

## Original Research Article

# An Investigation of the Factors of Enhancing Imagination and Active Audience Engagement in Motion Graphics\*

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Received: 15/12/2024

Accepted: 01/07/2025

Availableonline: 23/09/2025

## Abstract

**Problem statement:** Nowadays, the media have been one of the most significant tools for conveying ideas and information. With the far-fetched technological developments, the emergence of new artistic media with interactive potential offers a new and dynamic visual language for communication and expression. Motion graphics, a multimedia art image, plays a pivotal role in rendering different aesthetic experiences for the audience by blending texts, sounds, and movements. However, a deeper investigation is required to know how motion graphics artwork should be designed to stimulate the audience's imagination actively and prevent them from being passive. This research gap highlights the importance of identifying components that can enrich the audience's aesthetic experience and encourage them to actively interact with the artwork. This study seeks to address the following question: What factors effectively contribute to reinforcing the audience's imagination and active exposure in animated graphics?

**Research objective:** This study attempts to identify the characteristics of motion graphics based on enhancing the imagination and providing a suitable model for the creators of these works in order to actively expose the audience.

**Research method:** This research is fundamental and applied in terms of purpose. It employed a qualitative phenomenological approach. Data was collected through literature review and field studies, then analyzed using coding. The research samples were people who had experience with motion graphics works, as well as experts in the field of visual arts.

**Conclusion:** Research findings show that the main components of evoking the audience's imagination in motion graphics works included connection with reality, eliciting shock and surprise in the audience, attributing human characteristics, breathing life into basic elements of the visual arts and attributing human characteristics, raising questions in the audience's minds, using visual techniques such as combination, transformation, and elimination, the principle of integrity and coherence in all elements, a minimalist approach, the impact of music and sound effects. These components can help producers of motion graphics to stimulate the audience's imagination and enrich their aesthetic experience, thereby encouraging them to actively interact with the artwork.

**Keywords:** *Motion graphics, Audience, Imagination, Aesthetic Experience.*

\* This article extracted from Ph.D. thesis of "Mahdi Attarian" entitled "Codification of Motion Graphics Production Model for Active Encounter of Audience, Based on Strengthening of Imagination" that under supervision of Dr. "Seyed Reza Hosseini" which is doing at Shahed University, Department of Art, Tehran, Iran in 2024.

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## Introduction and Statement of Problem

In the modern world, the media is one of the most important tools used for conveying ideas, concepts, and information. With the far-fetched

technological developments, the emergence of new artistic media with interactive potential offers a new and dynamic visual language for communication and expression. Manovich (2001), one of the most important scholars in the scope of media, argues that issues presented via computers and websites fall into the category of new media. With the changing nature of media, some differences have emerged in their expressive form. As a result, audiences have also incurred diverse aesthetic experiences when facing these media. Motion graphics, as a multimedia art that includes the amalgamation of image, text, sound, and movement, has become one of the most popular visual media with an unmatched ability to generate powerful experiences for audiences.

Notwithstanding the vastness and capabilities of motion graphics in transferring messages and creating visual communication, there is a key challenge in taking full advantage of their potential. The concern is how to design and produce works that not only convey a message but also actively stimulate the audience's imagination and encourage them to interact with the work more deeply. This issue is significant because most of the productions mainly revolve around direct communication and information, and fall short of the full capacity to engage the audience cognitively and emotionally.

This research is an attempt to fill the existing gap in the understanding and application of motion graphics. Analyzing the concept of imagination shows that the main cornerstones of the motion graphics medium, like other artistic media, are imagination and stimulation of this faculty. Imagination has been instrumental in shaping the work and encouraging the audience to actively interact with the artwork. Additionally, the main issue that engages the audience's imagination in animated graphic works is adding the element of movement to inherently static elements. Therefore, in today's world, where many concepts and topics, such as commercial and cultural advertisements, educational and social infographics,

are delivered to the audience via animated graphic works through accessible platforms, it seems necessary to take heed of the way these works are made and the quality of these works in terms of conveying the main message. Enhancing the audience's visual understanding ultimately leads to more active exposure and strengthens the audience's imagination.

The main objective of this research is to identify the characteristics and components of animated graphics based on imagination to develop a suitable and practical model for the creators of such works to actively and deeply engage the audience. Aligned with this goal, the main research question is as follows:

What factors effectively contribute to reinforcing the audience's imagination and active exposure in animated graphics?

## Methodology

This research is fundamental-applied in terms of its purpose. In terms of its nature, it is qualitative. This research draws upon the lived and abstract experiences of individuals using a phenomenological approach. Data were collected from the field and included fieldnotes, questionnaires, and all up-to-date surveys. For this purpose, following the data analysis, concepts were extracted and coding was started; then, factors contributing to the stimulation of the imagination, and the aesthetic experience of the audience were identified. Then, the motion graphic works were examined based on the thematic classification (e.g., educational, commercial, social, cultural, and artistic), and the indicators extracted in the qualitative research. Ten works that were most consistent with the initial concepts and extracted components were selected. Following that, some experts were selected among art professors and experts in one of the three fields: modern art, philosophy of art and aesthetics, and motion graphics. Then they were asked to examine ten previously coded motion graphics. Based on the experts' opinions, the motion graphics of

five final works titled “Crave”, “Understanding Music”, Apple, Flux, and “Hands” from the Honda company were selected as the samples. Relying on the principles of the phenomenological research method, the participants, including people with experience in motion graphics work, were selected and shown five final works. After the observation, the participants participated in a series of in-depth, open, and semi-structured interviews, which are common tools in the phenomenological research method. After extracting themes by the authors of the study from the interviews, practical models for producers of motion graphics works were presented.

### Literature Review

Reviewing the existing literature, including Iranian and international resources such as books, articles, and theses, showed that no research has been conducted directly on factors reinforcing the audience’s imagination and active interactions with motion graphics. However, some studies generally and specifically left out different aspects of the present study. These studies fall into two categories: a) research on the media of motion graphics and b) research on the imagination and its role in improving the aesthetic experience. Motion Graphics (Motions in Visual Communication) is a Persian book written by Sheykhha & Rahnama (2013) on motion graphics. The book begins with the conceptualization of movement and its various meanings among scholars, and then delves into the basic roots of the transferring movement to works of painting and design. History of Motion Graphics, written by Michael Bentacourt (2013), presents a complete description of the history of titling design from the earliest films to the present day. This book is concerned with the discussion of motion graphics and its history, as well as the aesthetic dimensions of this medium.

Schlittler (2014), in an article titled Motion Graphics and Animation explains how the definition of motion graphics poses a challenge for designers in this field. The author raised the question of

what motion graphics were and provided the most trivial answer: a combination of graphic design and animation. Apart from the above-mentioned studies, scholars have attempted to shed light on different approaches to motion graphics. Greene (1995) published a series of articles on education, types of art, and social change in her latest book titled *Releasing the Imagination*, where she underscores imagination as the cornerstone of educational and social reforms.

No research has mainly focused on the subject of this research so far, and available studies only cover a part of the present research. They have specifically focused on motion graphics and have been limited to definitions and history. As detailed earlier, research has addressed imagination and its role in enhancing aesthetic experience. The studies have adopted a merely philosophical and theoretical approach to this issue, or have discussed the impact of the arts in the process of aesthetic education in general rather than examining the impact of an artistic medium on a case-by-case basis.

### Theoretical Foundations

#### • Motion graphics

There have been some challenges in defining this medium. The simplest answer to “What is motion graphics?” is “a combination of graphic design and animation to convey information and ideas” (Schlittler, 2014: 8). This general definition, like most existing definitions, which refers to technical aspects, describes animation as a technique used for the creation of motion graphics. In this approach, just as in animation, images are sequentially placed one after the other to create the illusion of real life; motion graphics designers also use animation techniques to communicate and convey ideas. Motion graphics stands for a contemporary term covering a wide range of areas of design and production. It includes visual and written parts of digital media such as animation, visual effects, film sequences, television graphics, commercials, multimedia presentations and computer games

(Sandhaus, 2006, 1). Simply put, motion graphics is the art of transforming static elements such as graphic elements, images, texts and logos into motion elements by adding the dimension of time to them (Fecher, 2017, 6). “Nhat” argues that anything encompassing the production and creation of the illusion of movement while being matched with the element of sound for use in multimedia displays is motion graphics (Nhat, 2020, 9). This diversity in application and nature of multimedia shows the incomparable capabilities of motion graphics in triggering different layers of perceptions and emotion in the audience.

Scrutinizing the definitions and features presented by experts shows that motion graphics is a multimedia and contemporary art that blends images, texts, sounds, and movements. Its goal is to convey concepts and ideas dynamically and attractively. In this study, motion graphics is defined as an audio-visual medium that can make a deep, meaningful, and stimulating experience for the audience by utilizing animation and visual effects on static and dynamic elements; in particular, its capacity to evoke the imagination distinguishes it from other purely visual forms.

#### • Audience

Audience is a significant and widely used term that is common in mass communication. In the simple linear model of communication (e.g., sources, channels, messages, receivers, and effects), this term stands for the recipient. “Addressed” is equivalent to “audience” in English, which means listener and refers to those who gather at an event to hear a speech. In Arabic and Persian, it also means “addressee” or “addressed”. In a more comprehensive view, the concept of audience is more than a mere recipient. According to Moustouri, audience is the equivalent to the Latin ‘publicus’ or in English ‘public’, which she has used in the introduction of her book ‘Sociology of Audience in the Cultural and Artistic Field’ alongside the term spectator (i.e. visitors to museums, exhibitions, and theater and cinema

audiences) (Mouchtouris, 2015, 15). This distinction is significant because the term ‘public’ refers to a broader group, often with active participation, while ‘spectator’ or ‘listener’ may be perceived more passive. According to McQuail, audience refers to a group of spectators who watch performances and events of a secular nature and have their customs, rules, and expectations regarding the time, place, and content of the performances (Denis, 2008, 13). This definition reflects the cultural and social role of the audience and the mutual expectations between them and the work. During the 1960s to 1980s, the concern was audience interactions. The emphasis was on the transformation of a passive audience into an active and dynamic one. An audience representing a person with an inquisitive characteristic, emphasizing motion beyond seeing, hearing, or reading. According to Langerest in contemporary society, everyone has increasingly become an audience (Victoria, 2014, 334).

Nowadays, with the accessibility of audiences to various media and, consequently, cultural products and productions, mass media have dominated all social dimensions of the audience’s life and have affected the bonds between the viewer and the cultural subject. This transformation has pushed the identity of the individual from the position of a mere viewer to an active consumer, and even in some cases, a producer (prosumer) (Mouchtouris, 2015, 33-36). This change in role signifies the importance of a new approach to the audience in the design of artistic works, especially in dynamic media such as motion graphics.

Given the historical developments and the presented definitions, this research defines the “audience” not just as a passive recipient of the message, but as an active and dynamic mind that can interact, interpret, and participate in creating meaning. In the context of motion graphics, the audience is someone who contributes their experiences, memory, and imaginative capacities, which can go beyond mere observation and enter into a deeper and more personal aesthetic experience. This research aims

to identify the components that stimulate this active potential in the audience and encourage them to participate imaginatively in the work.

### • Imagination

The significance of imagination in human perception, creativity, and experience has made this concept of great interest for philosophical, psychological, and artistic research throughout history. As this research attempts to identify the components of motion graphics that contribute to improving imagination, it is necessary to scrutinize the different aspects of this cognitive faculty from the perspectives of prominent Western and Islamic thinkers. These two intellectual traditions have been chosen to provide profound insights about the nature and functions of imagination based on distinct but complementary approaches. Western thinkers, especially since the modern era, have focused on the epistemological, original, and aesthetic aspects of imagination, while Muslim philosophers addressing the cognitive dimensions have accentuated the importance of imagination in the appreciation of transcendental truths and its relationship with sensual powers. This wide scope of perspectives provides an inclusive theoretical framework for analyzing the imaginative dimensions in motion graphics works. The experts selected in this study (Kant, Hobbes, Frye, Hume, Bachelard, Dewey, and Green from the Western tradition and Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Avicenna, and Al-Ghazali from the Islamic tradition) are dominant and influential figures whose views about imagination are directly related to the creative and perceptual nature of art (especially the visual arts).

### - Imagination from the perspectives of western thinkers

Since ancient times, different perspectives on imagination have emerged. One of the most comprehensive classifications was proposed by Kant, who offered three levels of imagination: regenerative imagination, productive imagination, and aesthetic imagination. According to Kant, regenerative imagination is passive and dependent on past sensory experiences, while productive

imagination is creative and the source of scientific and artistic creations. Aesthetic imagination reflects the highest function of imagination. Although Aesthetic imagination is productive, it is free from the laws governing understanding and is not bound to the world of sensory experience. The main difference between productive and aesthetic imagination is in being voluntary and involuntary (Hejazi, 2011, 155).

In contrast to Kant, scholars such as Hobbes and Hume believe in a close tie between imagination and memory. Hobbes believes that imagination is essentially a form of memory, but one that is largely free from the constraints of reality-based experiences. He believes that imagination cannot invent anything entirely new and that it derives its materials entirely from sensory experience (Brett, 2023, 9). Hume also views imagination as nothing more than a form of memory, writing: “The difference between memory and imagination lies in the superior power and vigor of memory” (ibid., 2023, 9). These views, while considering the role of imagination in creation to be completely unlimited, emphasize its ability to rearrange and combine existing experiences to create new meanings. In another approach, Frye introduces imagination as a “compositor of the mind”; An element that has been left for the sake of novel compositions and “composition for the sake of composition” (Northrop, 1984, 13). This view of Frye emphasizes the independent and self-sufficient aspect of imagination in creating forms and structures. Bachelard adopts a phenomenological approach to imagination. Citing from Bachelard’s *Poetics of Dreaming*, Namvar Motlagh writes: “Imagination, as its lexical etymology assumes, is not the power to shape images of reality; it is the power to shape images that transcend reality. Images that sing reality” (Namvar Motlagh, 2007, 62-64). This definition of Bachelard emphasizes the transformative and creative nature of imagination, which goes beyond the mere representation of reality and creates new realities.

Dewey, a pragmatic philosopher, highlights the contribution of this element to aesthetic experience by examining the role of imagination in art. In his book titled *Art as Experience*, Dewey explains that “Imagination is a way of seeing and feeling things in which they form a unified and complete whole” (Dewey, 2022, 397). He posits that all of our conscious experience has a kind of imaginative quality (Ansari et al., 2014, 56) that should be used not only in the fine arts and aesthetic experience, but also in all human activities (Elias, 2002, 74). Dewey’s emphasis on imagination as a unifying factor in experience is key to examining motion graphic works. Greene also argues that imagination is essential for aesthetic education. From his perspective, imagination acts as an important tool that provides us with an accurate understanding of what is called reality (Greene, 1995, 115). She states that imagination allows people to perceive and feel the world through experience (Pinnar, 2005, 223). In his view, imagination in its descriptive use refers to the process of forming ideas, conjuring up images in the mind, and creating images of what should be but is not. She believes that imagination should be the heart and center of education and research about aesthetic experience (Greene, 2001, 65). Like Dewey, he emphasizes the contribution of imagination in raising consciousness and exceeding the limitations of existing reality.

#### **- Imagination from the perspectives of Islamic thinkers**

From the perspective of Islamic intellectual tradition, the faculty of imagination (the imaginative faculty) is of great importance in the epistemological and psychological system. This faculty is the intermediary between the senses and the intellect, and it is a major factor playing a key role in perception, memory, and creativity. Ishaq al-Kindi classifies the imaginative faculty under the intermediate faculties of the soul. According to his definition, the imaginative faculty creates exhaustive forms without matter. Al-Kindi presents two main characteristics of the faculty of imagination:

first, the creation and retention of forms in the soul, and second, the power of combining forms (Al-Fakhoury & Al-Jar, 2014, 385-386).

Al-Farabi also argues that a faculty known as the “imaginative” can retain the observations of the senses even after their absence. Also, this faculty can combine some tangibles with others while separating some from others (Bolkhari, 2007, 83). He maintains that the work of the imaginative faculty is the preservation of tangibles after their absence (Farabi, 1982, 187). Farabi’s view shares a resemblance with Kendi’s because both emphasize the composite aspect of imagination, indicating a common intellectual trend in the Islamic tradition. Avicenna refers to the faculty of imagination as “masoura,” which is responsible for preserving and maintaining common forms after the absence of tangibles (Avicenna, 1996, 335). He believes that, in addition to preserving tangible forms, the faculty of imagination also preserves forms that are obtained through the combination and elaboration of the faculty of reason (ibid., 340). Ibn Sina believed that the faculty of imagination can invent specific forms through its combination and elaboration (Mohamadykia, 2010, 262). Ibn Sina’s emphasis on the ability to “invent” new forms through imagination distinguishes it from mere memory, highlighting a creative aspect of it.

Ghazali also identifies three roles for imagination: 1. Recalling forms, meanings, and concepts stored in memory, 2. Analyzing forms, meanings, and concepts, and recalling them 3. Combining forms, meanings, and concepts, and creating new combinations (Mehrmohammadi & Hosseinkhani, 2011, 25). Ghazali’s view presents a blend of the memory, analytical, and creative aspects of imagination, which turns it into a comprehensive faculty in the process of perception and creation.

Examining the perspectives of Western and Muslim thinkers shows that despite differences in philosophical frameworks, Western thinkers share substantial commonalities in the definition

and functions of imagination. All perspectives consider imagination to be a faculty that goes beyond the mere representation of reality; whether by rearranging and combining data from memory and sensory experience (Hobbes, Hume, Kennedy, Al-Farabi, Al-Ghazali), or by creating completely new images and concepts independent of reality (Kant, Frye, Bachelard, Dewey, Green, Avicenna). In this study, “imagination” is defined as an active and dynamic cognitive faculty that can reconstruct and combine sensory data with memory and create new images, concepts, and worlds. This faculty, by arousing curiosity, encouraging interpretation, and allowing for identification, transforms the audience from a passive observer to an active participant in the process of perceiving a work of art. In other words, imagination in this research is a force that, when faced with motion graphic works, serves as the basis for “active aesthetic experience” and a deeper understanding of the meaning of the work.

#### • **Aesthetic experience**

Aesthetic experience is a key concept in the philosophy of art and aesthetics. It refers to the ways in which individuals encounter artworks and how these encounters shape their perception, emotions, and thinking. This experience goes beyond simple observation or rational understanding, connecting instead to the deeper emotional and existential dimensions of the individual.

#### - **Aesthetic experience from the perspective of western thinkers**

Kant is one of the first Western thinkers who made a distinction between aesthetic judgments and cognitive judgments. He argues that “taste is the faculty of judging an object, or the representation of it, by means of a feeling of pleasure or displeasure without any interest. That which gives rise to such satisfaction is called beautiful.” Accordingly, aesthetic judgment must be free from any purpose, utility, or personal gratification, and should remain impartial and independent of function or usefulness (Kant, 2000). This approach emphasizes the independence of art and

aesthetic experience from practical and cognitive goals. Dewey, with a pragmatic and empiricist perspective, places the concept of “experience” at the center of his philosophy. According to him, experience is the result of a person’s continuous and cyclical interactions with his environment, which makes a change in the situation and ultimately, the acquisition of experience (Dewey, 1991, 24). Dewey distinguishes between “experience” and “aesthetic experience” and considers “experience” as the first stage serving as the groundwork for aesthetic experience (Ansari et al., 2014, 53). He believes that aesthetic experience has an imaginative quality and imagination plays a key role in such experience. One of these roles is to “integrate the experience and make it coherent”; imagination is the factor that leads to the unification of all elements (sense, emotion, reason) in the experience. Another role of imagination in experience is to “transform the experience into a conscious and aesthetic experience” through continuity in past and present experiences (Dewey, 2022, 407). Thus, Dewey emphasizes the active role of imagination in constructing and giving meaning to aesthetic experience.

Green also has great emphasis on aesthetic experience and views it as an active process. For him, the starting point of this experience is “highlighting certain aspects of works of art” such as paintings, plays, poems, and music by asking specific questions because people are not initially aware of the process of paying attention, but are stimulated by these questions (Greene, 1986, 60). In his point of view, one of the major tasks of aesthetic education is “increasing the level of attention and qualitative perception” and questioning is an important tool for this purpose (ibid., 1986). Moreover, artistic understanding is an essential stage of aesthetic education. However, he argues that aesthetic understanding is not something inherited that only certain people can benefit from. For him, the act of understanding and paying attention is something that can be learned, which

includes various efforts to make people familiar with specific artistic structures, language, history, and their study (Greene, 1981, 123). Green's emphasis on the role of questioning and activating the audience's mind in the aesthetic experience is closely associated with the potential of motion graphics in arousing curiosity.

#### **- Aesthetic experience from the perspective of islamic thinkers**

In the Islamic intellectual tradition, the term "aesthetic experience" has not been used in its modern form. However, the discussions of "pleasure in beauty", "perception of beauty," and "the impact of art on the soul" abundantly recur in the works of Muslim philosophers and mystics, which can be conceptual equivalents of this term. These views are often intertwined with the foundations of ontology and theology and regard beauty as a manifestation of truth.

Unlike Kant's approach that underlines impartial distance, in Islamic thought, the aesthetic experience is often tied to "approach to truth" and "spiritual intuition". Many philosophers and mystics view art and beauty as a means to approach God and understand the truths of the world (Hemati, 2006). For instance, in Suhrawardi's Ishraqi Wisdom, beauty is associated with light and presence, and its perception is a kind of development and intuition (ibid., 2006).

In the school of Ibn Sina, which was detailed earlier under the headline of imagination, the faculty of imagination (masurah) plays a pivotal role in the perception of particular and general forms as well as the creation of new forms. Such forms, whether in the material world or the world of the inner world, can be the source of pleasure and the perception of beauty. Ibn Sina considers pleasure to be the result of the gentle perception and perfection of an object, and the perception of beauty is also a type of perception of perfection. Accordingly, he argues that "pleasure is the perception of a good that is considered by the faculty of perception of perfection"

(Abn Sina, 2001, 335). Therefore, the experience of beauty can be defined in this framework as the perception of perfection and proportion of forms by the faculties of the soul, including imagination (Ainechi & Khandaqi, 2023, 38). Ghazali, who refers to the three-layered role of imagination, also considers beauty in proportion and harmony and consider pleasure from it as one of the levels of perception. He believes that "the beauty of every object lies in the perfection that it deserves" (Ghazali, 2013). The perception of beauty, whether in tangible or in intelligible things, can lead to the creation of states in the soul that bring a special kind of "experience" to the individual. This experience, beyond mere sensory perception, also addresses the deeper spiritual and spiritual dimensions of man and is a way to remove the veil of truth and have spiritual "ecstasy" (Markazi & Sharifzadeh, 2021, 11-9).

At large, Muslim thinkers consider the experience of beauty not merely a passive sensation, but an active and multifaceted process in which the sensual powers (including imagination) and different levels of perception (i.e. sensory, imaginary, intellectual) are involved. This experience is often accompanied by the goal of "giving meaning" and "guiding to truth" and highlights the role of art in reminder and reflection.

With regard the views presented by Western thinkers (Kant, Dewey, Greene) who underscore the perceptual, active, and integrative aspects of imagination in aesthetic experience, as well as the views of Muslim thinkers (Avicenna, Ghazali, and others) who relate this experience to the perception of perfection, spiritual intuition, and the role of sensual powers (including imagination), in this study, "aesthetic experience" is defined as an active and dynamic perceptual-emotional process.

This experience occurs when the audience (using their imagination and mental backgrounds) interacts with the work of art (here, motion graphics). "Aesthetic experience" in this study, beyond mere sensory pleasure, refers to a deep

encounter with the work in which the audience, by activating their imagination, “discovers hidden meanings”, “establishes emotional connections,” and “constructs new mental worlds”, and ultimately achieves a comprehensive and integrated understanding and perception of the work. This process not only enhances the audience’s attention and perception but also leads to the creation of a unique and personal experience that takes them out of a passive state and turns them into active participants in the creation of meaning.

### Imagination-Inducing Factors in Motion Graphics: From Theory to Practice

After an in-depth and analytical study of the theoretical foundations of motion graphics, audience, imagination, and aesthetic experience, the data collection and analysis phase was conducted to identify and present a model for imaginative components in motion graphics. Based on key components extracted from the perspectives of Western and Islamic scholars in the field of imagination and aesthetic experience (as explained in the previous sections), an initial framework for analyzing motion graphics works was developed. This initial framework, which is the result of a comprehensive review of the theoretical literature,

can be seen in Fig. 1. Based on this theoretical framework and the capacities of the motion graphics medium in arousing the imagination, 10 motion graphics works were selected from almost 300 works. This initial selection was made to cover as many theoretical components as possible. In the next phase, 5 out of 10 selected works were reselected based on the opinion and consensus of professors and experts in the fields of motion graphics, new art, and aesthetics, as the most representative works that had the greatest affinity and conformity with the imaginative theoretical components. Figs. 2 to 6 show views of these works, and the link to display and view each work is also provided below the image. Data about these works can be seen in Table 1.

After selecting the representative works, the participants of the study, including people with experience in motion graphic media, were identified. The selected works were shown to them, and then qualitative data were collected using an open-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to elicit the audience’s views and experiences of the imaginative components, with direct reference to the theoretical framework of the research. These questions are as follows:

1. In your opinion, what factors in a motion graphic

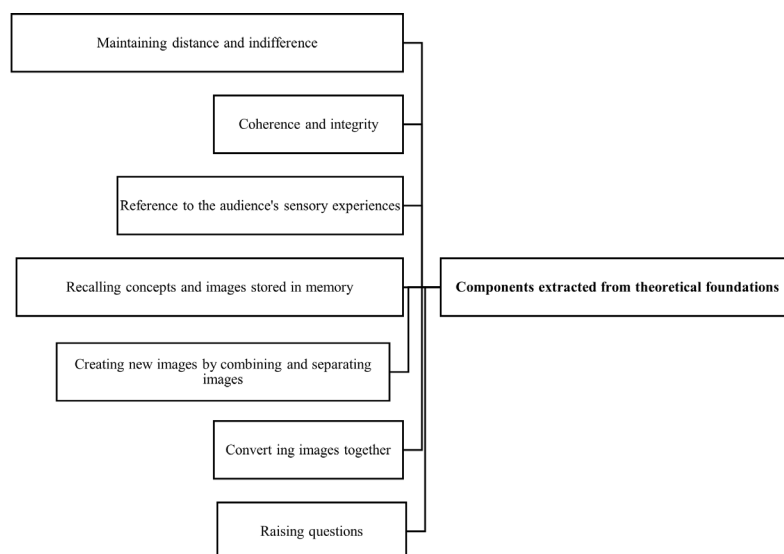


Fig. 1. Components extracted from theoretical foundations on imagination and the significance and role of this cognitive faculty in enhancing aesthetic experience. Source: Authors.

Table 1. Characteristics of the iconic motion graphics works. Source: Authors.

Name of the Work	Producer of the Work	Year of the Work
The opening sequence of Crave	Raleigh Stewart	2012
The motion graphics of <i>Understand Music</i>	Florian Geyer	2012
The motion graphics of Apple Company	Vietnam Production House	2016
The motion graphics of Flux	Candas Sisman	2010
The motion graphics of Hands	Nexus Studio	2014



Fig. 2. Shots of the Iconic Work of No 1. A screenshot at 0:14", B screenshot at 1:08". Source: [Work#1-The opening sequence of Crave.](#)

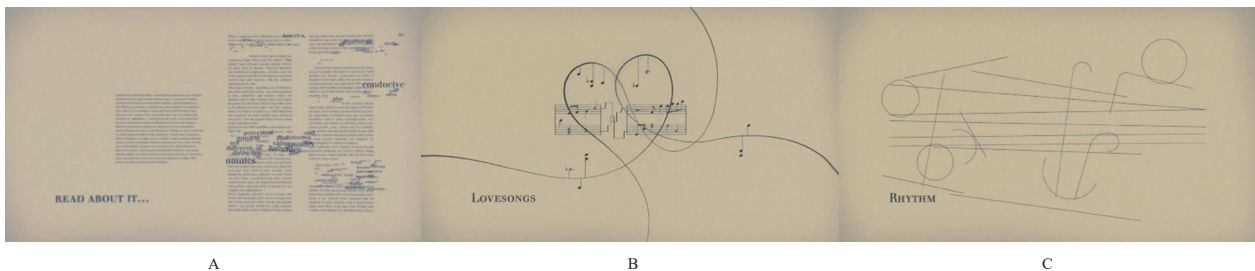


Fig 3. Shots of the Iconic Work of No. 2. A screenshot at 0:23", B screenshot at 1:10", C screenshot at 1:22". Source: [Work #2- The Motion Graphics of Understand Music.](#)

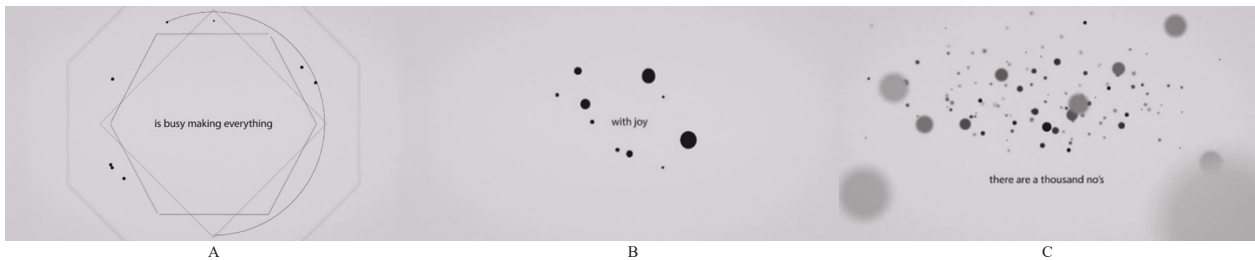


Fig. 4. Shots of the Iconic Work of No. 3. A screenshot at 0:7", B screenshot at 0:20", C screenshot at 0:59". Source: [Work #3- The Motion Graphics of Apple Company.](#)

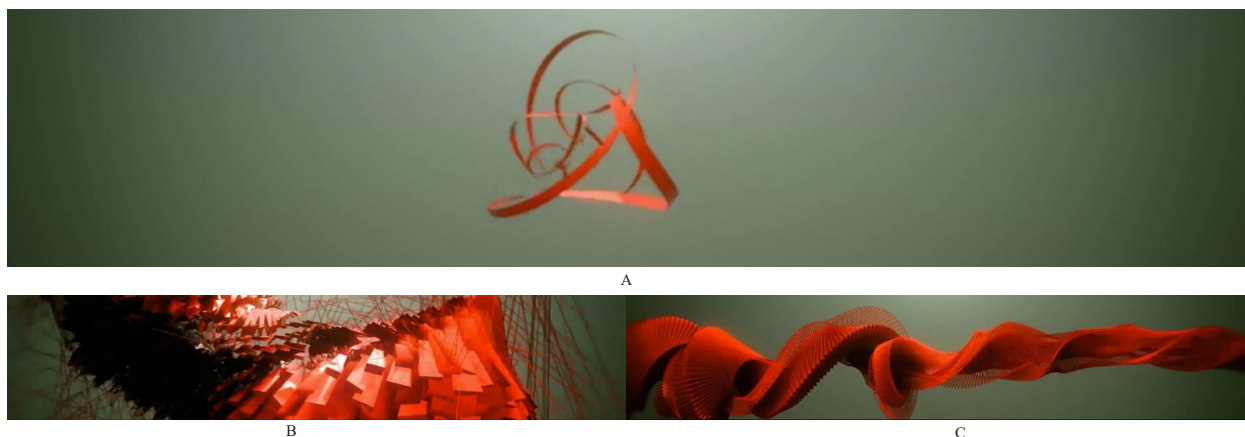


Fig. 5. Shots of the Iconic Work of No. 4. A screenshot at 0:59", B screenshot at 1:42", C screenshot at 2:36". Source: [Work #4- The Motion Graphics of Flux.](#)



A



B



C

Fig. 6. Shots of the Iconic Work of No. A screenshot at 0:59", B screenshot at 1:42", C screenshot at 2:36". Source: [Work #- The Motion Graphics of Honda Company](#).

work stimulate the imagination? (This is a general question that attempts to capture the audience's mental components).

2. Based on the observed motion graphic samples, which features of these samples do you think have evoked your imagination? (This question seeks to find objective samples of imaginative components in the exhibited works).

3. In your opinion, how have the integration and coherence of the visual and narrative elements in the observed examples manifested in your experience of the work? (This question is directly related to the concept of "coherence" in theoretical foundations

and examines its impact on the aesthetic experience and imagination of the audience).

4. Which factors in the observed samples have evoked your sensory experience or reminded you of personal or collective memory? (This question examines the relationship between "connection with reality" and memory, which is an imaginative component in theoretical foundations).

5. How can the innovative and creative aspects of the observed samples (such as creating surprise, transforming forms, etc.) be explained, and what impact have they had on you? (This question examines factors such as "creating shock and surprise" and "using visual techniques of combination, transformation, and elimination).

6. What factors have raised questions for you when you saw the observed samples, or which ones have made you think? (This question attempts to examine the component of "creating questions in the audience). In the next phase, open, axial, and selective coding were used to extract and analyze the interviews. [Tables 2 to 5](#) have tabulated some of the concepts with the highest frequency, along with the initial (open) codes for each concept. (Some of the tables have not been presented due to space limitations.)

## Coding Process and Extraction of Final Categories

Following open coding and 40 initial codes from the total number of interviewees' responses were extracted, the next phase in the data analysis was axial coding. At this phase, the conceptual relationships between the initial codes were examined. A total of 17 subcategories were extracted from common concepts. The axial codes, which represent semantic clusters of the audience's responses, are shown in [Table 6](#). Finally, in the selective coding stage, by examining the 17 axial codes and their relationships in more detail, 8 main categories were obtained. ([Table 7](#)). These 8 categories are an inclusive summary of the imaginative factors in motion graphics from the audience's perspective and include the following:

Table 2. Initial concepts and codes emerged about stimulating and imaginative trigger factors in motion graphics. Source: Authers.

Primary codes	Concepts emerged from the interviews (Examples of recurring responses)
Establishing concepts and forming mental images	Colors or shapes that evoke different things in the mind, creating an image in the mind based on music or sound effects, and associated concepts
Factors and elements anchored in reality	Familiarity anchored in reality; sensory associations that we have for real and are familiar to us; elements associated with reality and familiar; prior knowledge about the event in question
Using unpredictable factors on the audience	Anything unpredictable; being surprised; the unpredictability of events; the unpredictability of movements; unexpected and unpredictable events.
Eliciting shock and surprise in the audience	Eliciting surprise and demonstrating impossible things; giving shock; delivering sudden shocks; surprising; having a surprise
Attributing human characteristics to objects	Giving life to inanimate elements; attributing the properties of one thing to another; giving life to objects; giving life to elements that we do not expect to move; and attributing the behavioral properties of one thing to another.
Moving the basic elements of the visual arts	Moving things that don't move in the real world, moving lines, and things that aren't expected to move.
Arousing curiosity and raising questions in the audience's mind	Creating a sense of curiosity; things that need to be discovered; creating curiosity; creating questions for the audience; being questionable; having a hook; and creating a space for the audience to decipher
Merging one or more forms or transforming forms into each other	Visualizing events or characters while reading a storybook; combining several different features into one thing; transformation and simulation; forms that are created from other forms; transformation of forms into each other; things becoming one another; morph; transformations.
Using the power of music to understand the work better	Music and creating spaces to convey concepts; the impact of music on understanding the work
Using sound effects to convey concepts and a sense of movement better	Sound effects, voice-over, and evoking emotions through sound effects
Using simple visual language and avoiding rambling	Brevity and simplicity; using the simplest elements to convey the message; being minimalist; using simple and minimal tools; being minimalist and simple.

Table 3. Initial concepts and codes emerged about the integrity and coherence of elements. Source: Authers.

Primary codes	Concepts emerged from the interviews (Examples of recurring responses)
Color coordination throughout the entire work	Visual color and form; uniform color identity; colors related to concepts and themes; harmonious color palette; consistent and distinct color scheme from start to finish; consistent color space.
Consistent identity in the forms and visual space of the work	Uniform formal identity; distinct and consistent style; visual elements and composition; consistent style; consistent visual elements and theme; coherence of forms
Harmonious and seamless connection between music and visual elements	Consistent musical rhythm and harmonious peaks and valleys with forms and movements; connection of music with visual elements and movements; harmony of image and sound; harmony of music and image; harmony between sound and image; harmony of movement and music; harmony of music and movement

Table 4. Initial coding of creative aspects. Source: Authers.

Primary codes	Concepts emerged from the interviews (Examples of recurring responses)
Conveying the concepts and message of the work in simple language without any exaggeration	Minimalism of the message; conveying the message using the most minimal elements; conveying concepts with the minimum elements; conveying deep concepts with the simplest forms; conveying the message in the simplest form
Using words and their animation to convey the message of the work better	Using words and concepts; illustrating concepts and sentences using movements and animation; narration and expression; having a story; using text or words to convey concepts; scenarios; using text to convey a message; using text.
Eliciting shock and surprise in the audience	Surprising and raising a sense of curiosity; unpredictability of events; shocking the audience; surprising; and surprises within the work
Animating static visual elements	Moving things we don't expect to move; moving lines
Source to real and familiar experiences of the audience	Evocations of reality using the simplest things; using Sources and associations; using elements that are familiar to people

Table 5. Initial concepts and codes extracted around questionable factors. Source: Authers.

Primary codes	Concepts emerged from the interviews (Examples of recurring responses)
The message and theme that each motion graphic work intends to convey	Scenarios and stories; discovering the meanings of words; scenario and narrative of the work; theme; scenario of what happens next; theme and narrative; theme and message of the work; what message it wants to convey; what message is going to be conveyed; theme and suspense in conveying the message.

Table 6. Axial codes emerged from initial coding. Source: Authors

Axial Codes	Common concepts extracted from initial coding (related initial codes)
Concepts that are rooted in reality and familiar to the audience	Associating concepts and forming images in the mind, factors and elements that are rooted in reality, referring to real and familiar experiences for the audience, using symbols
Using the audience’s memory and referring to previous experiences	The sound of turning pages and studying and reading a book, the feeling of childhood games with toys, and scribbling on a notebook.
Shocking the audience with completely unpredictable events	Using factors that are unpredictable for the audience, shocking the audience
Attributing behavioral characteristics to elements that inherently lack these characteristics	Attributing human characteristics to objects; attributing the characteristics of one thing to another.
Adding an element of movement to static visual elements (such as dots and lines)	Moving the basic elements of the visual arts, moving static visual elements.
Creating moments in the work that make the audience ask questions and stimulate their curiosity	Arousing a sense of curiosity in the audience, placing a hook and the need to discover and decipher, creating suspense and mental knots in the narrative of the work
Evoking the imagination through the combination and transformation of visual elements	Combining one or more forms, things are becoming each other, forms that are created in the work from other forms.
Using the capabilities of audio elements to better understand the effect	Using the power of music to better understand the work, using sound effects to better convey the concepts and sense of movement, and connecting music with the movements of visual elements.
A simple expression, free from exaggeration and visual and content complexities.	Using the simplest elements to convey the message, creating simple and minimal visual spaces, and avoiding exaggeration and cluttering the spaces.
Unity and coherence of the narrative of the work	Harmony between form and content, coherence, and integrity in the scenario
Maintaining a consistent visual identity throughout the entire work, along with musical harmony	Consistent identity in the forms and visual space of the work, color harmony throughout the work, and harmony of music and movements.
The theme and message of the work	The message and theme that each animated graphic work intends to convey, scenarios, and stories
Discovering the messages and concepts hidden in each word or sentence, and utilizing the capabilities of letters for animation	Using words and animating them; discovering the concepts of words; visualizing concepts and sentences.
Using abstract visual forms	Using intangible forms; Using geometric and abstract shapes.
Paying attention to the audience’s life and environmental experiences	Experiencing life and facing challenges and limitations; People’s living environment; Connecting with people.
Events and moments in the work that do not follow the usual rules of the audience’s mind	Showing impossible things and things outside the audience’s mental logic; being outside the principles and rules; breaking habits (for example, things that should be in their place but are not).
Creating an atmosphere that forces the audience to guess and imagine to complete	The incompleteness and omission of things; the incompleteness of things and the idea of what could replace them; creating a negative space for the audience to think.

Table 7. Primary components (Main codes) emerged from selective coding. Source: Authors.

Primary components	Description
Connection with Reality	The use of visual and conceptual elements, symbols, or references that are rooted in the audience’s sensory experiences, memories, and familiar world provides a context for activating the imagination and a deeper understanding of the work.
Eliciting Shock and Surprise in the Audience	The use of unexpected and unpredictable events, movements, or forms that operate outside the usual logic of the audience’s mind disrupts expectations and stimulates their curiosity.
Breathing Life into Basic Elements of the Visual Arts and Attributing Human Characteristics	Giving behavioral characteristics, emotions, or human traits to objects, forms, or abstract elements that they inherently lack, to create empathy and enrich the audience’s imaginative experience.
Raising Questions in the Audience’s Minds	Designing the work in a way that creates ambiguities, suspense, or spaces that require decoding in the audience’s mind, forcing them to think, discover, and actively participate in completing the meaning.
Using Visual Techniques Such as Combination, Transformation, and Elimination	Creative use of the visual capabilities of motion graphics to create new forms by merging or reshaping elements, or deliberately omitting details to activate the audience’s imagination in completing the mental image.
The Principle of Integrity and Coherence in All Elements	Maintaining harmony and unity between all visual, audio, and narrative elements of the work, so that the audience’s mental flow is not disrupted and they receive a unified and coherent experience of the work that gives direction to their imagination.

Rest of Table 7.

Primary components	Description
Minimalist approach	Using minimal visual and verbal elements, avoiding unnecessary verbiage and complexity, to create space for the audience’s imagination to actively participate in filling in the gaps and discovering hidden meanings.
The Impact of Music and Sound Effects	Using auditory elements (music and sound) as a complementary and powerful tool to enhance the visual space, convey emotions, create rhythm, and instill a sense of movement, which helps to deepen understanding and stimulate the audience’s imagination.

- Connection with reality
- Eliciting shock and surprise in the audience
- Breathing Life into basic elements of the visual arts and attributing human characteristics
- Raising questions in the audience’s minds
- Using visual techniques such as combination, transformation, and elimination
- The principle of integrity and coherence in all elements
- Minimalist approach
- The impact of music and sound effects

These categories (main codes) are recognized as the final pattern and main factor in creating animated graphic works based on enhancing imagination in this research, and each of them will be described below.

### Research Findings: Imaginative Components in Motion Graphics

As explained in the methodology section, the analysis of qualitative data from the interviews (open, axial, and selective coding) led to the identification of 8 main categories that are known as a model for creating motion graphics works based on enhancing imagination. In the following, each of these categories is described based on the responses of the interviewees and in connection with the theoretical foundations explained:

#### • Connection with reality

One of the key imaginative factors is the references to and associations with real things in the work. Memory, as a source of individual and collective experiences and memories, can render the audience’s artistic experience and deepen their perceptions, and make them more personal by evoking emotions and reminiscences of the past. Additionally, the association with reality and the employment of the

audience’s sensory and lived experiences reinforce the sense of proximity and connection with the work and, as a result, serve as a basis for their active imagination. Hobbes also confirmed that imagination creates and produces novel things and frees itself from limitations by utilizing sensory experiences and events that specifically originate from memory (Brett, 2023). As Hume also points out, the equality of imagination and memory. It also follows from the responses of the interviewees that the visual and audio references and associations that are placed in the work, and use the audience’s memory, play an important role in evoking their imagination.

#### • Eliciting shock and surprise in the audience

A large number of interviewees highlighted the impact of unpredictable and shocking factors in evoking the imagination. Shock can serve as a factor that frees the audience’s mind from the predicted and linear paths and compels them to reconsider and reinterpret things. As a result of this process, the audience’s mind turns from a passive state to an active and dynamic one. Similarly, Bachelard also believes that in such surprising and unexpected circumstances that the audience faces the surrounding environment and the work of art transforms their vision and provides them with the opportunity to be creative in such a space (Bachelard, 2023). This finding confirms the transformative role of surprise in evoking the imagination.

#### • Breathing life into basic elements of the visual arts and attributing human characteristics

Essentially, motion graphics are an abstract media that deal with elements that inherently lack the element of movement and other human

characteristics. The range of such elements ranges from objects that are somehow absent in our reality to basic elements of the visual arts, such as dots and lines. The use of animation techniques in motion graphics is of great importance and, according to the responses received, is one of the important factors that stimulates the audience's imagination. By moving and attributing human characteristics to simple elements such as lines or dots, complex concepts can be conveyed and made understandable to the audience. On the other hand, when the audience encounters elements and objects that have acquired human characteristics in a motion graphic work, they begin to identify and establish a connection between that element and the attributed characteristics, and the audience's imagination begins.

#### • **Raising questions in the audience's minds**

At large, there is a meaningful link between raising questions and evoking the imagination. Both factors include a process of raising a sense of curiosity and seeking new and original answers. When the mind is faced with unknown concepts, it relies on imagination to discover and answer the question. If the questions are multifaceted and deep, imagination helps the person to go for deeper answers and look at the subject from diverse perspectives. The same is true for the artwork. The more successful a work of art is in terms of evoking the audience's curiosity, the more effective it will be in boosting their attention and perception (Greene, 1986). A medium such as motion graphics, which is inherently highly abstract, can raise many questions in the minds of the audience and force them to imagine and try to discover the answer. The symbolic elements present in a motion graphic work raise questions in the minds of the audience and force them to imagine the concepts beyond them. Also, the questions prompt the audience to move away from the status of a mere and passive observer, gaining a visual experience of an active participant, using their imagination to discover the concepts and messages hidden in the work. As emerged from the interviews, the factor

that most creates questions and curiosity for the audience is the message and concept of the work.

#### • **Using visual techniques such as combination, transformation, and elimination**

Visual forms and shapes are a very wide, unlimited, and miscellaneous space that, with a little change, can drag the audience from one space to another and engage their imagination. As mentioned earlier under the theme of association with reality, the stuff used by imagination is borrowed from memory, with which a new element can be created as those elements are combined. This issue has been highlighted by Frye as one of the functions of imagination (Northrop, 1984) or Farabi, who refers to this issue as one of the capabilities of the imagination (Bolkhari, 1987). Also, the accuracy of the views can be confirmed based on the answers of the interviewees. According to these people, one of the imaginative factors in animated graphic works is the games and events that take place with visual forms and shapes. These techniques contribute to imagination is creating ambiguity and leaving room for interpretation. The creative blend of two shapes and creating a new shape that can convey a different message and concept to the audience; incomplete shapes with the missing parts trigger the audience's mind to complete it, and as a result of this process, the mind is compelled to participate actively in discovering and completing the missing parts. Transforming shapes into each other is also an effective method that helps stimulate and engage the audience's imagination. This transformation, which can occur gradually or swiftly, causes the mind to actively and incessantly move through these changes and try to discover the relationships between the images.

#### • **The principle of integrity and coherence in all elements**

Imagination can be a factor contributing to the unity and coherence of elements (as was proposed in the theoretical foundations section from Maxine Green's perspective, it can be a means through which a coherent world is achieved) (Pinnar, 2005). Also, the

coherence and unity of elements can be effective in evoking the imagination of the audience. Coherence in all elements and elements of moving graphic works, from a fixed visual identity to narrative coherence and also sound elements, will have a significant effect on the imagination and perception of the audience. The existence of coherence in the work prevents the mind from becoming confused and disorganized and allows it to process and understand the work in a creative and free way. This is what John Sweller calls the cognitive load theory. According to this view, we should avoid things that cause useless and ineffective mental efforts and have no benefit other than consuming energy and complicating the understanding of the subject (Sweller, 1998). Coherence in all elements of the subject and message is a factor that defines a general framework and scope for the audience. The subject and manner of narration of the work are among the powerful tools in evoking the imagination. Especially if this message targets the emotions of the audience, it can make the audience establish an emotional connection with the work. If there are complex concepts hidden in the message of the work, it will lead the audience to the path of imagination and analysis. Narration allows the audience to imagine themselves in the space of the story and use their imagination to visualize the narrative. The use of words and the capabilities that letters provide to the producer of the work in terms of animation are also imaginative factors. Words that, in addition to their semantic load, can convey the desired message more effectively by adding the element of movement and engaging the audience's imagination. Another significant factor that emerged from the data as a factor that stimulates imagination is the minimalist approach to producing a motion graphic work. In a minimalist work, the removal of details and redundant elements allows the audience's minds to actively involve themselves in completing the empty spaces and use their imagination to understand the concepts of the work. Simplifying and creating negative spaces and

removing details in motion graphics (whether in colors and visual forms, in the type of movements, or even in the musical atmosphere) gives the audience the space to freely delve into the work. Minimalism in motion graphic works can move towards complete abstraction, to the point where the simplest visual forms are used to display and convey a complex concept.

#### • **Minimalist approach**

Another important factor that emerged from the responses of individuals as a factor that stimulates imagination is the minimalist approach in producing a motion graphic work. In a minimalist work, the removal of unnecessary details and elements causes the audience's mind to actively take action to complete the empty spaces and to use their imagination to understand the concepts of the work. Simplifying and creating negative spaces and removing details in motion graphics (whether in colors and visual forms, in the type of movements, or even in the musical space) gives the audience the space to freely delve into the work. Minimalism in motion graphic works can progress towards complete abstraction, to the point where the simplest visual forms are used to display and convey a complex concept.

#### • **The impact of music and sound effects**

Musical elements have an important place and role in motion graphic works, and a motion graphic work without music or sound effects loses a large part of its effectiveness. These elements serve as a complement to the image and help to better understand the work by creating emotional and expressive layers and using the audience's sense of hearing. According to the responses received from the interviewees, sound effects play an even greater role than music in stimulating the audience's imagination. The movements of the visual elements and the feeling and message they intend to convey are completed by the placement of sound effects. Sound elements in a motion graphic work create different sensory spaces by using the audience's imagination and are effective in conveying the concepts intended by the artist.

## Conclusion

The present study was an attempt to identify the components of imagination-based motion graphics to engage the audience actively with the work, boost their imagination, and create a unique aesthetic experience for them. Examining theoretical foundations and analyzing interviews and motion graphics works highlight several factors evoking the audience's imagination. The factors fall into 8 main categories. Connection with reality (by referring to individual and collective experiences and memories), eliciting shock and surprise in the audience (by using unexpected and non-logical elements), breathing life into basic elements of the visual arts and attributing human characteristics (to identify and convey complex concepts), raising questions in the audience's minds (to encourage the audience to seek new answers), using visual techniques such as combination, transformation, and elimination (to activate the mind in completing and interpreting), the principle of integrity and coherence in all elements (to prevent mental confusion and guide the imagination), a minimalist approach (to activate the imagination in completing empty spaces), and the impact of music and sound effects (as a complement to the image and creating emotional layers). Finally, in response to the research question of "What components should a suitable model for creators of motion graphics have to engage the audience actively?", it can be said that this model should include the above 8 main components. The blend of these components can help motion graphics producers use imagination and creativity to create more engaging, impactful, and profound works that not only effectively convey the main message but also create a rich and active experience for the audience.

## Declaration of No Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest in conducting this research.

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#### HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Attarian, M., & Hosseini, S. R. (2025). An Investigation of the Factors of Enhancing Imagination and Active Audience Engagement in Motion Graphics. *Bagh-e Nazar*, 22(148), 53-70.

DOI: [10.22034/bagh.2025.493336.5720](https://doi.org/10.22034/bagh.2025.493336.5720)

URL: [https://www.bagh-sj.com/article\\_226521.html?lang=en](https://www.bagh-sj.com/article_226521.html?lang=en)

