

Introduction-Pattern & Rhythm

- Artists use **pattern and rhythm** to bring order to space, add visual interest, create area of focus, add cultural/historical references and signal a time element
- Patterns are created by the recurrence of an art element
- In a work of art, the repetition of such patterns gives a sense of unity
- Rhythm arises through the repetition of pattern amongst any visual element-fabrics, gestures, colors, shapes, etc.
- The rhythm of a series of linked elements guides the movement of our eyes across and through a design

Pattern

The use of repetition in a work of art usually results in the creation of a pattern

Artists often create unity in works of art by repeatedly using a similar shape, value, or color, for example

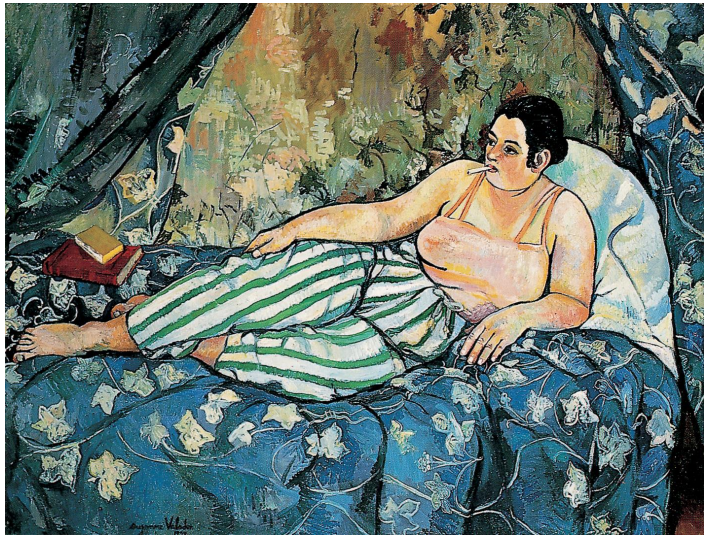
An artist can use repetition of a pattern to impose order on a work

Artists use alternating patterns to make a work more lively

The area covered by pattern is called the **field**

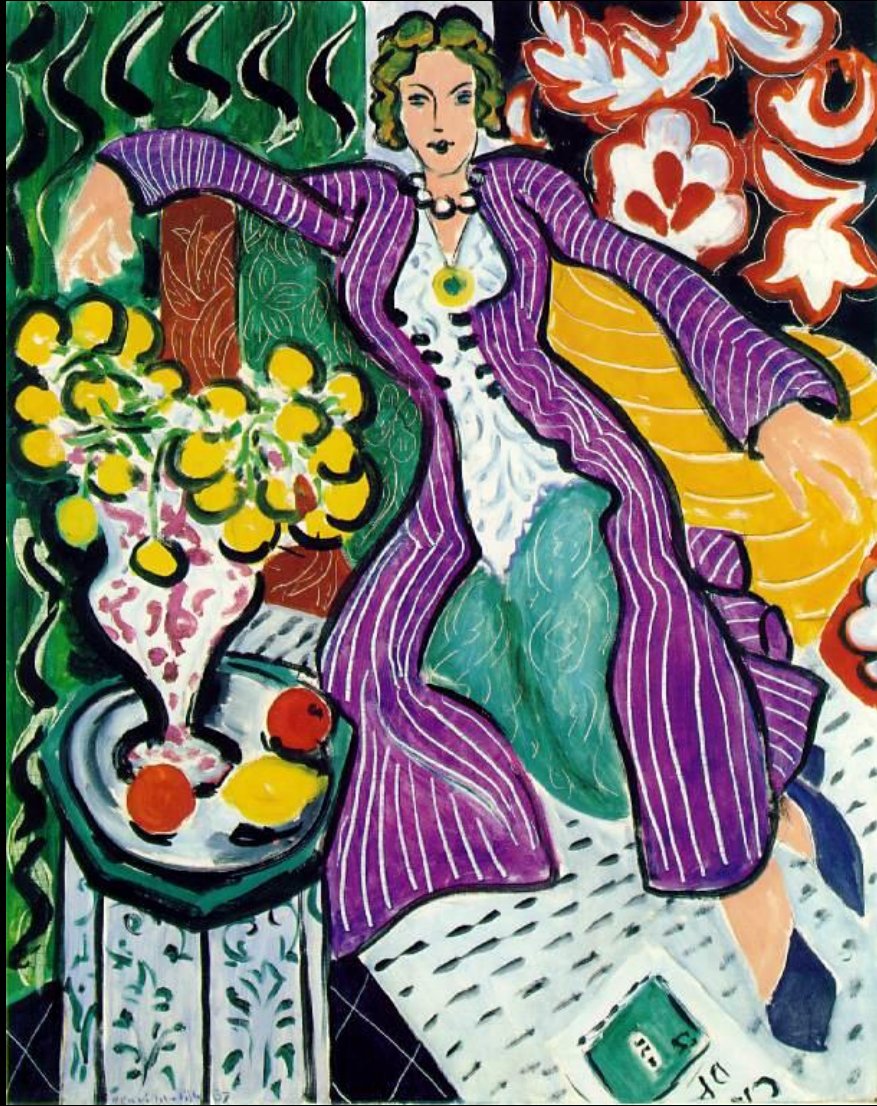


Suzanne Valadon, *The Blue Room*, 1923. Oil on canvas, 35½ x 45⅝". Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France



Suzanne Valadon, *The Blue Room*

- **Includes three contrasting patterns**
 - ◆ **The blue bed covering**
 - ◆ **The pattern in the woman's pajama bottoms**
 - ◆ **Above the figure is a mottled pattern**
- **The differences in these patterns energize the work**
- **Pattern influences much of Matisse's work whose work is similar**



Henri Matisse The Robe 1937



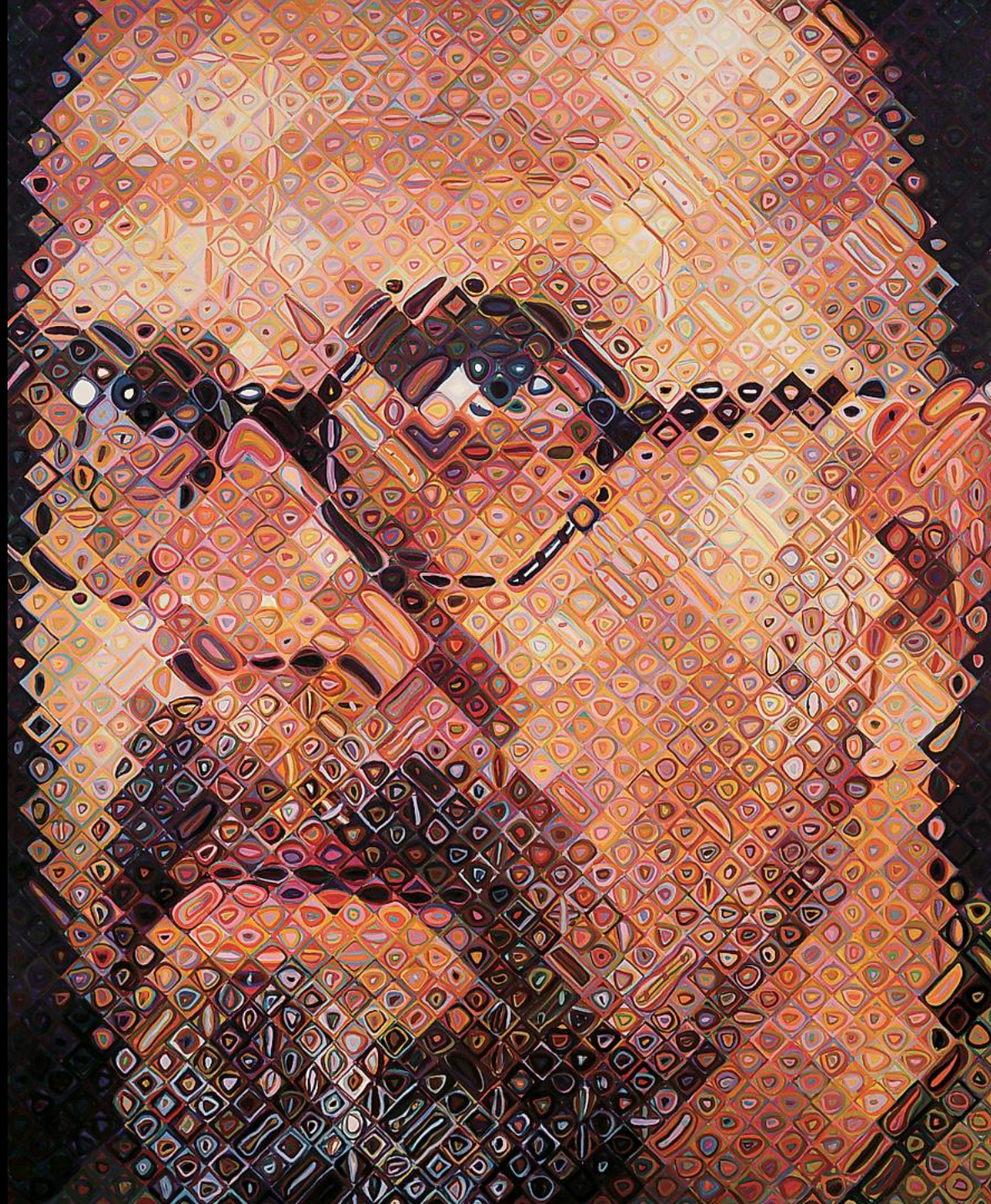
*Edouard Vuillard 1893
The Suitor*

Motif

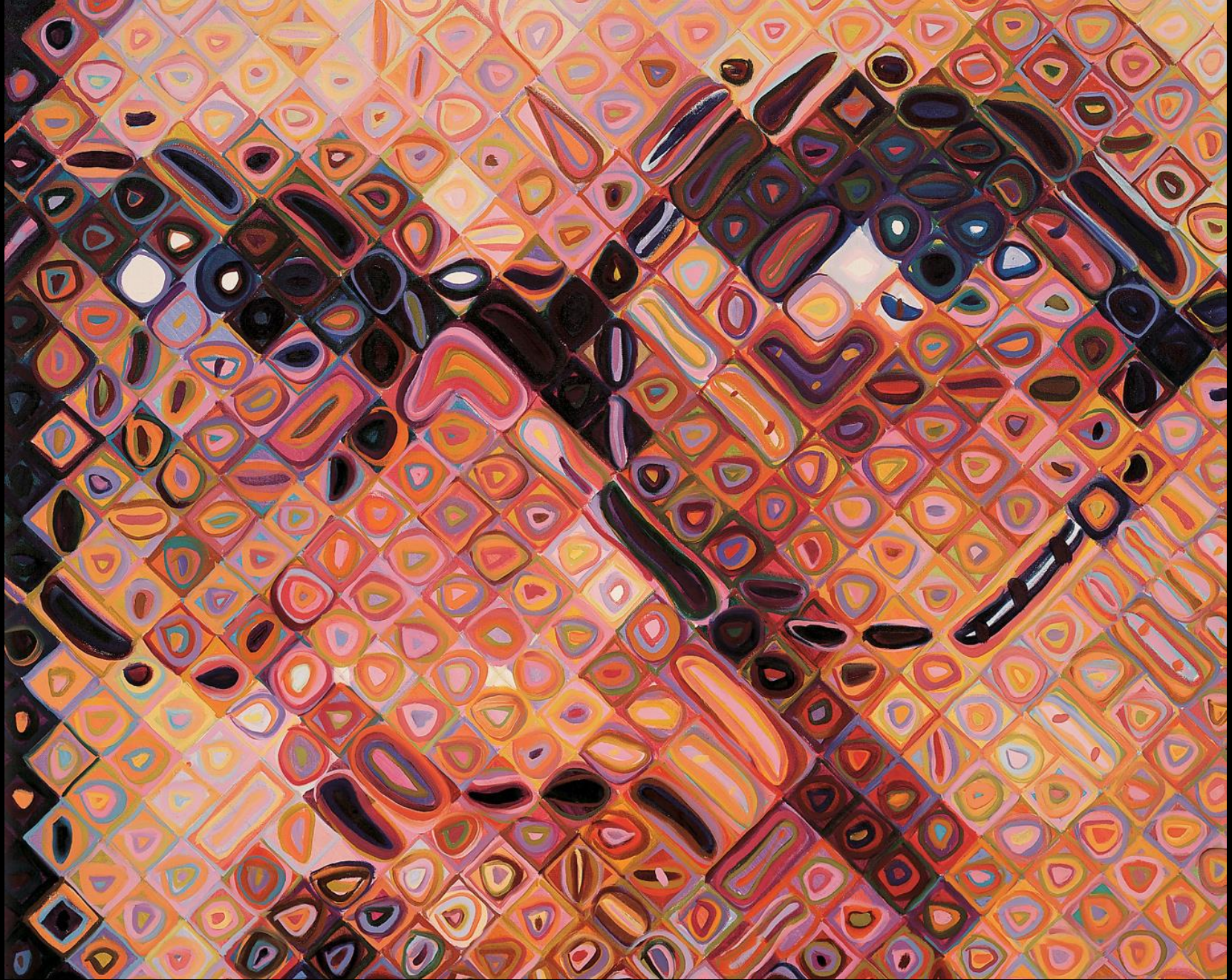
- **A design repeated as a unit in a pattern is called a motif**
- **Motifs can represent ideas, images, and themes that can be brought together through the use of pattern**
- **An artist can create a strong unified design by repeating a motif**

Targets
Vintage quilt piece
1950's
Unknown artist
The motif is the
square with the
target in it. As it is
repeated, it creates
a field.





Chuck Close,
Self Portrait, 1997. Oil
on canvas, 8'6" x 7'.
MOMA, New York



1.153c Chuck Close, *Self Portrait*, detail



Chuck Close, *Self Portrait*

Uses motif to unify his paintings

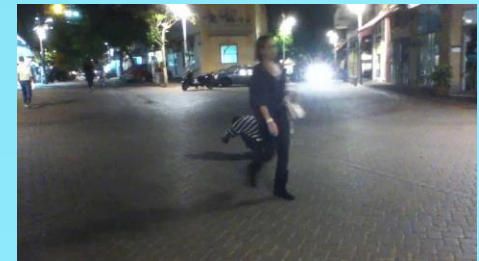
Uses a repeated pattern of organic concentric rings set into a diamond shape as the basic building blocks for his large compositions

The motif that Close uses is the result of a working with grids and photographs

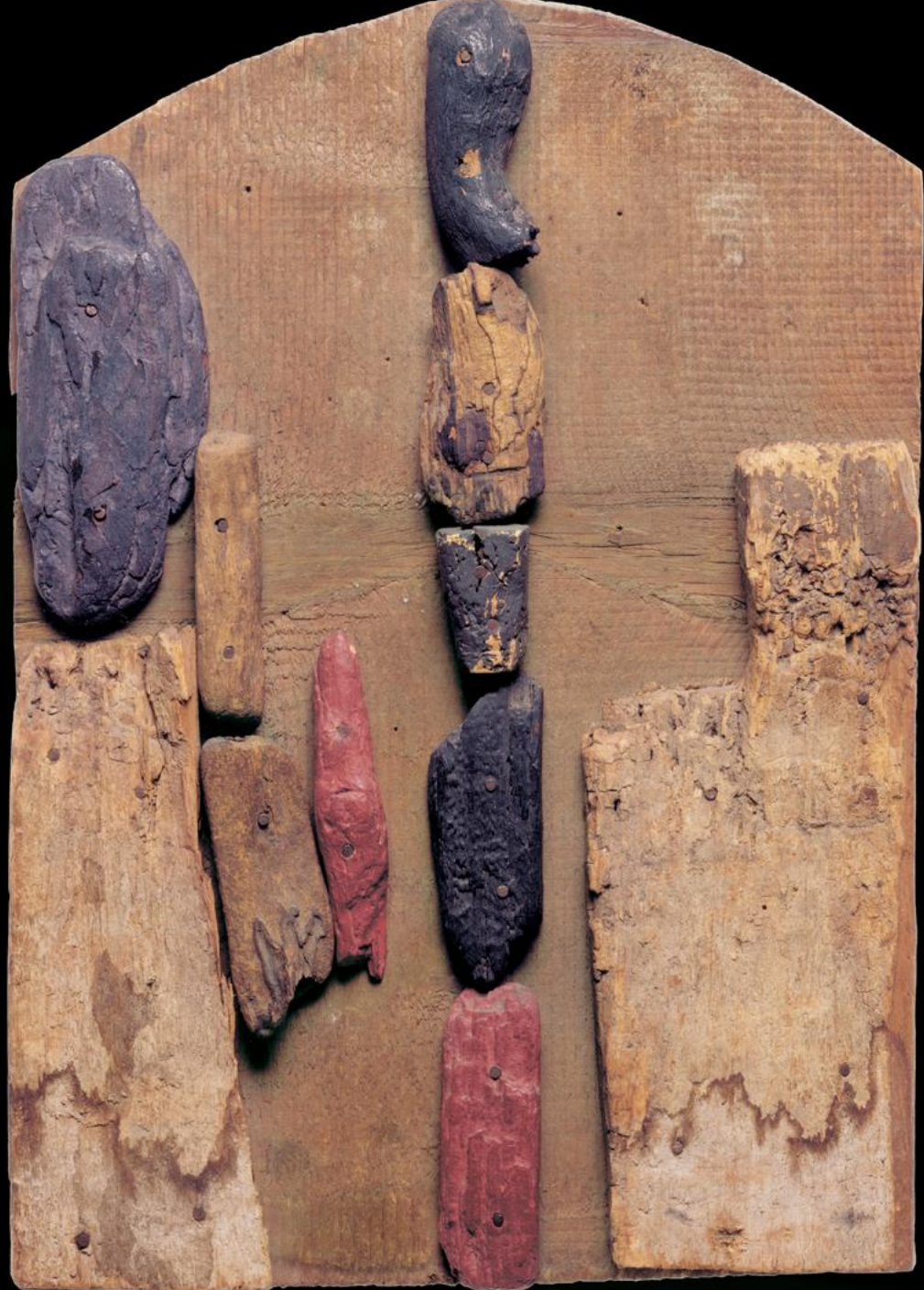
PROSOPAGNOSIA

R a N d o m n e S S

- The introduction of chance symbolizes-anti-order
- Artists who introduce randomness to a work try to avoid predictable repetition, symmetry, any mathematical construct like the Golden Triangle
- Works purposely contradict traditional methods
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Quej7ZXNp1k>
- Performance
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WK2c0A5CDvk>
- Random street art performance



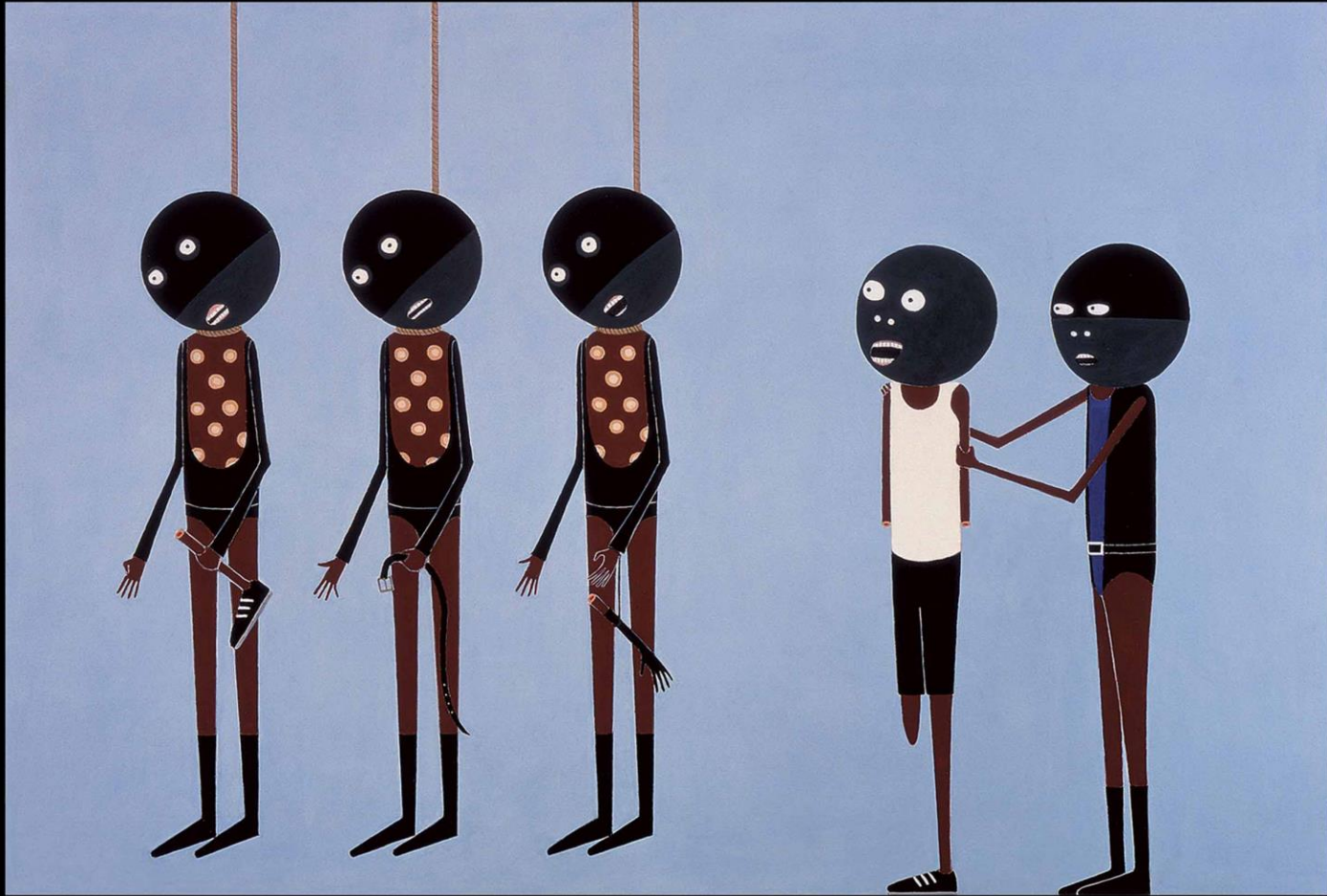
- Dada reveled in absurdity, irrationality, the flamboyantly bizarre, and the shocking
- Arp worked on creating “chance” arrangements



Hans Arp, *Trousse d'un Da*, 1920–21.
Assemblage of driftwood nailed onto wood
with painting remains, 15 x 10½ x 1¾". □
Paris, France

Rhythm

- **Rhythm gives structure to the experience of looking, just as it guides our eyes from one point to another in a work of art**
- **There is rhythm when there are at least two points of reference in an artwork**
- **The intervals between elements provide points of reference for more complex rhythms**



Laylah Ali. *Untitled*. 2000.

13 x 19 in. Gouache

Ali often achieves a high level of emotional tension in her work as a result of juxtaposing brightly colored scenes with dark, often violent subject matter that speaks of political resistance, social relationships, and betrayal.

Progressive and Alternating Rhythm

- **Repetition that regularly increases or decreases in frequency creates a progressive rhythm as the eye moves faster or slower across the surface of the work**
- **Artists can intertwine multiple rhythms until they become quite complex**
- **Alternation of rhythms can add unpredictability and visual excitement**



Bai-ra-Irrai, originally built c. 1700 and periodically restored, Airai village, Airai State, Republic of Palau



1.158 slide 2: Detail of Bai-ra-Irrai



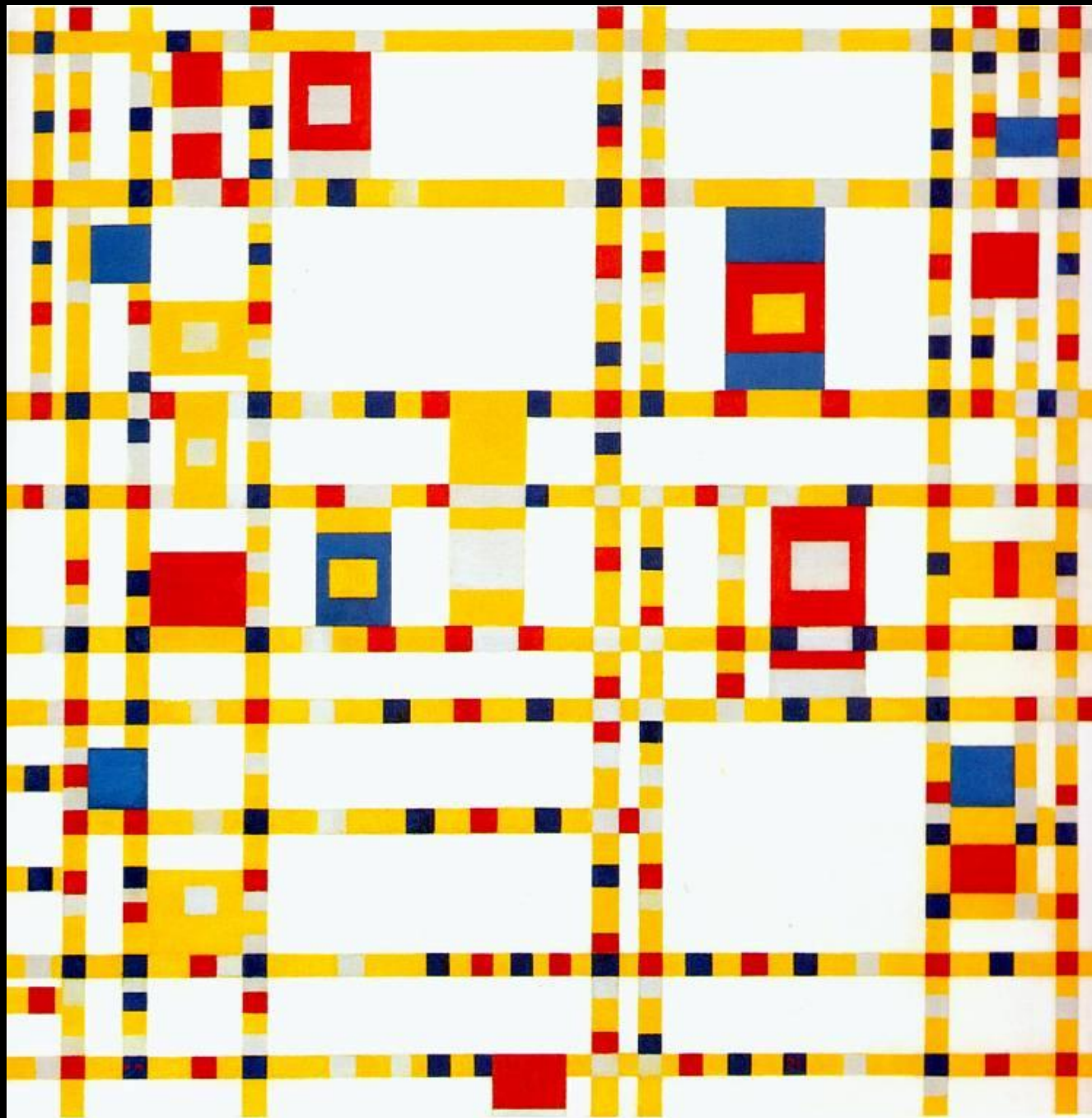
Bai-ra-Irrai

The imagery above the entry of this bai begins, at the bottom, with the regular rhythms of horizontal lines of fish, but the images above become increasingly irregular as they change to other kinds of shapes

Rhythmic Design Structure

- How artists divide visual space into different sections to achieve different kinds of effect
- Lauren Vioers, *Transparency*
- 2007





Piet Mondrian

1942-43

Broadway Boogie Woogie

Abandoned the representational in art
“...destruction of natural appearance and construction through continuous opposition of pure means-dynamic rhythm”

Rhythm, Music (jazz)
irreverent and improvisational,
echoing NY city streets.
Use of purest, simplest shapes, and primary colors

Conclusion

- In works of art, good composition articulates patterns and rhythms in a way that grabs our attention
- Because the visual rhythm of pattern is predictable, it tends to unify a work of art
- Some artists try to contradict pattern by imposing randomness and chance to free a work from what they see as suffocating orderliness
- Irregular rhythm can make a work seem unpredictable or make us feel uneasy