

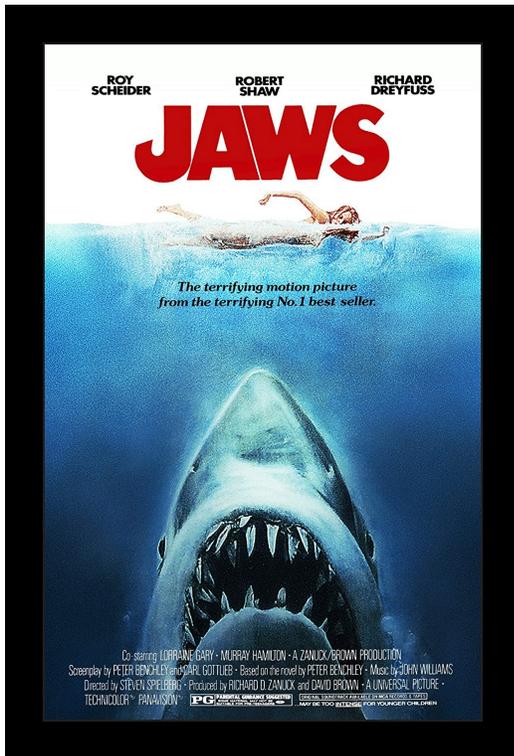
Jasmine Domena

Prof. Matthew C. Lange

COMD3504 - Section OL10

March 15th, 2021

Paper 1



The object I chose is the movie poster for the 1975 film *Jaws*. The *Jaws* poster was made by Roger Kastel for Steven Spielberg's film. The original painting was 20 by 30 inches and actually went missing around the time of the film's release. The film *Jaws* is about a man-eating great white shark who attacks people at the beach of a summer resort town. These events lead to the police chief, a marine biologist, and a professional shark hunter to work together in order to kill the shark to make the summer resort town safe again for tourists.

I choose this poster because I feel like it very successfully uses typophoto in order to convey the story of *Jaws*. *Jaws* was originally a novel before it became a film. The original artwork for this poster used both the cover of the Peter Benchley book and the Steven Spielberg film. Kastel didn't get far in the thriller before finding the part in it that inspired his idea for the movie poster. The part that grabbed his attention was when Chrissie Watkins goes skinny-dipping off the coast of Amity and then gets eaten by the giant great white shark. "I just thought it was a great visual," Kastel comments on his work years later, "I did a very rough

sketch for [Bantam art director] Len Leones while we were talking, and he OK'd it. He told me to make the shark larger and more realistic.”

Kastel's work perfectly supports the idea from Beatrice Warde's 1932 essay "The Crystal Goblet, Or Printing Should Be Invisible." In her essay she states, "...the most important thing about printing is that it conveys thought, ideas, images, from one mind to other minds." This means that the main goal of the work should be to communicate the creator's intended message to their viewers. Kastel successfully does this by using typophoto. As discussed in László Moholy-Nagy's 1925 essay "Typophoto" he describes how, "Typography is communication composed in type. Photography is the visual presentation of what can be optically apprehended. Typophoto is the visually most exact rendering of communication." What this quote means is that typography is communication expressed with type and words. Photography is communication expressed with visual images. Compared to images, type is more direct and means practically exactly what they say meanwhile images rely on what the viewer sees with their own eyes. What typography does is combine the both. It uses both images and type in unison to support each other in creating a coherent message for the viewer to receive through the work.

In Kastel's poster the image he painted and the type he places in the painting instantly creates a story for the viewers. The first thing that stands out is the word "Jaws" which is the title of the film. The word alone does not strike fear into the viewer. By definition according to the Merriam-webster dictionary the word jaws is defined as, "either of two complex cartilaginous or bony structures in most vertebrates that border the mouth, support the soft parts enclosing it, usually bear teeth on their oral margin, and

are an upper that is more or less firmly fused with the skull and a lower that is hinged, movable, and articulated with the temporal bone of either side.” This alone would not spark fear in a viewer. However, when you add the image of a giant shark with its mouth, or jaw open underneath under an unsuspected victim it starts to create fear within the viewer. It starts to tell a suspenseful terrifying story of a woman swimming in the ocean unaware of the great-white shark under her. But not an average great-whaite shark for this shark is way larger than any average sized great-white shark.

This use of typophoto is very successful in conveying this story to the viewer by using photo and text. By making the title just as large as the great white shark in the image it put emphasis on the size. Both the shark and the word jaws are larger than normal. The exaggeration in the depiction of the shark’s size and the font size of the title expresses to the reader how dramatic and over exaggerated things are also putting emphasis on the fear and suspense of the story being told within the movie poster alone, thus accomplishing its goal. For the goal of a movie poster is to give an idea to the plot of a film and convince viewers to pay to see the movie. The poster successfully shows a portion of the story being told of the movie to the point that a viewer will want to go to a theater to purchase a ticket in order to find out what happens next in the story that was starting to be told.

Work Cited

“Jaw.” *Merriam-Webster*, Merriam-Webster,

www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/jaw.

Kastel, Robert. *Jaws*. 1975.

Moholy-Nagy, László. “Typophoto.” 1925.

Tucker, Reed. “How the Famous Poster from 'Jaws' Was Created - and Lost.”

New York Post, New York Post, 27 July 2015,

nypost.com/2015/07/26/how-the-famous-poster-from-jaws-was-created-and-lost/.

Warde, Beatrice. “The Crystal Goblet, or Why Printing Should Be Invisible (1930).”