Launching the Imagination

A Comprehensive Guide to Basic Design

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concrete tunnels seem static. Upon entering each tunnel, the viewer discovers a series of holes that duplicate the stars’ size and position in four major constellations. The light pouring in through these holes shifts as the sun rises and travels across the sky. During the winter and summer solstices, the sculpture further transforms as the circular tunnels’ alignment frames light from the rising and setting sun. Like a telescope, the massive cylinders are more important for the visions that they create than as objects in themselves.

Linear Networks

Both artists and designers use linear networks in many different ways. In figure 9.27, interlocking metal lines form the woven mesh on a fencer’s mask. Due to its linear construction, it is light in weight and protects the athlete’s face without blocking vision. Janet Echleman’s Tsunami 1.26 (figure 9.28) was created using thousands of polyester fiber threads. Suspended above a busy city street, this artwork continually shifts shape, like an undulating jellyfish. Single lines can bring a simple eloquence to a design, while multiple lines can be used to create strong, complex, and versatile forms.

key questions

LINE

• Vertical, horizontal, diagonal, and curving lines all have unique strengths. What can each type contribute to your design?
• What can line continuity or discontinuity contribute to your composition?
• What happens when you dramatically increase or decrease the number of lines?
• Can intersecting lines strengthen your design, both structurally and compositionally?