

Composition Study Drawings

Before you begin the longer in-class drawings, you will be doing small composition study drawings (approx. 3" x 4" each). Try to simplify the major shapes you are seeing into 4 or 5 values (Lightest Lights, Middle Values, Darker Middle Values, and the Darkest Darks).

Remember to keep the ratio of your thumbnail drawings the same size as your 18" x 24" paper. (So if your paper is vertical, the thumbnail drawings will be 4" tall by 3" wide).

SOME THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

VALUE PATTERN: Lights and darks are very strong simplifying agents. When approaching a value study, first think of basic shapes of light, middle and dark values.

GEOMETRIC SHAPE ORGANIZATION: The purpose of this is to understand the importance of seeing how detailed forms can be simplified into basic geometric shapes.

RHYTHMIC DIRECTIONS – The main point of this study is to understand the rhythms and implied directions that forms within the artwork create. (ex. Vertical & horizontal lines are more static, while diagonal lines imply more movement)

Remember that the purpose of a composition study drawing is to help you become a better visual thinker and to organize the structure of your artwork.

SOME PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN TO CONSIDER AS YOU ARE DESIGNING YOUR PICTURE PLANE :

HARMONY – Unity and Variety

BALANCE – Symmetry vs. Asymmetry

PROPORTION – Part to whole (scale & size, dominance & subordination)

REPETITION – (of lines, shapes, value patterns, etc.)

RHYTHM / MOVEMENT – Through the combination of visual elements, how is your eye moving around the picture plane?

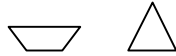
EMPHASIS / FOCAL POINT

THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF DESIGN:

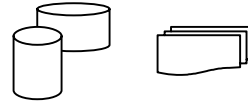
POINT

LINE _____

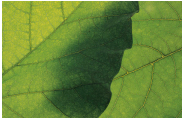
SHAPE



SPACE



PATTERN / TEXTURE



VALUE



Elements of Design Definitions:

Point – The simplest of elements. It is static (except when used in sequence).

Line – Indicates the path of a moving point in space. Lines can define the boundaries of shape. Line can be : straight, bent, curved, zig-zagged, convoluted, even in width, thick and thin, dark and light. Lines can be used for: construction, contour or cross contour, gesture. Lines can express emotion.

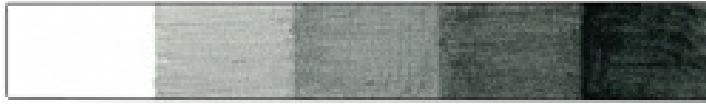
Shape – 2D interpretation of form. Shapes have height and width but not depth. Shapes are flat and level and may act to define planes, which represent 3D space.

Space – The distance between elements. Positive or negative space. The illusion of actual 3D space.

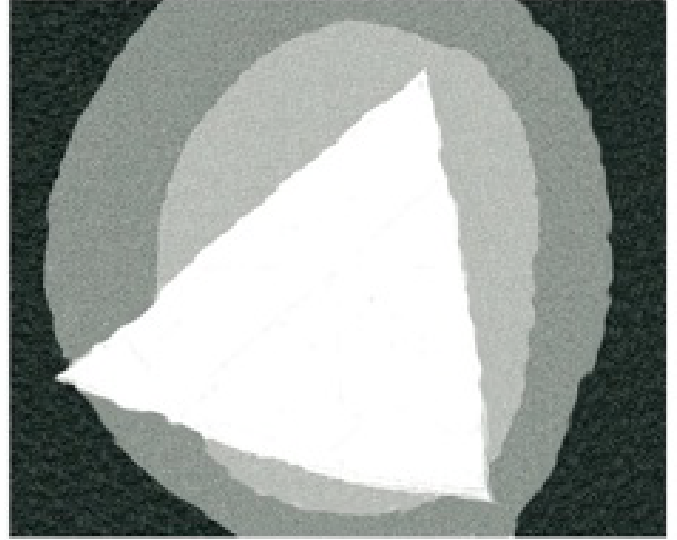
Pattern / Texture – The representation of quality of surface (smooth, rough, hard, soft, etc.)

Value / Mass – Describes form through transitions of a variety of grays created by a light source focused on an object (Chiaroscuro).

Composition Study Drawing Example



Study of the Value Pattern



Study of the Basic Geometric
Shape Organization



Titian Painting - "Venus and Adonis"