

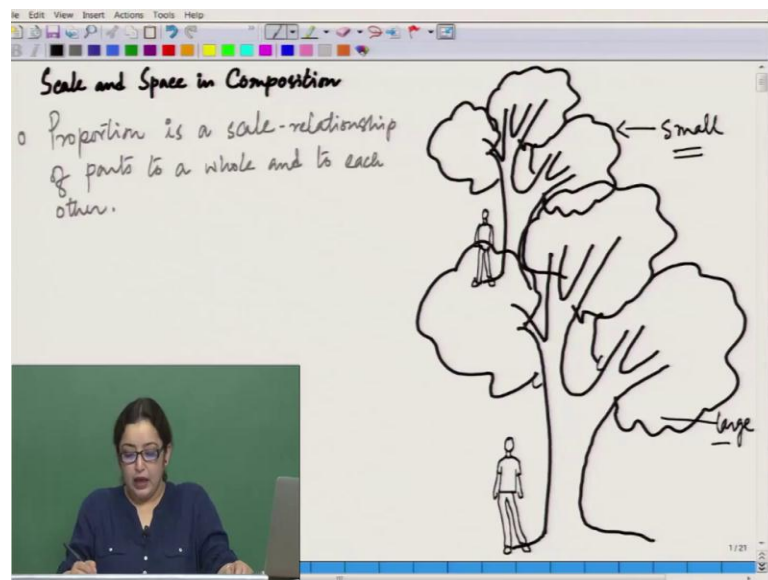
**Elements of Visual Representation**  
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**Lecture - 19**

Now, we are going to discuss another very interesting aspect of visual composition in terms of the scale and proportion. So, when we talk about scale or proportion, we indicate certain factor that is related to size and size; obviously, it is, it incorporates the idea of whether it is small or big. Whether it is large, expanded or shrunken or there are similar considerations. Now, something whether it is big or small, cannot be judge so easily, it needs some other references.

So, big or small remains basically meaningless, unless we have some standard of reference to suggest, whether it is bigger than something else or if something is small than that is smaller than something else. So, it is all relative and let us start from this point and see, how we operate, how we incorporate size in a whole, in reference to a holistic composition. And slowly, we build up a structure in reference to another and come up with a rhythmic composition.

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So, proportion is taken in terms of a part, as a part of a whole and that way we consider the ratio between the two and try to give it a meaning. So, proportion is a scale relationship of parts to a whole and also to each other. Let us realize that with one

example, where let us say in a composition, it shows a tree. Now, we do not know whether it is big or small, unless we make another tree and increase its scale.

So, when we get to see two trees, the earlier one will look smaller in relation to the larger tree. So, that makes this tree small and the other tree large. Also in a composition like this, it can also happen that we need to show things, which are other than the similar objects. So, if we have a tree of this scale, we think of a human proportion, who is standing right beneath the tree and we determine the size of the human form in relation to a tree.

So, if the tree is this big, a man can only be, this big in size. If the man stands somewhere underneath a tree here, then we follow the same proportion and have the man, this small in relationship to the other tree. Now, the moment we create another simultaneous relationship, the result will turn into something different. So, the composition will give us a different meaning. We will surely see that, this particular tree is not actually small, but this is only placed farther away.

So, that way the human figure also will not look small, we will just feel that these are the two trees of the same proportion, same size only because of the distance, the visual distance. The distance from the viewer, the other set of tree and human being is appearing to be small. So, we need to go by the visual perception to decide, how big it should be. Now, I will just alter the same example and produce another one to understand another ratio.

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Scale and Space in Composition

Proportion is a scale-relationship of parts to a whole and to each other.

Large

Small

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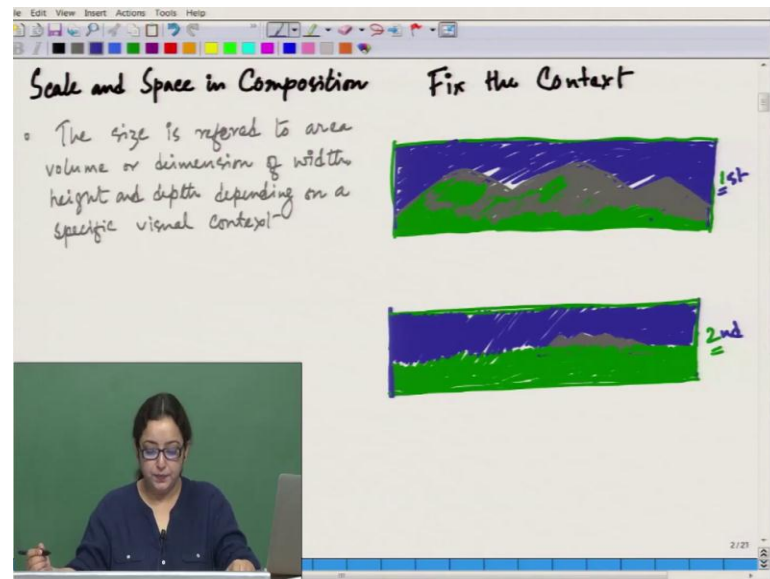
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Larger than the tree no 2

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So, as an alternative, let us draw a tree, which is this big and another tree, which is this big. Now, when we make a human form that is this much big in size, this size is not changing in proportion to the tree. So, that tells us that give the message, that this tree is obviously small in size and the other one is large and if it is large, then it is larger than the smaller tree. So, the tree number 1 is larger than the tree number 2, so that is the relationship of a proportion.

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So, scale and space and composition also refer to the size that is referred to the area volume or a dimension of a width, height or depth depending on a specific visual context, let us try and see that with some example. So, the size when it is referred to an area or volume or a dimension of width, height or depth depending on a specific visual context, then first we need to fix the context.

For example, if we take a context of a night sky, a mountain in context to a night sky, a jungle with a minimum suggestion of green, because of the time. We will end up producing a space like this with three layers. So, the forest of a jungle will be at the foreground, mountain at the middle ground and the blue sky at the background. Now, when we say that we are fixing our context, the context is a night sky, a dark blue sky with some mountain and the forest, we need to know that, how we fix the proportion of it.

So, how much area this whole composition is actually taking, that becomes our first consideration. Then, how much area is actually occupied by the sky, that becomes the

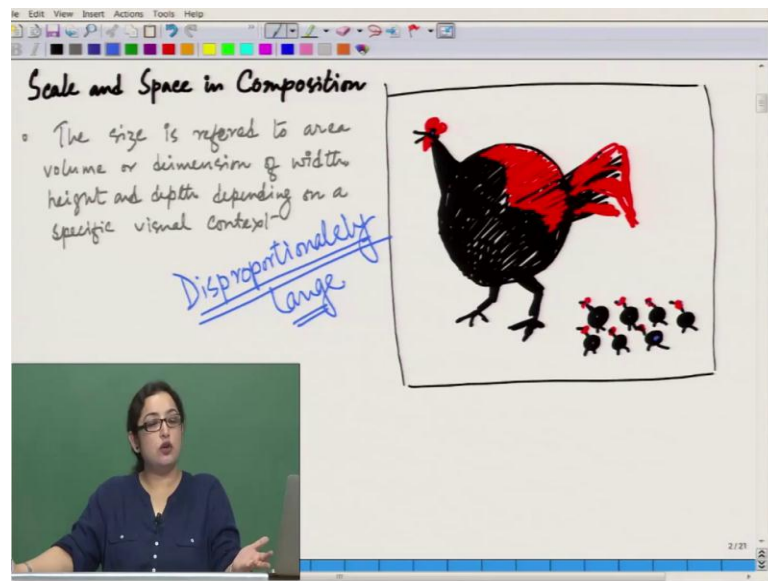
next consideration and accordingly how much area is occupied by the forest and the mountain in a picture becomes our consideration and that way, fixing the context is determined by the aspect ratio of different objects in a picture. Let us take another alternative, where we change the ratio of this composition.

So, we take a paper which is this big and make a mountain there, which you will occupy this much of a space, we will have the jungle there, at the frontal and rest of the part will have a blank area. So, this space, if we again specify the composition to have this much of an area, which is similar to the earlier proportion, what we will see is, the mountain is smaller in proportion in the context, if you feel that this is a paper size and the mountain here is occupying a larger area. The mountain in the second picture is occupying a smaller area, the forest is occupying a smaller area as compared to the other picture.

So, it totally depends on our viewing area, how much area we are considering for our context. So, when we fix a context whatever the context is, we see that the other things are known as small or big in that context. So, in the context of the second picture, if the mountain is this big and we extend the forest to the rest of the picture and also make this sky dark blue as it was in the earlier picture. We can come down to two statements, one is that in context to the first picture, the sky has not changed much, the sky is almost similar in proportion.

But, the mountain has occupied a larger area in the first picture whereas, in the second picture, the amount of mountain has reduced to quite an extent and the forest has expanded. So, in context two the second picture, the mountain is occupying a minimal space whereas, in context two the first picture the mountain is occupying a similar area, it is like you know, when we divide it into the sky mountain and forest, the three of these things are occupying almost the similar proportion in the context.

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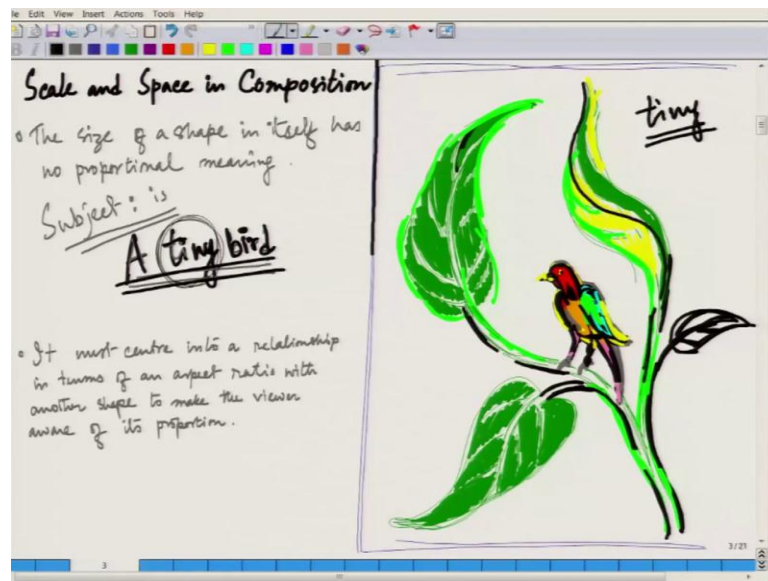
So, if we have an object in a picture that occupies a larger area, then let us have a few more objects here. So, in this picture what we get to see is, there is one object which is this, that is having some more object in reference to it which are smaller, but similar in size. So, that gives us a sense of repetition that the form is repeated. So, by repetition or by similarity, they get connected, they become part of a single composition.

But, it also happens that when we look at this, we feel that one object here is a little disproportionate and it disproportionately large, when we say something is disproportionately large; that means, they are in comparison to the other structure, the size difference is a little too huge. So, there is no medium size and we expect a size maybe one size smaller than this or one size larger than this to take place somewhere in between.

So, it looks disproportionately large, the mother figure and the babies, the chicks here they are too small too tiny. So, here the large black circle would certainly be called a large scale. It is a large element and occupies much space, given the overall dimensions of the design. It could also be described as out of proportion compared to the others, the others are very tiny as elements.

But, an out of the scale elements in art is not always a fault depending on the purpose, such as element could communicate a theme, it can be visually disturbing. But, as long as it communicates a theme which is relevant, it can be incorporated in picture and it does not look disturbing to our eyes in that particular context.

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So, size of a space in itself has no proportional meaning, unless we decide to see it in comparison to something else. So, it is more like if we say our subject matter of a picture is to draw a tiny bird. How will you draw a tiny bird without relativity? So, if we really want to show that, maybe a tiny bird is sitting there, if we just place it this way that you have a paper like this. Our subject matter was a tiny bird.

What we have drawn in the picture is a bird, but how will we say that this is a tiny bird. The bird looks pretty big. So, one way is to reduce the size, but that may not solve the problem. Because, if you feel that this is a bird in context to a paper, which is this big, then the bird will again become big. So, we need to change the context and give it a good context that will justify the word tiny for it. So, we change the paper size, so we place the same bird in a space which is much bigger.

So, if you feel that the bird is sitting somewhere here and also give it a comparative object, that is perhaps a branch. So, it must center into a relationship in terms of another aspect ratio with another shape to make the viewer aware of its proportion. Now, when we place it here, the leaves here are actually very big, big as compared to the bird which is sitting here.

So, if the bird is as big as a leaf, so with this the bird will really become smaller as compared to its context as compared to the ratio of its surrounding things. But, it also has some natural reference, we have we associate bird and leaves with some proportional norms. We know how big they can be and what the interrelationship of a bird and a leaf

can be, so in that context the bird becomes tiny. So, this is how we can justify a proportion and also the proportion, the scale and the composition in terms of the compositional space it occupies.

So, in our next lecture, we are going to talk about, how to select the scale, how to choose the scale for the benefit of a better composition. So, the proportion, the comparative relationship, the aspect ratios of different shapes, different color proportion, they are all interrelated. So, there are lots of overlapping in the same context, but let us see how to choose a scale that justifies our context.

So, it is the content, the context and also the form, these three things has to be synchronized and then, only we can take a decision of, how big or small a shape or a color or a line or the other elements, that we must pick up for a better expression in a visual representation.