

*STYLE*  
CHARACTER  
DESIGN AND  
2D ILLUSTRATION

# ELEMENTS OF ART

FORM x SHAPE

SPACE

LINE

VALUE

COLOUR

TEXTURE

# SHAPE THEORY

## shapes in character design



Chubby, bouncy, smooth, rounded, complete, earth - all circles, infinite.

### Circles

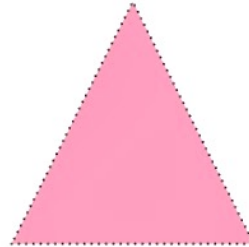
Curved and circular shapes are considered the friendliest as they have no sharp or dangerous corners. Circular shapes in nature has a tendency of being soft and harmless and evoke likable characters. Many of the most well-known protagonists are designed around circular concepts (Solarski 2012:180).



Boring, flat, ordered, bold, rigid, strong, dependable.

### Squares

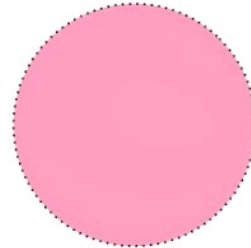
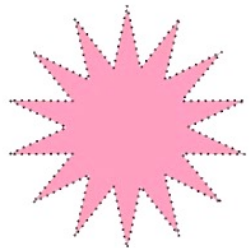
Square-like shapes relate to straight vertical and horizontal lines that communicate strength, stability and confidence. Squares can both be large and daunting or comforting and clumsy. They often depict steadfast characters who are dependable and are commonly used for superheroes or the



Pointy, sharp, angular, jagged, shard, symmetrical, lop sided, unequal sides.

### Triangles

Triangles relate to diagonal and strong, angular lines and are the most dynamic of the three shapes. Bad guys and villains are often based upon dominant triangular concepts, as they appear malicious, sinister and communicate with the most aggression (Bancroft 2006:35). It is the circle's most opposing shape and



### Comparison

The star seems: vibrant, detailed, complex, "evil", sharp, violent, aggressive.

In comparison the circle is: calm, simple, pure, safe, boring, plain.

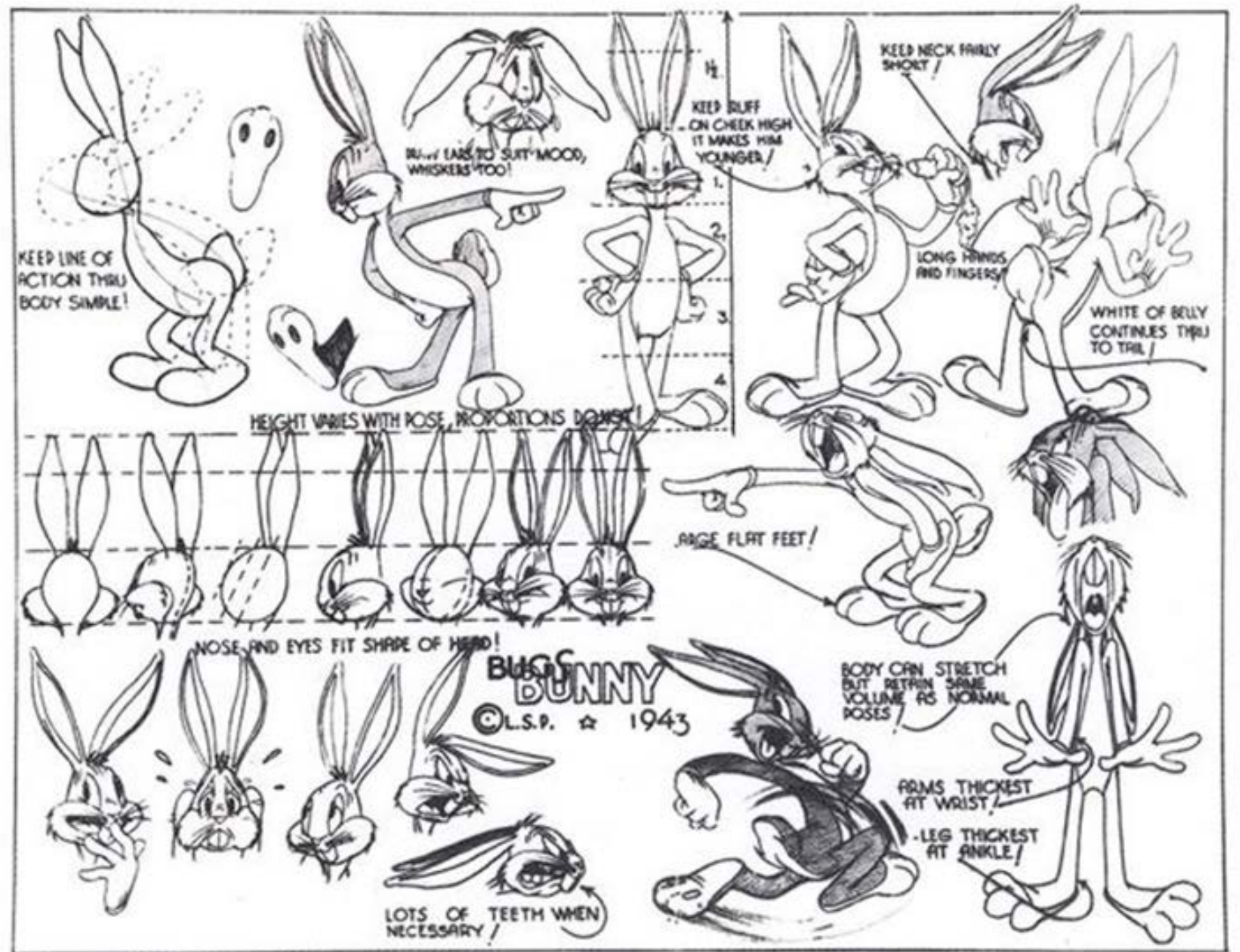
The shape of one single character has the ability to visually communicate on its own, but the visual communication becomes even stronger when placed in relation to another character: A small character that is juxtaposed with a big character will make them seem even bigger and smaller. When creating opposing characters, or a team, it is important that they look good together; by creating a contrast in proportions and body shape it is possible to create visual interest while also revealing something about the character's personality (Bancroft 2006:132).

# SHAPE THEORY





# PROPORTION



# ***STYLE - DESIGN PROBLEM I***

- In Illustrator, choose a shape.
- Working with the chosen shape create letterforms with common characteristics such as weight, proportion, and density.
- After creating a consistent and well-structured set of characters, introduce distortion, randomness, or physicality into your design.

# ***STYLE - DESIGN PROBLEM II***

- On a piece of paper, write down some personality attributes for one imagined character.
- Working using those personality attributes and shape theory, design a character.  
*Think of ways to subvert shape theory using the character design.*
- Using a consistent style, create a companion for the character .

# ***STYLE - DESIGN PROBLEM III***

- In Illustrator, draw the character you have created, using a consistent line art style.
- Export your Illustrator file as a .psd file.
- In Photoshop, add colour, shading and texture to your character.



# ***TASK 2***

- Using shape theory and a consistent style, design a set of 4 simple emojis in Illustrator (1000x1000px).  
*These maybe self-portraits or any object or person you are interested in illustrating.*
- Export these files as .png files with a transparency channel.