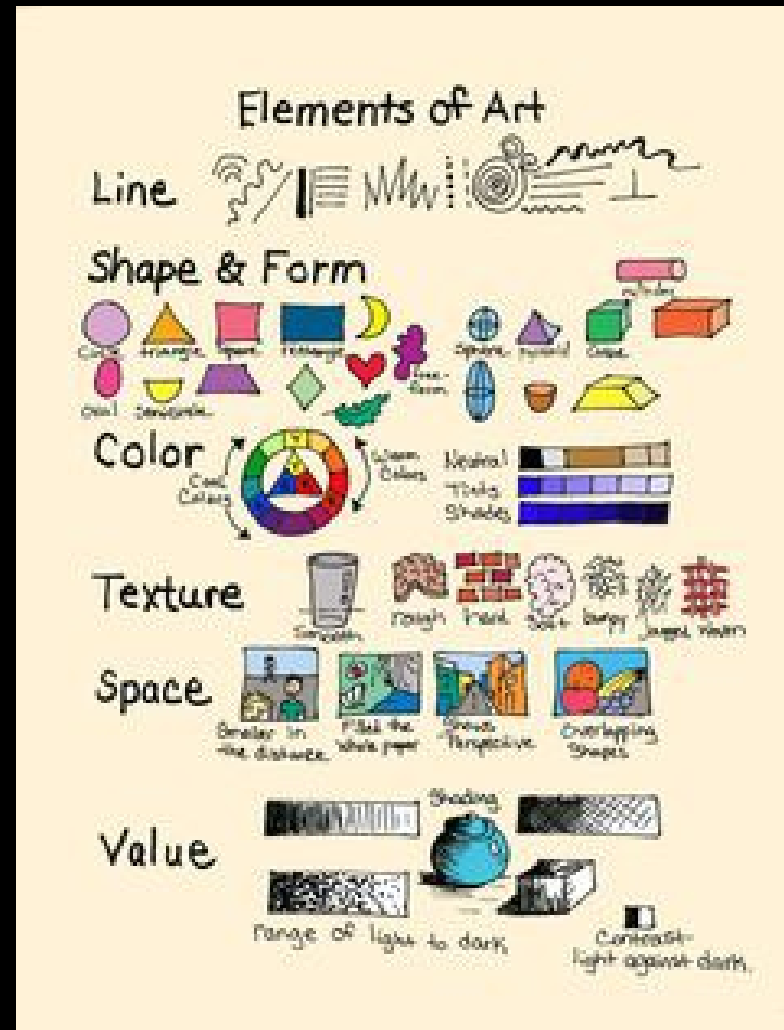


# The Value of Value

# What is Value?

Along with line, shape, space, texture and color, value is one of the formal elements of art... the building blocks we use to make our work.



# What is Value?

Value refers to the degree of lightness or darkness of something (regardless of what color it is).



# Um... Okay?

It can help you understand what value is if you imagine what something would look like in a black and white photograph. In other words, values are equivalent to blacks, whites and grays.



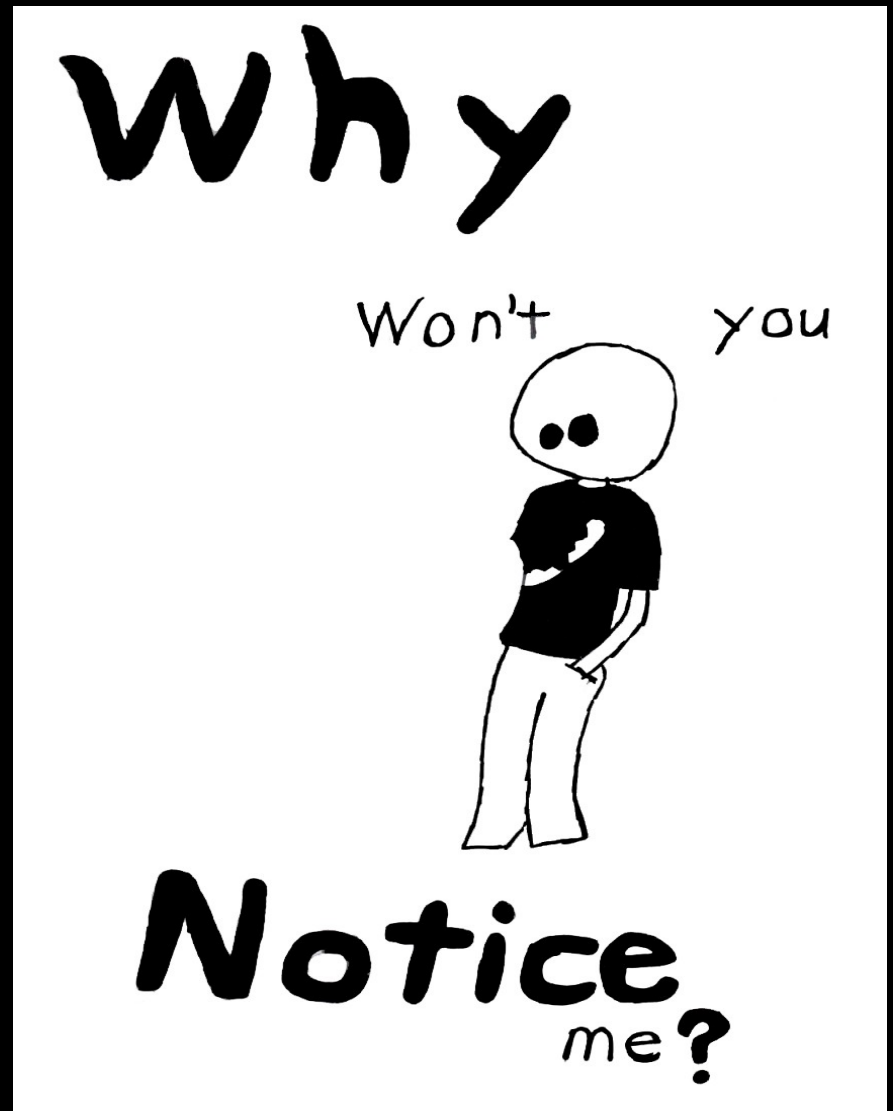
# The Challenges of Value

When you're first starting out as an artist, value can be one of the toughest formal elements to judge and to use effectively.

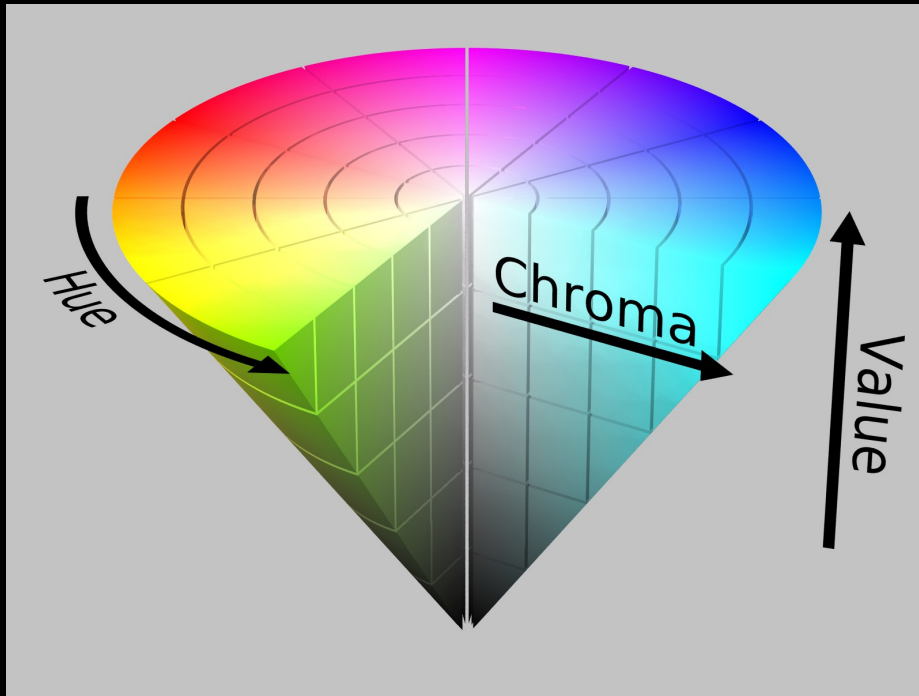


# The Challenges of Value

Line, shape, color and even texture are easier to see immediately, so value sometimes gets ignored.



# The Challenges of Value



This is especially true when a subject is in color. Value can be considered a sub-property of color.

But value IS crucial, because different colors...





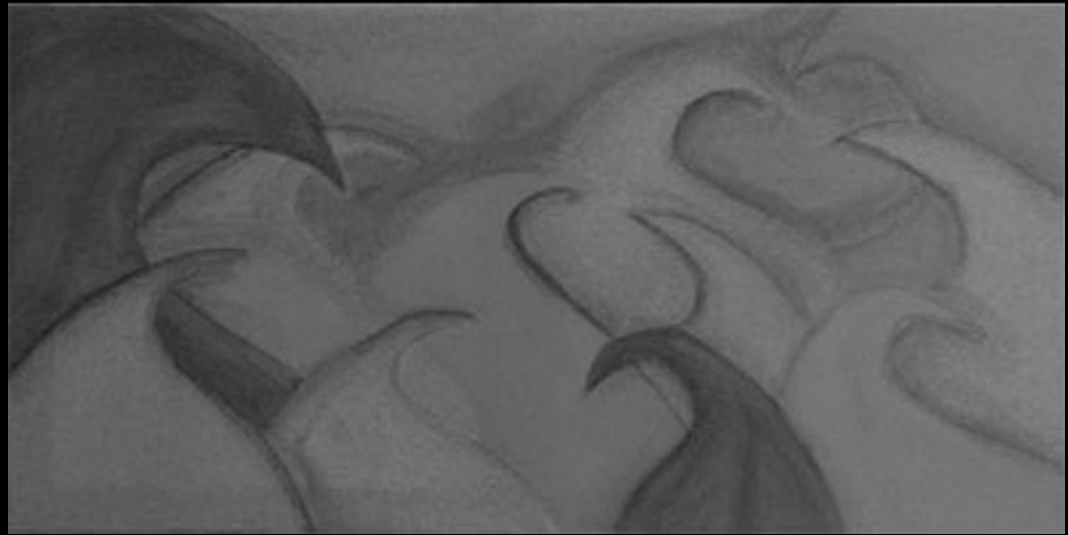
Can actually be the same value...



No, really...



This means, if you don't consider value, you may end up with art that feels a bit blah, even if it uses bright colors.



# So Value is Important?



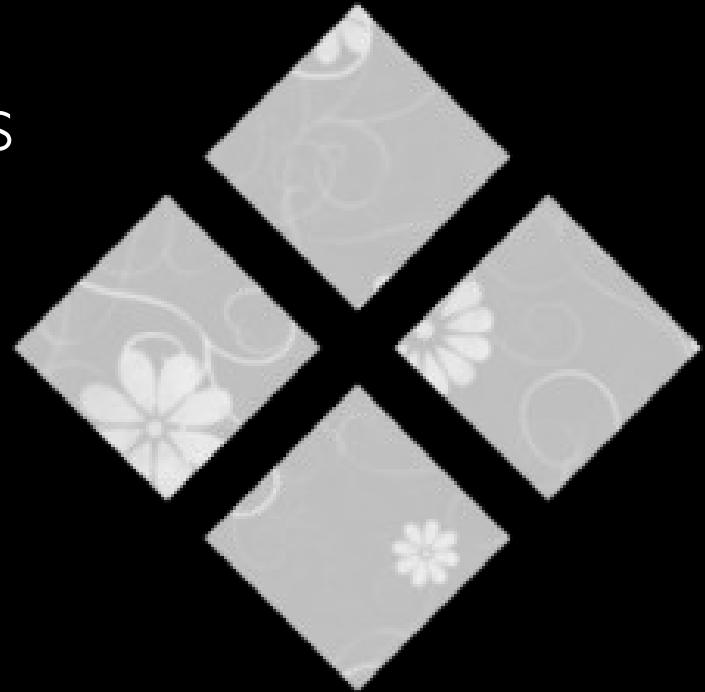
You betcha! Value is one of the primary ways artists:

- define shapes
- create a sense of light
- control composition
- establish mood

# Value for Defining Shape

Shape is one of the formal elements of art and is defined as an object that has length, width and height.

Shape can be created by using lines (including contours), texture, color or, importantly for drawers like us, shifts in value.



# Value for Defining Shape

Closely related to shape (and sometimes considered a formal element in its own right) is form. Form is shape in three dimensional space.

Value, applied as shading, is the most effective tool for making a 2D drawing look 3D.

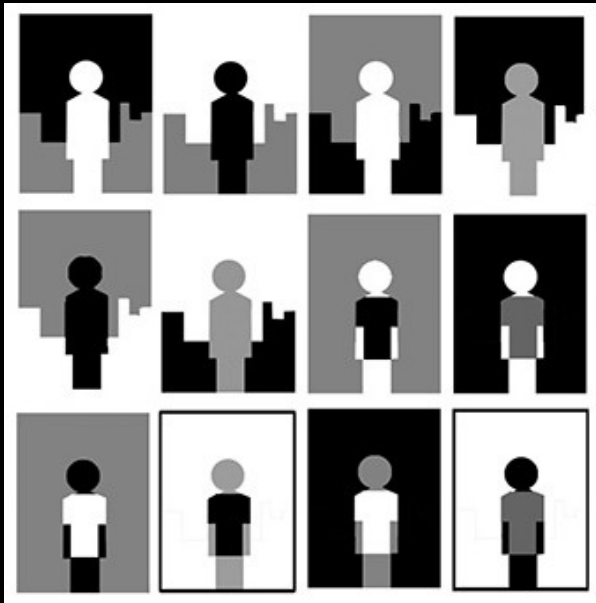


# Value for Creating Light and Shadow

And... closely related to the creation of 3D form is the establishment of a sense of light and shadow, for which value is the single most effective tool.



# Value as a Compositional Tool



As one of the formal elements, value can affect the formal principles of balance, emphasis, proportion, rhythm, movement, unity and variety, which in turn are what control composition.



# Value as a Compositional Tool

For example, a value substantially different from the values that surround it can become a focal point or emphasis.



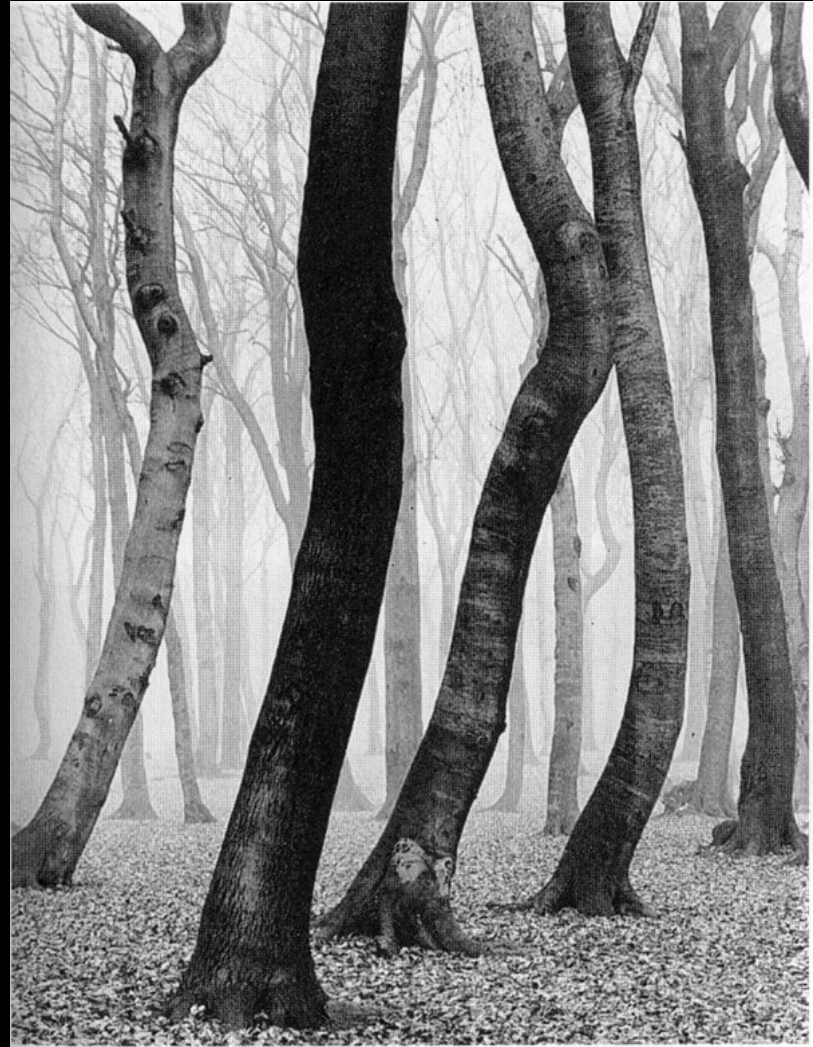
# Value as a Compositional Tool

Or, the way blacks, whites and grays are arranged can create an overall balance, either symmetrical or asymmetrical.



# Value as a Compositional Tool

Certain values can also be repeated in an artwork to create rhythm, unity and/or variety, as well as moving the eye around the composition.



# Value and Mood

Finally, value is one key ways an artist creates mood and meaning.



Nom Nom Nom!

Don't believe  
it's true?

Look at the  
underlying  
value scheme  
of something  
that gives you a  
wiggy vibe you  
can't otherwise  
explain...

**TELETUBBIES ARE  
TERRIFYING**



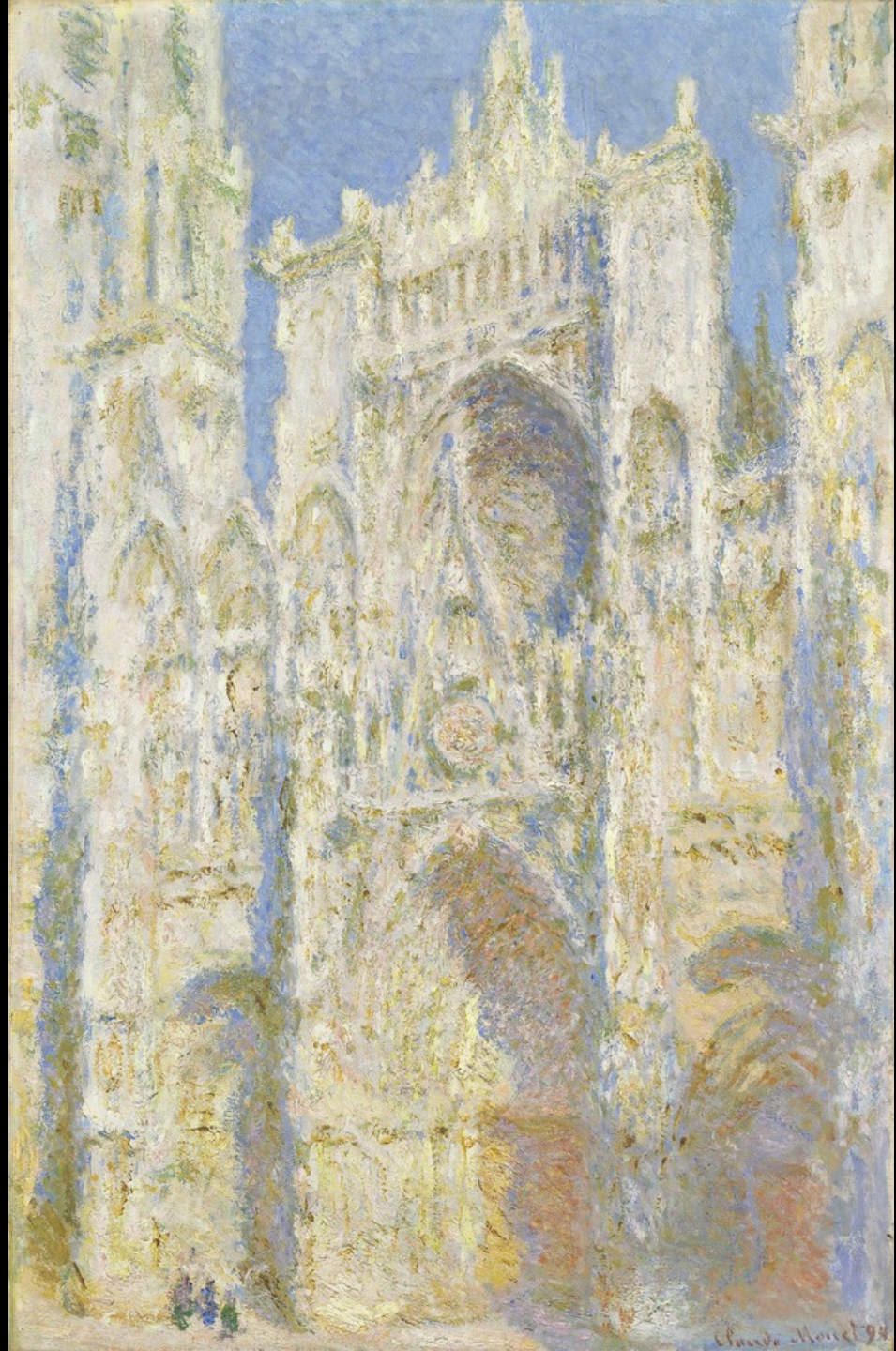
**IN BLACK AND WHITE**

# Value and Mood

Although most of the drawings we'll create in this class will have a **full range of values** (meaning everything from black to white), limited value ranges can sometimes be used to good effect in art.

In fact, there are even specific types of limited value schemes like high key and low key, which can create particular moods.

High Key value schemes use limited value range on the white end of the scale. They are often energetic and cheerful.



Low key value schemes use limited value range on the black end of the scale. They may be somber or even scary.





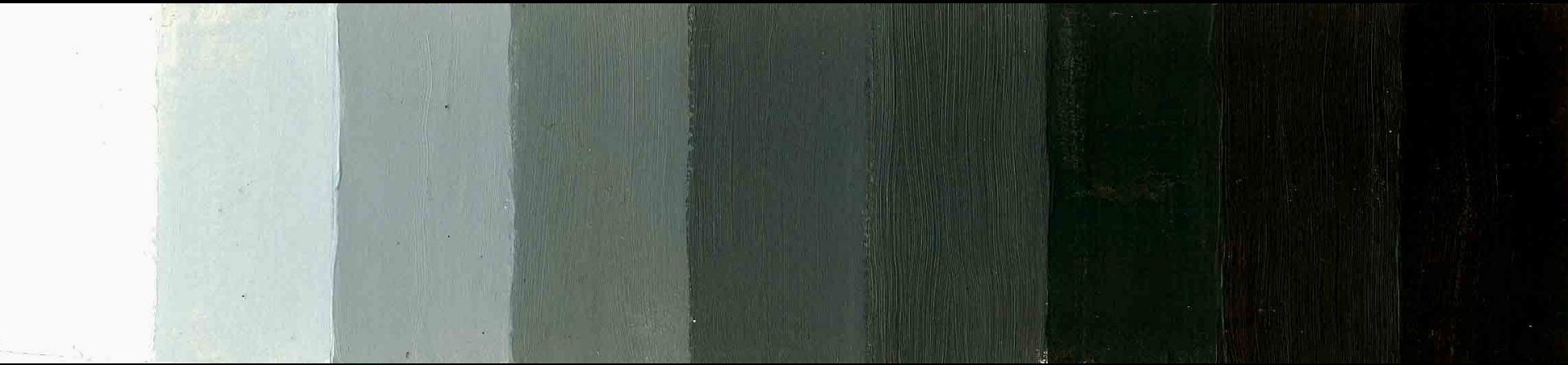
# How to See Value

Squinting helps....



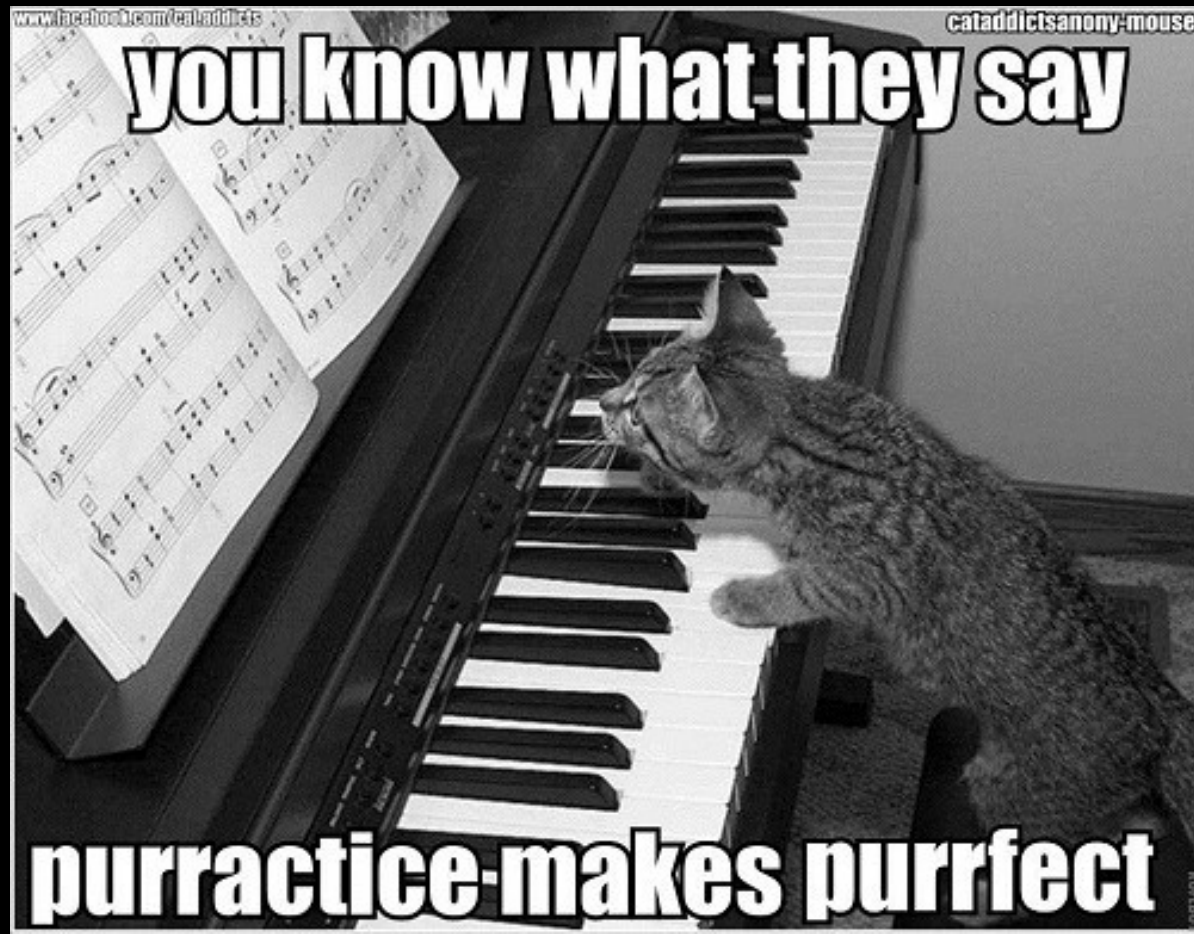
# How to See Value

As does the use of a value scale for comparison.



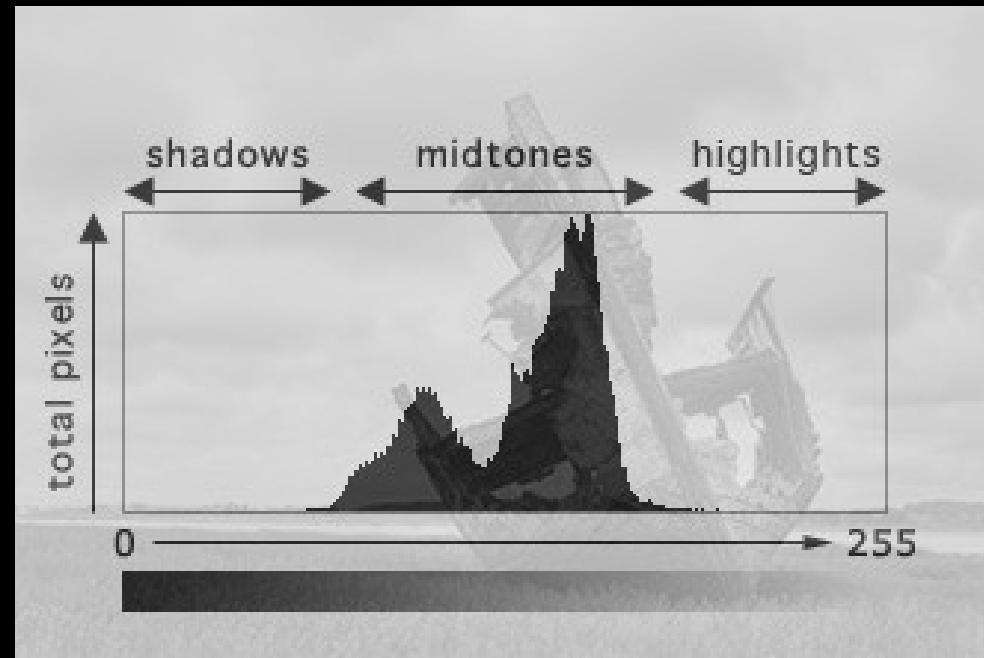
# How to See Value

And as with anything art...



Incidentally, you will also sometimes hear the term “tonal range” to talk about value structure, especially in photography or graphic art.

We are going to steer clear of this, because “tone” has another connotation in art having to do with color mixing.



Questions?

