

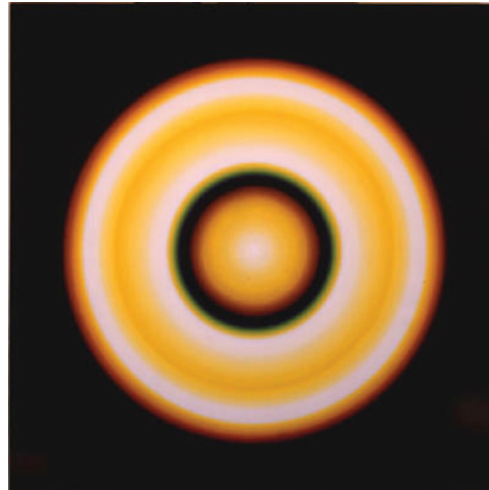
Optical Art, or Op Art, developed as a segment of geometric abstraction in the mid-20th century. Concerned with perception and visual phenomena, images were intended to surprise the viewer and provoke visual confusion.

Op Art paintings generally employ the following art elements:

- 1) **Hard-edge line** – Quick changes are found between color areas.
Color areas are often of one solid color. The Hard-edge painting style is related to Geometric abstraction, Op Art, Post-painterly Abstraction, and Color Field painting.
- 2) **Tonal contrast** – The difference in brightness between different areas of a painting. One common example of tonal contrast is black and white paintings or photography.
- 3) **Figure/ground ambiguity to create optical illusions of movement and shifting special depth** – A visual phenomenon where the understanding of the figure and the background are not constant in an image, and can reverse unexpectedly.



Richard Anuskiewicz, *Sol V*, 1968,
Acrylic on canvas



Peter Sedgley, *Phantasmagoria*, 1966,
Acrylic on linen



Howard Mehring, *Chroma Double*, 1965,
Acrylic on canvas

Can you find examples of each of these elements in the artworks?

When you look at the works in *Optical Impact*, do you notice any pulsating, vibrating, or difficulty focusing?