Birds of a Feather

Evening out differences

Based on: The ABCs of Form 07 – Size and Proportion

In the part on likeness and difference, this sheet is about evening out.

In Picture Conversation 09 (“Top Dog”) you created differences and strengthened them. Now you go the opposite way. *What happens when a difference gradually becomes smaller?*

Evening out doesn’t mean making everything the same. Try it out and notice what even a small step towards each other changes.

You will need: your two sheets from Picture Conversation 09, a soft pencil (for example 4B) and an eraser. If you no longer have the sheets, draw six similar shapes on a new sheet and make one of them clearly larger or darker.

Time: about 20–30 minutes.

1 The top dog.

Take your first sheet from 09. There you made one shape more and more different from the others. Now pick up exactly that difference again: if your top dog is larger, enlarge the other shapes a little. If it is darker, make the others somewhat darker. Then pause.

What has changed? Does the one shape still draw your eye just as strongly?

2 Come closer still.

Keep evening out, step by step. Pause after each step.

- *From what point is the one shape no longer the top dog?*
- *Does it still draw your eye just as strongly?*
- *Is your attention spread differently now?*
- *Do the other shapes become more important?*
- *Does the sheet become calmer?*
- *Or do you notice something else entirely?*

3 Two areas.

Take your second sheet from 09. Bring the two areas closer to each other: add a few shapes to the loose area or take something away from the dense one.

Tip: In drawing, dark is hard to make light again. Then simply even out the other area instead.

Pause again and again as you go.

- *What happens between the two areas?*
- *Does your eye still wander back and forth?*
- *Does the sheet become calmer?*

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- *Do the two areas become similarly important?*
- *Can you still feel the gradient between them?*
- *Or does a quite different effect appear?*

> **If you get stuck …** Start with the top dog: take something away from it instead of building up the others. More questions that help: Picture Conversation 12.

> *Finally, a question for yourself:*
> ***At what degree of difference was the sheet most interesting to you?***

Your picture conversation

Talking about pictures is something you can learn. Write down your answers in your own words – just for you, no one has to read them. Over time you'll find words for what you see.

Why this exercise

When you make pictures, you can not only strengthen differences but also let them become smaller. What seemed clearly different before can move closer. A shape that ruled everything can give up weight. The gradient between two areas can also become stronger or weaker.

With 09 and 10 you have got to know a tool that works in both directions:

- *I want to make a difference stronger – I can enlarge it.*
- *I want to take a difference back – I can even it out.*

This brings Part 3 to an end. You have experienced how repetition connects, how differences create weight – and how you can change both. *What matters is not whether evening out is better. What matters is what it does to your picture.*

Picture Conversations is a series of 13 exercises – you'll find the worksheets at ekke-scholz.de/en/picture-conversations.
New exercises and thoughts from the studio: **ekke-scholz.de/en/newsletter**

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