responses in their audiences. For example, the city planner might discuss zoning, transportation systems, the development of parks, and the design of streets and how these affect the quality of living in and responses to a city. The director of an art museum might speak about how exhibitions are selected and hung, how shows are juried, and how these decisions affect the patrons of the museum and the community at large. Although these individuals may not speak explicitly in rhetorical terms, much of what they do is rhetorical, and the students should gain some idea of the rhetorical nature of visual concerns with which these individuals deal.

In the second half of the unit, the students themselves have opportunities to apply concepts and principles of contemporary rhetoric to the visual environment. Students select for study some visual phenomenon—such as a car, a painting, a sculpture, a building, a park, or a city—and analyze it using some aspect of contemporary rhetorical theory—perhaps Burke's notion of perspective by incongruity or Weav-

er's distinction between rhetoric and dialectic. These analyses are shared with other class members to encourage thinking about and discussion of a variety of visual elements in rhetorical terms.

### SAMPLE ANALYSES

I hope that the brief review of the justification for and format of the unit has given the prospective instructor a basic idea of the way in which visual phenomena can be used to teach rhetorical theory. Sample analyses of the way in which contemporary rhetorical theory can be applied to various visual aspects of the environment might further clarify the procedure and give the instructor greater confidence in the teaching of such a unit.

To illustrate the application of contemporary rhetorical theory to visual phenomena, I will show how the concepts of three rhetorical theorists can be used to analyze three visual images. The ideas of I. A. Richards will be used to analyze Joan Miró's painting, *Blue II*; Kenneth Burke's notions will be applied to a Burger King restaurant; and Richard Weaver's concept will provide the basis for an analysis of the ocean-front strip at Virginia Beach, Virginia. The visual phenomena selected for analysis, however, may be examined from a variety of theoretical perspectives, just as the rhetorical theories may be applied to a variety of visual images. Burke's ideas, for example, easily could have been used as the basis for an examination of an art object or an environment and need not be restricted to examining architecture and interior design.

#### AN ANALYSIS OF *BLUE II* ACCORDING TO RICHARDS

To illustrate how I. A. Richards' notions about rhetoric can be taught through the use of works of visual art, I have selected for analysis a painting by Joan Miró. Born in 1893 in Spain, Miró is not only a painter but also has created ceramics, prints, and sculpture. *Blue II* was completed in 1961 and is now part of the collection of the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York City. It is on canvas, approximately nine feet

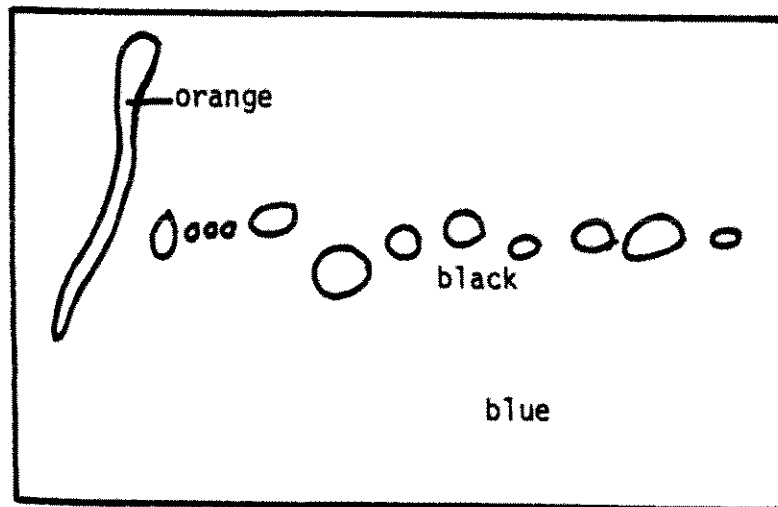


FIGURE 1

by eleven feet, and consists of an aqua blue background with a long, vertical orange rod at the left of the painting and a series of black oval shapes creeping horizontally to the right of the rod. Figure 1 suggests the basic form of the painting.

Richards' ideas about rhetoric, although not originally intended to be applied to visual images, offer perhaps a particularly appropriate means of studying abstract art not only because he has been concerned with aesthetics<sup>7</sup> but also because his focus in rhetoric is on misunderstanding and its remedies. To study misunderstanding and its remedies, for Richards, is to study meaning as conveyed in symbols. Although he concentrates in his works on the meanings of verbal discourse, his definition of rhetoric as inclusive of all forms of discourse and the tendency of abstract art to create a great deal of misunderstanding lead me to believe that Richards would be interested in eliminating this type of misunderstanding as well as that found in verbal communication.

Richards offers a theory of meaning based on the idea that words mean nothing by themselves—they have meaning only when a thinker makes use of them.<sup>8</sup> The process he describes can be used to explain how we derive our meanings from paintings or other visual phenomena. His starting point is the idea that humans are responsive to other things, with our responses affected by our past experiences. In other words, we respond to a stimulus in a way that is influenced by the other things that happened to us when more or less similar stimuli struck us in the past.<sup>9</sup> When we look at *Blue II*, then, our perception is influenced not only by the present circumstances, but also by our past experiences with art and abstract art in particular, the colors in the painting, the shapes and forms in the painting, our acquaintance with the works of Miró, and perhaps even with our past experiences in art galleries and in New York City. Thus, one viewer might feel bewilderment because of little exposure to and understanding of abstract art; another might respond positively to the painting because the dominant blue color reminds her of a swimming pool, summer, or the sky. A fisherman, on the other hand, might see the oval black forms as rocks in a river and be pleasantly reminded of past fishing trips. Any past experience that is called up by the painting will affect the beholder's response to it.

The role these past experiences play in meaning becomes more explicit as Richards develops his concept of context. He defines context as a whole cluster of events that recur together, a set of things or events or entities related in a certain way,<sup>10</sup> and because of context, a sign or symbol is able to function. Signs are former components of a context that once affected us as a whole, and even when only part of the context appears, that part affects us as though the whole context were present. For example, dark skies, thunder, lightning, and rain may once have constituted a context. Following this experience, if thunder is heard, it affects us as though the rest of the context were present—that is, we interpret the thunder as a sign of rain and thus act accordingly by carrying an umbrella. So our interpretation of a sign is our reaction to it as determined by past experiences in similar situations as well as by our present experience. For Richards, then, meaning becomes context. Symbols derive meaning through belonging to a recurrent group of events and serving as substitutes exerting the powers of what is not there. What a word means is the missing parts of the contexts.<sup>11</sup>

To see how this process of meaning operates in the visual arts, let's return to the viewer of *Blue II* who was reminded of a swimming pool by the rectangular space of the blue color that dominates the painting. The entire context of the swimming pool

image might include a hot summer day, the coolness of the water, sharing fun with friends, vacation, cold beer, getting a sun tan, the smell of sun-tan lotion, chlorine in the eyes, a yellow beach towel, wet cement beneath the feet, and feelings of relaxation and contentment. Upon viewing *Blue II*, the blue color in the painting acts for the beholder as a sign of this entire context, and the painting affects her as though the whole context were present. The painting for this particular viewer "means" the missing parts of that context, and she is likely to leave the painting with a pleasant feeling about it—even though she may not realize consciously that the meaning of the painting for her is coming from that specific context.

Richards' semantic triangle, of course, clarifies the relationship between the symbol, the mental processes, and the actual object or referent in this process of the acquisition of meaning. At the three points of the triangle, Richard places "symbol," "referent," and "reference" or thought. For our viewer, the color blue or the painting as a whole would be the symbol, the swimming pool is the referent, and the recollections of the experiences with the swimming pool and its color are the reference.

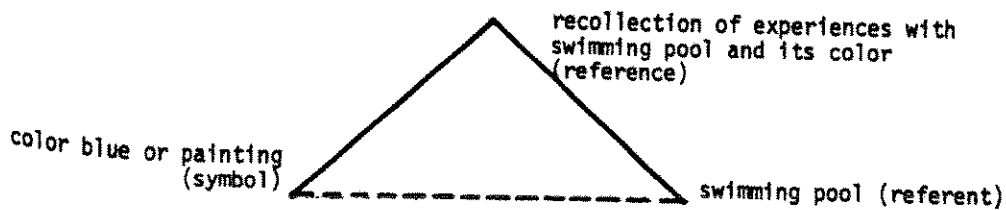


FIGURE 2

Between the viewer's thoughts and the symbol (the color blue or the painting), causal relations hold. The symbol causes her to perform an act of reference—that is, to think about the swimming pool and her experiences there. Between these thought processes and the referent (the swimming pool), there is also a relation that is more or less direct—the viewer thinks about the object that is the swimming pool. But between the symbol and the referent there is no direct connection, which accounts for the likelihood that the painting will create different responses in the thought processes of each person who sees it. So experience plays an important role in the development of the thought which in turn influences the relationship between symbol and referent.

Other notions that are involved in Richard's theories of rhetoric could be applied and studied in terms of a painting such as *Blue II*. His distinction between emotive and symbolic language<sup>12</sup> and his model of comprehending,<sup>13</sup> for example, would enable the student to learn more about his theories and to become skilled at seeing them in operation.

### A BURKEAN ANALYSIS OF A BURGER KING RESTAURANT

Both the exterior design and interior spaces of buildings can serve as subject matter for rhetorical analysis. In cities that contain famous, unique buildings such as the John Hancock building in Chicago or the Guggenheim Museum in New York City, students will have access to dramatic examples for study. But those who do not have access to these types of buildings still can use rhetorical theory to study the buildings

around them. To illustrate this type of analysis, I have selected for study a typical Burger King restaurant that is located on the corner of 21st Street and Colley Avenue in Norfolk, Virginia.

From the outside of the Burger King, the customer sees a square building with a mansard shake roof. Glass windows dominate the front of the building and allow one to see the line of customers while still outside. A very large sign with the Burger King logo of the words "Burger King" between two halves of a hamburger bun towers over a small yard enclosed by a split-rail fence that contains grass, shrubs, and two small trees.

Inside, the restaurant features linoleum designed to look like bricks on the floor, plastic paneling on the walls made to look like wood and interspersed with mirrors, and two large photographic wallpaper murals of trees in autumn. On the ceiling are square, flat plastic light covers decorated with a design of tree branches and autumn leaves. The table surfaces are formica designed to look like wood grain, and red plastic chairs—again with an imitation wood grain—are attached to them with metal bars.

Customers order from an employee standing at a cash register, who requests the food that is ordered over a microphone. Behind the counter, the customer can see the back of the stainless steel grill, stainless steel work areas where employees wrap food, and stainless steel beverage machines. Customers are given their items on trays that are stacked next to the cash register, go to the dining area to eat, and then deposit their trash in one of the many containers marked "THANK YOU."

One possible way to approach the Burger King restaurant using Burke's notions of rhetoric is to examine it in terms of form. Form, for Burke, is an arousing and fulfillment of expectations, and he discusses several types of form that one can see in evidence at Burger King.<sup>14</sup> Conventional form involves the appeal of form for form, a notion of structure that already exists in the minds of the audience. Conventional form is violated when, for example, someone does not shake hands when introduced to another. Because all Burger King restaurants are essentially alike, conventional form operates as customers enter the restaurant expecting a certain form that is efficient, clean, has a certain atmosphere, and offers certain types of food. This conventional form is not violated here. If you were to enter the Burger King, on the other hand, and find available a variety of flavors of yogurt, mixed drinks, and a candlelight setting, conventional form would be violated.<sup>15</sup>

Repetitive form is the consistent maintenance of a principle under new guises, or a restatement of the same thing in different ways. In a speech, this type takes the form of a "string of pearls" approach, in which different examples are strung together to emphasize the same point. Repetitive form is evident at the Burger King in that many diverse elements make the same point: this is an eating establishment that is efficient and that will serve you food quickly. Several aspects of the food-serving processes emphasize this theme. The woman taking orders asks, "Can I help you?" immediately after finishing with the previous customer. Any lack of attention or hesitation on the part of the customer is met with irritation. Many items are ready to go even before a customer orders them—hamburgers are waiting under lights in wrappers or boxes, and the employees simply grab them and put them on the tray next to the cash register as they are ordered. The use of the microphone to call out what has been ordered means that the woman at the cash register does not have to step away from the register to transmit the order or fill it. All of these make the same point that this is an efficient restaurant where food can be obtained quickly.

Progressive syllogistic form is the form of a perfectly-conducted argument in which the premises force the conclusion. Given the various aspects of the Burger King that are visible to the customer—the omnipresent logo with the hamburger on it, limited food choices, plastic physical surroundings, efficiency in the taking and filling of orders, and economical prices—one does not expect gourmet, unusual food served in an interesting and attractive manner. The premises (Burke, I'm sure, would appreciate the pun) force the conclusion that the food eaten there may be tasty enough, but it will be prepared with economy, efficiency, and uniformity in mind. Taste, in this case, may not be as important as these other qualities, just as a syllogism is not particularly valuable in real life for its content—form is more important.

Just as Burke's notions of form can be seen operating in the Burger King, his specific methods of criticism can be applied to the restaurant. Let's take as an example of Burke's critical methods agon analysis, which attempts to answer the question, "what versus what?" Using this technique, the critic searches for conflict between ideas, terms, or characters on the assumption that the motive for communication is always some aspect of division. In agon analysis, the critic attempts to locate this conflict and thus gain insights into the guilt being expunged or transformations that might occur as the result of the conflict.

Examples of conflicting ideas and images are abundant at the Burger King. Each plastic cup is imprinted with the words, "Dispose Properly • Please Help Keep Our Environment Clean," and trash containers are omnipresent that spell out "THANK YOU." These two elements alone might lead the customer to believe that Burger King is committed to environmental concerns. But in opposition, the customer finds that all food served at the Burger King is wrapped and wrapped and wrapped. Hamburgers are wrapped in paper and cartons and then are placed in paper bags, all of which are thrown away after being used for possibly ten minutes. Many trees go into the making of paper products for Burger King, which is in direct opposition to the printed messages on the paper products and trash cans. Guilt at participation in the destruction of the environment may have caused an attempt to identify with nature through the photographic wall mural and in the incorporation of some natural elements in the exterior design of the building.

Another conflict is apparent at Burger King. For several years its primary advertising slogan was, "Have it your way," the implication being that Burger King is interested in meeting the individual's needs, not in treating customers as a mass. This slogan contrasts directly with the treatment of the customers by the employees. The woman taking orders at the cash register did not seem at all concerned with the needs and wants of individual customers. She was clearly unhappy if they needed a minute or two to peruse the selections and make a decision about what to order. She asked every customer, "Can I help you?" in an irritated tone of voice immediately upon finishing with the previous customer and became very impatient if the customer did not respond immediately. This apparent lack of concern for the customer appears to have instigated a transformation such as the type that Burke discusses. The slogan, "Have it your way," was dropped because the management knew the entire Burger King system is predicated on efficiency, not on meeting individual needs.<sup>16</sup>

Just as agon analysis provides some insights into conflicts at the Burger King and possible reasons for changes in its advertising and environmental decor, other insights could be gained using other Burkean methods of criticism such as cluster

analysis, pentadic analysis, or essentializing. Whatever the concepts or methods used as the basis for this type of analysis, the results should reveal new knowledge and perspectives about our responses to buildings.

### CRUISING THE STRIP WITH RICHARD WEAVER

The application of contemporary principles of rhetoric need not be confined to traditional visual arts forms such as painting, architecture, or interior design. Students might want to look at more expanded visual aspects of their world—entire environments such as parks, streets, neighborhoods, or cities. To illustrate how Richard Weaver's idea about rhetoric can be used to analyze these larger environments, I will take as an example of such an environment the resort strip of the city of Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Virginia Beach, with a population of 250,000, is a resort city located on the Atlantic coast between Norfolk, Virginia, and the North Carolina border. It calls itself the largest resort city in the world since it annexed its county a few years ago. The result was a land mass for the city that is 35 miles long by 25 miles wide. Tourists rarely go beyond the ocean-front strip, however, which includes hotels, fast-food restaurants, T-shirt shops, souvenir shops, discos, and miniature golf courses built along the beach on what used to be sand dunes. A concrete boardwalk runs along the beach throughout the strip, separating hotels and motels from the sand. Traffic on the streets in and around the strip is very heavy during the tourist season, and cars barely move as drivers circle the blocks in search of parking places or to gawk at scantily-clad men and women walking the sidewalks and beach. On the beach itself, which is quickly disappearing because the natural barriers once formed by the dunes no longer keep the sand from eroding, individuals reeking of sun-tan location lie a few inches apart from each other, covering every available spot of sand.

An analysis of Virginia Beach's strip might begin with Weaver's basic notion that language or symbols are sermonic. We have no sooner uttered words or built a building or created an environment than we have given impulse to other people to look at the world, or some part of it, in a certain way.<sup>17</sup> This attitude implies an act, making all rhetoric a rhetoric of motives since in its utterance there is a will to alter something.

A walk through the strip at Virginia Beach indicates that indeed, a specific attitude and specific actions are encouraged and exhibited by the tourists there. Primarily, they are supposed to spend money. The visual environment tells you this at a glance. Only places where one can consume exist along the strip. Trees, grass, and flowers don't exist largely because they would take up space that could be used to extract money from tourists. Prices of all of the commodities sold on the strip are very high. Rates at hotels and motels increase drastically during the tourist season, and beverage vending machines along the strip, for example, sell cokes for 50¢ that cost 30¢ or 35¢ off the strip.

A second attitude that the strip conveys is that it does not care about the natural environment. Mass transit is virtually non-existent—parking lots and meters abound for cars. Sand dunes were destroyed in order to build the strip. There is no foliage to maintain the natural flow of oxygen and carbon monoxide or to provide beauty, despite the fact that plants and trees grow readily in the geographic area. Plastic, artificial materials are everywhere—from restaurant interiors to the large-



scale hippopotamuses, giraffes, and King Kongs that loom above the miniature golf courses. The statement that is made about the environment urges actions appropriate to a lack of concern for life in nature: lie on the beach, dance all night, consume junk food, ogle and pick up men and women, and get drunk.

Just as Weaver believed that rhetoric is sermonical in that it exhibits an attitude and encourages certain acts, he believed that there is a proper ordering of the goods in a culture. There is a hierarchy of terms capable of moving individuals to action with some ultimate source at the top. He asserted that the major goal of an ethical rhetoric must be to maintain these ultimate terms and thus proper values.<sup>18</sup> As a starting point to analyze this hierarchy, Weaver formulated the notion of god and devil terms. God terms are expressions to which all other expressions are subordinate and less powerful. Their force imparts to the others their lesser degree of force and fixes the scale by which degrees of comparison are understood. The counterpart of the god term is the devil term, the enemy that people will work to keep out of the culture.<sup>19</sup>

A discovery of the god and devil terms operating in the Virginia Beach strip offers some interesting insights into its environment. God terms evident include "youth," "shiny" or "flashy," "sensuality," "physical," "tan," "freedom," "play," "excitement," "relaxation," and "sun." The strip communicates to visitors that this is the place to forget the routines of work, a place to play and relax and leave old inhibitions behind. To make it in this environment, the individual must be tan, sexy, young, and possess flashy clothing and a car. Devil terms include "old age," "dullness," "intellect," "pale," "restraint" (which includes institutional restraints such as "church" and "school"), "work," "boredom," "rain," and "cold." In other words, anything that inhibits the carefree pursuit of sun, sex, and glitter becomes evil, and many of the ideas that would be god terms in the individual's home environment (such as "work" and "intellect") are shelved and temporarily forgotten at the beach. The normal hierarchy of terms in the home environment is inverted, and the terms that are highly regarded and sanctioned at home become despised on the strip. Weaver, of course, would urge that all tourists at the strip hold a private dialectic to examine the terms present in the rhetoric there—and thus prevent themselves from becoming creatures of evil public forces and victims of their own thoughtless rhetoric and that of the environment around them.

Again, this has been merely a sample of the kinds of analyses and insights that Weaver's theories of rhetoric could provide when applied to a portion of a city. Such an analysis could be carried further by looking at the strip in the context of, for example, Weaver's types of argument<sup>20</sup> or his notion of loss of memory or historical consciousness.<sup>21</sup>

## RESOURCES

Many resources are available both on contemporary rhetoric and art that the instructor will find useful in preparing for a unit such as this. Because instructors of rhetoric are likely to be familiar with works dealing with contemporary rhetoric, the following bibliography is composed only of works dealing with art and the visual environment since resources in this area are not likely to be as familiar. The works listed here all take essentially a rhetorical view toward art and were selected for inclusion specifically with this perspective in mind.

Alexander, Christopher. *The Timeless Way of Building*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Presentation of a new theory of architecture, building, and planning that emphasizes the quality that results from living patterns taking place within buildings and cities. Introduces the pattern language approach to architecture by which an individual may create any act of building.

Alexander, Christopher, Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverstein, Max Jacobson, Ingrid Fiksdahl-King, and Shlomo Angel. *A Pattern Language*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

The second book in the series about the pattern language method of architecture and planning that provides the patterns or units of language that answer design problems. These patterns are very specific, as "How high should a window sill be?" and "How much space in a neighborhood should be devoted to grass and trees?" More than 250 patterns are given, allowing any lay person to design any part of an environment with an eye to the effects of that design.

Baldinger, Wallace S. *The Visual Arts*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1960.

A guide to the basic elements and principles of the visual arts, including industrial design and the crafts, architecture, sculpture, photography, film, print making, and painting.

Berleant, Arnold. *The Aesthetic Field: A Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1970.

A concise review of basic theories of art including the imitation, emotionalist, expressionist, communication, and formalist theories. Also included is a model for an aesthetic-field theory of art that overcomes many of the problems of former theories.

Dewey, John. *Art as Experience*. New York: Capricorn, 1958.

Based on a series of lectures given at Harvard University in 1931 on the philosophy of art, this book discusses the formal structures and characteristic effects of the arts, including expression, form, substance, and perception.

Dondis, Donis A. *A Primer of Visual Literacy*. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1973.

Beginning with the assumption that visual as well as verbal literacy means sharing the assigned meaning of a common body of information, Dondis constructs a basic system for learning, recognizing, making, and understanding visual messages that are negotiable by all people, not just those specially trained, such as the designer or the artist. Topics discussed include perception, attraction and grouping, positive and negative, tone, dimension, scale, and style. Diagrams and exercises are included to assist in the development of visual literacy.

Huxtable, Ada Louise. *Kicked a Building Lately?* New York: Quadrangle/New York Times Book Co., 1976.

A collection of critiques of buildings and cities including the Kennedy Center, the Hirshhorn Museum, New York, Boston, Washington, and Philadelphia.

Stolnitz, Jerome. *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Criticism*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960.

An introductory text to aesthetics that includes discussions of the aesthetic experience; theories of art; the structure of art; issues in aesthetics such as ugliness, truth, and morality; and the evaluation of art.

Langer, Susanne K. *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953.

The sequel to *Philosophy in a New Key*, in which Langer formulates a systematic, comprehensive theory of art from her theory of symbolism and applies it to painting, sculpture, architecture, music, dance, drama, and film.

Langer, Susanne K. *Philosophy in a New Key*. New York: The New American Library, 1942.

In this work, Langer argues that the human brain is constantly carrying on a process of symbolic transformation of experience as a basic human need. Her discussion of this transformation includes the logic of signs and symbols; what constitutes meaning; what characterizes symbols in language, ritual, myth, and music; and the integration of all these elements into human mentality.

Rasmussen, Steen Eiler. *Experiencing Architecture*. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1959.

Beginning with the premise that an architect is a theatrical producer who plans the setting for our lives and creates innumerable circumstances as a result of the way he or she arranges the setting, Rasmussen attempts to explain the elements with which the architect works. Included are solids and cavities, scale and proportion, rhythm, texture, daylight, color, and hearing.

Venturi, Robert, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour. *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form*. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1972.

Deals with symbolism in architecture, particularly that evident in the Las Vegas strip. Topics covered include the architecture of persuasion, architecture as symbol, system and order, permanence and change, lighting, monumentality, styles, and signs.

With the scope of rhetoric generally recognized as much wider than simply written or spoken discourse, rhetorical principles and concepts applied to visual phenomena as described in this essay should enable students to gain new insights into both rhetoric and the visual environment as well as to make the relevance of rhetoric strikingly clear. Through instruction and study of this kind, perhaps we will discover new perspectives about how communication functions in its entirety as we share visions with those who work and study in visual as well as verbal modes.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> At this point some are certain to assert that the artist does not need an external audience, that the artist may not want to show a painting to anyone. This view ignores the fact that the artist is his or her own audience. Because a work of art has a life of its own apart from the artist, the artist is subject to the same processes of communication and interaction with the work as is the viewer. As Kaelin explains, "the artist learns as much from his work as does his audience. The artist is his first appreciator . . . the first one surprised to discover 'his' idea." Eugene F. Kaelin, *Art and Existence: A Phenomenological Aesthetics* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1970), p.38.

<sup>2</sup> This, of course, is Burke's notion of identification. Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950), pp.45-46.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p.28.

<sup>4</sup> Hugh Dalziel Duncan, *Communication and Social Order* (New York: Bedminster Press, 1962), p.56.

<sup>5</sup> John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1934), p. 105.

<sup>6</sup> Douglas Ehninger, ed., *Contemporary Rhetoric: A Reader's Coursebook* (Glenview, Illinois: Scott Foresman, 1972), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Richards has co-authored, for example, a work on aesthetics in which the different theories of beauty are

delineated. I. A. Richards, C. K. Ogden, and James Wood, *The Foundations of Aesthetics* (1922; rpt. New York: Haskell House, 1974).

<sup>8</sup> C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning: A Study of the Influence of Language Upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1938) p.10.

<sup>9</sup> I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp.29-31.

<sup>10</sup> Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, p.34. Ogden and Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*, p. 58.

<sup>11</sup> Ogden and Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*, p.175. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup> Ogden and Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*, pp.10, 124-25, 149-51.

<sup>13</sup> I. A. Richards, *Speculative Instruments* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), pp. 22-23.

<sup>14</sup> Kenneth Burke, *Counterstatement* (Los Altos, California: Hermes, 1953), pp. 124-26.

<sup>15</sup> Conventional form was violated on June 25, 1980, at this particular Burger King when, between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m., it featured candlelight dining. A hostess in a long dress met customers at the door and escorted them to tables covered with white cloths; a candle burned at the center of each table. Waitresses—in long dresses—took customers' orders from menus at the table and brought the food ordered to them. A violinist played music at the back of the restaurant.

<sup>16</sup> That Burger King officially has abandoned its policy of making hamburgers to suit the customer is confirmed in Lee Smith, "Burger King Puts Down Its Dukes," *Fortune*, June 16, 1980, pp. 90-94.

<sup>17</sup> Richard L. Johannesen, Rennard Strickland, and Ralph T. Eubanks, eds., *Language is Sermonic: Richard M. Weaver on the Nature of Rhetoric* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1970), p. 224.

<sup>18</sup> Johannesen, Strickland, and Eubanks, eds., *Language is Sermonic*, pp.86-87.

<sup>19</sup> Johannesen, Strickland, and Eubanks, eds., *Language is Sermonic*, p. 89.

<sup>20</sup> Richard M. Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953), pp. 55-114.

<sup>21</sup> Richard M. Weaver, *Visions of Order: The Cultural Crisis of Our Time* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), pp.40-54.

**PLAN TO ATTEND:**



*The 68th Annual Meeting*

**LOUISVILLE, KY**

The Galt House

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