

An Expanded Field of Play:

How to Read a Visual Poem

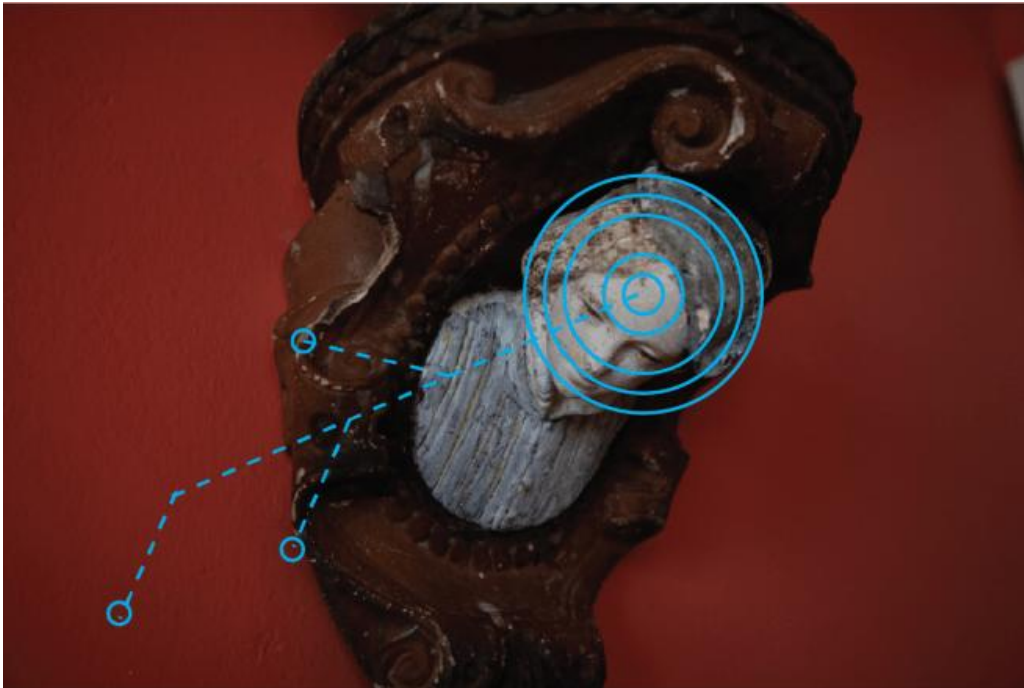


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Intro

This primer is intended to support the teacher, the reader, or the artist of visual poetry. It is also a companion to the book *Games for Children* by Keith S. Wilson. One need not own or read that book for this guide to be of use.

What is a visual poem? A working definition:

visual poem – a poem which especially depends on being seen for its meaning

My goal is to be as clear and comprehensive as I can while remaining brief. The above definition is the first example of this philosophy. Bolded below are all the words which, themselves, might need defining:

a poem which especially depends on being seen for its expression

What, for instance, does it mean to *especially depend* on visuals? I leave many (nearly all!) of the answers up to you.

Imagine you want to explore the wilderness. This is a guided path. If you are uncertain about venturing forth alone, it will familiarize you with the landscape. If you never leave the path, you will miss nearly everything.

And so we go!