Leaders' Lesson

Zola Porter
Member of Friend OHCE

Grady County OHCE
Leaders' Lesson

The Art of Floral Design
Flower arranging is an art which goes back in history almost 5,000 years, possibly more. The earliest evidences we have of this art are the pottery flower holding vases from Egyptian tombs or ruins. All down through the ages there is further evidence that flowers and floral decorations have played an important part in the life of civilized man. As a matter of fact, some may even consider this development as a civilizing influence.

In more recent times, starting with the Renaissance or about the year 1400, we have more accurate information on how people used flowers. Essentially, the arrangements of this period consisted of bouquets—large quantities of flowers massed together in a container. Dried flowers were often featured, as were fruits of various types.

The Renaissance extended into the early 1600’s and following came the Dutch-Flemish period during which the arts flourished, particularly in the field of painting. And it happened that painters of this era frequently featured flower arrangements in their pictures and the flowers were so detailed that they could be easily identified.

Mass arrangements in many variations continued to be the style in Europe on down through the centuries, even the present time.

**EARLY AMERICA**

Flower arranging in early America during the 1600’s characterized the frugality of the period. Arrangements, such as they were, consisted generally of simple bouquets placed in kitchen utensils of pewter, brass or copper. Earthenware containers were also fairly common.

Of all the early Colonies, Williamsburg in Virginia was most blessed with a climate and surroundings which were conducive to rapid strides in the field of horticulture. Flower and herb gardens were commonplace and an extensive plant exchange was carried on with England and the countries on the Continent. As a result, many of the common garden flowers of Europe were soon growing in Williamsburg gardens.

These early flower arrangements tend to follow the mass arrangements of Europe. Arrangers also seem to
ripening grain, increases the metabolic rate
Children instinctively select a yellow crayon to draw a happy story
(brown for a sad story)
Bright yellow—aggressive
Pale yellow—breezy and spring like
Sunshine, bananas, lemons, daffodils, butter, smiley faces, egg yolks,
gold, cowardice
Green
Restful, tranquil, pastoral, spring, fertility, trees, grass, mildew, poison, jealousy, yellow influence, bright and warm, blue influence—receding, somber cool, green means “go”
Harmonizes and blends other colors in nature
In the garden an anchoring color
The background for the shades of flowers and fruits
Limes, spinach, Robin Hood, pistachio ice cream
Shamrock, leaves, olives, mint jade
“green with envy, “green” sickly

Violet
Sensuality, passion, rich or cheap and vulgar, royal
Power, yet power can corrupt
Exclusive and individualistic, faddish
Red violet—flamboyant
Blue violet—dignified

Orange
Warm, rich, vital, strong, no negative associations
Powerful without the passion of red
Softer in peach

Leaders’ Lesson

have patterned them after flower prints then popular in England
By the early 1800’s most flowers and flowering shrubs common in England were being grown in the New World. Indeed, importations were now coming from main parts of the world, and most of the flowers which we have today were then under cultivation.

THE VICTORIAN ERA
In 1837 Queen Victoria was inaugurated, and the Victorian Era ushered in.

Flower arrangements were still following the mass form, but during the Victorian period designs became gaudier as the years went by, to the point that overly ornate containers became crowded with a jumble of flowers. Artistry in flower arranging was definitely lacking.

By the end of this Era in the late 1800’s there was some reaction to all this showiness and the trend was to simplicity. Actually, there was little direction or movement afoot. Frequently flower arrangements consisted of the “florist’s dozen”—twelve roses or carnations and some foliage.

INTO THE 20TH CENTURY
The year 1910 is an auspicious date in the history of flower arranging for it marks the start of the American Garden Club movement. In the first years the emphasis was placed on the growing of quality blooms. Gradually, however, classifications in the flower shows were open to flower arrangements. This trend proved very popular with exhibitors and show visitors alike, and our modern era of flower arranging was on its way.

THE ORIENTAL INFLUENCE
Now let us go back some 2500 years to trace the history of flower arranging as it developed in the Orient.

The first evidence of flower arranging as an art was China in approximately 500 B.C. Arrangements were undoubtedly simple, the indication being that they were of the bouquet type.

In about 538 A.D., Buddhism was introduced to Japan, and it was not long afterwards that priests of the new religion introduced
flower arranging. With this new art form there soon followed rules which prescribed the way arrangements could be constructed. The first school in flower arranging was established towards the end of the 7th Century. It came to be known as Ikebana and is still in existence.

Japanese flower arranging thus became an integral part of the Buddhist religion and flourished in the temples. It is not known exactly in which period this art was carried over into the homes of the people. There developed, however, a simplified home type arrangement based upon a close approach to nature. Arrangements usually reflected the seasons, scenes in nature and even the moods of the arranger.

Japanese flower arrangements have always used a minimal amount of plant materials, the Orientals valuing and appreciating the small beauties of nature. Their designs have, over the years, come to be known in the western world as line arrangements in contrast to the mass arrangements.

**MASS VERSUS LINE**

Before the Victorian Era ended, that is, in the late 1800’s, there were garden writers already lamenting the sorry state of mass arrangements, some even suggesting that new pathways could be found through a study of the oriental patterns of line designs. This new idea was slow in developing, but with the formation of the garden club movement in 1910 it was not long before the arrangers in this country began incorporating oriental practices with their occidental type of designs.

As the years passed the American style developed as a cross between the massed arrangements of Europe and the line arrangements of the Orient.

At first, rules were laid down but these proved to be drawbacks because they restricted the artist’s freedom; consequently, these rules were gradually abandoned. Today the designer is given full freedom to construct any arrangement which to him is artistically satisfying.

---

**Leaders’ Lesson**

**PSYCHOLOGY OF COLOR**

**Red**

Vitality, power, courage, rage, passionate, love, danger, has the greatest emotional impact of all colors.

In nature a signal “poisonous” berries, “ripe” fruit

Red ink for correcting papers by teachers

Babies put in red rooms become agitated and nervous—cry more.

Red wine in winter “warms the blood”.

Commands attention—stop lights and stop signs

Tomato, lipstick, Santa Claus, tabasco, cherries, apples fire, hearts, “red carpet”, “see red”, “in the red” - in debt.

**Blue**

Air & water, sea and sky, tranquility, balance, well being, peaceful, refreshing, royalty, credible, dignified, sad, depressing, sorrowful, gloom

Light blue—young and sporty

Dark blue—royal, dignified and wealthy

Most favored color anyone can wear “blue suit”

Blueberries, denim, ink, sapphires, bachelor buttons

“Blue Chip” high quality

“Blue Ribbon” first prize

“Blue Blood” highborn-royalty

“True Blue” trustworthy—dedicated

“Blue” sad

“Blue Laws”

**Yellow**

Day, sun, light—color nearest white light

Has the brightest chromatic intensity of the three primaries, cheerful, energetic, incentive

A stimulant similar to red

Associated with the power of the sun and
This color scheme uses three colors: any hue and the two adjacent to its component.

This scheme also uses three colors. They are evenly spaced from each other.

This color scheme uses two pairs of compliments.

This scheme uses four colors: a triad and a complement to one of the hues.

This scheme uses four colors evenly spaced on the color wheel. A primary, secondary and two tertiary colors are uses.

PRINCIPLES OF FLORAL DESIGN

The seven principles of floral design (composition, unity, proportion, accent, balance, harmony and rhythm) are the constant, underlying ingredients in every floral design. Design elements (the interpretive ingredients) can be resent, but they must be blended with these principles to create the overall composition.

All floral designs are first seen as a total composition. Each component within a design should contribute to its total look. In art terms, COMPOSITION is defined as the organization or grouping of different parts to achieve a unified whole. The word organization in the definition implies floral design is an exact thought process starting with the selection of the container, fresh materials and accessories and ending with their placement in the design.

UNITY is a singleness of purpose. The relationship of the individual parts to each other should produce a single, general effect. Unity can be expressed in many other harmonies and material selections as long as they blend together.

PROPORTION is the comparative size relationship between ingredients within a design. This relationship can be measured in the quantity of flowers, length of stems or amount of materials used in a design. Setting the proportions for most floral designs begins with the container. The word SCALE is often used along with the principle of proportion. Scale specifically refers to the size of the arrangement in relation to its setting. For instance, a single flower bud vase would look out-of-scale on a 25-foot buffet table. However, several centerpieces used on that same 25-foot table...
would appear more in scale.

ACCENT in floral composition is a distinctive, regularly occurring, but subordinate pattern, motif or color. Traditionally, the focal area of design is the place where accent is most recognized. The principle of accent is taken from music composition meaning “stress or emphasis given to certain notes.” Within the application of accent in a design, the words “regularly occurring”, imply that each ingredient is repeated more than one time.

The principle of BALANCE is achieved when placement of the ingredients conveys a feeling of both physical and visual stability. PHYSICAL STABILITY refers to the actual placement of the main stems to establish the structure. If an arrangement is falling over because of poor stem placement, the physical balance or structure is faulty. VISUAL STABILITY is created by using color and material placement in sequence. An example of a visual stability rule is darker colors appear to be heavier and are used at the base of a design, lighter colors appear more lightweight and are used at the top of a design. Another example is the bud of a flower always appears lighter than a fully opened flower of the same variety. So, buds are used at the top of a design while fully opened flowers are used at the base. Both physical and visual stability can be expressed three ways: symmetrical balance, asymmetrical balance and open balance.

SYMMETRICAL BALANCE is characterized by EQUAL visual weight does not have to be expressed in identical materials as pictured in the example of symmetrical balance. The center line. This equal visual weight does not have to be expressed in identical

COLOR MATTERS

Color wheels show how visible colors are related. Primary, secondary and intermediate colors are organized on a circular chart. A color circle, based on red, yellow and blue, is traditional in the field of art. Color wheels help artists remember how to mix and think about pigments.

Observing the effects colors have on each other is the starting point for understanding the relativity of color. The relationship of values, saturations and the warmth or coolness of respective hues can cause noticeable differences in our perception of color.

In traditional color theory, these are the three pigment colors that cannot be mixed or formed by the combination of other colors. All other colors are derived from these 3 hues.

COMPLEMENTARY

If two hues are opposite each other on the color wheel they are considered to be complimentary colors. When used together in a design they make each other seem brighter and more intense.
RECTANGULAR
Definitely a contemporary arrangement shape, the rectangular design is properly constructed when all flowers and materials fall within the line of an imaginary rectangle.

HOGARTH CURVE
A taller, cylindrical container is ideal for the Hogarth curve as it displays the full beauty of this interesting arrangement shape. One important technique in creating the Hogarth is to extend the arrangement foam above the container, so flowers can be inserted properly for the bottom part of the “s” curve.

PARALLEL SYSTEMS
A parallel systems arrangement is created by using two or more vertical designs in the same composition. Technically, there should be “air” between each parallel grouping of flowers. However, in interpreting this design sometimes the vertical grouping blend together.

CRESCENT
The crescent is one of the most difficult shapes to construct because it requires that flowers and greens are carefully shaped to form the crescent curve. Sometimes, materials can be shaped naturally into a crescent line, other times wiring is necessary.

The Art of Floral Design

ASYMMETRICAL BALANCE occurs when UNEQUAL visual weight appears on either side of an imaginary center line.

OPEN BALANCE is a phrase used when neither symmetrical or asymmetrical characteristics can be applied to a design. Many of the newer design styles are classified as open balance. Abstract, new wave and parallel systems styles of design are all considered open balance because it is difficult to apply traditional balance fundamentals.

RHYTHM is repetition of a motif or formal element at regular or irregular intervals. Rhythm can be expressed in line, form, color, spacing between flowers or the simple repeating of curves or planes within a composition. The irregular placement of flower forms shows an irregular repetition in the flow of the vertical line. Repetition used to express rhythm should not be dull. Using more than one form of flower makes rhythm natural and visually stimulating.

HARMONY is the pleasing aesthetic quality created by the careful selection of parts for a composition. It can be expressed in two ways: with similar blending materials or contrasting components which are distinctively different. Harmony is most evident in design colors but can also be present in texture shape or size of materials.
BASIC ARRANGEMENT SHAPES

Professional arrangements do not “just happen”. There is always a “plan” for the design, and this concept is evident in the final shape of the arrangement. Without a plan, the finished product is an “uncontrollable happening”, not a controlled, profitable design.

These are the basic arrangement shapes that professional floral artists should be qualified to create. We are presenting the primary design shapes that are basic to professional floral designing. Once these basic forms have been mastered modifications and creative license can be taken to create the interpretive, more contemporary designs.

**ASYMMETRICAL**

In an symmetrical design, the central axis moves to the right or left of center. An asymmetrical arrangement falls comfortably within the boundaries of a right angle. Technically, the height of the design meets with the length to form a right angle.

**ROUND**

When all the flowers and greens fall within the circumference of a circle, the shape of the design is identified as “round”.

**FAN**

In creating a fan design, the flowers are placed to form a semicircular shape, with all stems flowing into a central focal axis.

**VERTICAL**

A very distinctive design shape, the vertical arrangement emphasizes height. Technically, all of the materials used should be contained within the width of the container.

**HORIZONTAL**

The horizontal line creates a pleasing arc shape, therefore it is important to keep the arrangement low and ideally quite narrow to reinforce the horizontal impact of the composition.

**OVAL**

A full oval arrangement is often difficult to design. The typical oval arrangement is made with a primary flower to define the oval shape and other flowers and greens used as filler.