Principles of Art: Rhythm/Pattern

Pattern is created by a combination of regular, repeated elements like lines, shapes, and/or colors. The elements that create the pattern are called motifs. Rhythm occurs when a motif is repeated, but with a variation. Pattern and rhythm help organize and unify an area, create texture, guide your eyes around the artwork, and provide visual interest.

There are several types of patterns and rhythms:

Regular rhythm: a pattern or rhythm that is continuous and predictable
Random rhythm: a motif is repeated in no particular order
Alternating rhythm: another motif is introduced or there is a change in spacing to break the monotony of regular patterning.
Flowing rhythm: repeated wavy lines or a large swooping movement
Progressive rhythm: a motif that changes in a predictable way, (e.g., steadily changing in size, color, or shape).

1. What type of pattern/rhythm is used in these examples?

Storage bag, c. 1850–1900, Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) artist
Shuchov Transmission Tower, 1929, Alexander Rodchenko
Ornament, one of a pair, 7th–10th century, China

2. What is an example of a manufactured pattern or rhythm from daily life? (e.g., a tiled floor)

3. What is an example of a natural pattern or rhythm from daily life? (e.g., a field of grass)
4. Find three artworks that demonstrate pattern or rhythm.

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<th>Sketch it!</th>
<th>Type(s) of patterns/rythm used:</th>
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