Floral Design Workshop Course
FD 201

Horizontal, Parallel, Synergistic and Underwater Designs

With a focus on Rhythm

Revised 2022
Floral Design Committee

Understanding the Principles of Design

The Principles of Design (balance, contrast, rhythm, dominance, proportion, and scale) are guidelines used to provide visual structure and unity to art. The aim of the FD Workshop Course is to build your understanding of both design styles and principles, and to demonstrate how using these principles can assist you in creating successful designs.

COURSES

FD 101 Mass and Line designs with focus on:
- Balance - a design principle: Visual balance: stability; one visual force holds another in equilibrium.
- Contrast - a design principle: Placement of opposite or unlike characteristics of a single element together in order to emphasize their differences.

FD 201 Horizontal, Parallel, Synergistic, Underwater designs with a focus on:
- Rhythm - a design principle: Activity or movement, created by the dominant visual path of line(s), form(s), or color(s) through the design.

FD 301 Contemporary designs with Armatures with a focus on:
- Dominance - a design principle: Prominence of one or more component(s) over others in a design.

FD 401 Comparative designs with a focus on:
- Proportion - a design principle: Refers to how the sizes of different components of a design relate to one another.
- Scale - a design principle: Refers to how the size of a design relates to the area in which it is placed.

Understanding the
Elements of Design

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The elements of design are the tools a designer uses to express meaning and bring clarity. Each FD Workshop will incorporate a discussion on how skillful use of line, color, form, texture, space, pattern, light and size can help designs be powerful and clear.

The Elements of Design

- **Line** - One dimensional visual path through a design. A line connects any two points and can be used to separate or create a space between other elements or to provide a central focus. The direction, weight, and character of a line can convey different states of emotions and can evoke various reactions.

- **Color** - How the eye sees and interprets wave lengths of reflected light. Color is a versatile tool. It can be used to unify designs, place emphasis on a component or serve as a supporting element. Color affects the mood of a design and conveys different emotions. For instance, the use of red can incite anger, love, and passion while blue creates a sense of peace, serenity, and security. Color can be broken down to:

  > Hue: Specific or family name of a color (Red, Green ...)
  > Value: Lightness or darkness of a color
  > Intensity: Bright or dullness of a color
  > Primary colors: Red, Blue, Yellow
  > Secondary colors: Orange, Violet, Green
  > Achromatic colors: Block, White, Grey

- **Form** - Three-dimensional object. Form is always defined by boundaries and adds interest to other elements. Angular forms can indicate strength and structure, while curvilinear forms are organic, and can communicate unity.
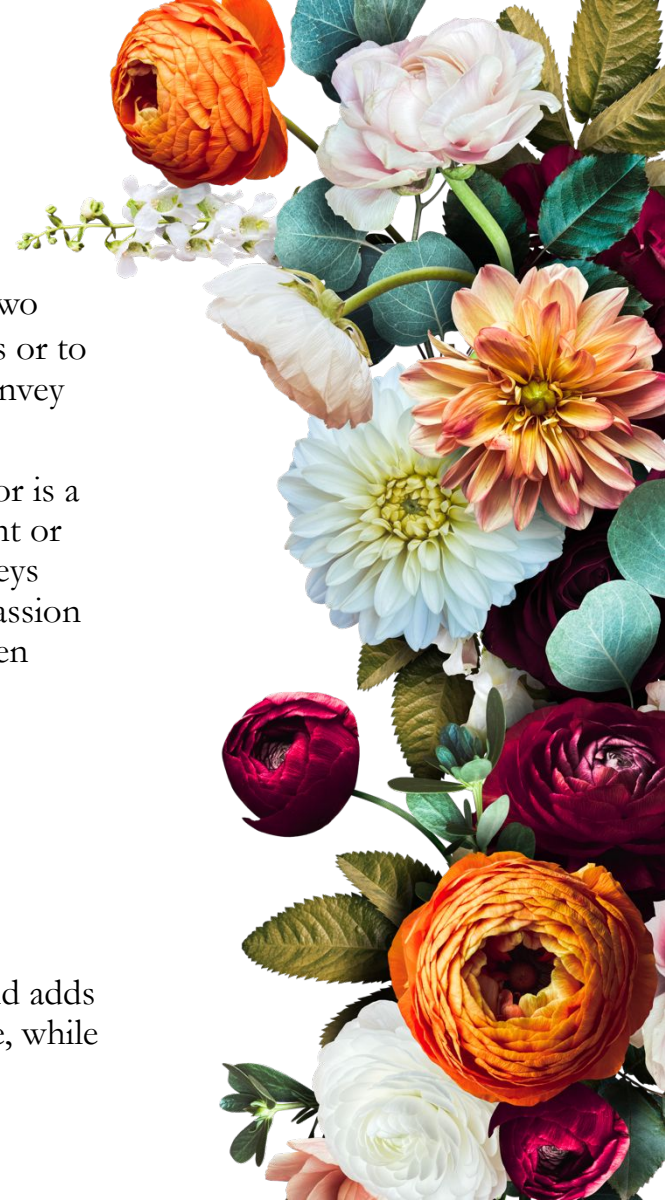
The Elements of Design, Cont.

- **Texture** - Perceived surface quality of a material. Variations in texture (rough or smooth, course or fine, glossy or dull, hard or soft) make a design unique and are a way to bring attention to an area or component.

- **Size** - Perceived or visual dimensions of components. How boring would a design be if all the components were all similarly sized? Playing with the size of your materials adds interest and emphasis. Subtle differences may suit traditional designs, while bold ones enhance contemporary abstract designs.

- **Pattern** - Spatial divisions of solids and voids. Pattern can be described as a repeating unit of shape or form that organizes a design in a consistent manner. It brings familiarity and provides structure.

- **Light** - Illumination necessary for vision. Light, natural or artificial, is used to make elements stand out or garner attention. It can create visual excitement.

- **Space** - Open area in and around the design. This element, also known as negative space, is the visible distance or area between and around, above and below or with in the elements used in an arrangement. It is a powerful tool for conveying a message.

Design principles aren't hard and fast rules. They are guidelines used to help us think critically. There is no one right way to communicate that two elements are similar or different, for example. You might see it differently, which is fine.

Examining RHYTHM

- **Rhythm** is a design principle that suggests movement or action. It can be achieved through the repetition of components i.e. lines, shapes, and colors or through progression and graduation of size, weight, texture, or color. It is an artwork's visual tempo (compositional flow) providing clarity and order. It determines what, how, and in what order, the viewer will see a design. Beginning with a dominant element (focal point) the flow provides directional clues and pulls the eye through the design making a visual pathway. Rhythm is created both through the elements the eye follows and the intervals/spaces between them. Changes to either alter the pattern and add interest.

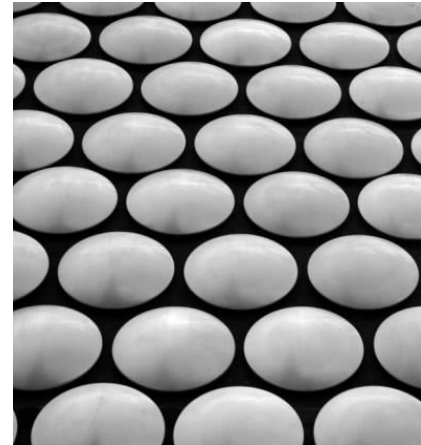**There are 5 different methods of showing rhythm:**

    1. Regular

    2. Alternating

    3. Progressive

    4. Flowing

    5. Random

Regular Rhythm

Rhythm through predictable patterns. Regular Rhythm has identical motifs or patterns and a steady beat. It has an equal amount of space between motifs. For example:

- Light posts or the slats of a crib
- Bricks in a wall
- Parking Spaces

Alternating Rhythm

Rhythm through contrasting multiples. Alternating Rhythm uses two or more interchangeable patterns or designs that are repeated throughout a piece. Two or more different motifs may be alternated, a single motif might be flipped, mirrored, or rotated every so many iterations, or the placement or spacing between motifs can be alternated. This is essentially a regular rhythm that has more complex motifs. The added variety can help lessen the monotony of a regular rhythm.

For example:

- Black and red squares on a checkerboard

- Oriental rug patterns

- Quilts

Progressive Rhythm

Rhythm through graduating patterns. Progressive Rhythm describes a design that contains repeating elements in patterns that change either in size or color as they repeat.

For example:

- Spirals
- Rungs on a ladder
- Graduated pearls on a strand

Flowing Rhythm

Flowing Rhythm is created by natural undulating elements and intervals, bending and curving motifs, and spaces.

For example:

- Streams and waterways
- Rolling hills
- Wind-blown grasses

Random Rhythm

Rhythm through organic shapes. Random Rhythm occurs when positive and negative shapes are repeated in a manner without order or any planned arrangement. It involves design that cannot be predicted. What may seem random at one scale, may exhibit purpose and order at another scale.

For example:

- Pebble beaches or fields of clover
- Falling snowflakes
- Traffic jams

Influence of MOVEMENT on Rhythm
Rhythm created by the use of alternation, gradation, repetition, perspective, and directional lines can appear as either static or dynamic

- **Static Movement** occurs when the eye jumps from one part of a composition to another; when the viewer notices similarities and seeks to establish a pattern.
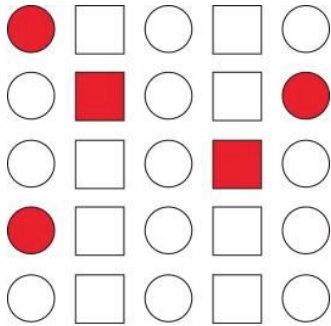
- **Dynamic movement** flows in a smoother manner. The viewer is guided through the piece by continuous lines, forms or gradations.
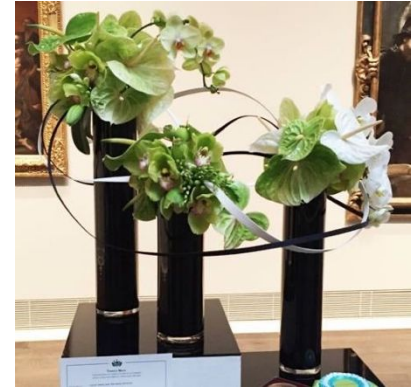
Rhythm is an extremely important principle of design. Its patterned repetition of elements placed in space creates predictability and organized movement. The brain follows the pattern and seeks to make sense of the overall composition. Like a musical beat, visual rhythm establishes unity, sets tempo, imparts a mood, draws attention, and engages the audience. Using it wisely and thoughtfully can made designs more harmonious and more appealing.
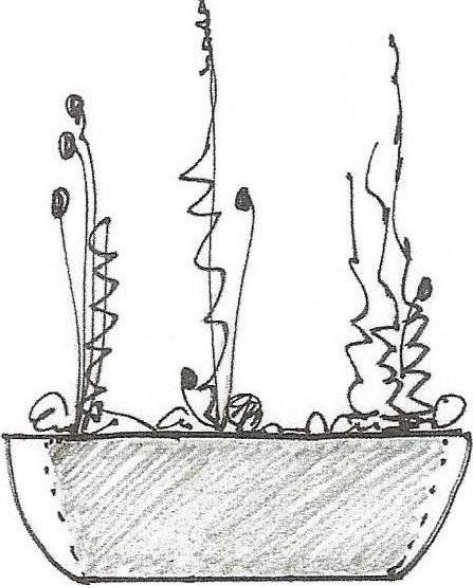
Examining HORIZONTAL Design

Horizontal Design: A composition in which components are arranged on an axis parallel to the horizon.
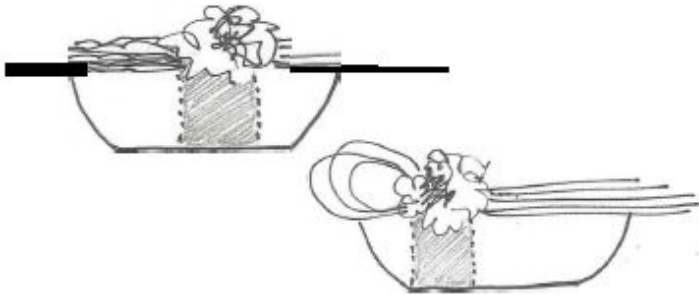
HORIZONTAL DESIGNS

Examining PARALLEL Design

Parallel Design: A design in which plant material (and other components if not prohibited) are placed in strongly parallel groupings with open space between; may be vertical, horizontal or diagonal. Additional components may be placed at any angle at the base as connectives. Multiple containers may be used, but design must appear as a single unit.

PARALLEL DESIGNS

Examining UNDERWATER Design

Underwater Design: A contemporary design style where all or part of the design must be under visible water.

UNDERWATER DESIGNS

Examining SYNERGISTIC Design

Synergistic Design: a contemporary design style including 3 or more containers; each unit is either a partial or complete arrangement which, when combined with the others, makes a unified whole. A connector (either man-made or plant material) may be used to link the units.

- Consists of three or more units which have a greater impact when viewed together than they would on their own.

- All units share the same colors, textures and forms, creating balance, rhythm, and harmony.

- Goal is to create rhythm and movement through the relationship of solids and space.

SYNERGISTIC DESIGNS

Credits

FD201 was created by GCA's inaugural Floral Design Committee, led by Chair Lisa Snowden and Assistant Chair Amelia Crumbley

The Floral Design Committee's purpose is to promote interest and to educate all GCA club members regardless of expertise and experience in the art of floral design, to encourage all club members to participate in floral design activities, to enhance the quality of the Floral Design Division in all flower shows, and to share the beauty and artistry of this discipline throughout the GCA. The FD Committee provides the GCA membership with resources for club floral design programs, guidelines for floral design workshops, support for the floral design division at flower shows, and publications for design edification. The FD Committee landing page provides GCA members with floral design news and digital publication access.

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