

WLC 2016: World LUMEN Congress. Logos Universality Mentality Education Novelty 2016 |  
LUMEN 15th Anniversary Edition

## The Diversity of the Visual Form

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### Abstract

<http://dx.doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2016.09.39>

Our life is an educational *continuum*, Today we live at a time ruled by the visual, with images which embrace, subdue and absorb us. Visual artistic creation is correlated with the natural-geographic and biological context as well as with the historical, social, political, religious and cultural ones. This context echoes the incidence of the environment over the artist. Filtered through the artists' own personality, the visual forms through which the artists express themselves result from this incidence; each image makes its way among a cluster of virtual possibilities. This path, of the accomplishment of the forms that define a specific style, can be found in successive, intuitive and/or deliberate explorations, in a theoretical and practical sense; alternatively, it can appear as a derivative of a pre-established time-and-space-bound concept. Most of the time these two possibilities intertwine in the artist's option, (un)conditioned by circumstances, for a canon, current, fashion or style. Therefore, artistic forms also imply a comprehensive view, which can expand the analysis from the independent, abstract mode, of the structuring of the form itself, to the minimal interaction with other fields of human life and knowledge. The *Continuum* modular ensemble, including double-sided personal paintings, discloses, in a creative manner, both existing and potential aspects of the diversity of visual artistic form.

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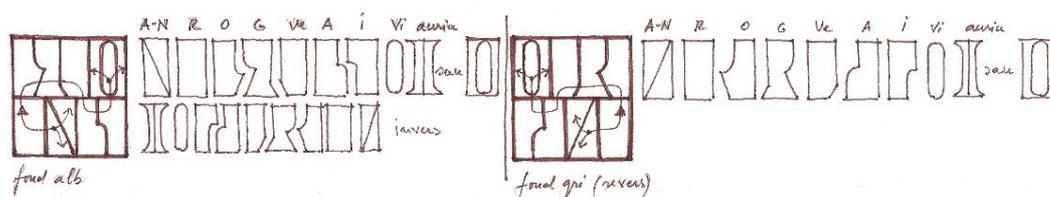
**Keywords:** Educational *continuum*; image; interaction; context; visual artistic creation; modular paintings.

## 1. Introduction

As an important presence in concrete and imagined realities, visual forms deserve a more extended and deeper attention.

Located as we are between the microcosm and the macrocosm, in the visible surrounding world, we constantly wonder about *the beginning, diversity and transformation* of form, which, from the microscopic to the macroscopic, on each of the three levels mentioned, joins the two; this resembles an orchestra in which each level has a double status, that of *conductor* and of *interpreter*, who can come out as a *soloist*. Therefore, *the beginning of form* includes, in the seed, *its diversity and transformation*; *the diversity of the form* implies a beginning and initiates *the transformation*; and *the transformation of the form* comes as *a result of diversifying a beginning*. However, all these stages can also be seen separately. Visually, in fact and through their quintessence, they can be expressed either in harmony and in disharmony. When dealing with the ecology of the visible, the forms that we propose or create seem to feel that they have to assume a role of *sanogenesis*, therapy through art. Once launched in public, the created forms acquire independent power; their relation to the viewers becomes creative in itself, through the reactions they entice. In our time, in its moments of crisis and tension, human nature might feel a stronger necessity, not to reverse visually only a dissipative result of some painful emotions (with their psychological chain effects), but to try to counteract the tendencies to violence and dislike by inducing a balance by means of plastic, stress-free, harmonious forms. Thus, as the design of some configurations that also determine conceptual recoveries, the non-invasive visual symbols can produce a state of spiritual elevation through their methods of artistic constitution.

This paper is based on its author's own concept and artwork. Research conducted on a selection from an extensive body of work resulted in a synthesis and several inferences shaped into a personal visual artistic proposal: a modular *Continuum* of double-sided paintings (Figure 1). This personal concept and visual-art ensemble present creative compositional paths both for artists and receivers; in this interaction, the latter can become creators, through their thoughts, attitudes and actions.



**Fig.1.** Project of modular painting, double-faced, CONTINUUM. (Fronts, backs and compositions of the panels in the CONTINUUM -Shadows and Lights ensemble)

## 2. The diversity of visual form

### 1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this work is to entice a need for visual knowledge, with a view to avoid the destruction of form through violent actions and to stimulate rethinking, analytic decomposition and artistic re-composition based on harmonious premises. This allows the cooperation of methods and a balanced syncretism of the constituents involved. Therefore, original solutions, referencing fractals and

gesture extensions may appear widely; the incidence percentages of the ordering and random factors determine the resulting artistic and visual aspects.

### 1.2. Objectives

The objectives of the *Continuum* concept are the development of visual artistic creativity. The target groups are people without professional artistic experience whose awareness can be raised towards the diversity of visual artistic forms with reference to natural forms and to forms created by artists.

### 1.3. Methodologies and results

Enticing a taste for analysis and comparison of diverse visual forms can stimulate, at any age, receptive mental attitudes, of contemplation and research, in nature, life and art. Simultaneously or as a follow-up, creative actions are achievable both through initial ludic, free, entertaining approaches of playing with visual forms, as well as through induced and proposed problem settings of approaching and constituting groups of forms with certain meanings and also artistic solutions. The popularization of a set of activities from the author's own artistic creation, a set of works entitled *Continuum*, supports the plea for the aesthetically non-invasive *diversity of the visual form*.

In his *The origin of the form in art*, in an exploration beyond the youthful consideration of the artistic act gratuity, Herbert Read (Read 1971), states that art is an *ordering*, through the creation of form and beauty, and at the same time a *model* for the social conscience. Form is defined as a result of the entire creation process, from the idea that generated the artwork to the total number of language means that shape the work – color, line, volume etc.

Our life is an educational *continuum*, even if we are not always aware of this fact or accept its evidence and rigors. We live in a time ruled by the visual, in which images embrace, subdue and absorb us.

Visual artistic creation correlates with the natural geographic and biological context and with the historical, social, political, religious and cultural ones; this general context is echoed in the artwork as the incidence of the environment over the artist. The visual forms through which the artists express themselves are a result of the respective incidence, filtrated through the peculiarities of one's own personality; each artist seeks one's own path through a cluster of virtual possibilities.

The path of shaping the forms that ultimately define a style can be found, in the process of time, through successive, intuitive and/or deliberate explorations, in a theoretical and practical sense; alternatively, it can appear as a derivative of a concept, pre-established in a certain time and space, an ideational base that imposes certain regulations or rules of visualization (as in Ancient Egypt, for instance). Most of the time, the two alternatives intertwine and the artist opts, unconditioned or conditioned by circumstances, with varying degrees of subtlety, for a canon, current, fashion or style.

With references to *Postmodernism* (a cumulation of syncretic artistic manifestations, polarized internationally), my proposal of *Continuum* represents an ensemble of double-sided paintings. The bidimensional modules, conceived and painted on both sides, were reshaped compositionally (photos in Figure 3); they were based on the concept of open creativity suggested to the viewers. The latter can interact with the painted ensemble of modules and enlarge the range of compositional alternatives, both

bidimensionally and tridimensionally; this extends the diversity of artistic expression. The idea is inspired from the diversity of the visual form, natural and created by human beings, spontaneous and deliberate.



Fig. 2. (A-B) Ambiental square (Fronts 2A – Shadows; Backs 2B - Lights)



Fig. 3. Ambiental hypostases of modular painting, double-faced, CONTINUUM - Shadows and Lights. (Fronts, backs and compositions of the panels in the CONTINUUM - Shadows and Lights exhibition. The front the back of the eleven pieces ensemble = eight are correlated with the colors of the solar spectrum + white and black, the geometrical forms associated to them and the days of the week and of the Creation + Parousia. The varied display of the works gives new semantic interpretation to the new compositions. Source: Eurostat)

The *Continuum* presented in this paper is a double-faced compositional suggestion in itself. It has a pattern of forms and colours capable of generating other forms which, in their turn, can be assembled from these components. Almost modules, but still not identical as form, they allow for different assembling, in relation to one face or another, or with both of them at the same time. The result, that is the re-shaping, plane or space stylization, allows for natural and man-made forms. Structurally, the continuities and discontinuities of the composing forms can exist within the forms concurrently. The opening of a wing, the rhythm of a wave, the approximation of a human silhouette, a tree, a mountain, a butterfly, a cross form, a roof, a building, a boat, a book and other forms of images that could be obtained from the *Continuum* components show that the replacing of the direct, explicitly narrative representations, with an indirect, allusive representation highlights the symbol as a means for the life of ideas and stimulates of the perceptive and creative imagination. Thus, the symbolic configurations are not only those obtained from the concept's semantic inner structure towards the exteriorization to the receptors, but also in the other way around: from the results of the associating the elements available

towards the mental re-creation of certain connotations, induced to the author of the works as well as to the potential beholders-authors. This takes place exactly through the re-composition of plastic solutions of some already formed forms.

However, these new forms are not cut-outs or variants or associations of borrowed artistic visualizations, as they are personally conceived. The forms presented and recombined here remind one of the post-modernist taste for compositional experiments, used as ways of creativity which visualize and offer a semantic enrichment to some personal artistic suggestions. The idea of pictorial modules offers the possibility for a variety of assemblies and shifts in connotation. The generalizing and monumental, initially ludic *Continuum* is transformed into particular assemblies. Each of the latter reveals a much closer meaning, through the same plastic elements as in the basic format, of a different composition as compared to its primordial specific, visual and ideational semantics.

The Universe is reflected in us – in our physical and psychic structure, in our intrinsic order and disorder - and its creation, in the rhythms, symmetries, asymmetries and everything that pulsates, appears and transforms within each human being. Resonance logic is present everywhere in the visual forms of reality and in those which make up the artistic aspects in time and space.



4 A – *Shadows*

4 B - *Lights*

**Fig. 4.** (A-B) - „ENTITIES” (Compositional display options for the pieces in the Shadows and Lights hypostases)

The painting that includes organic and angular forms from the *Continuum* modular ensemble is made on wooden panels using geometrical and stylized shapes. These shapes can be recomposed into a square (Figure 2), in a *continuum* of a frieze or in other bi-dimensional and tri-dimensional, free and rhythmical associations (Figure 1, 2, 3 and 4). These suggest nature-created and human-made forms. The hypothesis can be applied, therefore, not only to painting, but also to sculpture and to the dynamic possibilities of the programmed movement of some parts (through turns and balance for instance). In this way, art and technicality merge into a visual performance in which borders between artistic expressions are blurred. The dimensions of the forms may also vary, from monumental – aesthetic to miniature – functional. The perception and artistic expression also uses the ludic state, irrespective of the age of the viewer who might act upon it. Every work or piece from the *Continuum* painted modular ensemble can be perceived both separately and in relation to the others. The sections or the painted modular works have symbols with different semantics. They recombine and bring in new symbolism and shape images suggestive of cosmic and earth aspects. The images convey the impression of

movement, continuity, of random and ordered situations, of rhythmic pulsation, of composition and decomposition in diverse elements, with visual resemblances and differences. The name of the *Continuum* concept used to entitle the personal ensemble of modular proposals and visual-artistic works previously presented was derived from the very possibility of endless ways of reception of given visual forms.

### 3. Conclusion

The fascination with the contemplation and shaping of form represents a perpetual challenge for a visual artist. The initial stage in the ideation process of a creative act always embeds the primary forms, the very forms from which the accomplishment of the artwork are gradually derived. The conceptual and technical step an author chooses to take can represent, for another author, a step in the development of their own different creative act.

Let us assume that we have some visual elements available. We can associate them in various manners. Those imaginary *mosaics*, formed by their correlation, give us, along with a compositional diversity, various overall images in which we find the same basic elements, displayed differently every time. The impulse impression that art is supreme freedom is however an illusion. In the privacy of its vast creative freedom, without subsidiary rigors or methods, without insistent study efforts or through from search to discovery and assimilation of some expressions which can serve as a further base in the differences in a personal sense, art cannot exist or impose itself as a rendering of an expressive perfection.

For an artist, not just one accomplishment or another is a *form* of expression, but each of them includes *forms*, which have contributed to the structuring of the overall forms. Any dot, stain, line, surface, void, full, has a form that fits into *the great form* through which things are perceived. The attentive viewers give themselves time to fathom these forms and find out that in this way they, the viewers, shape themselves culturally. In so doing they add to the knowledge around themselves, as they transmit what they have received and rediscover an increasing number of interpretations. Therefore, what has already been mentioned is restated and every time the form of rendering is enriched with new hypostases.

To conclude, artistic forms also imply a comprehensive view, which can expand the analysis from the independent, abstract mode of the structuring of form itself to the at least minimal interaction with other fields of human life and knowledge. Resonance logic is present everywhere in the visual forms of reality and in those which create the artistic aspects in time and space.

### Acknowledgment

Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 represent photos of artwork made by the author of this article: double-sided paintings and the modular ensemble *Continuum*, in different variants of bi-dimensional and tri-dimensional compositions.

### References

Read, H. (1971). *Originile formei în artă* [The origins of form in Art]. Bucharest: Univers Publishing House.