

## A METAPHORICAL ALGEBRA

A setting can be viewed as a composition of certain basic types of elements: natural forms such as the sky, mountains, or a field; man-made structures such as cars and buildings; and figures such as trees, people, animals, or flowers.

I assume that these elements of a setting express a common theme of abstract intent. To the extent that the elements share a common theme, they can be treated as metaphors for each other.

Each element has a structure with basic component parts. Metaphors are like algebraic equations whose component parts can be interchanged. First I do an inventory of the metaphorical elements in a setting and summarize their basic structural components. Then I select a central theme and apply the “math” to blend the matching component parts.

For example, the central theme can be a “flower” with “stem, leaf, and blossom” components. All the other elements in the setting can be interpreted as metaphorical versions of the “flower.” Once the matching components are blended, the setting becomes transformed into variations of the “flower” theme.

My goal is to establish a surrogate reality which can be sustained by rational means. Algebra is a rational tool that makes sense. At some point this metaphorical algebra can make complete sense. It seems to work best with a deliberate subjective commitment to the surrogate reality.