

## **Visual...Union**

### ***Visual Composition through Rugby Union;***

**by**

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

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The Master of Teaching (Honours) Degree

Faculty of Education

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The unit of work and visual text presented here are part of a collection exploring the compatible elements of Rugby Union and visual composition. The collection of various texts includes an introduction to the researcher, which is also included here. Furthermore, it defines the compatible elements of the two disciplines and explains how these elements can be used in a cross-discipline teaching technique. Qualitative research methodologies were employed to determine the effectiveness of this technique in a year seven Visual Art class. The unit of work taught during the study compared certain elements of visual composition to specific elements of a Rugby Union football game. Students participated in historical study, critical study and art-making as outlined in the Stage Four Syllabus for Visual Arts in New South Wales. Through the results of anonymous pre/post testing, it was determined that the students simultaneously learned about visual composition and Rugby Union. The results suggested that the combination of traditionally incompatible disciplines, in this case Rugby Union and Visual Art could be used as a successful teaching technique.

## A SELF PORTRAIT

self-por-trait (slfpôrtrt, -trt, -pr-) n.

*A pictorial or literary portrait of oneself, created by oneself.*

([www.dictionary.cgi-bin/dict.pl?term=self-portrait](http://www.dictionary.cgi-bin/dict.pl?term=self-portrait))

In a small suburban town in central Pennsylvania I began my educational journey through primary school. I was an excellent student but exhausted most of my energy in the swimming pool. I swam competitively through high school, although my peak performance took place in the eighth grade. Along with my endeavours in the pool, I developed a love for the visual arts. I achieved top marks in all subjects, and I became curious why some subjects seemed more important. I could never understand why high marks in English were more important than winning a basketball game. I certainly could not see why acing a math test was more important than my ceramics project. I concretely remember my father telling me "that's just the way it is". Well, as most adolescents in suburban America, I took the plunge into a pool of rebellion.

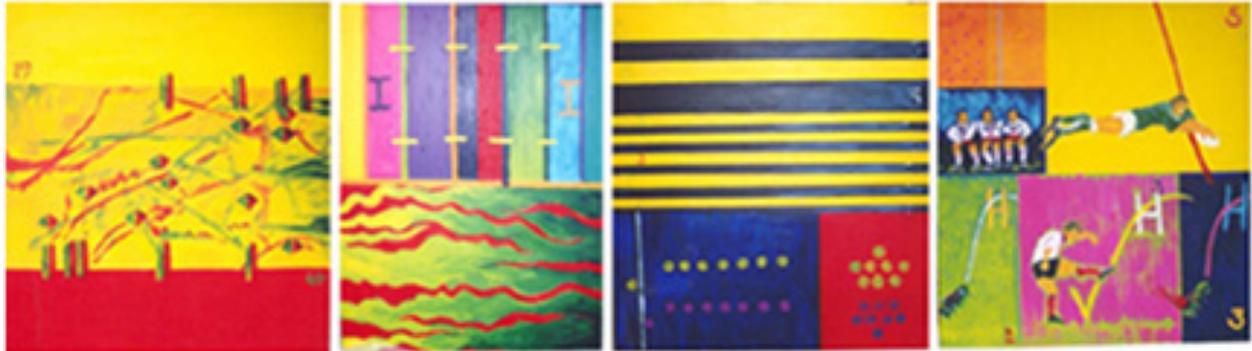
Through the abandonment of my 'gifted' academic aptitude, my educational rebellion took place. Although I continued to achieve high marks in all subjects, I focused my energies on visual arts. I completed the minimum academic requirements to attend University and majored in Art. I would like to say I concentrated heavily on my art, but my rebellious streak took another turn. This time it was in the form of football, Rugby Union to be precise. Here was a perfect opportunity to use my physical strength and endurance while enjoying all aspects of a team sport. I loved it. I became almost obsessed with the sport, and spent the last two years at University running from the art building to the footy pitch.

I graduated from Kutztown University, a state school in Pennsylvania, in May of 1996. I received a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Art. I graduated with honours and the Dean's award for outstanding graduate in my field of study. I also received a leadership award from my sorority and the Most Valuable Player award from the rugby team. Despite my achievements, I lacked a true career path. The drive to continue playing football kept me from avidly pursuing a career as an artist. I moved to Philadelphia to play, and found myself managing a coffee shop in the city. It was not long before I truly began to appreciate my academic intelligence. I was convinced it was being wasted on coffee beans. I decided that it was time to go back to school, this time to get a career.

The only thing I ever wanted to be, besides an artist and a footballer, was a teacher. I opposed pursuing art education in my undergraduate degree because I thought it was a cop-out. I naively thought that being a teacher meant you were not truly an artist. The reality is that running a coffee shop does not make you an artist either. How I ended up at the University of Sydney is a little vague. Let's just contribute it to my love of the beach in the summertime, a desire to travel and the desire to experience the best Rugby in the world ([www.rugby.com.au](http://www.rugby.com.au)). I convinced myself that living in a new culture would help me understand people in general. I believe that having a better understanding of people will make me a better teacher.

I have come to the understanding that to know other people you must first know yourself. I am now hopeful that the lessons I have learned will translate into the wisdom needed to teach another generation. I may not convince you that scoring a try is worth as much as top marks in English. However, I may be able to convince someone that a successful artwork is just as important as a football game. During my Special Study I used football themes to teach visual art. In doing so I hoped to show that both have equal worth. If I can teach one artist something about football I will have succeeded; and if I can teach one footballer something about art I will have made my point. The point is that by integrating subjects normally separated we can take a step towards understanding the world. We can help those apt to one discipline understand another, and in doing that we will better understand each other. This understanding may be what we need to guide this generation, and future generations, into the next millennium.

Thus the focus of this Special Study is the relationship between Rugby Union and Visual Art. In reporting my research this thesis adopts the following structure. The next chapter reviews multiple intelligence theory and outlines research questions. Chapter Two reviews qualitative inquiry and narrative analysis. The following chapter defines the elements of art and design, composition and balance. The fourth chapter gives a history of Rugby Union and an explanation of how the game is played. Chapter Five explains the relationship between the two disciplines and analyses the paintings, *Visual Union*. This is followed by an explanation of the unit of work, *Visual Composition through Rugby Union*. The results of the study are found in Chapter Seven and a final critique makes up the conclusion.



## **Visual Union**

*Olivetti, Dreon*

(2000)

acrylic on masonite

97 cm x 445 cm

## **Visual Composition Through Rugby Union**

**Term:**

**Course:** Year 7 Visual Arts (Stage 4)

**Class:**

**Teacher:** Olivetti

**Duration:** 5-7 hours

**Topics:** Visual Composition and Rugby Union

**Subject matter:** People/ Events

**Frames:** Structural/ Cultural/ Postmodern

**Forms:** Drawing/ Painting

**Resources:** paper, pencils, rubbers, crayons, paint, handouts, prints, rugby ball, cotton fabric

Acton, Mary. 1997. Learning to Look at Paintings. Routledge: NY

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Henning, Fritz. 1983. Concept and Composition. North Light Publishers: Cincinnati, Ohio.

Galerie 1900-2000. 1984. Retro Sport 1850-1940: Peintures-Sculptures-Dessins-Jeux-Objets et Figurines. Paris: Galerie 1900-2000.

Helden unserer Zeit. 1984. Fussballer, Kopfschmerzer oder Roboter?: ein Begleithoft zur Ausstellung/ Ausstellung und Katalog. Dusseldorf: Kunstmuseum Dusseldorf.

International Rugby Football Board. 1999. Laws of the Game, 1999 edition. Australian Sports Commission

Kent, Sarah. 1995. Composition. Harper Collins: Pymble, NSW

Loran, Erle. 1946. Cezanne's Composition: Analysis of His Form with Diagrams and Photographs of His Motifs. University of California:LA

Marks, R.J.P. 1994. Rugby Union National Coaching Scheme Level 1. Australian Rugby and the Australian Sports Commission.

Marks, R.J.P. with T.W. Burkett. 1998. Rugby Forward Play. Alken Press Pty. Ltd.: Smithfield

Marks, R.J.P. with T.W. Burkett. 1998. Rugby Backline Play. Alken Press Pty. Ltd.: Smithfield  
National Art Museum of Sport. 1990. Sport in Art; from American Museums. The Director's Choice. National Art Museum of Sport.

National Library of Australia. 1974. The National Library Engagement Calendar 1975: Sports and Pastimes in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Australia. National Library of Australia:Canberra.

Poore, Henry Rankin. 1967. Composition in Art. Sterling: NY.

Reyburn, Wallace. 1976. All About Rugby Football. W. H. Allen & Co.: London.

Toney, Anthony. 1966. Creative Painting and Drawing. Dover: NY

Van Pelt, John Vredenburgh. 1913. A Discussion of Composition as Applied to Art. MacMillan: Melbourne.

USA vs. Australia, Rugby World Cup 1999. Video. Fox Sports

**Rationale:** This program provides students with an innovative opportunity to experience visual arts through making and studying. Students study historical techniques used in creating a visual composition while exploring the structural and cultural characteristics of Rugby Union. They apply these techniques to drawing and painting exercises while developing a final artwork.

**Aims:** Students develop their conceptual, perceptual and evaluative skills as they apply structural elements to a cultural event. By applying a sporting theme to visual composition, students experience the interaction of the frames as they take a postmodern approach to the visual arts. They gain understanding of the diverse nature of the visual arts and the ways in which images are created, interpreted, valued and used by different societies and cultures.

**Outcomes:** Students enhance their understanding of how subject matter can represent a diverse number of interests in the world. They enjoy creating new meanings through their own artmaking. They gain the knowledge that artworks can be interpreted from different points of view as they participate in class discussions about artworks depicting Rugby Union. They will complete a subjective written critique on their own work in their VAPD. Through this writing and discussion students learn to value different ways an artwork can be understood.

**Content:** This program employs the cultural, structural, subjective and postmodern frames in artmaking, historical study and critical study. The program is structured over 7 periods, or 5-7 hours; and concentrates on people and events as they related to a Rugby Union.

**Proposed lesson schedule:**

Lesson 1- Intro to composition

Lesson 2- History of Rugby and Colour

Lesson 3- Balance...lineouts, scrums and kickoff

Extension Lesson

## Lesson 1- Intro to composition

Composition is the arrangement or composition of an artwork.

Artists use the elements of design to compose artworks.

Match the following terms with explanations.

\_\_\_ line a. masses of varying size, value and colour

\_\_\_ shape b. I can be warm or cool and effect mood

\_\_\_ space c. the amount of lightness and darkness

\_\_\_ direction d. the distance or depth between objects and shapes

\_\_\_ texture e. the smallness or largeness of an object or space

\_\_\_ size f. I describe the surface of an object

\_\_\_ colour g. I can be thick, thin, straight or curved and I often define

the edge of an object

\_\_\_ tone h. I lead the viewer's eye to the main area of an artwork

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Activity: Colour the photocopy of an artwork in the following way.

1. Use red to show where line is used in the artwork.
2. Use blue to show where texture is used.
3. Use yellow to show where tone is used.
4. Use orange to show where shape is used.
5. Use green to show the focal point.
6. Use purple to show where direction is shown.

## Lesson 2

### History of Rugby & Colour

Rugby Union was invented at the Rugby school in England in 1823.

While playing a game where the ball was run back to your side and kicked forward, William Webb Ellis picked up the ball and ran with it. From this innovation, two games were developed: a dribbling game and a handling game. The dribbling game was played at

schools with paving and stone playgrounds and the handling game was played at schools with large areas of grass to play on. The dribbling game became soccer and the handling game became rugby union. Originally, an unlimited number of players massed around the ball and wrestled their way across the opponents line for a touch down. After making a touch down, a team was awarded with the opportunity to kick a goal over a crossbar for which points were awarded. Today the game is played with 15 players on each side. The actual touchdown is called a try and is worth 5 points. The goal kicked after the try is worth 2 points. Goals can also be kicked from a penalty kick or a dropped goal and are worth 3 points.

Important terms:

Try

Goal

Penalty kick

Dropped goal

Activities:

Divide and colour the colour wheel.

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violet red

Cool Warm

blue orange

green yellow

Colour the diagram as follows.

Mark one dead ball line red. Mark the other the complement of

Mark one goal-line orange. Mark the other the complement of orange.

Mark one 22 metre line yellow. Mark the other the complement of yellow.

Mark one cross-bar purple. Mark the other the complement of purple.

Mark one sideline blue. Mark the other the complement of blue.

Mark one dead-ball line green. Mark the other the complement of green.

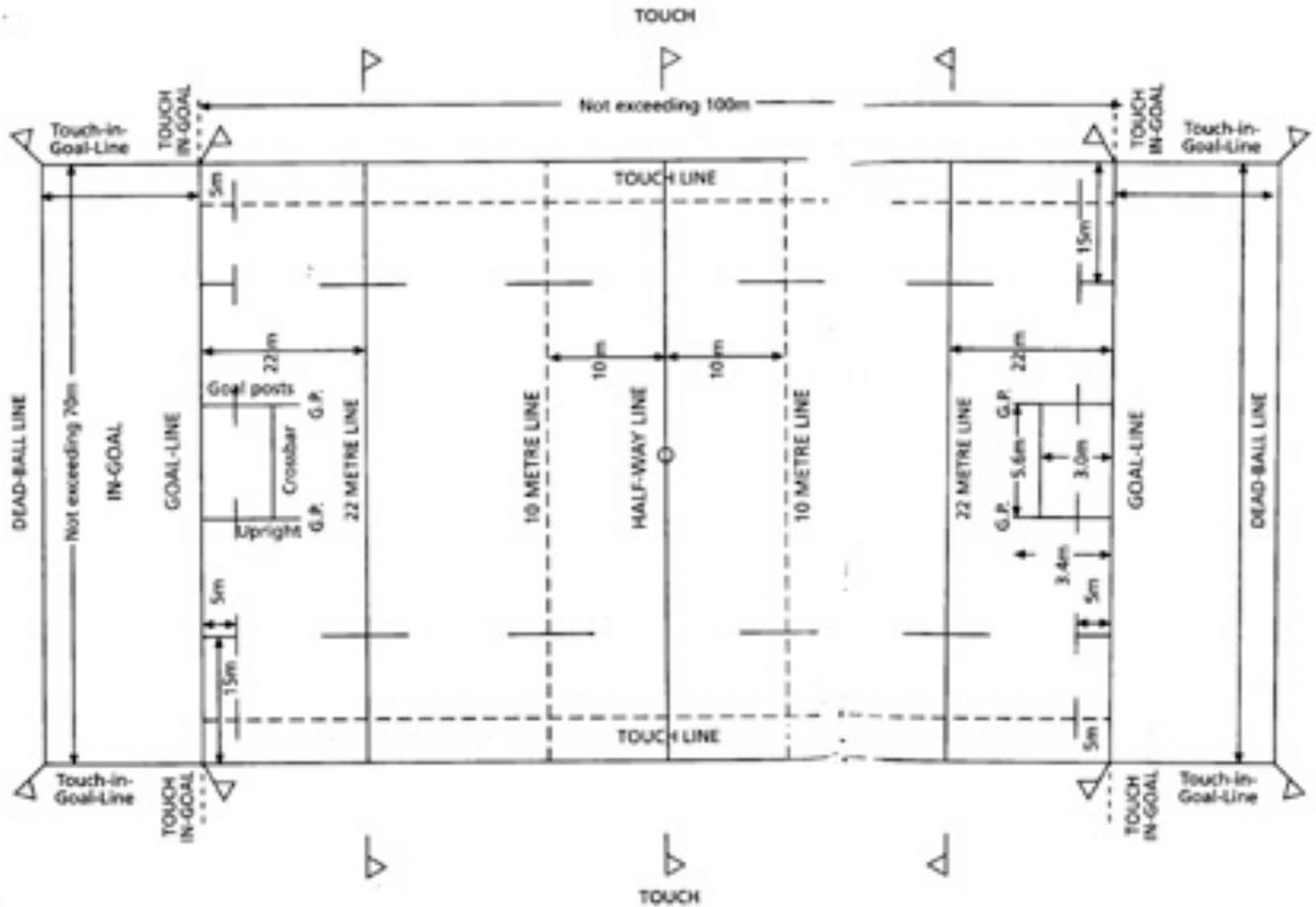
Colour one in-goal area a cool colour, and the other a warm colour.

Colour from the half-way line to the 10 metre line a primary colour.

Colour from the 10 metre line to the 22 metre line a secondary colour.

Extension:

Copy the lines you just coloured onto a large sheet of paper with paint.



(Australian Rugby 1999. Laws of the Game. International Rugby Board. Australian Sports Commission. p. 10-11)

### Lesson 3

#### Balance...lineouts, scrums & kick offs

Unity refers to a sense of 'oneness', a feeling of parts belonging, usually created by the balance of art elements. A unified artwork is one which has its elements skillfully organised into a harmonious whole.

Balance is achieved when the parts compensate each other so well that the result is equilibrium.

- *Glenis Israel, Artwise p. 192*

Match these important terms with their definitions.

\_\_\_ symmetry a. when the ball is thrown in from the sideline

between 2 rows of opposing players.

\_\_\_ asymmetry b. when the elements in an  
artwork are organised

into a harmonious whole.

\_\_\_ balance c. the team without the ball

\_\_\_ lineout d. when the 2 halves are different

\_\_\_ scrum e. the team that has the ball

\_\_\_ offense f. 8 players from each team bind together

in order to fight for possession of the ball

\_\_\_ defense g. when 1/2 of the picture mirrors the other 1/2

Are the following formations symmetrical or asymmetry?

Lineout \_\_\_\_\_ kick off \_\_\_\_\_

Scrum \_\_\_\_\_ front row \_\_\_\_\_

*Visual Composition through Rugby Union*

## REVIEW HOMEWORK

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### Matching.

\_\_\_ line a. masses of varying size, value and colour

\_\_\_ balance b. I can be warm or cool and effect mood

\_\_\_ space c. the amount of lightness and darkness

\_\_\_ asymmetry d. the distance or depth between objects and shapes

\_\_\_ texture e. the smallness or largeness of an object or space

\_\_\_ composition f. I describe the surface of an object

\_\_\_ elements g. I can be thick, thin, straight or curved and I often define  
of design the edge of an object

\_\_\_ focal point h. I lead the viewer's eye to the main area of an artwork

\_\_\_ colour i. Artists use these to compose artworks.

\_\_\_ size j. the arrangement of an artwork

\_\_\_ shape k. when 1/2 of the picture mirrors the other 1/2

\_\_\_ direction l. when the 2 halves are completely different

\_\_\_ symmetry m. when the elements in an  
artwork are skillfully organised

into a harmonious whole.

\_\_\_ tone n. I am the most important point of an artwork

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Fill in the blanks with these terms:

try England 3

goal Rugby Union 2

penalty kick soccer 5

dropped goal 15

\_\_\_\_\_ was invented at the Rugby school in \_\_\_\_\_ in 1823.

While playing a game where the ball was run back to your side and kicked forward, William Webb Ellis picked up the ball and ran with it. From this innovation, two games were developed: a dribbling game and a handling game. The dribbling game was played at schools with paving and stone playgrounds and the handling game was played at schools with large areas of grass to play on. The dribbling game became \_\_\_\_\_ and the handling game became \_\_\_\_\_. Originally, an unlimited number of players massed around the ball and wrestled their way across the opponents line for a touch down. After making a touch down, a team was awarded with the opportunity to kick a goal over a crossbar for which points were awarded. Today the game is played with \_\_\_\_\_ players on each side. The actual touchdown is called a \_\_\_\_\_ and is worth \_\_\_\_\_ points. The \_\_\_\_\_ kicked after the try is worth \_\_\_\_\_ points. Goals can also be kicked from a \_\_\_\_\_ or a \_\_\_\_\_ and are worth \_\_\_\_\_ points.

## **Extension Lesson**

Each student must have:

20cm square of waxless paper

22cm square of plain cotton fabric

crayons

water colours

Teacher must have an iron and extra sheets of cotton.

Directions.

1. Draw a scrum, lineout or kick-off formation on the waxless paper with a crayon. If the formation is symmetrical use warm colours; if it is asymmetrical use cool colours.
2. As the class plays Quiz Rugby, the teacher will iron the wax paper face down on the fabric. The crayon will melt onto the fabric.
3. Students will then paint the fabric with water colours. If they drew a symmetrical formation they should paint with cool colours and if they drew an asymmetrical formation they should paint with warm colours.

\*The result should be an abstract work resembling hand-dyed cloth.

This is also a way to test a students understanding with pencil and paper.