The Language of Graphic Design
Rockport Publishers, Beverly, Massachusetts

In April 2011, Rockport Publishers released Richard Poulin’s first book, The Language of Graphic Design: An Illustrated Handbook for Understanding Fundamental Design Principles, a comprehensive guide to the fundamental elements and principles of graphic design. This hardcover, full-color, 288 page book showcases work by some of the profession’s most renowned practitioners as well as students, providing essential information, inspiration, and guidance for readers of all experience levels.

Poulin equates developing a visual sense to learning a new language—each discipline possesses a unique alphabet, lexicon (vocabulary), and syntax (sentence structure). Each of the book’s twenty-six chapters (a reference to the English alphabet—the building blocks for Western language) is devoted to defining a fundamental element of a graphic designer’s vocabulary (i.e. point, line, shape, form, light, color) detailing what each is, why it is important, and how to use it effectively. Each chapter dissects the principles of graphic design and includes a narrative and visual sidebar referencing a historical graphic design benchmark, giving voice and meaning to the art of visual communication.

Stressing the value of the written word, each chapter opens with a dictionary definition of the section’s corresponding design principle. Poulin describes graphic designers as visual interpreters, emphasizing that effective communicators must possess a deep, continual respect and appreciation for narrative form. Visual communications, like written and verbal communications, require analysis, planning, organizing, and problem solving. All three forms of communication rely on intuitively choosing elements, whether they be words or imagery, that most effectively convey a message. Point, line, shape, light, color, balance, contrast and proportion are a graphic designer’s vocabulary for giving voice and meaning to any visual communication.

A straightforward reference for core design curriculum, The Language of Graphic Design offers clear and concise information to enhance a reader’s visual literacy and provides dynamic, indelible, visual references to inform, inspire, and reinforce a sense of “seeing.” With The Language of Graphic Design, Poulin’s goal is to provide essential information and influential resources on the basic tenets of visual communications and graphic design fundamentals. Easily accessible and always informative, The Language of Graphic Design is a meaningful, memorable, and inspiring design tool that readers will refer to time and time again.
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point

4 as: a geometric element that has zero dimensions and a location determinable by an ordered set of coordinates

A point is a point of departure and no more, as soon as you elaborate it, it becomes complicated by itself.
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