

Building blocks of a Good Painting

- Good design – the bones of a painting
 - Composition, not content, grabs your attention
 - Includes combination of geometric, organic and abstract shapes
 - Make white & black sketches to see structural patterns – leave out what's not needed
 - Format – Cruciform, S or Z, Vertical, Group mass, Pyramid or Triangle etc
 - Compositional lines, then a value plan
 - Horizon line – where
 - Drawing – accurate, good perspective, believable

- What are you trying to say?
 - The Golden section: center of interest, secondary center of interest
 - A way to get in – around – out of the painting – leave open spaces

- Shapes – Negative / Positive (shapes of far more important than the subject)
 - Repetition, large, small, interlocking shapes
 - Edges – Soft, hard, open – varied edges
 - Link shapes to create a pattern
 - Squares and circles are static shapes
 - Triangles, edges and lines move the eye

- Light – Where is it coming from, what's in shadow?
 - Contrast, value, mood, drama
 - Yin / Yang
 - Reflected light

- Color – Monochromatic, Analogous or Complementary
 - Mood
 - Cool / Warm
 - Dominant Color
 - Key – Light & airy or contemplative
 - Grays – a place to rest the eye

- Other factors of Importance
 - Simplicity
 - Texture
 - Repeat Patterns

Notes:

- In a landscape: Signs of life is the first thing a viewer looks for. Next, everyday man-made objects, then man-made but something unfamiliar.
- In a portrait: we look at the eyes first, then the face, then the hands.
- Triangular – If pointing upward, there is a sense of spirituality. If pointing downward, it causes tension and uneasiness
- Circular – May become boring and can accent a point or direct the eye.
- Rectangle – Air of solidity, giving the viewer a sense of comfort.