

type 1: scale/value

your next exploration in establishing hierarchy is the use of scale. changing the size and proportion of type within a composition is one of the more creative ways to maintain clear hierarchy while creating a non traditional layout. larger object command more attention and are therefore understood to be more important. larger objects can exist outside of list order and still be read first. this is also the point at which we begin to introduce aesthetic style into hierarchy based simply on order. while order has its own aesthetic appeal, scale introduces dynamism and the opportunity for drama through contrast and asymmetry.

often coupled with scale is value. value is the lightness or darkness of an object and is usually expressed as a percentage of gray. value can emphasize or invert scale relationships. for instance a word set in large type, but in a light value will have the same visual weight and perceived importance of something smaller but much darker. value also provides for the illusion of depth. lighter objects are perceived to be further away (atmospheric perspective)

design problem

while keeping your informational hierarchy in mind, you are to explore the creative potential of both scale and value treatments.

parameters

- › your information will be the same, but you may now use combinations of scale, value and style (from the last exercise).
- › you are to create 18 designs: 2x3 of scale, 2x3 of value and 2x3 that combine both scale and value. (for the value-only exercises, please use the 10pt type size)
- › when creating the studies for value only, you may choose a size other than 10 point, but don't change scale within the study.

considerations

the addition of scale and value and the inherent creative possibilities can cause one to forget both grid structures and hierarchies. please keep both of these in mind. I would suggest starting more conservatively and moving toward more creative solutions. the real effort here is to keep the primary objectives in mind while still allowing for creative and dynamic compositions.

due at the beginning of class 01/26

notes:

› scale and value work in a reciprocal relationship with value trumping scale in all but the most extreme examples. the reason for this is that darker type provides a greater contrast and stands out more – even in a smaller size. some of this, though, will depend on the percentage difference between the two values. 50% value difference is significant, 10% is negligible in terms of differentiating information... or rather it is too subtle to overcome large scale disparities.

› please also be sensitive to overlap and value. there needs to be enough difference in value to visually separate information... unless your intention is to muddy the composition – which is fine as long as you understand what is at stake.