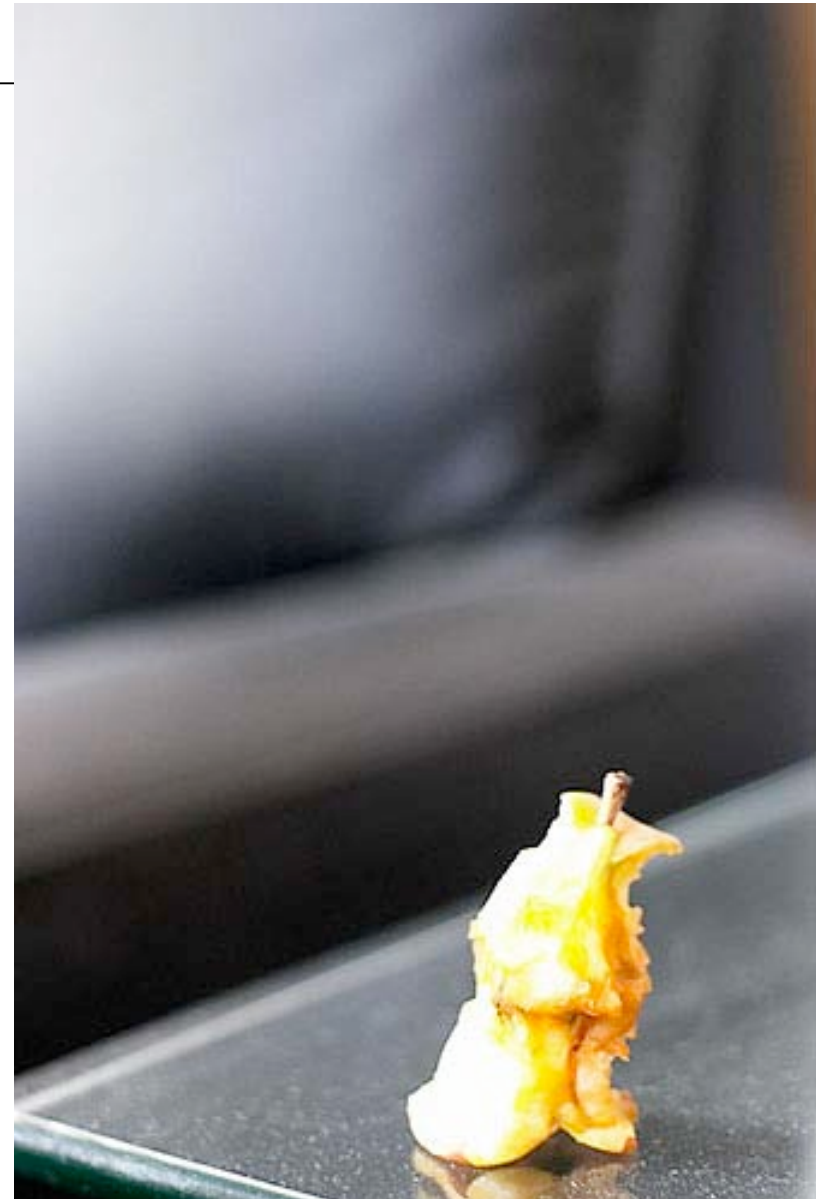
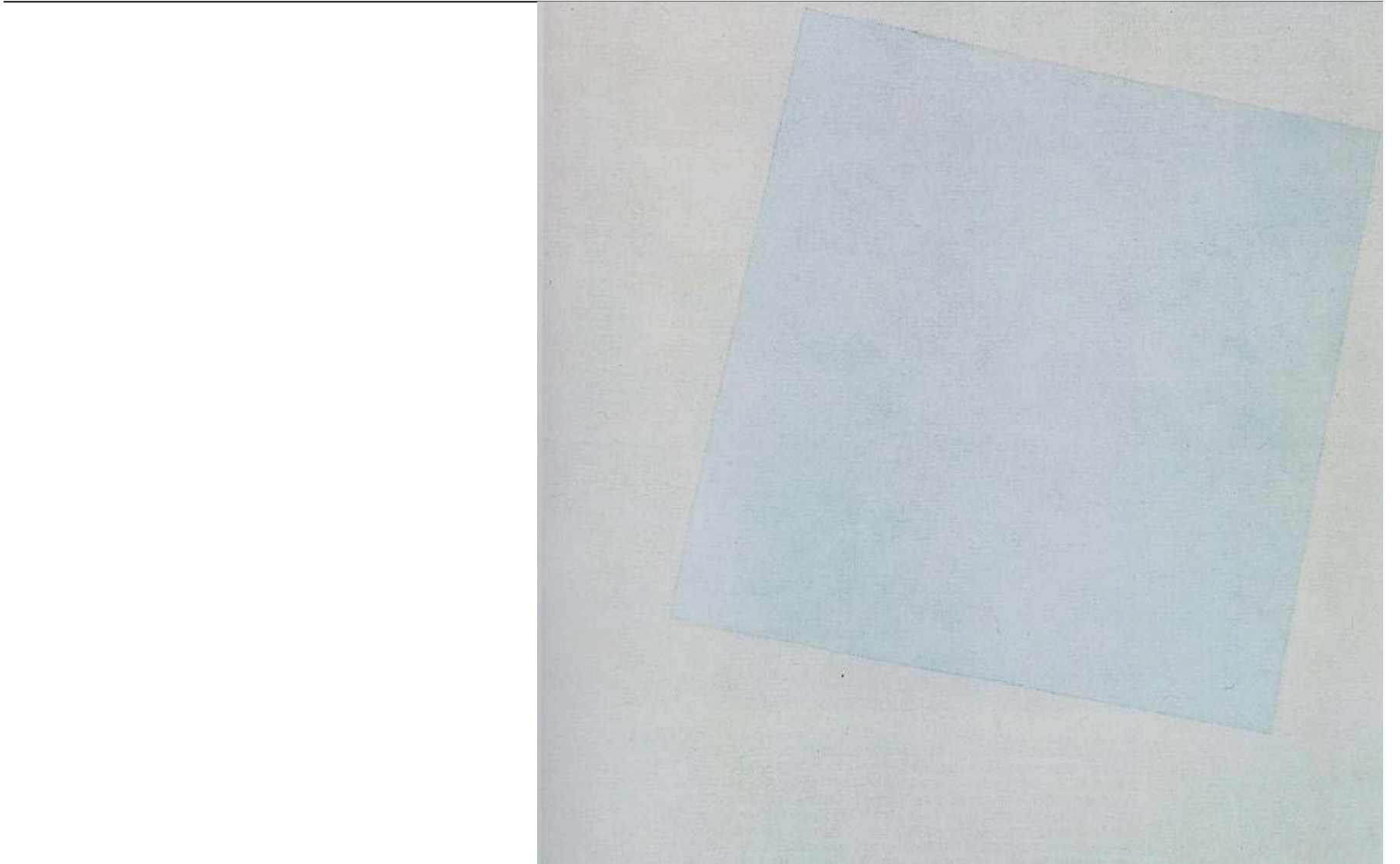


## Figure / Ground Relationship

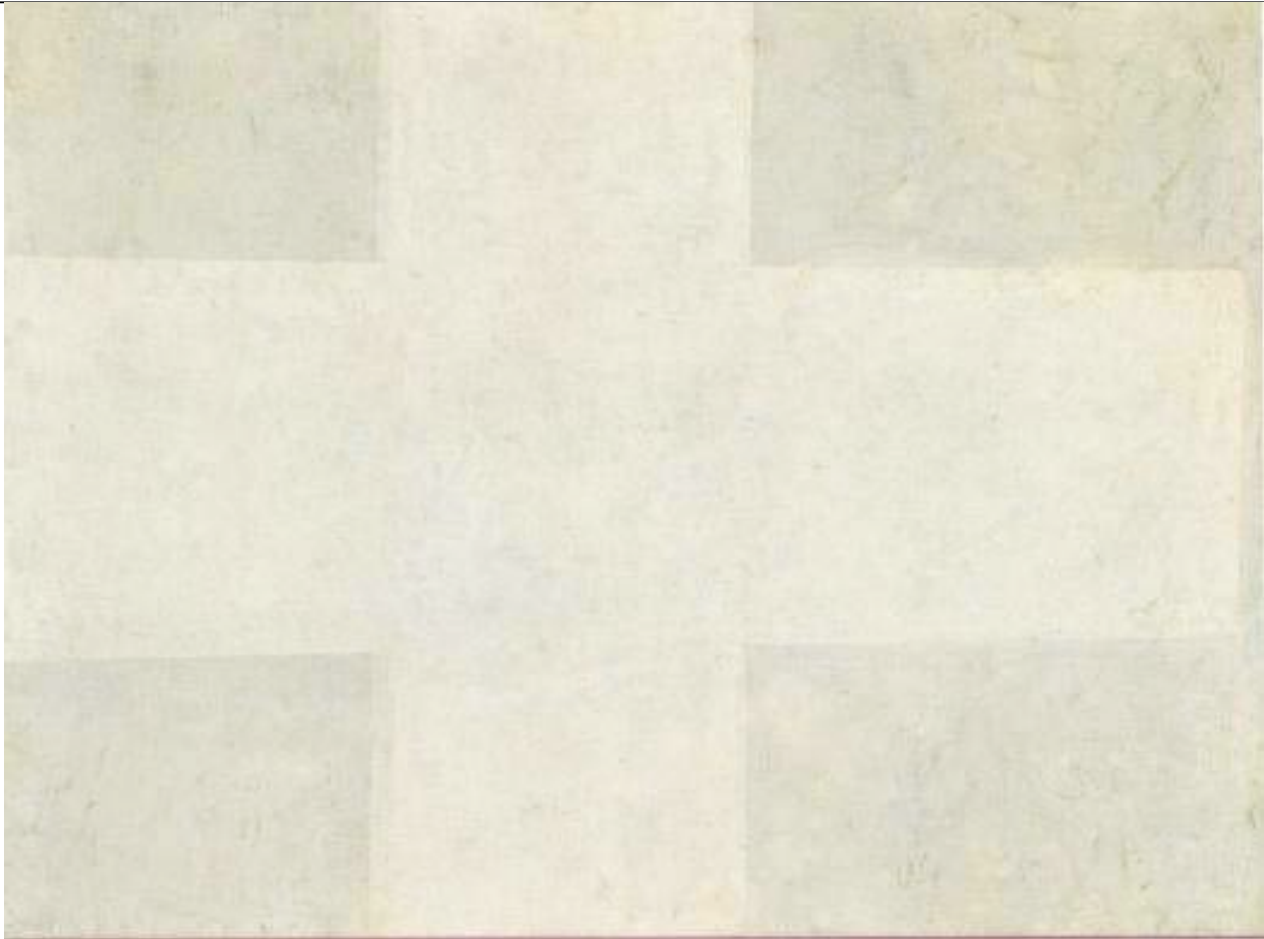
---

- One of the most common forms of visual relation involves figure and ground.
- The relation of figure and ground is fundamental to human perception.
- Human perception tends to separate a figure from the ground.

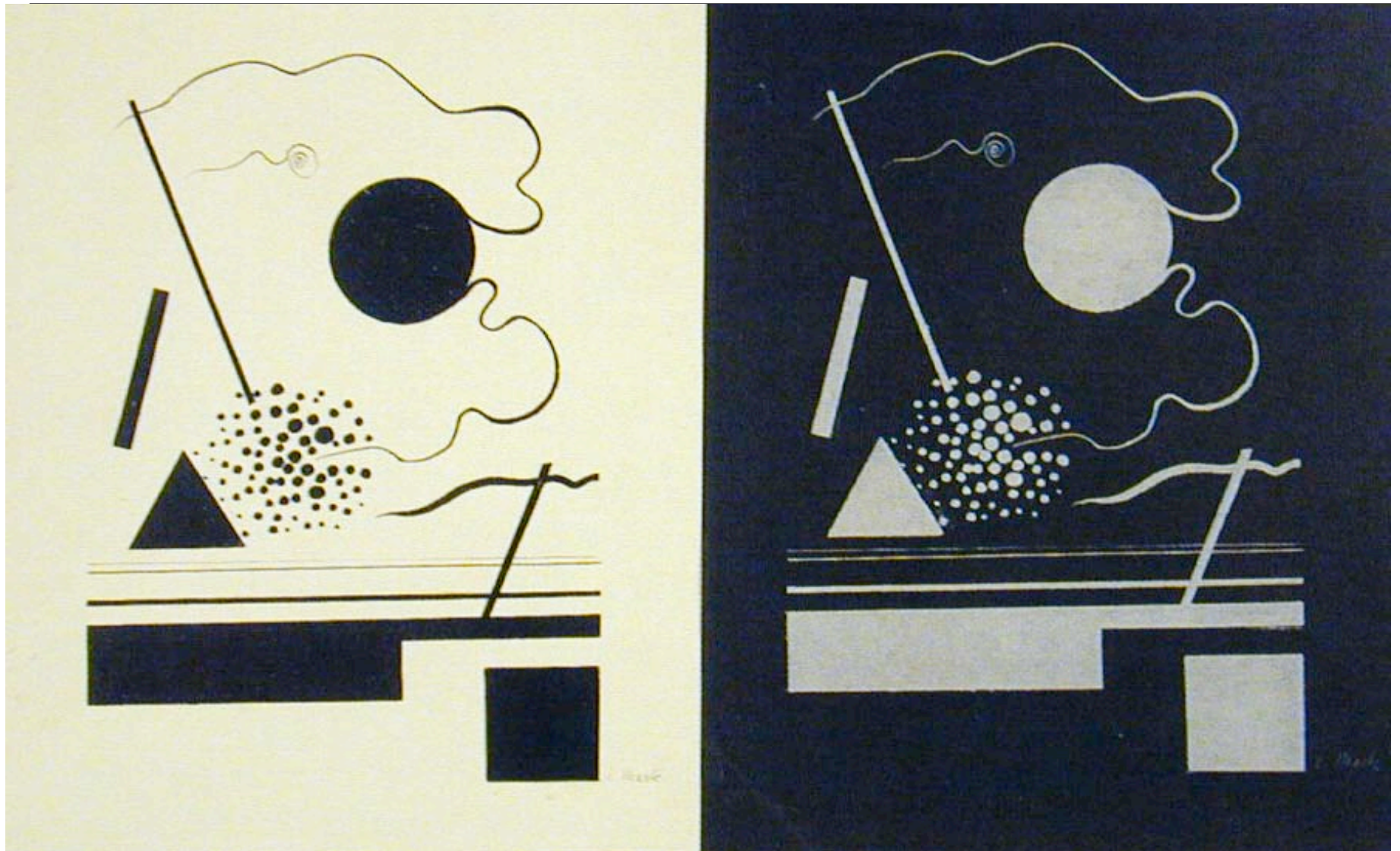




\_\_\_\_\_

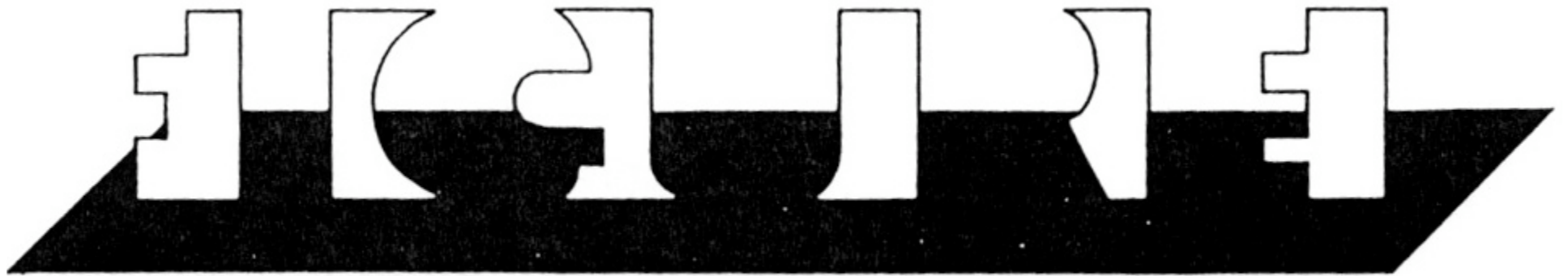


Reversed ground color



Counterchange between figure and ground

---

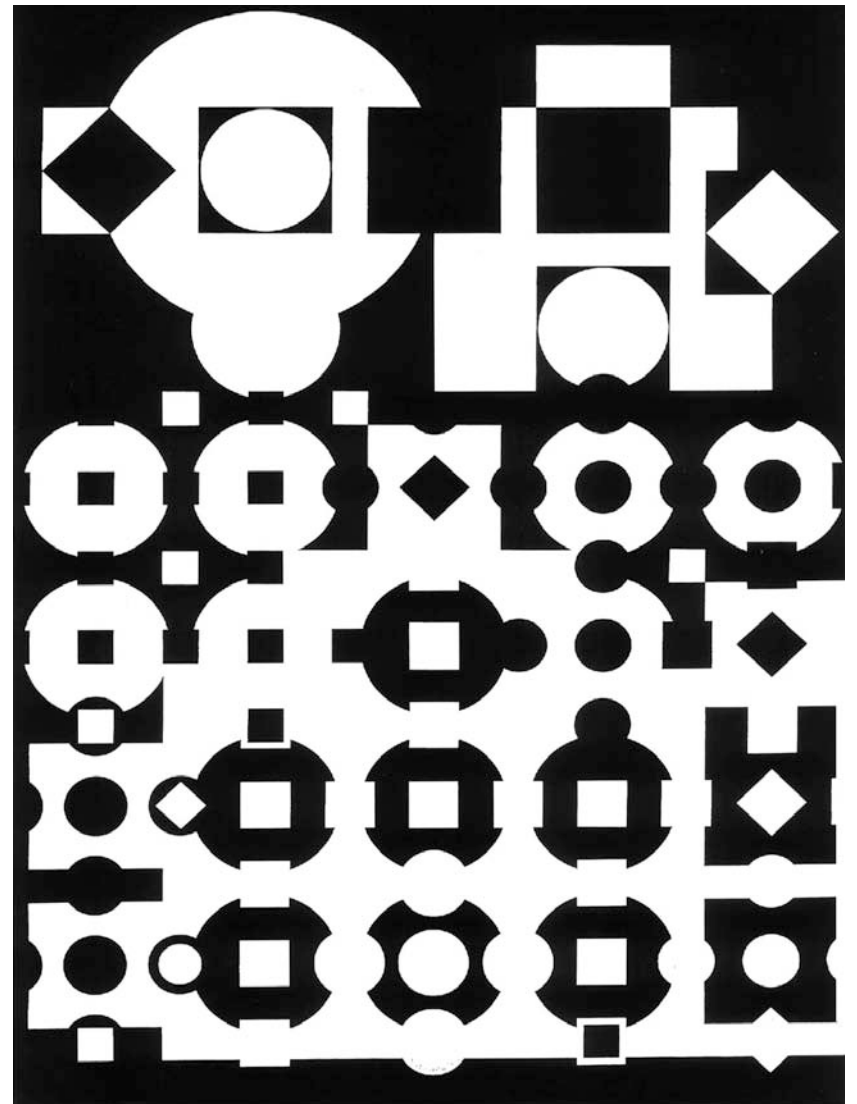


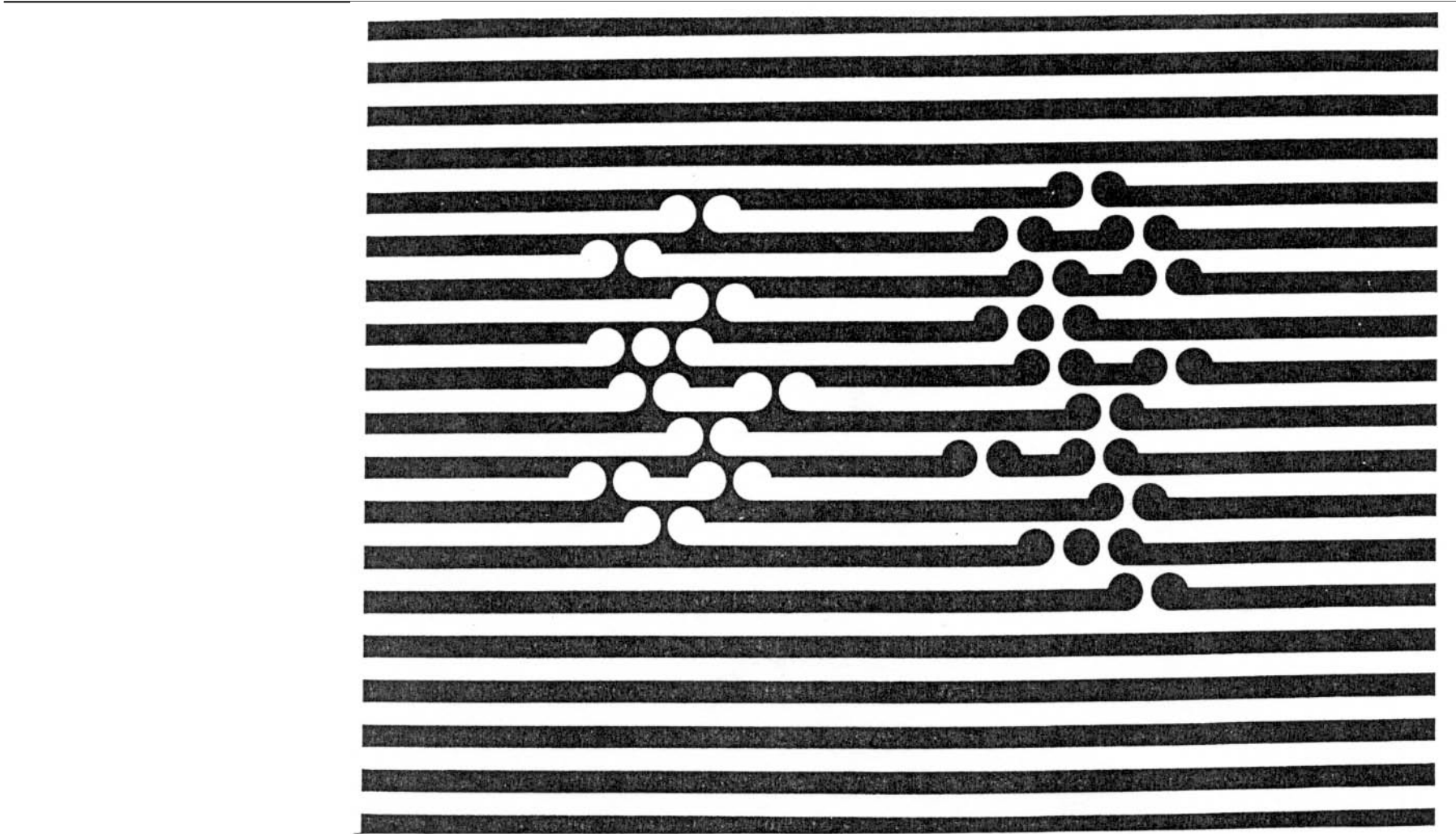
D

Exchange of figure and ground (black and white).

---

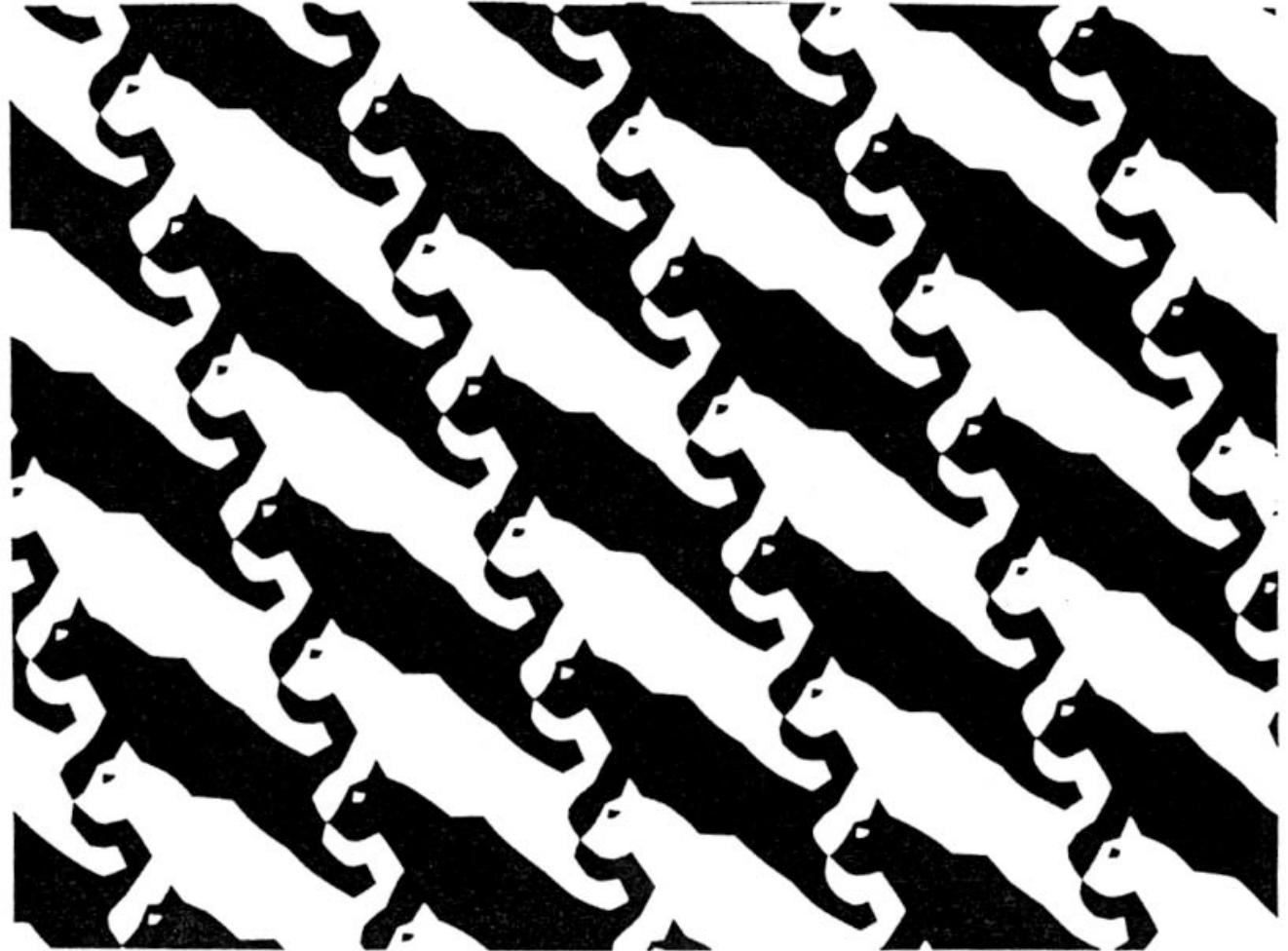
Vasarely





## Double function of the contour line

---





# Ambiguity of figure and ground

---

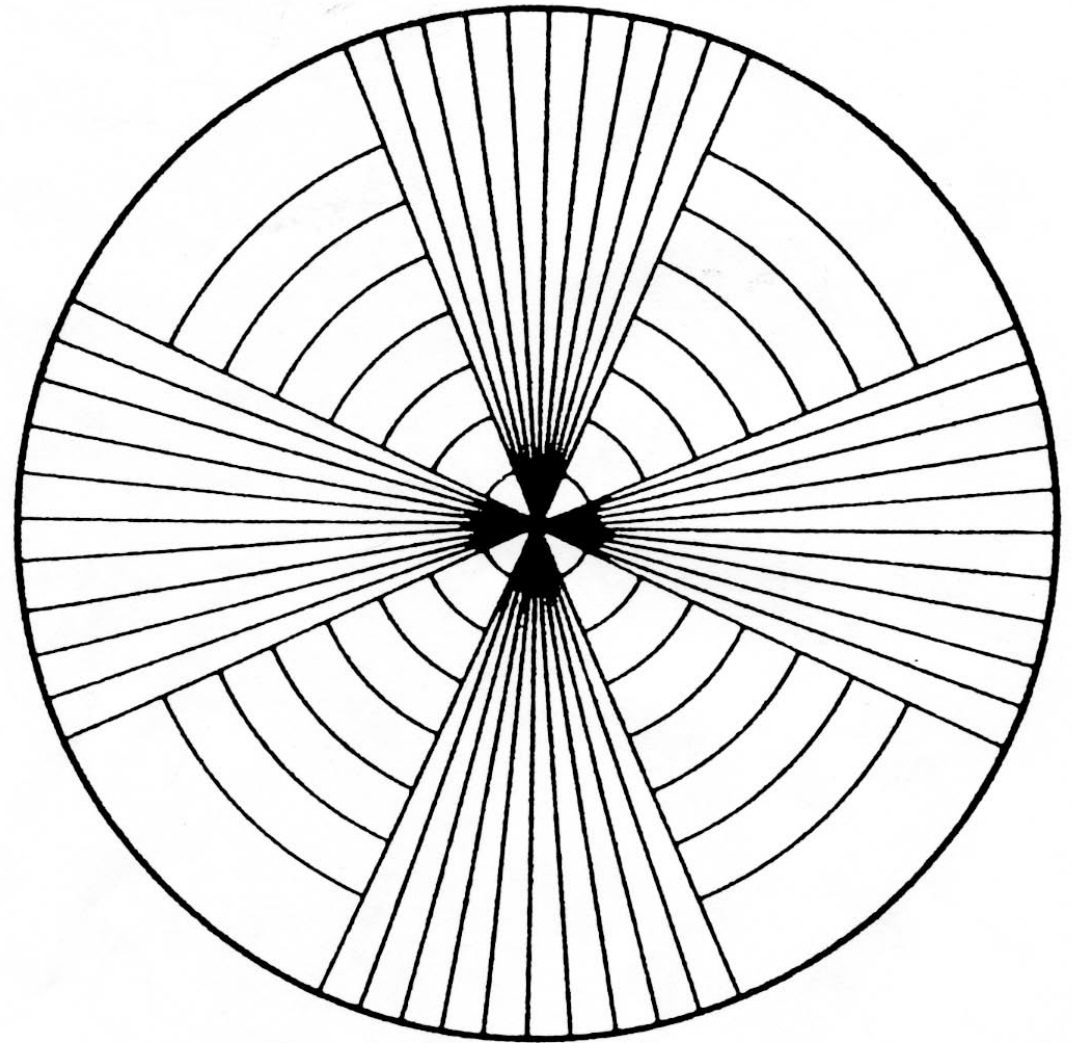


Figure 36.10. A demonstration of the Gestalt law of area. The pattern in (a) is multistable and can be organized with either the white region (b) or the black region (c) as figure. The interpretation in (b) is preferred because, according to this law, the white regions occupy less area than do the black.

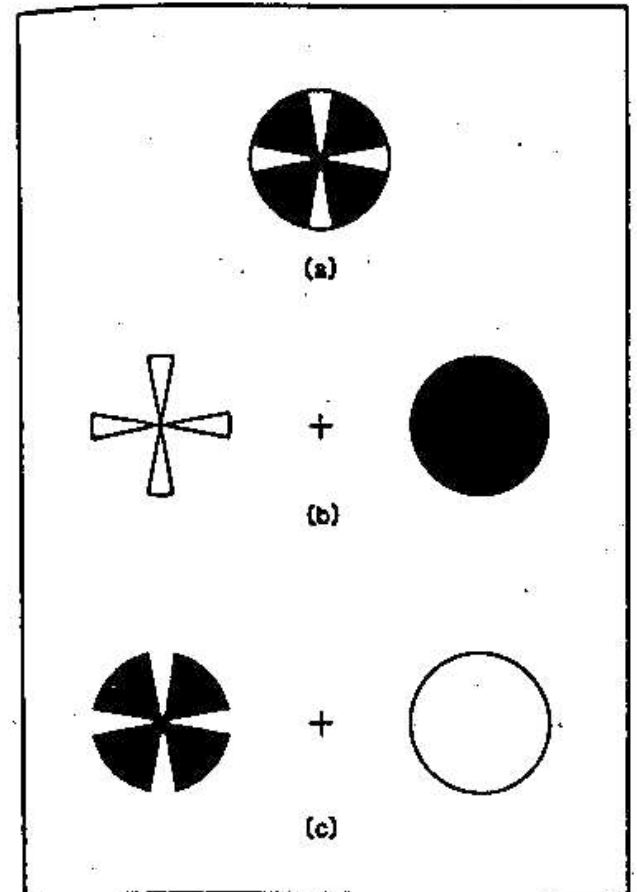
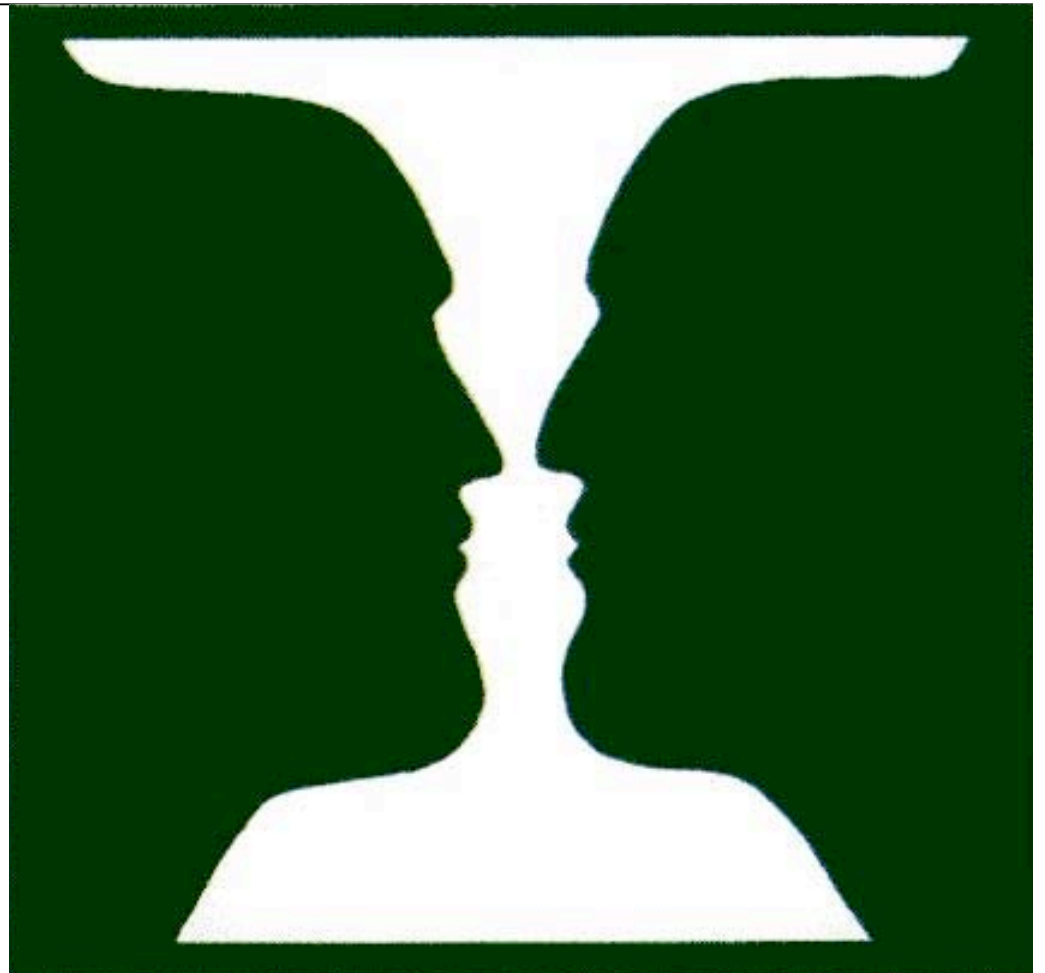
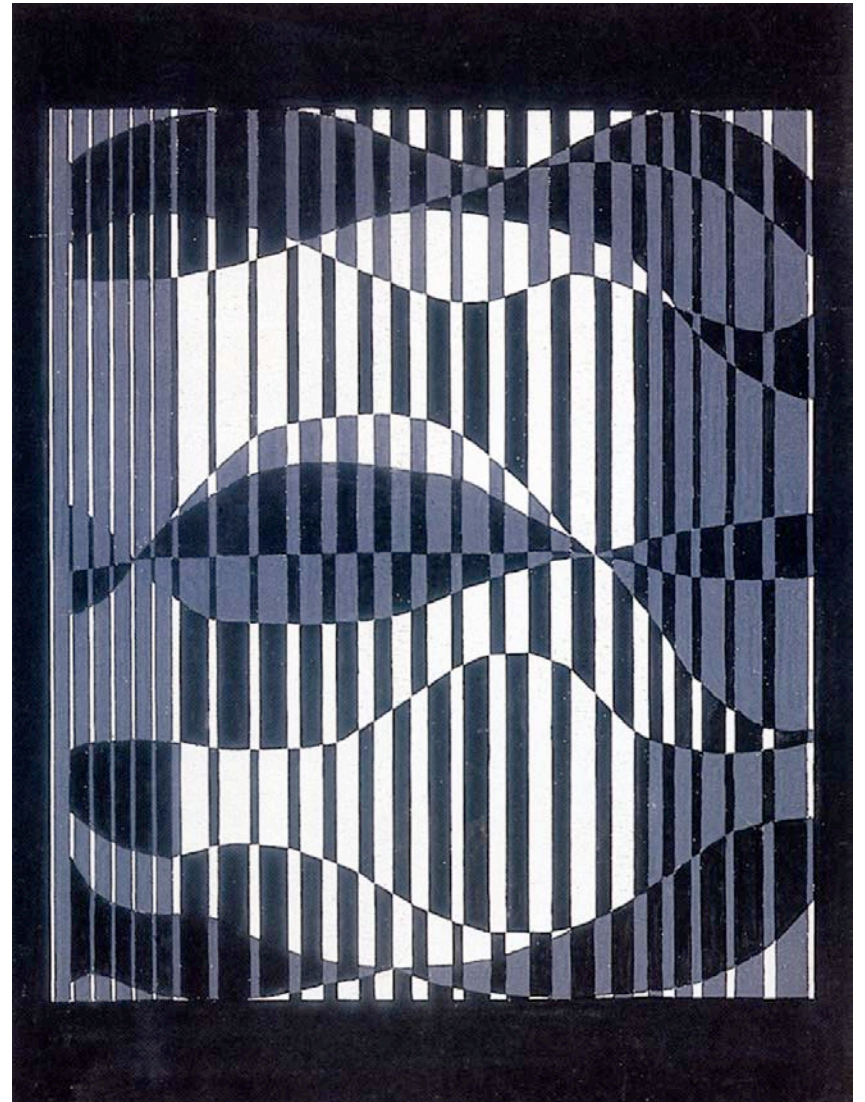


Figure-ground ambiguity

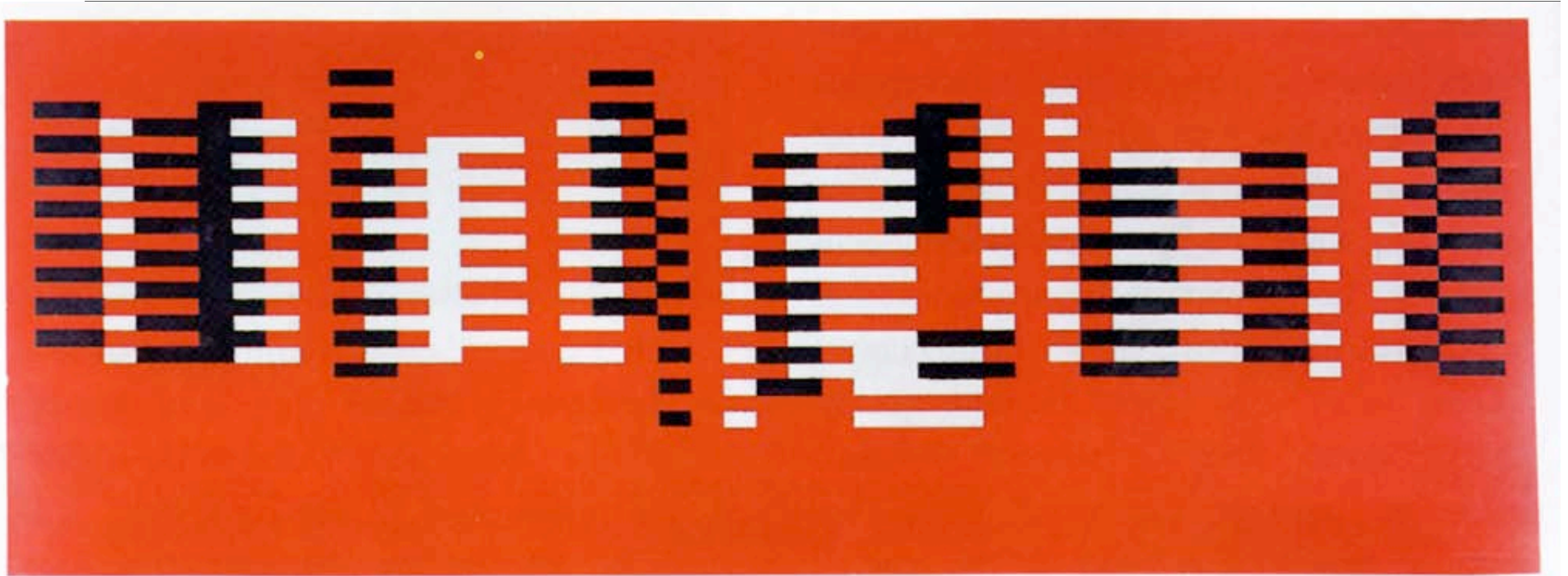
---



- 
- Figure-ground ambiguity can be used to create a strong sense of instability.
  - Joseph Albers

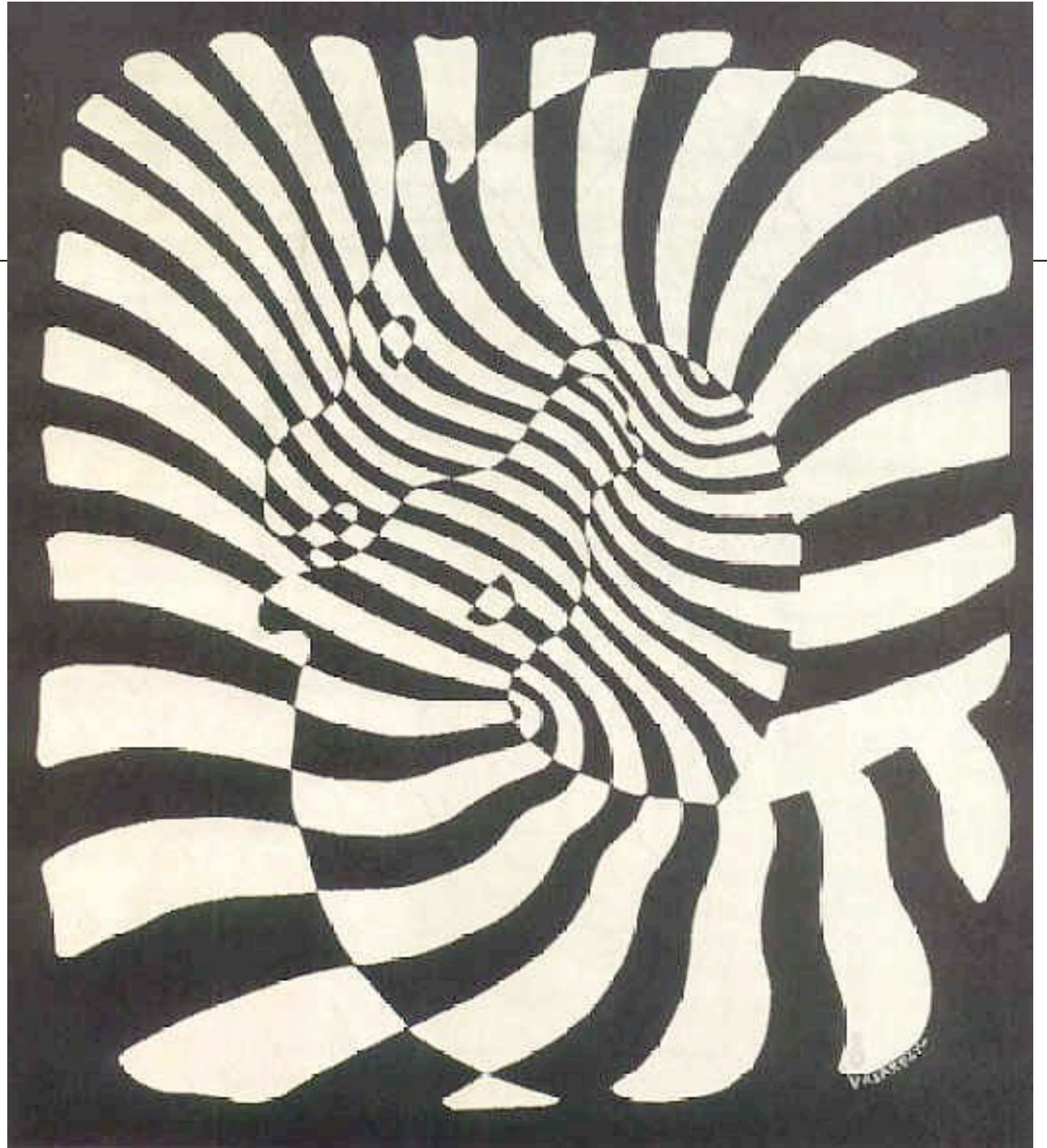


Josef Albers

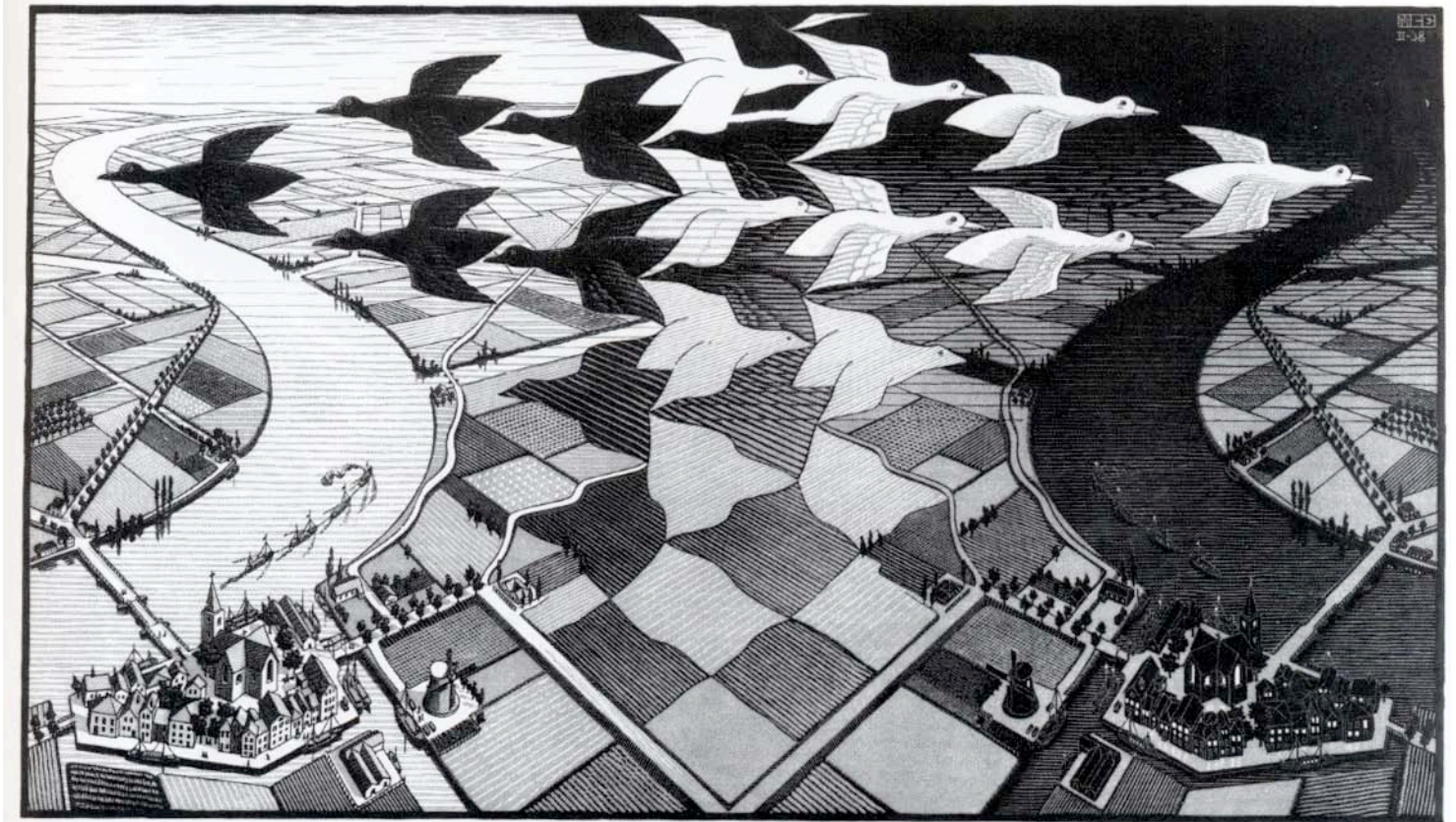


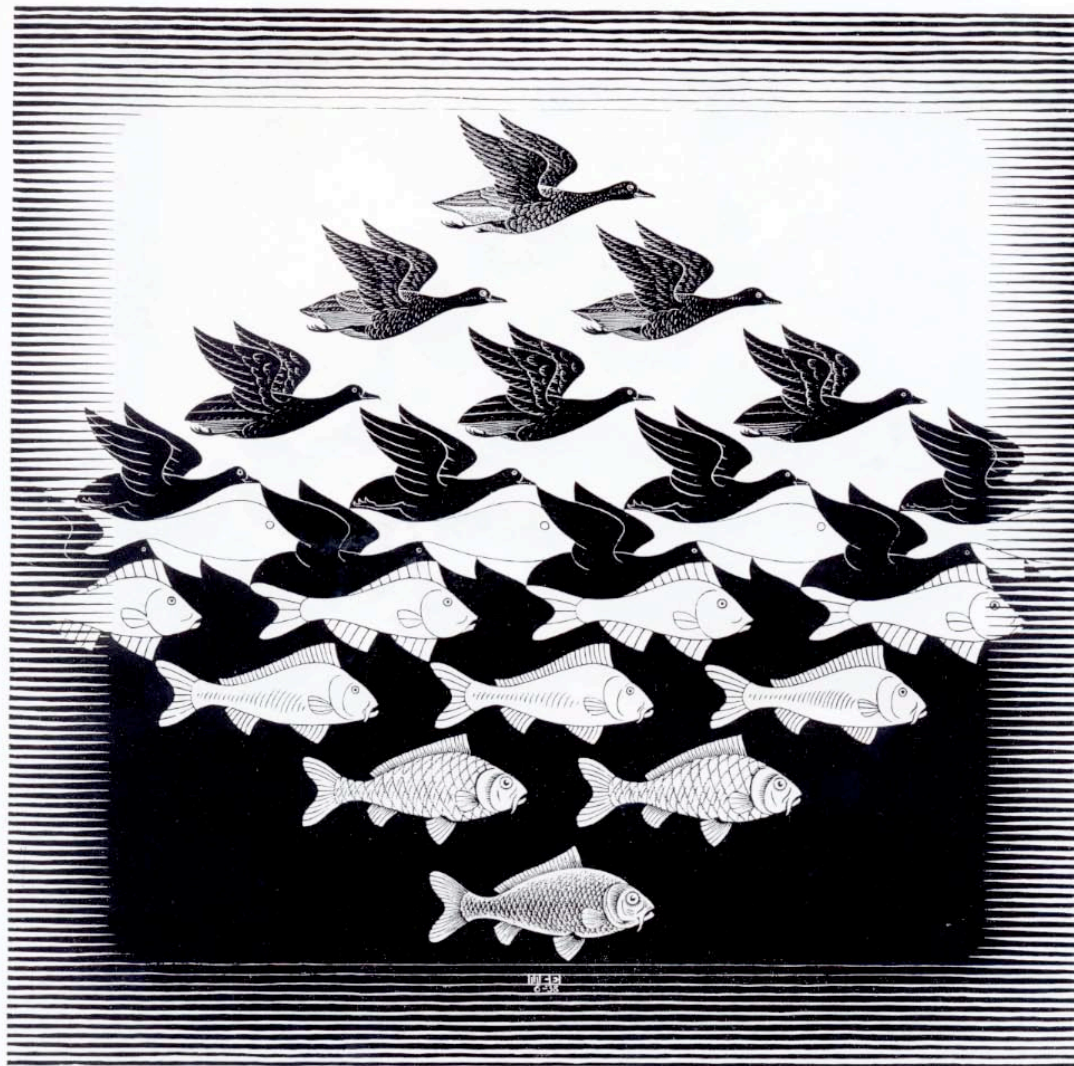
---

**Victor  
Vasarely**



# Development of the figure-ground relation into a dynamic composition

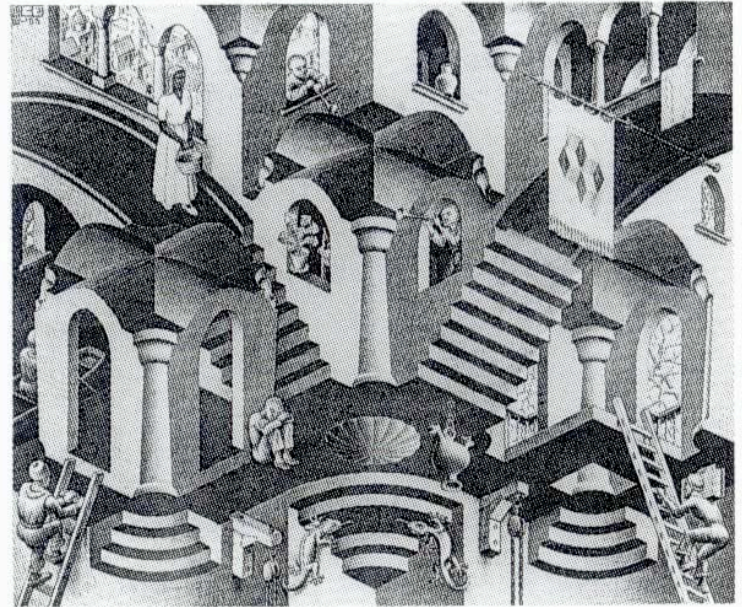








- 
- We have spent some time looking at ambiguous figure-ground relations.
  - But there are many forms of ambiguity.
    - concave-convex ambiguity.
    - Some sections are concave and others are convex.

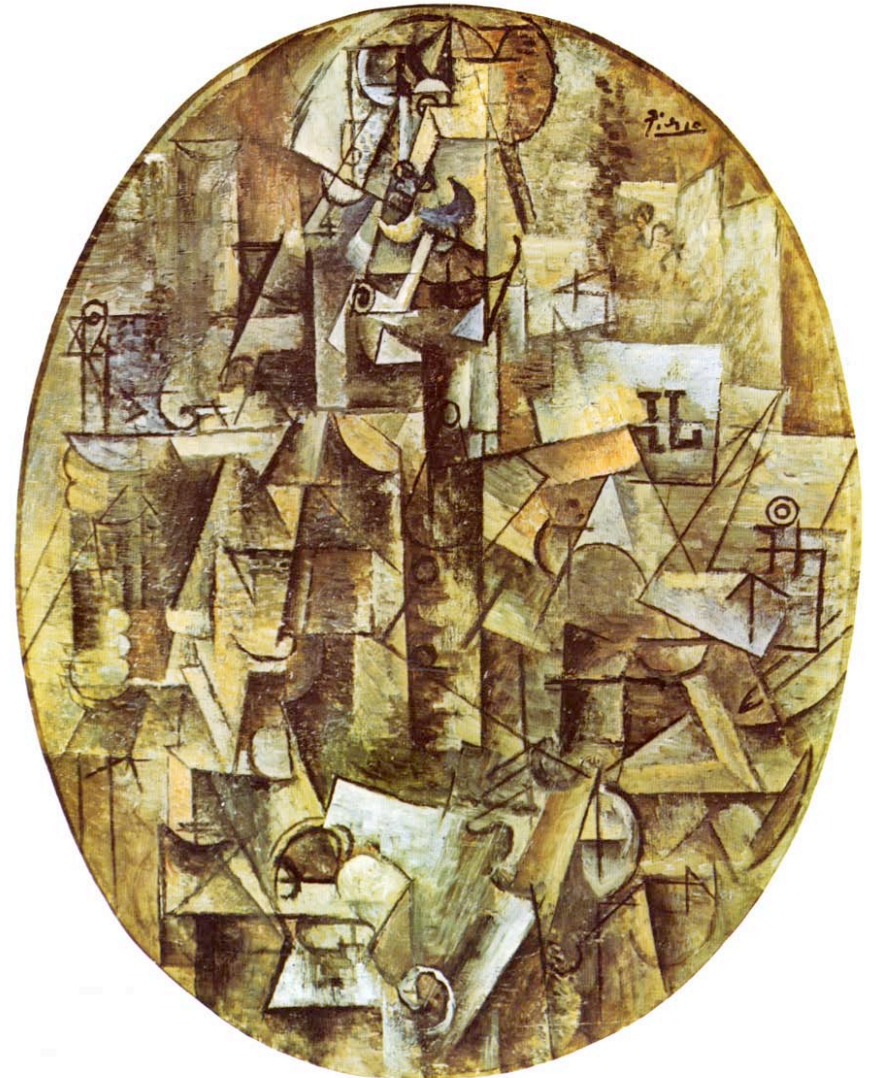


- 
- Ambiguity is a powerful type of relation, because the image lacks a single interpretation.

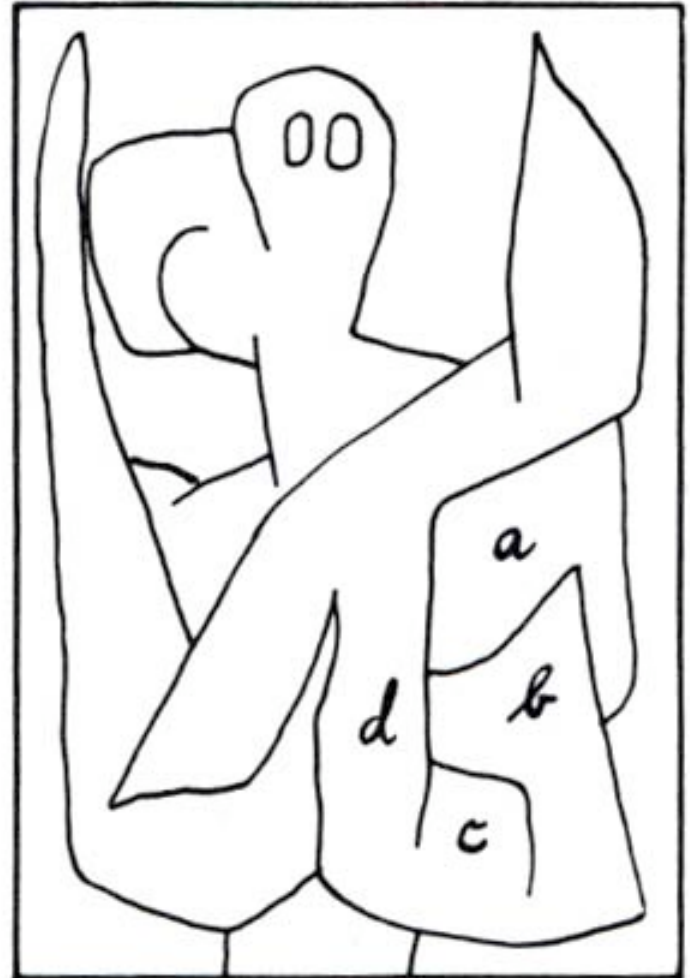
## Overlapping figures

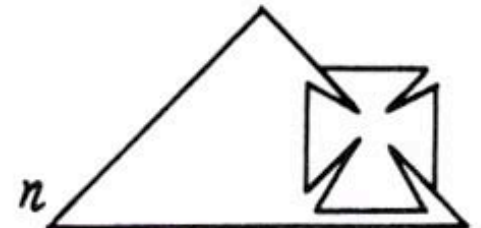
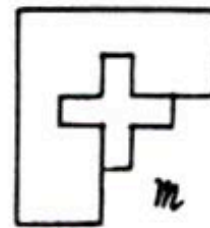
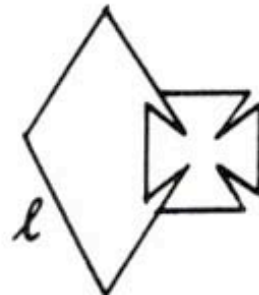
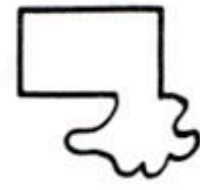
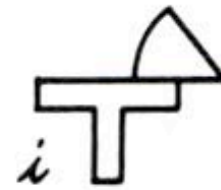
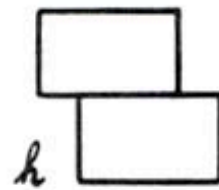
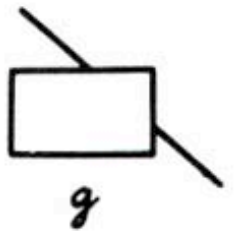
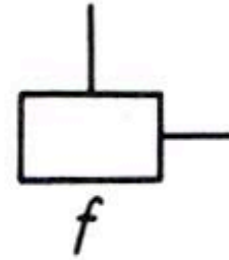
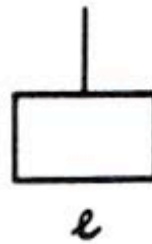
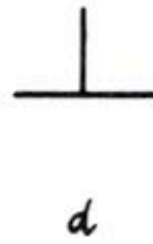
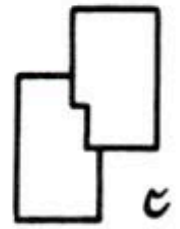
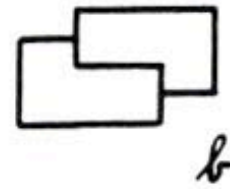
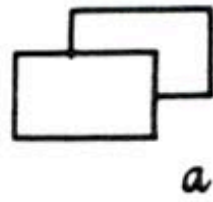
---

- Two figures overlap if one hides all or part of another.
- The human eye tends to perceive the world in terms of depth: We interpret ambiguous images in terms of depth relations.

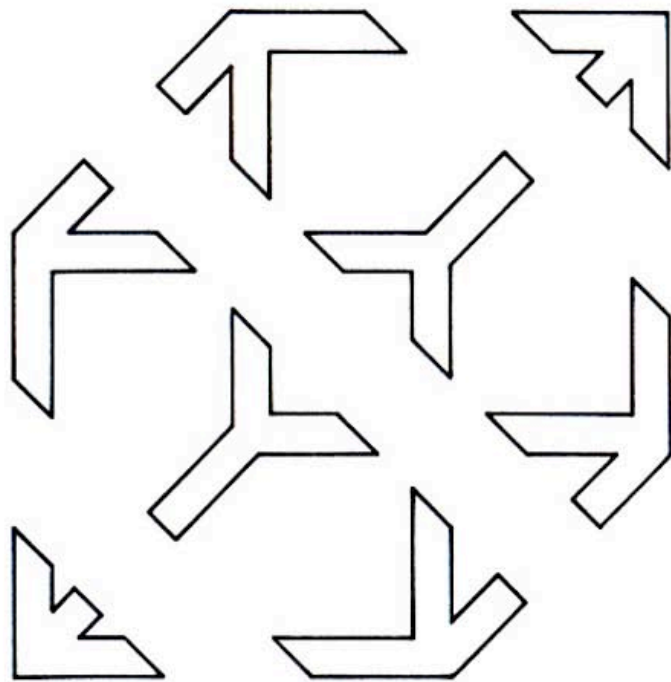


- 
- Ambiguous overlap can generate visual conflict.
    - Different regions seem to be acting against each other.

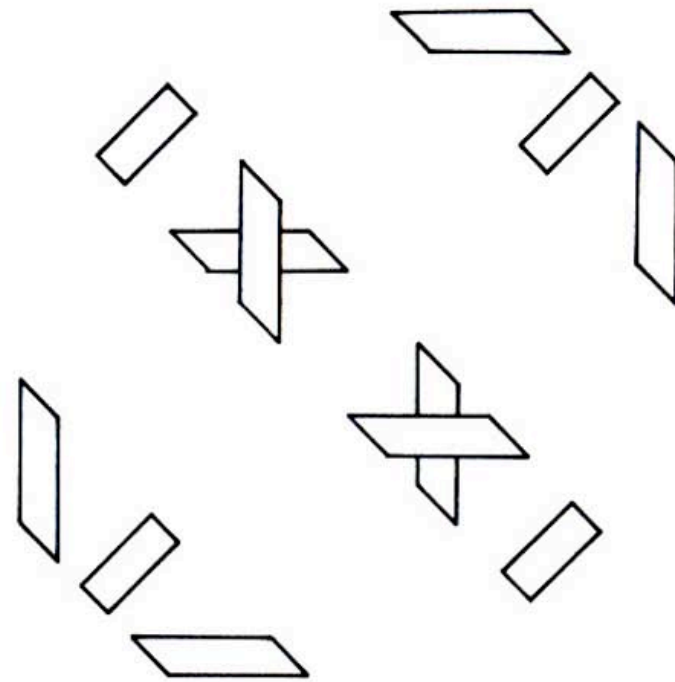




- 
- These lines form a cube, but the cube is not clearly visible.

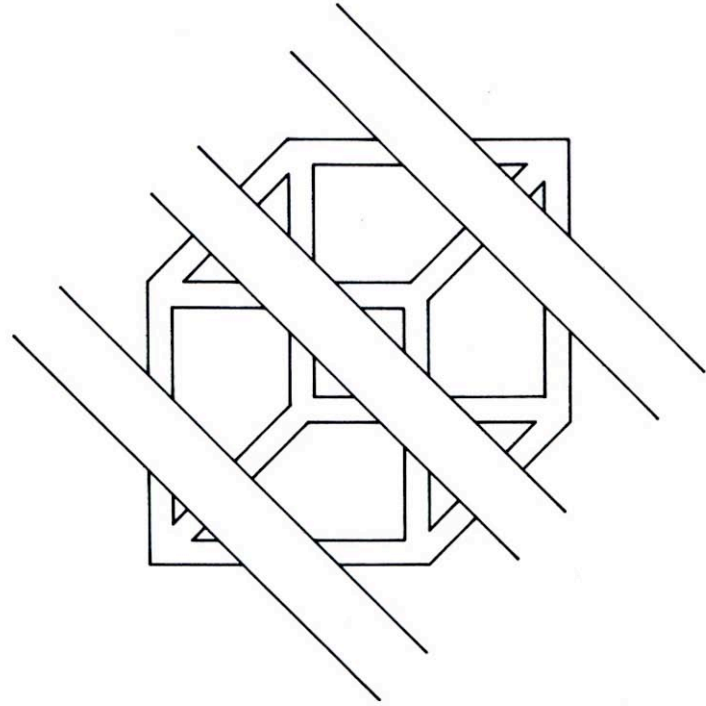


**Figure 1.1a** Seeing and thinking are clearly distinguishable activities. With these “pieces” we can *imagine* a cube, but it is very difficult to see it.



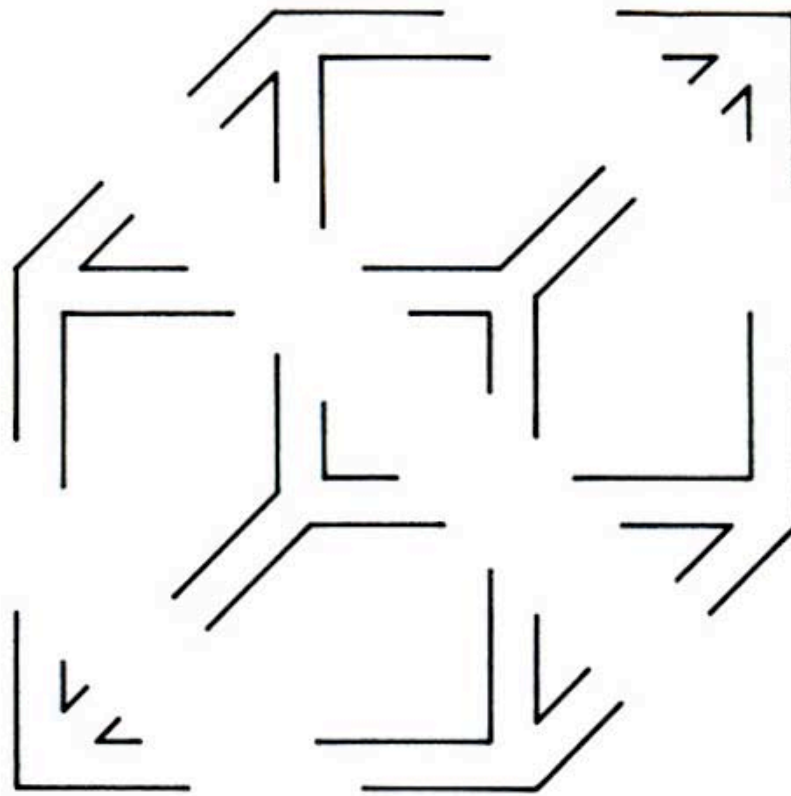
**Figure 1.1b** These also are fragments of a cube that is actually invisible.

- 
- When stripes are added, however, the cube becomes visible:
    - The cube now has a stronger **visual presence**. It is easier to see.



**Figure 1.2b** The cube is amodally completed behind the three opaque stripes and becomes perceptually *present*.





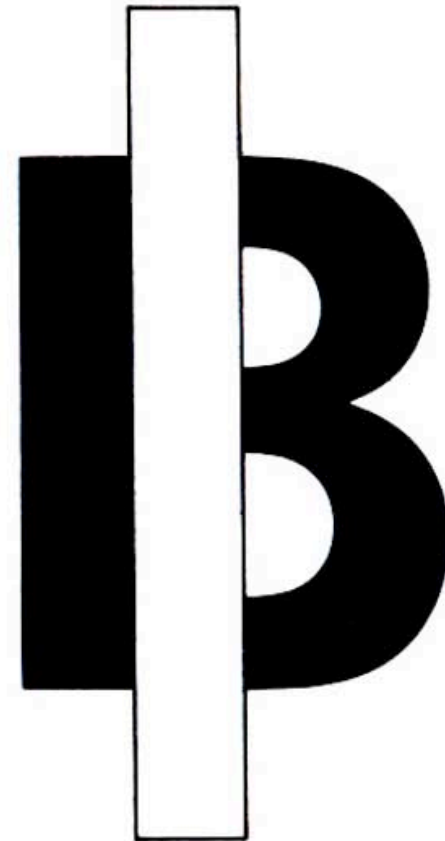
**Figure 1.13** The *subtraction* of some parts from the patterns of Figure 1.1a makes them “incomplete”; that is, forces are released that allow the completion of the patterns. Now the cube has perceptual *presence*.

## Overlapping can reduce ambiguity

---

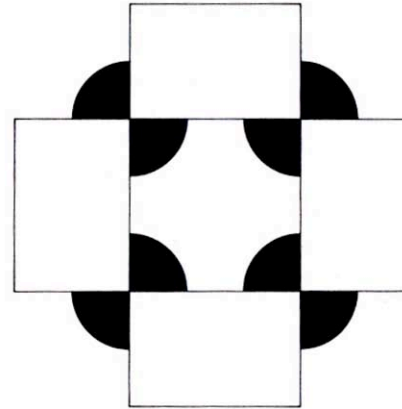


**Figure 1.6a** A configuration that can be read either as the numeral 13 or as the character B (Bruner and Minturn 1955).

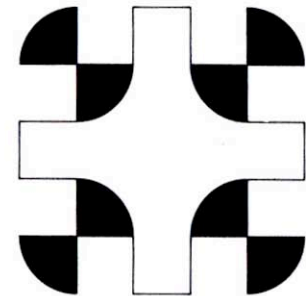


**Figure 1.6b** When amodal completion occurs, the outcome is more unambiguous: a partially covered B.

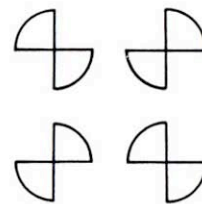
- Compare the following two figures:
  - The black sections are the same in both...
  - And yet we perceive them differently.



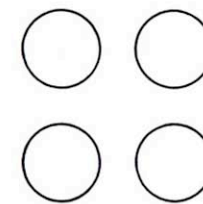
**Figure 1.3a** Four black disks partially hidden by rectangles (see Figure 1.3d).



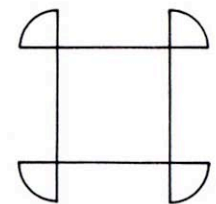
**Figure 1.3b** A black square partially hidden by a cross (see Figures 1.3c and 1.3e).



**Figure 1.3c**

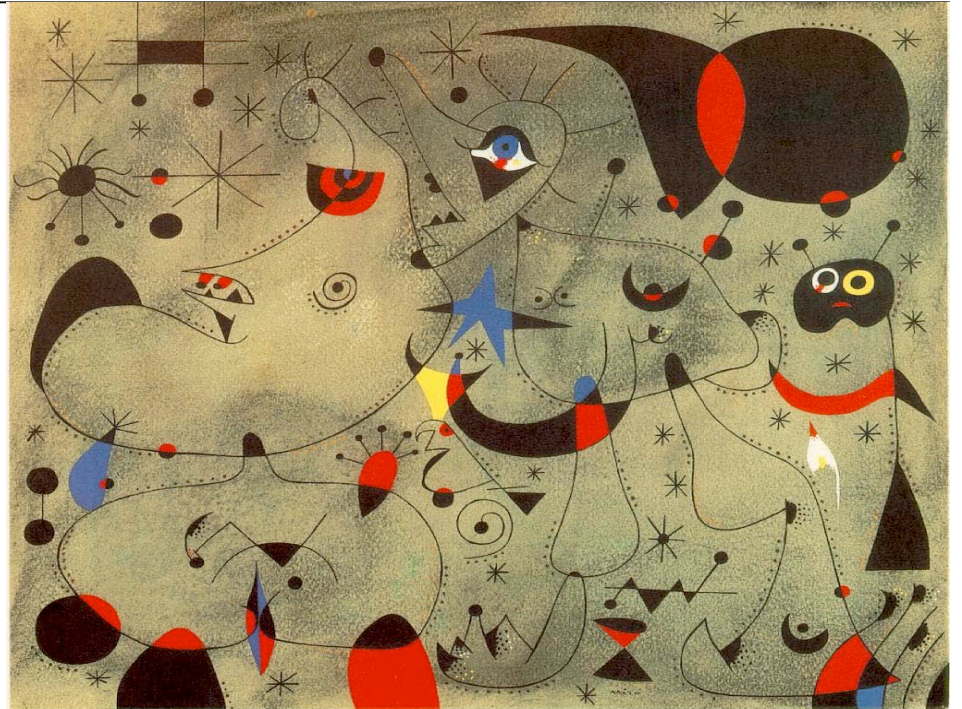


**Figure 1.3d**

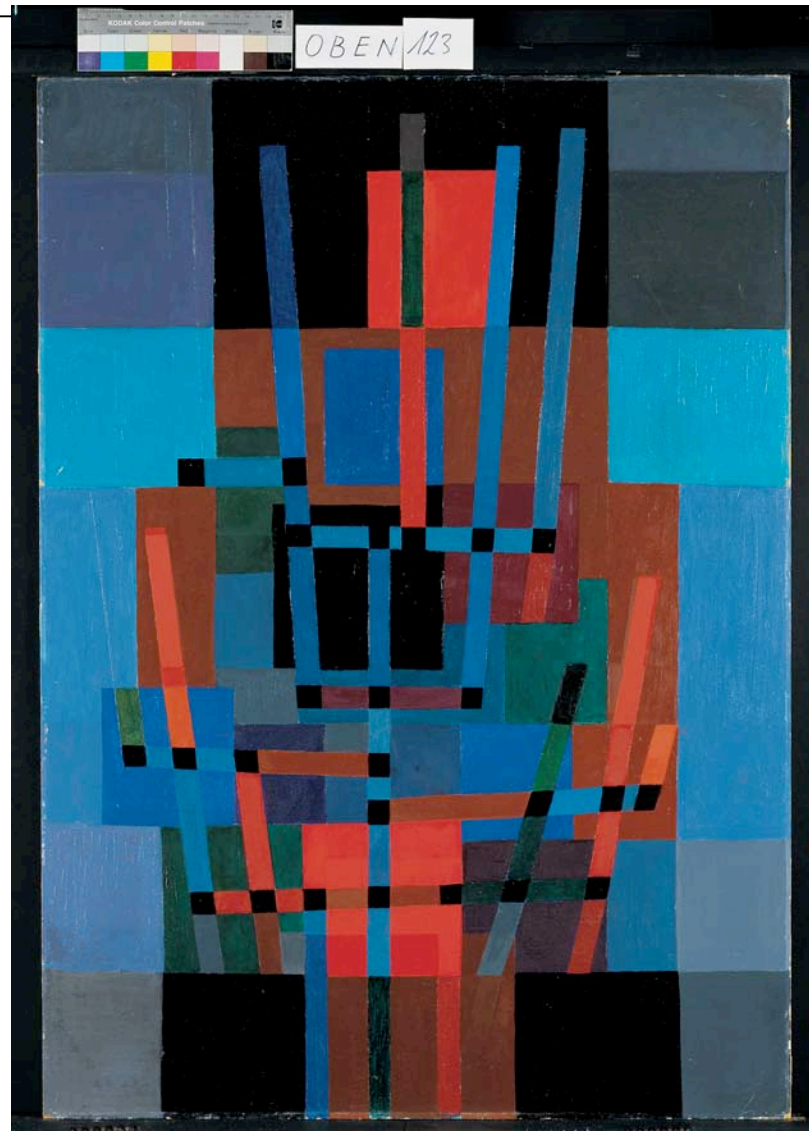


**Figure 1.3e**

- 
- The painter Joan Miro was a master in the creative use of overlap:
  - Notice what happens when figures overlap in his paintings.



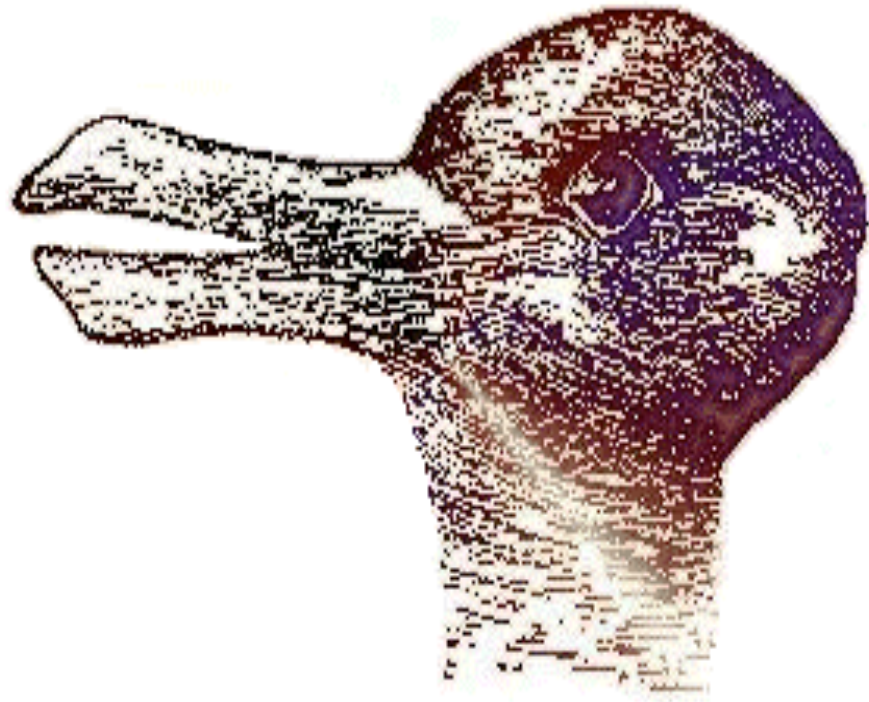




## Gestalt switching

---

- There is another kind of ambiguity, known as “gestalt switching”.
- In this case, we can see two figures, but not at the same time.
- We must switch from one “pattern” (gestalt”) to another pattern.
- We can switch voluntarily (we can control when and whether we switch).









- 
- A woman's face or a man playing the saxophone?

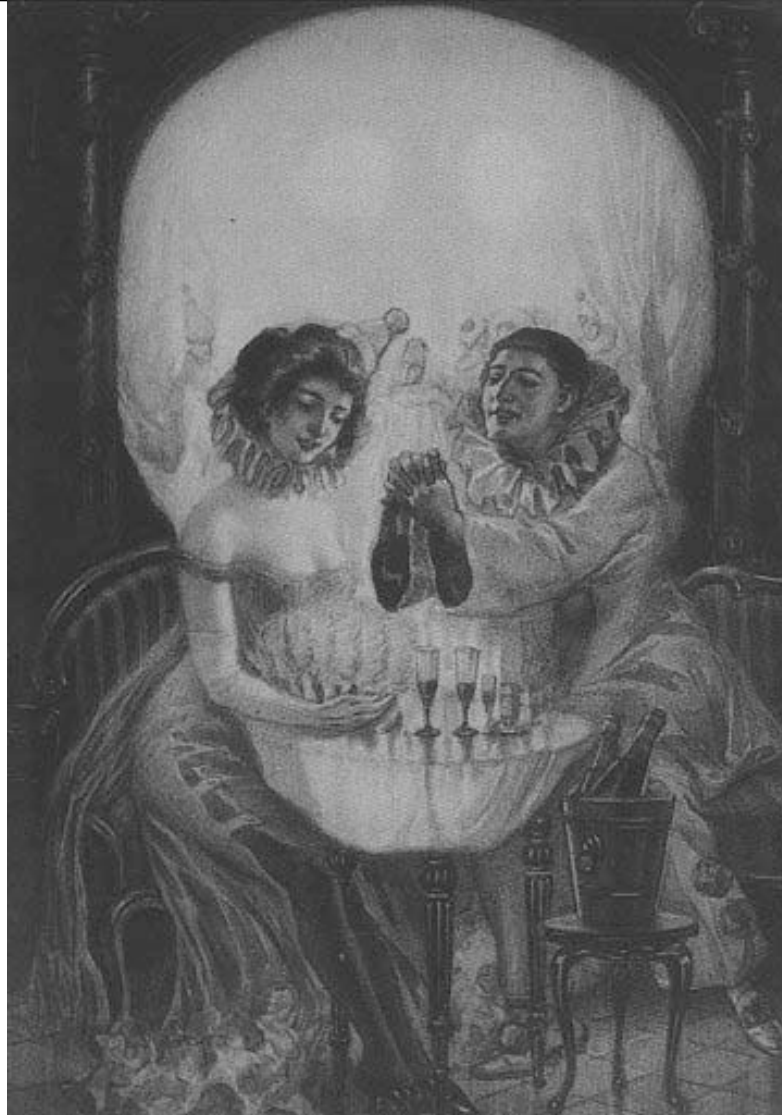


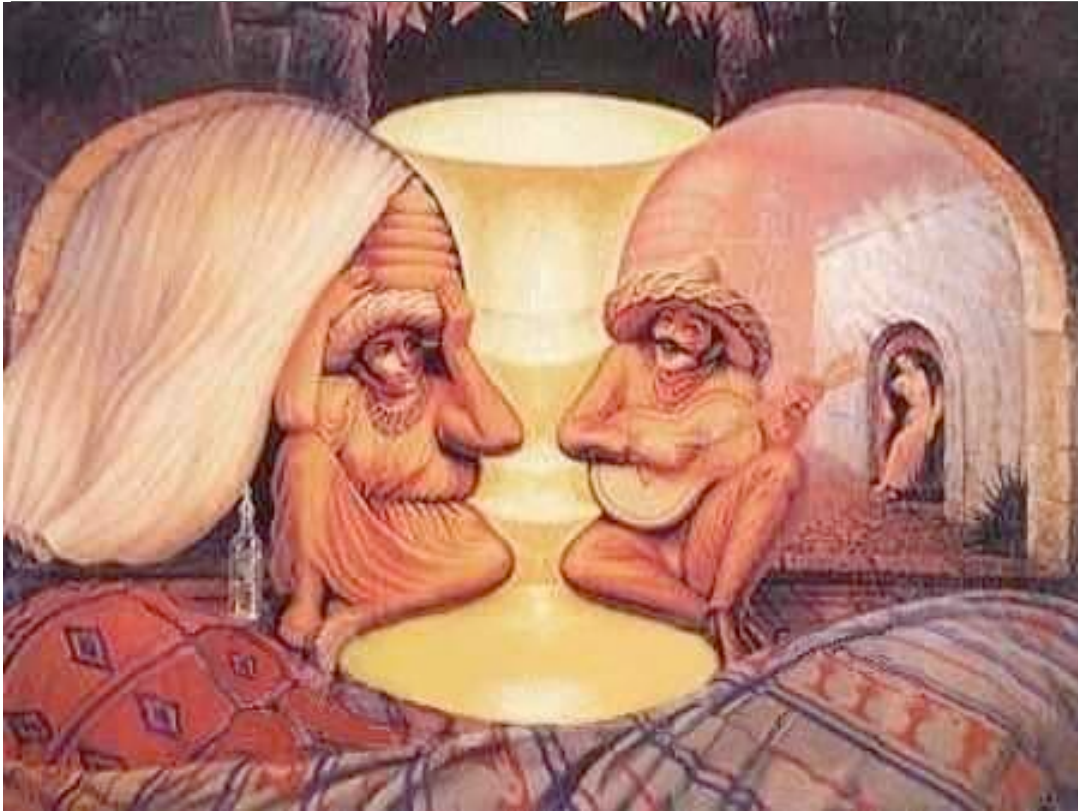
---

This effect depends on the existence of double figures:

- The same lines form the contours (outlines) of two different figures.
- The two figures are incompatible with one another: we can either see one or the other.
- This is why we must switch.







Dali

