Tutorial 6: Design exercises

Using the following design terms, create five Illustrator documents with the requirements listed. (You have two class periods to complete this assignment.)

You may add elements not listed as a requirement to your layouts, but make sure you include the required technique.

First, select a theme, then execute a series of five 8.5 x 11 inch posters to demonstrate each of the following design principles.

1. **Repetition**: The use of the same visual effect a number of times in the same composition or design. Repetition may produce the dominance of one visual idea, a feeling of harmonious relationship, an obviously planned pattern, or a rhythmic movement.
   
   **Extra**: Convert special type styles to outlines. (Type Menu > Create Outlines)

2. **Asymmetry**: A felt equilibrium is achieved, although the design may have more elements on one side than the other. The balance is sometimes attained through the use of a strong color or even a line directing your attention elsewhere.
   
   **Extra**: Create an original gradation. (One not existing in the Swatches Palette)

3. **Rhythm**: A flow created from repeating similar shapes, colors, values, or textures. The elements do not have to be identical, just similar-looking enough and positioned in a way which forces the eye to follow the elements in a composition. Rhythm has recurring measures like a beat or tempo in music.
   
   **Extra**: Use the Gradient Vector tool to create one gradation across more than one object.

4. **Figure/Ground (Positive/Negative)**: The artist’s initial selection of elements is the positive (figure) and the unoccupied areas of the design are negative (ground). (In the case of a painting of flowers in a vase against a blue background, the positive space would be the flowers and the negative space would be the background.)
   
   **Extra**: Create a shadow for any pen drawn object, practice using the reflect or shear tools to accomplish this.

5. **Approximate Symmetry**: Equal, but varied optical forces are on either side of a design’s axes. Each side is similar enough to make a repetitious relationship (this holds an audience’s attention), but the subtle variety makes the design more interesting.
   
   **Extra**: Use type on a curvy (or spiral) path.

**Suggestions**

Before you begin, sketch several layout ideas on paper to get see what will work. It takes less time to quickly sketch something out, then take it to the computer.

Think series. Choose one theme and play with it to illustrate each design principle.

Think about scale. How big can you make a letter form? What interesting shapes does that create? How will things look if they don’t entirely fit on the printed page? Will they be more visually interesting?

Think simple. This does not have to be overly complicated or busy.