

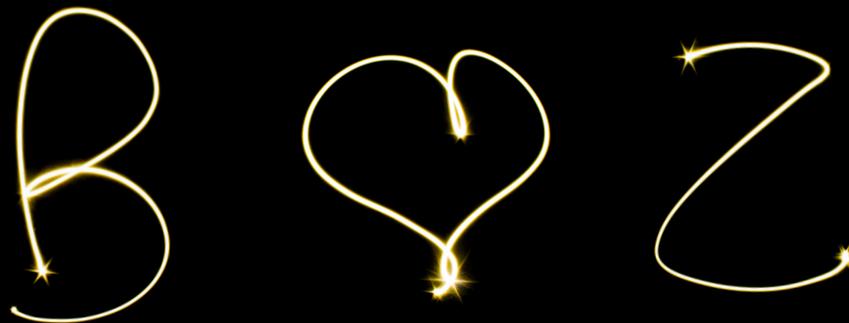


Visual Glossary

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The Picture on the Cover

There is a letter B in the picture on the cover. I took the picture at night with the help of my roommate, and my roommate drew a letter B with the flashlight on the phone. As you know, my name is Xiaorui Bi, and it is my Chinese name. It is a little bit hard for people from other countries to pronounce Xiaorui, so I just let others call me Bi which sounds like letter B. I think it will be much easier. Bi is my family name, so there is no doubt that letter B can be a representation of me. I love my mom and dad so much. After taking this picture, an idea came into my mind. My mom's last name is Zhang, so I also took a picture of letter Z, and a picture of heart. I put the three pictures together.



This means my dad loves my mom. Yeah!

Brand



A brand is a name or symbol of products or companies. In order to sell commodities in bulk, sellers and companies started to give their commodities a unique name, a brand. Companies use brands to create a connection between commodities and consumers. The brand can help consumers to recognize and remember the commodities so that the commodities can be sold better. The brand is full of intangible value, and it can increase the value of the commodities.

There are many brands in the picture. When I see the logos of the brands, their commodities come into my mind, and they aroused my desire to purchase their commodities.

Bricolage



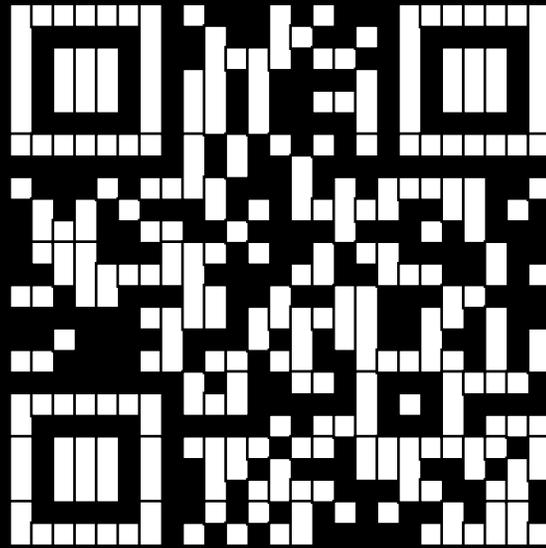
Bricolage is the creation of a work. This work is made of whatever materials you have in your hands. Bricolage is totally decided by yourselves, and you can give your works new meanings, so it can reflect your personal art taste. Take myself as an example. I'd like to decorate my own room. I use a lot of Decorative materials, like colored papers, colored ribbons, cobblestones, to make my room different from others' rooms with my personal style.

There is a dancing girl in the picture. The dancing girl is made of colorful buttons and beads. The creator gives these buttons and beads new meaning. The beautiful buttons and beads with different colors and shapes show her exquisite dancing.

Code

Code is a rule that is established by usage, and it is a connection between creators and audiences.

For example, when seeing someone shows three fingers, we understand this code of social conduct, and we know that he/she is saying Yes or OK. In the film, when hearing a horrible music, we can say something terrible will happen. Furthermore, sometimes, a variety of codes work together to imply one meaning.



This is a QR Code I created in Adobe InDesign. After scanning it, you can see a website (<http://saveourwater.com/>) hiding behind the QR Code. There is something about water saving in this website.

Habitus



Habitus is the taste and preference for music, images, poems, decorations, fashion, art, and so on. Different people have different habitus, and it depends on one's class position, educational background, ages, experience, horizons, values, and family context. It is not only decided by educational background, family context or anything else. For example, the habitus of a child in primary school is different from her elder sister in senior high school.

In the children's eyes, this picture is pretty, but adults do not think this style is the best. Adults prefer the style which is more mature.

High Culture / Low Culture



The Mona Lisa is from the Italian Renaissance artist Leonardo da Vinci. This picture has a high artistic value, and many elites highly value it.

High culture and low culture are used to classify different kinds of culture. High culture is the culture with high aesthetic value, like classical art, classical music, operas, and poetry. High culture can only be appreciated by upper classes or elites, most of whom are well-educated. Contrasted with high culture, low culture is more like a pastime, like entertainment news, gossip magazines, comic book, and soap operas, which has a tendency to be appreciated by lower classes.



This is a parody of the Mona Lisa, and it is just a pastime without a high artistic value.

Icon

In the past, icon referred to a religious work of art, most commonly an image that had sacred value, so it usually used in churches and rituals. The most common subjects are God, Christ, saints and angels. However, as time goes on, the meaning of the term changes. It is not only used in region. Nowadays, it means an image or a person which is used to represent something or somebody. In an icon, you do not need to show every element of the thing or the person. An icon prefers main characteristics of the thing or the person. Icons can be used to represent universal concepts, emotions, and meanings because icons do not have special implied meanings. For example, I can draw a picture as my icon to resemble myself.

The religious figure in the ceramic icon is Arethas of Caesarea. He was Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (modern Kayseri, Turkey) early in the 10th century, and is considered one of the most scholarly theologians of the Greek Orthodox Church.



Indexical Sign



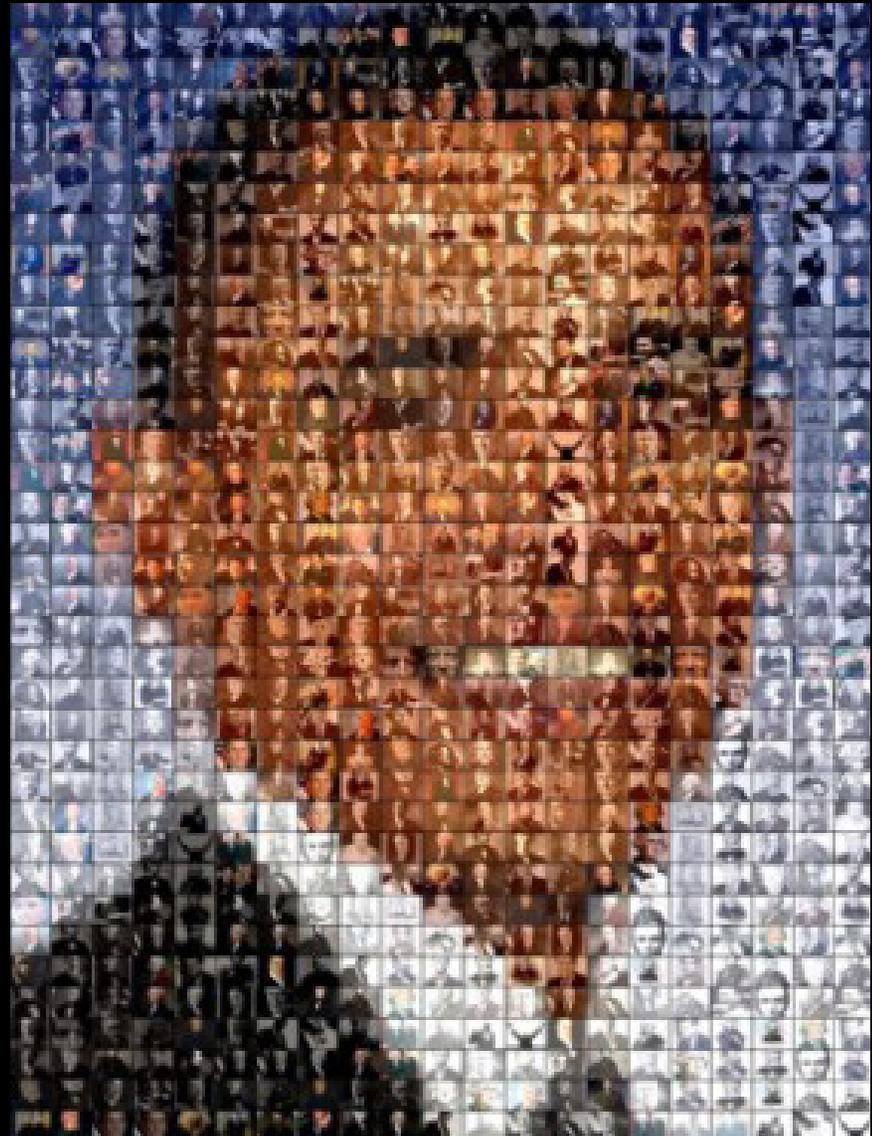
In indexical sign, we can see directly the meaning behind the signifier (work/image). There is an obvious relationship between the meaning and the signifier. For example, there are a set of footprints in the sand. This means someone has been to this beach.

We can see the smoke coming from the chimney. It is not difficult for us to image there are people living in the house, and they are cooking now.

Montage

Montage is an editing technique in the film which is usually used to indicate the passage of time and compressed narrative information in the film. In Soviet montage, it creates a symbolic meaning, like clash or tension.

This is a composite picture of Obama, but a lot of other pictures are cut and joined in this picture. This composite picture is made of many small pictures. This is so-called Photomontage.



Propaganda



Propaganda is a way to influence people's attitude, thoughts and beliefs. Propaganda is usually produced by governments, activist groups or companies on purpose, so it is usually not rational. It is subjective, biased even extreme.

This poster is a kind of propaganda, and it was used to spread Maoism. Actually, I am not saying Maoism is wrong, but this poster exaggerated Maoism. This behavior is a kind of personality cult.

Sign / Signifier / Signified

The signifier can be a word, an image or an object which can be seen, heard, touched, smelled or tasted. The signifier is used to convey meaning. The meaning of a signifier depends on the context, so a signifier usually has more than one meaning. For example, crying has different meanings in different situations. Sometimes people cry because they are sad. Sometimes people cry because they are moved.

The signified is a mental concept, a specific meaning and an interpretation of the signifier in a particular context.

The sign is the relationship between the signifier and the signified, and it is a bridge of the signifier and the signified.

The sign is composed of the signifier and the signified.

The sun usually means hope. In this case, the sun is the signifier, hope is the signified, and the sign is the relationship between the sun and hope.



Spectacle

Spectacle refers to a striking and impressive image or event with a strong visual effect. Spectacle can be used to describe the relationship between representations and contemporary culture, and it can be used to describe the relationship between all social relations and images.

This is the fireworks display in Disneyland, and it is a common example of spectacle.



Symbolic Sign

Symbolic sign does not refer to a specific object. Symbolic sign is common in terms of language systems. For example, the word country does not physically resemble any actual country, like the United States and China (in other words, it is not iconic), nor does it have a physical connection to the country (so it is not indexical), hence it is a symbolic sign. There is no direct connection between country and the United States or China.



There is a bike in this traffic sign. This bike does not refer in particular to any bike. It just shows that this is a lane for bicycles.

THANK YOU FOR READING!