

Draw what you see

See Like an Artist - Part 2



[Click here for Part 1](#)

The Nuts and Bolts of seeing like an Artist

To translate Thoughts, Feelings, Ideas, and Emotions into Art an artist must see:

- Edges
- Shapes
- Size
- Proportion
- Value
- Color
- Pattern
- Design
- Composition

These are the Fundamentals

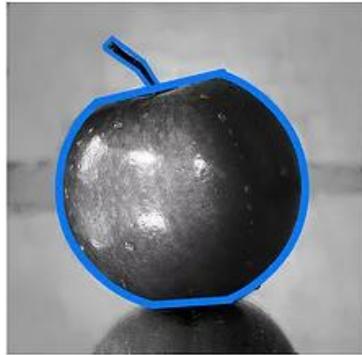
Edges

There are different edges in art. Hard edges, Soft edges, and Blurred edges (softer edges). Edges help create visual interest and draw attention to a specific area.

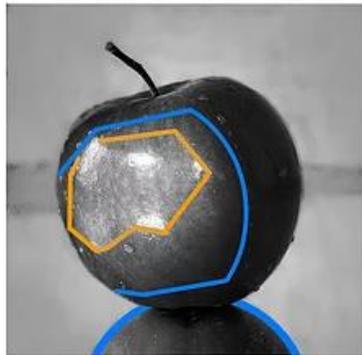
Look at this apple



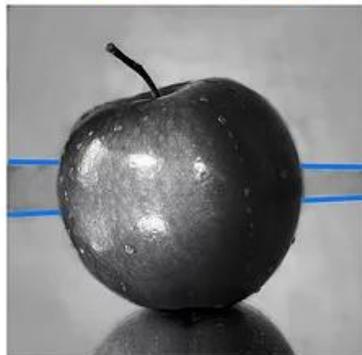
It has Hard edges



Soft edges at the shadow and reflection



and other Soft edges that show 3-dimensional depth



In the photograph of the apple the hard edges help it stand out from the background creating a sense of depth. Using both Soft and Hard edges gives the piece visual interest.

Shapes

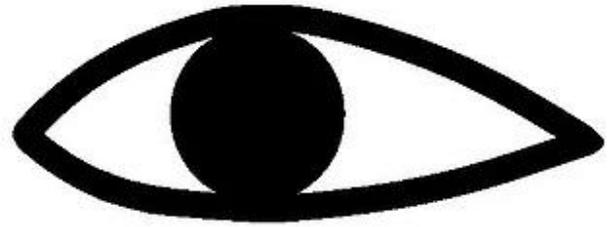
Artists see things as more than themselves. He sees the shape of the whole and its parts. He sees the object as it is, separate from the name associated with it.

Think of an eye



This is how someone may draw it.

This is a symbol for the word eye. It is what people identify in their mind when hearing or using the word. This is drawn using the logical side of the brain.



But an eye is made up of many shapes. When drawing from the creative side of the brain it's important to see the shapes.

Here are circle shapes.



- and other shapes



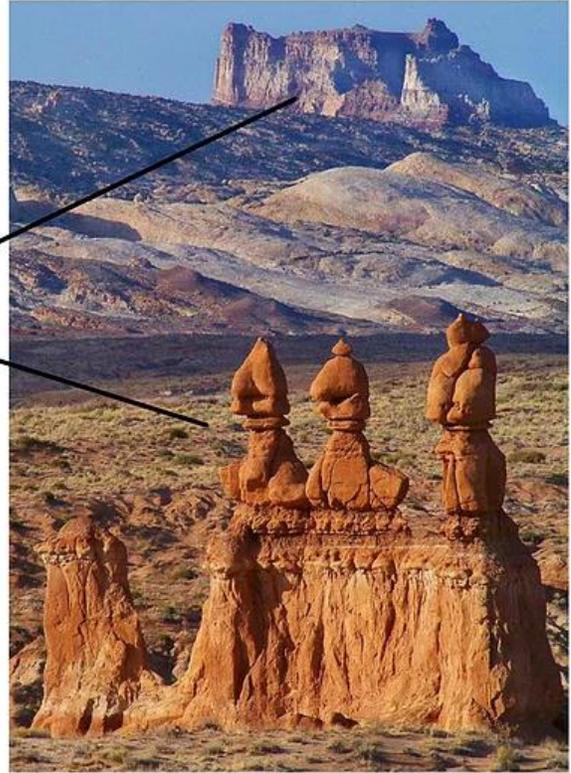
Size

How big or how small something is in a piece of art communicates the importance of something in relationship to the whole

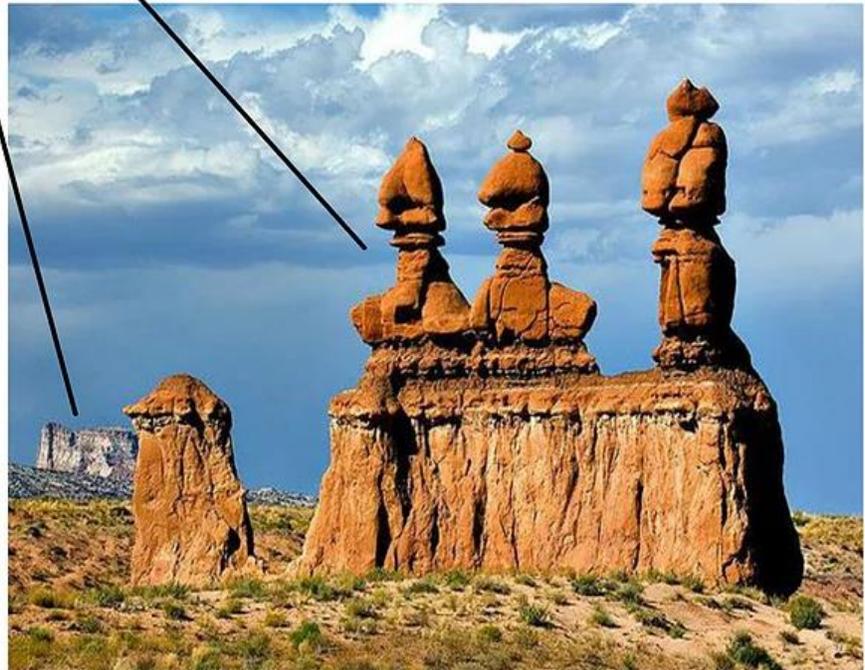
Size helps translate what you see.

See the relationship between the foreground and the background

In the first image the foreground appears smaller compared to the background than it does in the second image.



Use size to your advantage to help communicate what you're trying to say.



In the first image the relationship of size between the foreground and background communicate the idea of a whole cohesive scene.

In the second image the huge foreground dwarfs the background making it stand out. The main focus becomes the sculpted rock formations with the background serving in a support role to show their magnificence.

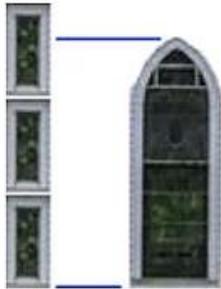
Proportion

Proportion is the relationship of size.

Learn to compare the size of one object to another

Compare the windows

The biggest window is about two and a half times bigger than the smallest window



See how much bigger the main doors are compared to the side door



Pay attention to the relationship of size. Are they about the same size, a ratio of 1:1, 1:2, 1:3, and so on. When doing a representational drawing always compare the size of different objects to each other.

Value

Value is relative lightness or darkness. Value is used in the shading of an object to communicate volume. It is also used to set different elements within a drawing apart from each other. The contrast of light and dark helps draw attention and set the mood of a piece.

The light values in the cloud compared to the dark values around it give a strong sense of drama.



See how the transition of value from light to dark creates a sense of volume.

This gives the feeling of a billowy three dimensional cloud even though we're seeing it on a two dimensional surface



The use of Value in a work of art can be your greatest tool. Learn to master it and you will create amazing pieces.

Color

Color can be a powerful tool in creating great art but be careful, it's easy to abuse color. Use it to your advantage to create mood in your work and draw attention to your focal point. There are three main elements of color; Hue, Intensity, and Temperature.

Hue:

the local color of an object. The color of the apple is red and yellow. The color of the pear is green.



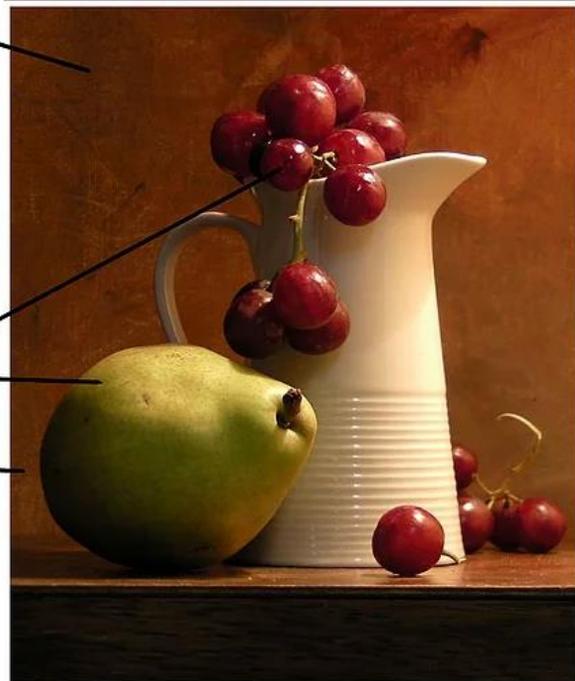
Intensity:

the vibrance of a color. The pure red of the apple is very intense while the subdued reds and oranges in the background here are less intense.

Temperature:

how warm or cool a color is. Reds and yellows are warmer colors, and blues and greens are cooler colors.

Here you can see the relative cool colors of green and purple in the foreground with warm colors in the background.



Save your more intense colors for your focal point to draw the viewer's eye in and use subdued colors to set the mood of the piece. The mood will be a major factor in how a viewer will react emotionally. Be aware of any feelings or emotions you feel while working with a certain color palette. Cool colors generally create serene thoughtful moods, while warm colors are more comforting and passionate. Use them together to evoke the emotions your piece demands.

Pattern

Pattern is repeating shape or form. It organizes a piece in a consistent, regular manner. Think of pattern as the organization of the parts of a composition. Use pattern to draw interest.

Patterns occur naturally and can be great inspiration for any piece of work.

See how a pattern flows and draws your attention to follow it.



Look for patterns in unusual places. Here you can see it in the slats of a delapidated fence.



Sometimes patterns aren't initially recognizable.

See how the window pattern in the doors help draw interest.



Use pattern as the main element or as subtext. Use it brashly or as a subtle element to lead a viewer into a work of art. Practice using different patterns in different ways. Have fun with it and let it inspire you.

Design

Design is the arrangement of patterns and elements within a work of art. It is seeing the whole image in a simplified form. Studying and learning design can help you give your work more flare. This is the place to release the full potential of your creativity.

Look at how a leaf can inspire unique and interesting designs.



Use nature to inspire new and creative designs.



Simplify your image and play with different ideas.

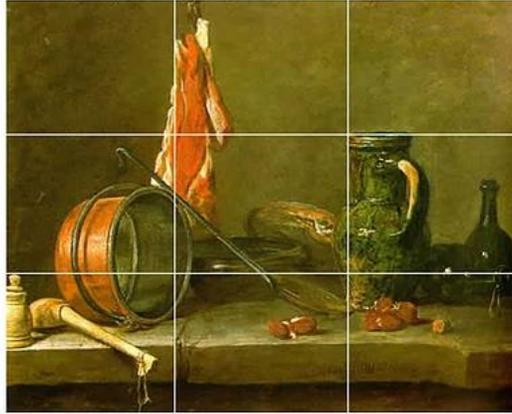


Think design at the beginning of the whole art process. Let it inform all your decisions. Let it create flow and harmony in your piece. Think about it during the process of drawing, painting, and sculpting. Before you finish your piece step back and see if it's working. Reassess, and adjust as needed to communicate your ideas clearly. Design is about seeing how all the parts fit together to create movement in a harmonious flow.

Composition

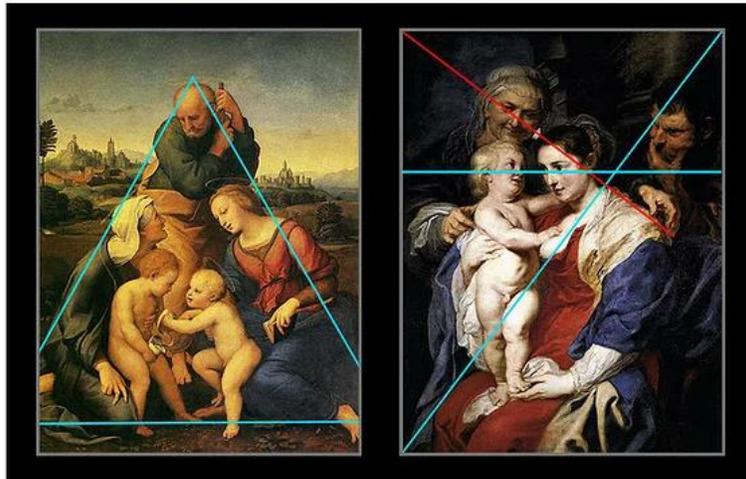
The organization of all the parts into the whole. This is where you take everything you have, from line all the way to design, and put it together. Composition is about drawing the viewers eye into your piece and holding it there. Balance all the art fundamentals; edges, shapes, size, proportion, value, color, pattern, and design into one piece of work.

In this first image you can see how the scene is split into thirds vertically and horizontally. It is at the "thirds" lines that the viewers attention will be held. Where the lines intersect is the point of greatest attention.



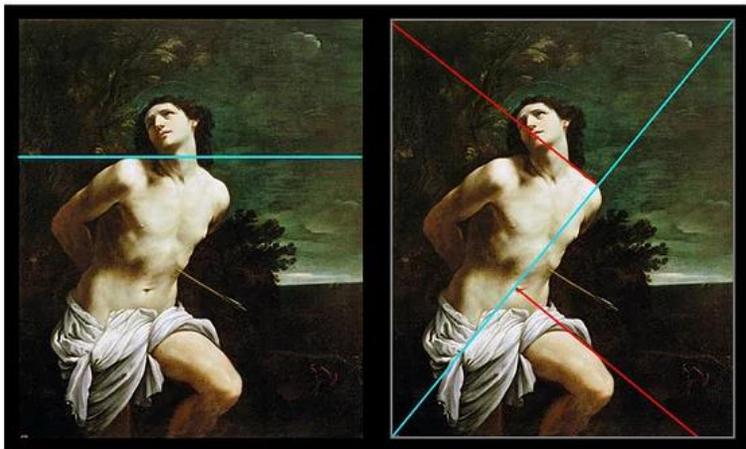
In this first image the group is composed in a triangle, a common method for organizing people.

In the image to it's right you can see how the center of focus is at a "thirds" cross-section.



Here is another example of how the point of interest lies on the "thirds" line.

Notice how the subject is much lighter than his surroundings. Notice the use of hard and soft edges to draw focus.



Composition is big picture thinking. It takes all the elements and combines them into one cohesive piece. It can make or break a work of art. Study it and learn how to use it effectively. You don't want to put hours of blood, sweat, and tears into a piece just to find it's off-kilter when you finish.

Put it all together

The artist must see how things fit in relationship to everything around them. Learn to translate three dimensional objects into two-dimensional works of art. Translate your ideas from complex and cluttered to simple and clear. Art is communication. An artist must know what they are communicating and be proficient in its language.

Learn the language of art and share all your thoughts, ideas, emotions, and feelings with the world!