



## Graphic design analysis of Studio Ghibli animation film poster "*From Up on Poppy Hill*"

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### ABSTRACT

Graphic design, which is one of the fields of science in the world of fine arts, is currently very popular among the general public. Today, graphic design has many fields of science, from photography to film. One of the entertainment segments of graphic design that is currently widely available to the general public is animation, which is part of the film industry. The film itself has the meaning of an image presented on a big screen and has audio-visual elements. This study analyses the poster work of the animated film "From Up on Poppy Hill" by Studio Ghibli and uses qualitative research methods. In qualitative research, the findings are not obtained through statistical procedures or calculations, so the research is descriptive. The results of the study using graphic design analysis on the poster of the animated film Studio Ghibli entitled "From Up on Poppy Hill" are that the film poster does not have many threats to compete with posters of other films because Studio Ghibli already has its own market in the animated film industry. Many fans highly anticipate its films with character. In addition, the elements of graphic design on the poster are designed and calculated carefully so that they are able to meet the rules of beauty and optimal message delivery.

**Keywords:** *movie poster, graphic design, Studio Ghibli, animation, film.*

### ABSTRAK

*Desain grafis yang merupakan salah satu bidang keilmuan dalam dunia seni rupa hingga saat ini begitu populer di kalangan masyarakat luas. Dewasa ini, desain grafis telah memiliki banyak sekali bidang keilmuan, mulai dari fotografi hingga film. Salah satu pangsa hiburan desain grafis yang saat ini banyak masuk pada masyarakat luas adalah animasi, masuk ke dalam bagian ilmu perfilman. Film itu sendiri memiliki pengertian gambar yang disajikan lewat layar lebar, dan memiliki unsur audio visual. Penelitian ini menganalisa karya poster film animasi "From Up On Poppy Hill" dari Studio Ghibli, dan menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif. Pada penelitian kualitatif, temuan-temuannya tidak didapatkan melalui prosedur statistik ataupun hitungan, sehingga penelitiannya bersifat deskriptif. Hasil penelitian dengan menggunakan analisa desain grafis pada poster film animasi Studio Ghibli berjudul "From Up On Poppy Hill" adalah poster film tidak memiliki ancaman yang banyak untuk bersaing dengan poster film-film lain karena diantaranya Studio Ghibli telah memiliki pasar sendiri di industri film animasi, dan karya-karya filmnya yang berkarakter sangat ditunggu oleh banyak penggemar. Selain itu unsur-unsur desain grafis pada poster dirancang dan diperhitungkan dengan matang, sehingga mampu memenuhi kaidah keindahan dan penyampaian pesan yang optimal.*

**Kata Kunci:** *poster film, desain grafis, Studio Ghibli, animasi, film.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Graphic design, which is one of the branches of knowledge in visual art, has become increasingly popular among the general public. In addition to the many aspects that can be studied in the world of graphic design, it also offers entertainment and opportunities for learning appreciation among the broader community through exhibitions, art shows, art workshops, and art bazaars. Nowadays, graphic design encompasses various fields, such as photography, videography, film, digital illustration, manual illustration, video mapping, animation, and digital printing techniques like DTF (Direct to Film), DTG (Direct to Garment), sublimation, and manual printing using screen printing techniques. One of the emerging domains of graphic design entertainment is animation, which falls within the scope of film studies. A film is a visual representation presented on a screen, with both audio and visual elements. A film typically addresses a theme or phenomenon, and within it, there are messages or impressions that the director aims to convey (Fahida, 2021).

The film industry, in Indonesia and globally, has developed rapidly over time. In the context of Indonesian cinema, this development can be traced back to the Dutch East Indies era (early 20th century), a period marking the beginning of the Indonesian film industry (Azahra, 2023). On a global scale, the evolution of the film industry can be seen in the advancements in the equipment used, as well as the filmmaking techniques. Speaking of equipment, essential tools for filmmaking include cameras, green screens or chroma keys to create visual effects that transport the viewer to worlds beyond reality, computers, editing software, and audio production tools such as sound recorders, lapel microphones, and noise-cancelling equipment. In addition to these crucial tools, there is also a need for film promotional materials. In the modern era, an attractive film promotion is vital; without it, a film can be considered a failure due to low audience numbers. Promotional materials used for films include movie posters. These teasers are less than a minute long to entice viewers to learn more about the content, and trailers typically last 1-3 minutes to introduce the plot, characters, and director.

This analysis focuses on one of the promotional tools used in the film industry, namely movie posters. The film poster analysed in this study is from one of Japan's most famous animation studios, Studio Ghibli. Located in Tokyo, Japan, Studio Ghibli was established on June 15, 1985, by four individuals: Hayao Miyazaki, Isao Takahata, Toshio Suzuki, and Yasuyoshi Tokuma. Studio Ghibli has produced many high-quality animated works, with its animators being highly experienced in the field. The studio's first animated film, *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind*, was as captivating as other renowned animated films, and the success of *Kiki's Delivery Service* opened the door for Studio Ghibli's future success. Studio Ghibli even won an Academy Award for "Best Animated Feature" for its animated film *Spirited Away*. Given the track record of Studio Ghibli's successful animations, it was a logical choice to analyse a film poster from this studio. The specific film chosen for this analysis is *From Up on Poppy Hill*.

Released in 2011, *From Up on Poppy Hill* was adapted from a 1980s manga series by Chizuru Takahashi and Tetsuro Samaya. Set in Yokohama, Japan, in 1963, the film presents a unique story centred on the protagonist Umi Matsuzaki, or Meru, as those around her affectionately call her. Meru raises a flag every morning, symbolising a prayer for a safe journey, as a tribute to her father, Yuichiro Sawamura, who died during the Korean War. The poster for *From Up on Poppy Hill* is analysed using the field of graphic design, covering aspects such as typography, illustration, colour, creative ideas, meaning, balance, and focus.

A poster is defined as an image on a flyer, either digital or printed, with sizes ranging from small to large, and it is typically affixed to a wall or other surface (Rukiyah, 2016). In the context of film posters, illustration is an essential element and serves as a primary tool to capture the audience's attention, compelling them to watch the upcoming film. Illustrations on film posters play a vital role in providing information or a preview of the film's content, stimulating public interest in viewing the film (Sachroni & Ali, 2021). Good illustrations on film posters should be simple, convey a clear idea with a focused purpose, offer a depiction of the film's storyline, be colourful rather than monochrome, include a slogan to support the illustration when necessary, and feature straightforward typography (Astuti et al., n.d., 2018).

Based on these definitions of illustration and posters, it can be concluded that posters, especially those with illustrations, play a crucial role in the film industry by promoting the film to audiences. The analysis of the *From Up on Poppy Hill* poster is conducted using graphic design analysis, with a qualitative approach to presenting data and results. Graphic design analysis involves examining the elements of design in a work of verbal and audiovisual publication. The aspects that can be analysed include illustration, typography, colour, creative ideas, meaning, balance, and focus. These aspects are influenced by the concept of *nirmana* (aesthetic design) in the fine arts. It is hoped that this graphic design analysis will contribute positively to the field of visual arts, particularly graphic design and filmmaking, to advance the film industry, especially in terms of promotional needs.

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## METHOD

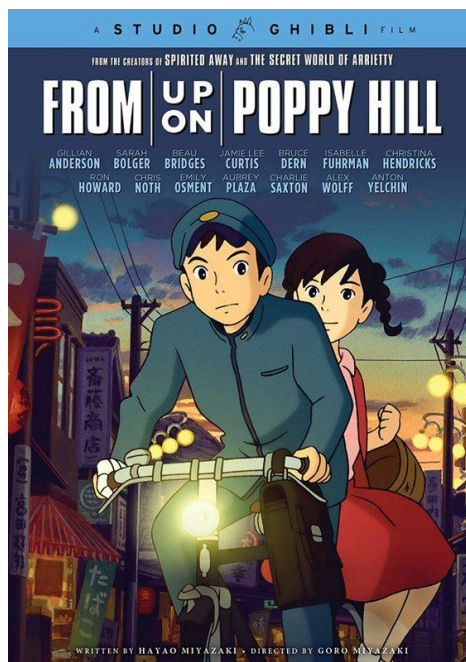
A research study undoubtedly requires a methodology, and this research employs a qualitative research method. In qualitative research, the findings are not derived from statistical procedures or calculations, which makes the research descriptive in nature. Through its descriptive and comprehensive elaboration, it is expected that the findings will be easily understood by researchers and the broader public (Fadli, 2021). This qualitative study uses the library research method, where the data collected and written comes from a variety of sources such as online articles, e-books, and journals. Furthermore, the nature of this qualitative research is natural, and its data analysis is more in-depth (Malahati et al., 2023). The qualitative method in this study provides a descriptive analysis of the graphic design elements in the film poster from Studio Ghibli titled *From Up on Poppy Hill*. The graphic design elements discussed include typography, illustration, colour, creative ideas, meaning, balance, and focus. Typography and illustration are essential elements in a film poster work, while colour, creative ideas, meaning, balance, and focus serve as supporting elements that are elaborated descriptively.

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## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result and Discussion

The picture below is a poster for the film *From Up on Poppy Hill*.



Picture 1. The poster for the film “From Up on Poppy Hill” is from Studio Ghibli.  
Source: Pinterest.

The following is the result and discussion of the graphic design analysis of the Studio Ghibli film poster *From Up on Poppy Hill*:

#### **a) Typography**

Secara In general, typography refers to the art of arranging and selecting letters or text in a work, whether in 2D or 3D forms. The use of typography can be a distinct attraction, especially today when various font types are widely available online, enabling designers and the general public to use them. Additionally, typography can convey additional information or messages to the audience when they view an illustration. However, the use of typography must still adhere to established rules; a designer cannot use typography elements for provocative purposes, for example. Integrating typography in a design work must align with the concept and characteristics of the product to be disseminated (Rosita, 2022).

The font type used in the Studio Ghibli film poster *From Up on Poppy Hill* is a Sans-Serif font, also known as a type of letter without serifs. This font type has the advantage of high legibility. The choice of this font is intended to help make the film more recognisable and convey trust in its quality. The placement of the Sans-Serif font for the title and film details at the top creates a minimalist and straightforward appearance while also making effective use of space, giving it a clean and elegant look. To this day, Sans-Serif fonts are widely used because they provide a consistent impression and balance without requiring perfect symmetry between elements.

#### **b) Illustration**

Illustration is one of the key elements in a film poster. The illustration in a film poster plays a significant role in establishing the atmosphere and mood of the film, setting the emotional tone for the audience before the screening. Illustration refers to the visualisation of a story or text, created through either manual or digital techniques, and can be in the form of 2D or 3D works. In the *From Up on Poppy Hill* poster, there is an illustration of two characters, Umi Matsuzaki and Shun Kazama, who are depicted as classmates. The creation of these two characters' illustrations goes beyond simple drawing, paying careful attention to the visual style. Visual style refers to the designer's or character creator's depiction of imagination from a story or event, supported by creativity (Janottama & Putraka, 2017).

This visual style provides a distinctive visual identity for Studio Ghibli. The illustrations produced by the artists and designers of Studio Ghibli can easily be recognised by the public, thus increasing both the appeal and trust of the audience in viewing the upcoming film. The technique used to create the illustrations also keeps up with contemporary trends, incorporating elements of manual drawing that are then digitised and undergo editing through the latest applications.

#### **c) Color**

Colour is an essential element in the poster of *From Up on Poppy Hill*. In design, colour is an inseparable component, whether in manual or digital works. The dominant colour used in the *From Up on Poppy Hill* poster is a cool colour, namely blue. Blue is a colour closely associated with Studio Ghibli, and to this day, its use in film posters has remained relevant despite evolving trends. Blue evokes a visual impression of softness, coolness, and calmness. Additionally, the color blue contributes to the aesthetic and harmony of the work, as its presence is not overly striking (Mubarat & Ilhaq, 2021).

#### **d) Creative Idea**

When discussing creative ideas, the term "Idea" is inherently linked to the concept of creation. An idea is the crucial starting point, serving as a concept or thought transformed into a tangible work, whether in the field of art or beyond (Eskak, 2013). Every animation studio worldwide has its unique creative approach to producing work. Creative ideas arise from creativity, a concept that has been known since the time of Plato. Creativity is inherent in both individuals and groups, and through creativity, both can develop a distinct character recognised by society.

Studio Ghibli showcases its creative idea by incorporating themes, settings, language, and character designs influenced by Japan, its country of origin. In the poster for *From Up on Poppy Hill*, Studio Ghibli presents an illustration of a scene set in Yokohama, Japan, in 1963 at sunset, evoking feelings of romance, coolness, and comfort. This illustration is still from the film and was

designed to capture the audience's attention and curiosity about the film. Thus, it functions not only as a creative expression but also as a "Call to Action".

**e) Meaning**

Any form of artwork, regardless of its type, inherently carries a purpose of communication and meaning. The meaning within an artwork cannot be separated from its constituent elements (Loho, 2022). The elements that form the meaning in the art can be observed in the study of two-dimensional visual composition, with elements such as lines, shapes, points, colours, space, and form. Further exploring the meaning in the poster for *From Up on Poppy Hill*, one cannot ignore the message conveyed by the animated film. *From Up on Poppy Hill* communicates the message, "We cannot discard all the memories of the past. There will be no future for those who idolise the future and forget history." Another message conveyed is the harmony or togetherness of the different generations at Umi Matsuzaki and Shun Kazama's school. Although they sometimes have differing opinions, they still maintain unity. This can be seen in the illustration on the film's poster, where Umi Matsuzaki and Shun Kazama are depicted riding together after school. The illustration creates a romantic atmosphere characteristic of Japan, highlighted by a beautiful sunset sky.

**f) Balance**

Balance is an essential aspect of any design work. In the field of visual arts, balance is divided into three types: symmetrical balance, asymmetrical balance, and bilateral balance, with equal strength on both sides. These types of balance contribute to creating artwork that feels evenly distributed without any side being overly dominant (Inayah, 2023). The element of balance helps designers develop compositions that are visually comfortable and appealing, enhancing the clarity of the meaning and message conveyed to the audience. Balance in design can involve the equilibrium of colour use and the spatial arrangement of typography and illustrations.

In the poster for *From Up on Poppy Hill*, the balance follows the type of bilateral balance with equal strength on both sides. The blue colour in the poster is evenly distributed, with the top and bottom, as well as the right and left, maintaining symmetry. Additionally, the illustration of the building objects does not overshadow the central point of interest, which features Umi Matsuzaki and Shun Kazama. The use of Sans-Serif typography further balances the space at the top of the poster, contributing to a harmonious composition.

**g) Focus**

Focus is a supporting element in the poster design of *From Up on Poppy Hill*. It provides additional space for the audience to comprehend the visual and informational content being presented. The poster's primary focus is on the central characters, Umi Matsuzaki and Shun Kazama. A secondary focus can be found in the typography, which conveys detailed information about the upcoming film. The visual elements and typography in the *From Up on Poppy Hill* poster complement each other without conflict, resulting in a harmonious design that is visually pleasing and easy for the audience to engage with.

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## CONCLUSION

Poster Animated film posters serve as a commercial feature for promoting films. Posters are an effective medium for both artistic and commercial purposes (Nirmala Sari et al., 2022). The creation of a film poster must consider essential design elements in the fine arts, including visual illustration, typography, colour, balance, and focus, as discussed in the results and analysis above. The research findings, based on a graphic design analysis of the Studio Ghibli animated film poster *From Up On Poppy Hill*, reveal that this poster does not face significant competition in the market due to Studio Ghibli's established presence in the animated film industry and its highly anticipated, distinctive film works. Furthermore, the graphic design elements in the poster are carefully designed and meticulously considered, ensuring both aesthetic appeal and effective communication of its message.

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