



Eloquent Design: Essays on the Rhetorics of Vision

Lisa A. Baird

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Humans first attempts to record their thoughts resulted in images painted in the decorated caves throughout Europe, known as Upper Paleolithic Art. As humans developed written alphabets to record their thoughts in words, the images they painted and the words they wrote competed for attention. As the Sister Arts tradition attests, words and pictures have developed along distinct, though related, lines. With the rise of New Media, however, the innovative inter-animation of words and pictures in the screen space of the computer deserves and requires artists and designers and rhetoricians to take a fresh look at the complexities of human communication, particularly the way in which words and pictures share commonalities. The range of image-texts, from cave to computer, from palimpsests to pixels, demands critical attention from modern designers who create innovative image-texts for New Media. Eloquent Design: Essays on the Rhetorics of Vision explores ancient image-making as a basis for understanding the modern uses of image-texts in New Media. Eloquent Design also considers the current state of imaginative design from the Sister Arts tradition to Gestalt theories of vision to social semiotics of image-texts. Moreover, Eloquent Design proposes a generative method for creating image-texts, a technique called Rhetorical Vision. Applications of the generative mode of Rhetorical Vision give rise to the innovative designs of palimpsests and experimental modes of writing, such as creative nonfiction. Essays in Eloquent Design outline a method for teaching Rhetorical Vision as the inter-animation of words and pictures.

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