Lesson 1: Principles of Gestalt Systems: Theory
Emergence
Reification
Multistability
Invariance

Gestalt Psychology is a theory introduced in the late 1800’s by the Austrian philosopher Christian von Ehrenfels which asserts that in relation to perception, the mind forms a global whole with self-organizing tendencies. The movement of Gestalt Psychology was later founded by Max Wertheimer, Kurt Koffka and Wolfgang Köhler. Koffka is attributed with quoting the phrase ‘The whole is other than the sum of its parts’. Gestalt does not explain why these perceptions exist, only that they do exist.

Following are examples and descriptions of the key principles of gestalt:

Emergence

As the name suggests, the theory of emergence is a process of complex pattern formation where images emerge from patterns. In the picture below, the dog is not recognized by first analyzing all of the individual shapes contained, rather it is perceived as a whole, all at once.
Examples of Emergence
Examples of Emergence
Examples of Emergence
Examples of Emergence
Examples of Emergence
Examples of Emergence
Examples of Emergence
Examples of Emergence
Examples of Emergence
Reification

Reification is the constructive or generative aspect of perception, by which the experienced percept contains more explicit spacial information than the sensory stimulus on which it is based. More simply put, we fill in the gaps to create a unified whole from the parts and implied shapes.
Examples of Reification
Examples of Reification
Examples of Reification
Examples of Reification
Examples of Reification
Examples of Reification
Examples of Reification

Givenchy
Lesson 1: Multistability

Multistability

Multistability is the tendency of ambiguous perceptual experiences to pop back and forth unstably between two of more alternative interpretations, as seen below in the Necker Cube and below in the Duck Rabbit. What sets multistability apart from the other principles from a philosophical standpoint is the ability for one image simultaneously to have two meanings, and although we are capable of knowing the two meanings, we are forced to perceive one or the other.
Examples of Multistability

TIME for WINE
Examples of Multistability

MELBOURNE FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL
8-14 OCTOBER 2007

www.foodnwine.com.au
Examples of Multistability
Examples of Multistability
Examples of Multistability
Examples of Multistability

PETER AND THE WOLF
A SUZIE TEMPLETON FILM

SERGEI PROKOFIEV | BREAKTHRU FILMS
Examples of Multistability
Examples of Multistability
Examples of Multistability
Examples of Multistability
Examples of Multistability

SNOW WHITE
AND THE SEVEN DWARVES
Lesson 1: Principles of Gestalt Systems: Theory

Invariance

Invariance is the principle of perception which allows us to recognize forms when viewing from a different perspective. It allows us to recognize people when they are turned, as opposed to a straight on view. Shapes then become recognizable independent of rotation, deformity or scale.
Examples of Invariance
Examples of Invariance
Examples of Invariance
Examples of Invariance
Examples of Invariance
Examples of Invariance
Examples of Invariance
Examples of Invariance
Examples of Invariance