



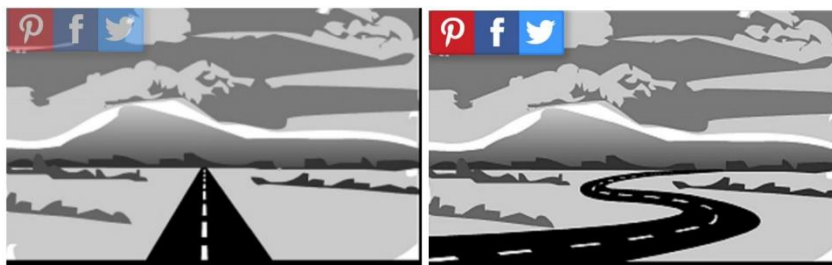
MARCH 2020 – STUDYING COMPOSITION: Armatures: The S Curve



You will find the S Curve in landscapes all the time, because there are so many curves in nature. a road, a garden path, a trail through the woods, a river--leading the viewer into the picture plane. But it does not have to be that way. You can use S-Curve compositional structures in Portraits, Still Lives, Crowd scenes, etc.

THE –“ELEGANT” S-CURVE is such a structure which has been called the “line of beauty.” It signifies liveliness and activity, and excites the attention of the viewer as contrasted with other compositional strategies.

This graphic is pretty good at showing the value of the S-Curve:



“Straight ahead is the quickest way to get somewhere, but it is not very interesting, is static and does not invite the viewer into the whole composition. A winding road takes you on a

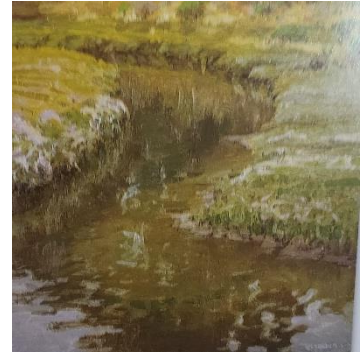
sightseeing tour of the rest of the composition, inviting you to enjoy the interplay of shapes and elements found in the movement of the composition.”¹ =

1. <https://watercolorpainting.com>
2. Mastering Composition, Ian Roberts, pg 19



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CAREFUL! You can see from this painting in Ian Roberts book "Mastering Composition", that you can shoot the viewer right out of the composition², so, be careful as you get to the edges, to soften your lines. Compositions like these easily bring the viewer into the painting from the bottom.



HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES TO GET YOUR CREATIVE JUICES FLOWING



David Becker

Using separate shapes to create the S-Curve

Follow the S-Curves of the tops of the jars.

(The S is backwards)



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2. Mastering Composition, Ian Roberts, pg 19

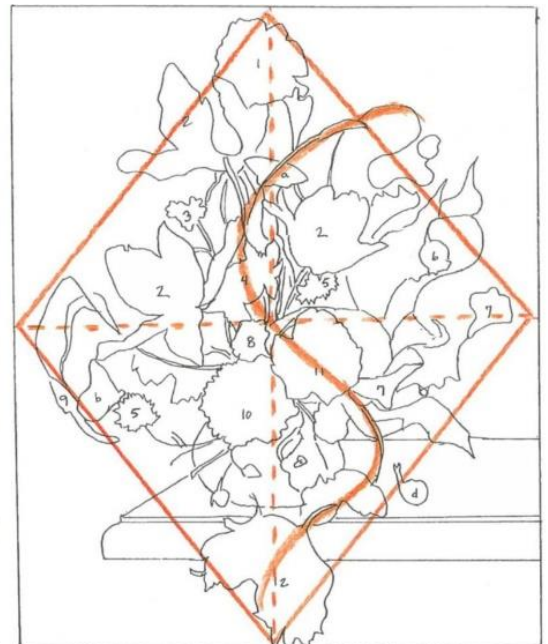


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The crowd: Love this one!

A Still Life:



Have fun!

Barbara Sparks
Barbara@blsparks.com

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