This exercise is designed to strengthen a student’s visual awareness to the images surrounding us. Cropping and juxtaposition of everyday and (possibly) banal images will generate new meanings and constitute a new work of art in the form of a diptych.

MATERIALS
- As many magazines and newspapers as possible
- Tape and glue
- Photocopier

INSTRUCTIONS
1. Each student is given a 4.5cm x 6cm frame: a hole cut out in a (letter-size) sheet of black paper.

2. They are given keywords (e.g., tenderness, restraint, conflict, fear, hatred, jazz, rock, fragile, hard, peace, delicate).

3. Examining newspapers and magazines through the frame, the student should crop anything that relates to the theme: images, words, colours, direction, and composition. This step is to be done quickly, since the student should cut out as many small images as possible within an hour.

4. Images are collected in piles corresponding to the different words.

5. Assemble images with tape from the same pile to form diptychs expressing a given concept/word. The parameters for the diptychs can vary: abstract, figurative, only black-and-white, black-and-white versus colour, text versus text, etc., but the diptychs should all be made of “complementary” images, one image informing the other one.

6. Glue the diptychs together to form a mini booklet, with careful attention to the order in which they are glued. (You glue the back of the second image of your first diptych to the back of the first image of your second diptych, etc.)

7. Photocopy and enlarge as big as possible on the photocopy machine the best diptychs; they are pinned to the classroom wall for a final review at the end of the class.

Students rediscover while working the details of the images themselves, going beyond the first fast and obvious meaning, and the concept of contrasting and complementary images, forms, directions, colours, how they influence each other, and thus create meaning.