Transcript of VISUAL EMPHASIS Video:

[MUSIC].

Hi again, Susan Delagrange here. I wanted to take a minute to introduce the visual emphasis video that you're going to see today. Because I wanted to create kind of a larger picture for you to imagine using the strategies in. And that larger picture has to do with the concept of graphic design, which is the skill of putting together images, video, typography in a coherent and ultimately rhetorical frame.

First of all, the idea of how typography works. Now, typography is, of course, the art of using type. And in graphic design, all of the elements of visual analysis, like size and color and position, are also going to be rhetorical, they're going to have rhetorical effects within the framework of your, of your piece. For example, the opening screen to the movie Thin, which is a documentary by Lauren Greenfield about eating disorders, looks like this. And you can see that she has strategically deployed typography in her thin, thin lettering of the word "thin" itself, in order to enhance the rhetorical effect of the title.

Here's another example, and this has to do partly with typography, partly with image, but primarily with the arrangements of the elements on the page. This is a classic advertisement for the Volkswagen Beetle from a number of years ago. And the strategic placement of the image of the Beetle, very small in the upper left hand corner of this page, in a huge field of white that makes it look even smaller than it actually is, again, is a really effective rhetorical device.

So, as you watch this, your thinking about how you can use type, your thinking about how you can use arrangement on the page, and your thinking about how all of these are part of the visual emphasis that enhances your rhetorical argument. In this module we'll look at the rhetorical analysis of visual texts. Visual documents like verbal texts, use rhetorical strategies to inform, persuade, or even entertain. To produce effective photographs, ads, brochures, and other visual documents, designers pay attention to the same things writers do: audience, purpose, and context.

Let's begin with the introduction to several features of images that designers use to focus their audience's attention, and create visual emphasis. Some of these position size color, may already be familiar to you. Others like lines of sight perspective and pattern may be new. We will look at each briefly, to develop a vocabulary for talking about and analyzing images later on.

First position and the Rule of Thirds. Photographers use this principle, although it can be applied to cartoons, designs, paintings,

even pages of text. The Rule of Thirds says when parts of an image line up with a grid dividing the image into thirds horizontally and vertically, the image seems more pleasant, more focused and more energetic than the symmetrical arrangements. The intersections of the lines are points of particular emphasis. Here's an example of a pleasing balanced image. You will notice that the lower horizontal line bisects the sunset, which is the lightest area of the image. The right vertical line traces the trunk of the tree, emphasizing the dramatic contrast between white and dark where they come together.

In this second example, the left vertical line calls attention to the face, and the upper horizontal line crosses the eyes. The intersection creates an emphatic point of emphasis, on this key feature. Size is another key point of visual analysis, and you will see from these images that size is always relative. In the first photo the pyramid dwarfs the figure on the camel, emphasizing his insignificance. In the second image however, the rider and his camel dominate the image, and loom over the pile of stones on the left.

Color is also a rich source of visual emphasis. Notice here that the contrast between the neutral gray umbrella and the color of the girls features and clothing. Drums are focused to her face. Color carries emotional weight, too. And the warmth of the pinks and browns from the girl, also contrast with the emotionally cool grey of the umbrella.

I'm going to move quickly through the remaining points of visual emphasis, as we will discuss them in depth later. We are drawn to strong lines in images. Lines that all seem to move toward a common point, like the headlights and tail lights in this timed exposure, create a strong focus on the point. In this case the bridge, where they converge. Lines are also important when we consider perspective. As our eyes are drawn up the side of this clock tower, we cannot help but feel small by comparison. On the other hand, seeing the world from above, particularly from a great height, is called a God's eye view. It makes us feel powerful and in control. We don't think of motion as a point of emphasis in a still photograph. But motion can be captured through timed exposures and other methods. The sense of motion of speed of the train in this photo, is enhanced by comparison to the static weaves in the foreground.

Pattern and repetition are fruitful sources of visual emphasis. Here the pains in the glass of the building form a patterned grid of mirrored images. But what we are drawn to is the disorganization of the reflected images of the building opposite. Is this perhaps a comment on the fragility of the old in the face of the new? The intensity and direction of lighting in an image, focuses our attention and also contributes to the mood of the subject or scene. In this image, the light is strong, but comes from behind. Outlining the couple while also emphasizing their anonymity and distance from one another. The long shadows also contribute to the somber tone.

Finally images can be edited and manipulated to enhance or shift emphasis. The somewhat sinister effect of this image, results from its graininess combined with the redder than red lips, and mugshot style black bar over the eyes.

To sum up, we have seen that strategies which produce visual emphasis have a rhetorical effect on the audience, that is cumulative and collective. Visual emphasis is, or should be purposeful. Sometimes it is created by absence instead of presence. Finally, visual emphasis may be captured in an unedited photo, or created by editing or manipulation.

[MUSIC]