ON THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF PAINTING

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PART I. INTRODUCTION

The elements of design can be thought of as the basic things that make up a painting, in the pictorial sense. Whatever the overall quality of a work, it will contain most of, if not all, the elements of line, color, shape, texture, space, etc.

The principles of design can be thought of as what the artist actually does with those elements of design. How the artist applies the principles such as balance, emphasis, repetition [1], etc., in the light of an invention determines how successful the painting is. However an artist utilizes these principles will dictate whether the work is merely competent or truly artistic. This is all purely utilitarian; at this point in time modern terms are plentiful, redundant and used interchangeably and inaccurately to confusing effect. Most people are content to merely pass on and repeat the list and concepts they are most familiar with whether or not the list or system holds up to any kind of thorough examination. Unfortunately this is true across the board, whether for graphic design or for painting, the ‘Queen of the visual arts’. The elements are a kind of basic grammar; elementary, simple and principally inert in themselves as constituents
of a visual language.

The basic principles are the tools of employing the elements, of managing them to produce competent works of visual communication.

To this end—I present a series of criteria, or principal canons of judgment that relate specifically to works of classic realist painting. There are six principles of painting as described in the following two sections.

In section II below, is given the background history from which the principles are derived, along with specific academic details that are pertinent to section III. (Fair warning: this section is highly didactic, and for those without the time or interest, they can proceed straight to section III without fear of missing the key elements of this treatise.)

In section III is given their sequence and descriptions. Following each principle is given six examples; three of older masterworks and three of (post)contemporary works, all of which illustrate each principle in effect. I must note here that many other examples could have been used to illustrate each principle, and that the works listed could easily be used as examples of more than one principle. They are simply here for the sake of completeness in conveying the basic ideas and principles in action. The examples named, new or old, while all equally masterful and truly excellent above and beyond the merely competent, shall not be construed in any way as any peculiar bias against those of equal merit that have not been named.
PART II. BACKGROUND

Xie-He[2](479-502CE) was a painter, writer, art historian and critic in 6th century China. He is most famous for his “Six Points to Consider when Judging a Painting” usually called “The Six Principles of Painting” or sometimes called “The Six Canons of Painting” taken from the preface to his book “The Record of the Classification of Old Painters” (古画品录). This was written c. 550CE and refers to “old” and “ancient” practices. In this theory, Xie-He deals with all the major aspects of the art of painting according to areas of importance: [3]

What are the Six Laws?

1) The first is: Engender [a sense of] movement [through] spirit consonance.

2) The second is: Use the brush [with] the “Bone Method”.

3) The Third is: Responding to things, image (depict) their forms.

4) The fourth is: According (adapting) to kind, set forth (describe) colors (appearances).

5) The fifth is: Dividing and planning, positioning and arranging.

6) The sixth is: Transmitting and conveying [earlier models, through] copying and transcribing”. [4]

Marcus Vitruvius Pollio (c.80–70 BCE-c.15 BCE) was a Roman writer, architect and engineer, active in the 1st century BCE, so about 500 years before Xie-He. He is the author of “De Architectura" (On Architecture), known today as “The Ten Books on Architecture”, a treatise written in Latin and Greek on architecture primarily but with additional information on diverse subjects of design and engineering. [5] The lasting influence of Vitruvius upon classical western architecture and design theory is far too widespread to
discuss at any great length here. The same goes, respectively, for Xie-He whose six principles became a central theory in the history of Chinese painting and to East Asian painting generally.

Vitruvius, as he is known, was not the only preeminent Roman architect to have written surviving records of his field. He cites older but less complete works, and like many other ancient writers cites works which are no longer extant, lost to time or waiting yet to be discovered. He cites general knowledge that was evidently commonplace amongst thinkers of his time or significant enough to attain acclaim. [6] He was less an original thinker or creative intellect than a codifier of existing design practice. Among the many artists, designers, engineers, thinkers, and architects that he influenced from the Early Renaissance onwards, was Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519) who wrote the posthumously published and variously regarded “Libro di Pittura” (Treatise on Painting)[7] and who famously drew the Vitruvian Man:

![Vitruvian Man](image)

As importantly, Vitruvius influenced Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472). Alberti’s life is described by Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) in his famous
Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects. [8] Alberti, an architect and a bona fide “renaissance man” wrote his famous “Della Pittura” (On Painting) beginning in 1435. [9] Alberti was the first post-classical writer to produce a work of “art theory” as opposed to works about the function of Christian religious art or art techniques, and reflected the developing philosophical thought about classical figure painting. In Della Pittura he analyzes the nature of painting and explores the elements of perspective, composition and color in a geometrical fashion. Alberti chooses a sequence of three major divisions of painting: “circumspection”, “composition”, and color-value “modeling” inherited and adapted from Aristotle’s three ‘offices’ of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, and style. [10] Alberti’s direction was to see painting more related to rhetoric and to poetry than in the sense that Vitruvius outlines for architecture, despite the fact that Alberti was an architect deeply indebted to Vitruvius. [11] Aristotle said poetry and painting as arts of imitation or representation (mimesis) use the same principal structure [12], namely, plot in tragedy and design in painting [13]. Perhaps he was so motivated in elevating painting (and his theory through the book) far beyond that of building. We can be reasonably sure that neither Aristotle, Vitruvius nor Alberti came across the work of Xie-He.

After the introduction of “De Architectura” and giving a somewhat wandering account of the ideal education of the architect, Vitruvius begins with his famous set of six principles:

“Architecture depends on

(1) Order (τάξις, “taxis”),
(2) Arrangement (διάθεσις, “diathesis”),
(3) Eurythmy,
(4) Symmetry,
(5) Propriety, and
(6) Economy (οἰκονομία, “Oikonomia”).”[14]

The connection to Xie-He or painting for that matter may not appear obvious at first, but let us look deeper. Vitruvius begins with Order and Arrangement (mental, design oriented considerations) and ends with Economy or Distribution, the material aspects of building. Xie-He begins with Spirit Consonance and ends with Transmission. Both, however, include the same basic components and place fidelity or ‘correspondence/symmetry’ in the middle of their respective series (perhaps implying a mid-level importance). Xie-He’s series is concerned with criteria for aesthetic estimation and principles for the painter to cultivate rather than a hierarchical mind over matter evolution (e.g., Vitruvius), and so his judgment begins with the expression of vitality.

The six principles of Xie-He as described by James Cahill are arranged in three pairs, each pair acting as a kind of supportive relationship. [15]

The first two, Spirit Consonance and Bone Method, are related in such a way that they inform each other since one’s technique and use of materials have a noticeable moral influence; the influence of one’s signature, of one’s individual engendering spirit, as embodied in one’s material sensibility is a conduit for the central gesture of the piece.

The second pair, Depiction and According to kind, relates to representation of the principle forms, the first is fidelity in terms of drawing, the second as an aesthetic and emotive response in terms of color and value to further the intention of responding or according to such form.

The third pair is Composition and Transmission, both of which relate to ‘rules’ and ‘design’, and the education of the artist and his translation of past artistic experience. Composition is the best placement of things, and largely is informed by the adjustments and adaptations of time-tested rules.
Vitruvius would have called the rules of Transmission ‘regula’ ("rule") and his description of decorum (θεματισμός, “Thematismos”) entails three components: decorum from prescription, decorum from usage, or decorum from nature.

1) Of these, Prescription [16] is the awareness of history, subject and symbolism; it demonstrates the overall literacy of the artist. Every artist should aim to become familiar with the inherited symbols of one’s culture. This includes everything from the indigenous mythology and lore of one’s ancestors and uses of allegorical symbolism and other related things as well as familiarity with current images and popular culture.

2) Usage is what is fitting from a common sense use of elements and principles; less successful work, and a poor use of visual grammar will be apparent almost immediately. Great subjects may need to be formatted large or small or depicted in different ways depending on circumstances. The final framing of a work is also indicated by usage. More vernacular or discrete subjects will need a presentation suitable to them. There is no fast rule for either, but let the final result be more from deliberation than by accident or haste, whatever the quality of composition, materials used, or the level of draftsmanship. The artist should aim to be eloquent and not haphazard in the work. The best key to creative “eloquence”, as Quintilian [17] explained, arises from exposure to past works of excellence.

3) Nature means practical common sense in making something for the real world and being conscious of the physiological and psychological impact, the biophilic aspects of design. Biophilia is not only simply design rules about the psychological effects of color and such, but also consciousness of real physiological affects of art and design, both unsettling and harmonizing. [18]

Transmission entails awareness of exemplary models and past masterworks. Not simply of this or that individual masterpiece but the general oeuvre of the masters who count as influences and of whom one learns painting through emulation. [19]
Vitruvius is primarily concerned with the education of the architect and the hierarchy of principles that are suspended from the division of space that is at the heart of designing and building. He is fully aware of the creative and intellectual concerns of the architect who builds on principle and adapts individual buildings to circumstances with inventive genius, in this way affirming the architect as a kind of artist, not simply a construction worker or simple craftsman.

Xie-He is primarily concerned about a hierarchy of principles in the estimation of individual works of expressive painting, therefore ‘spirit’ or energy is of primary importance over something like what we would call mimetic realism and, what Xie-He calls “Correspondence to the Object”[20] and further away from pedagogy or what he calls “Transmission”. Painting as we know it, partakes of all these things.

Vitruvius in describing his six principles in sequence says of the first:

“Order gives due measure to the members of a work considered separately, and symmetrical agreement to the proportions of the whole. It is an adjustment according to quantity (ποσότης). By this I mean the selection of modules from the members of the work itself and, starting from these individual parts of members, constructing the whole work to correspond.

Arrangement includes the putting of things in their proper places and the elegance of effect, which is due to adjustments appropriate to the character of the work.

The vitruvian principle of Order/taxis pertains to painting and 2d design “Information density”[21]. By ”selection of modules” he certainly has the idea of measurement and math in mind, but this is more about proportion than any inflexible rule in the sense that each flat rectangular (or other shape) 2d surface has indefinite ways of its space being distributed through composition due to line, shape, notan [22], or information density. In thinking about the density of an architectural plan he certainly can resort to
mathematical ‘modules’, which a painter might find a bit superfluous [23]. The important thing is the underlying principle of quantity, not so much a specific rigid mathematical formula.

The second related idea to order, for Vitruvius, is Arrangement or what we might more easily recognize as composition, “elegance of effect due to [spatial] adjustment appropriate to the character of the work.” So in other words, composition can be broken into two facets; the first is due to an actual measurement of space, using a grid and (if necessary) other geometrical rules, while the second arrangement is due to the individual character or spirit of the invention [24].

Each elaborates and extends what pertains to his own particular art: Vitruvius makes Order (information density) and Arrangement (composition) two separate principles and considers color a subtopic of Decorum in so far as even he mentions the use of color [25], whereas Xie-He makes the application of color and value a distinct principle, “according to kind”.

Does the use of color due from inherited knowledge of what is proper to the language of painting and symbolism pertain to Decorum? Does color pertain more to Verisimilitude (Fidelity) of the subject or is its place more imaginary, subject to considerations of arrangement and visual complexity, advancing or retreating upon the eyes on the basis of composition? Is it both a design element and a design principle? Color (and in every case here hue, value and chroma, along with neutral grays and black and white are to be considered in a single principle of “color”) does seem to be so fundamental to vision, and to painting itself that Xie-He seems right in establishing it as one of the six.

Xie-He neglects to notice or elaborate on Information Density as a principle all its own. For him it is well enough within the principle of Composition as “Division and planning”. Vitruvius on the other hand, so concerned with planning and process, elaborates Information Density as “Order”, a distinct principle from Composition.
To grasp the power of the whole array, we must make a distinction between design elements and design principles, as stated in the beginning of section I, as well as the different concerns of Vitruvian hierarchy of idea before material and Xie-He’s concern with vitality before pedagogy.

Xie-He concludes after outlining his principles that one can learn the rules of his other principles, but the first one, Spirit Resonance cannot be learned. The most important principle of painting is the thing least guaranteed by the rules of art and design, yet instrumental for making masterpieces. The final principle is included as fundamental to the concerns of the first (via Emulation); the last is not listed to contrast and conflict with the first, in so far as the first indicates something like our modern notion of individual expression, but it is included as indispensible to the series. We can say in opposition to the modernist’s claims of the alleged ‘infringement’ on creativity that classical training [26] is supposed to be responsible for—that the negation of the last principle would be injurious to the aims of the first.

The specific order or particular sequence of the principles as they are to be understood in evaluation of a particular masterpiece is up for discussion and consideration, but that there might be more or less of the array as is discussed in section III, is a doubtful proposition. Of course we should welcome further refinement and discussion of these principle ideas, and they are supplied in this paper for artist colleagues, their patrons, and to all the lovers of this art for the enlargement of artistic understanding and the elevation of artists, and not for personal gain or self-aggrandizement.

These six principles will always be found recognizable to a large degree in classic, representationally painted masterpieces, everywhere and from every era. Naturally, works equally masterful in appearance but so different and varied in form, style, and content will exhibit more strongly one or more of the stated principles.

Therefore artists should strive to recall these principles to improve upon their own work Additionally, through personal reflection and
using their own inventive genius they may discover what principle(s) have been emphasized in masterpieces, new or old, that they celebrate and wish to emulate.

These six then comprise the whole of painting and are to be considered in light of one with all the others, as members of a group. For example, the reliance on models for one's basic training (6) is tempered and modified by the aims of (1) and that of (5) which calls for an original composition. The same is true for each and every one of them.

What is interesting to me are the striking parallels, dare I say, consilience [27] between the two sets of principles of Xie-He and Vitruvius. Neither is engaged in a “visual analysis” in the modern semiotic sense of critique, or in the same [geometrical] manner that Alberti approaches the subject of painting, nor is it a discussion of design elements pertaining strictly to formal concerns. It seems that it is an underlying and unified multiplicity of universal principles that both Vitruvius and Xie-He are independently discovering and describing through thinking and writing about their respective fields, therefore I hesitate to call them “new” principles or “my” principles for that matter. I have only reorganized and renamed them for the sake of simplicity.
1. GESTURE: Eurythmia, "Engender a sense of movement through spirit consonance"

The individual voice and personal energy transmitted from the artist into the work. Resonance. Presence. The overall energy and spirit of a work of art. Musical vitality.

There is a musicality to the work as a whole such that the primary forms may be perceived as forming a group distinguished by unified, lively appearance.

In order for a work to be distinguished by gesture, its composition should have a resonant, vital appearance when perceived as parts of a group; and the parts should possess the quality of being well-shaped as constituents of a whole, the most spectacular of which are selective marks indicating the inner signature or ‘vital spirit’, the appropriate gesture of the essential energy of the whole work.

In other words the individual signature is in accordance with the
successful use of all the other five remaining principles.

Examples:

Joan of Arc by Bastien-LePage

Nymphs and Satyr, by W.Bougereau

Philosophy, by Gustav Klimt

Twin Mothers, by Odd Nerdrum

Allegory of Painting, by Jeffery Mims

Diana, by Nicole Alger

2. ECONOMY: Oikonomia, Distribution, “Use the brush with the “Bone Method,””


The way of using ones tools and material considerations that apply to technique in expressing and rendering the forms in the context of the whole composition. This refers not only to texture and brush stroke, but also to the close link between handwriting and personality. (In Xie-He’s day, the art of calligraphy was inseparable from painting.)

Vitruvius: “Distributio autem est copiarum locique commodae dispensation parcaque in operibus sumptus ratione temperatio.”
“Distribution denotes the proper management of materials and site, as well as a thrifty balancing of cost and common sense in the construction of the works.”

‘Common sense’ here indicates a conservation of means and efficiency in constructing a work of art whether it is a painting or a building. Every tangible consideration from the relative capabilities of ones materials, their durability, aesthetic worthiness (even their cost), and the masterful, efficient, soulful manipulation of them is indicated by this principle. This principle is essentially about sensitivity to ones materials and the techniques of using them to reveal form without superfluity.

Examples:

Los Borachos, by Diego Velasquez

La Source, by J.A. Ingres

Hombre con Turbante (A Turbaned Oriental), by Gabriel Raya Morcillo

Alexandra, by Paul Dusold

The Dream of Pierrot, by Teresa Oaxaca

Candace, by Jacob Collins

3. FIDELITY: Symmetria, “Responding to things, image, depict their forms”

coherent “naturalistic” or “realistic” harmony of the work, achieved when there is consensus between the primary subject formed on the basis of a natural model or prototype and between the rest of the work.

That is, when the proportions of recognizable forms are congruous as they are found in natural forms. This is especially important in depicting the human form. [28] So much of portraiture and of depicting the figure in general depend on this principle, as do so many other aspects of “realism” or “representation”.

Yet fidelity is not necessarily blind imitation, or attempting to copy as a camera even when striving for such verisimilitude and coherence as ones skill will allow.

This leaves room for interpretation since naturalistic forms may be depicted with infinite variety all the while retaining clear recognition of their prototype. Thoughtful adherence to this principle will bring new understanding to even traditional subjects.

The key point is that representation/depiction is a response to the perceived form by the artist’s invention, and in the light of the principles (5) and (6) one might be cognizant of the language of painting as something apart from the direct mimetic and stylistic influence of photography. Photography alone (despite any possible usefulness it has as an aid in the painting process) is not a means of inculcating visual eloquence any more than simply working from life is—with no sense of a Transmission of past eloquence.

Examples:

Still life with Gilt Goblet, by Willem Claesz Heda

Grand Canal from Palazzo Flangini, by Canaletto

Study from Life for the Portrait of King Alfonzo XIII, by Ramon Casas
Gretchen and Roscoe, by Sean Cheetham

Blue, By Kate Lehman

Upkeep, by Joseph Todorovich

4. COLOR-VALUE RESPONSE: “According to kind, set forth (describe) colors (appearances)"

Responding in terms of color and value. Color in design and overall mood. Hue, Value, and Chroma used in terms of both local color and in the whole composition to convey the artists' personal design aesthetic and inner vision in relationship to the pictured form.

This goes beyond strict representation of the form from the imagined sense of a photographic reproduction in which there is no color hierarchy. The power of this principle is in its emphasis (or de-emphasis, i.e. desaturation) and its enthusiastic response to a given form and/or series of color relationships in the context of the whole work. The biophilic response of color is also included in this principle and the symbolic use of color would overlap into (6).

Examples:

Melun Diptych, by Jean Fouquet

The Slav Epic, by Alphonse Mucha

Attack on a Galleon, by Howard Pyle

L’Herbe Rose, by Helene Delmaire

Couture, by Erik Jones
5. COMPOSITION/ORDINATION: Diathesis, Disposition, Arrangement, “Division and planning, positioning and arranging”

(a) Composition or Arrangement deals with the right placement of the principle masses and figure-ground relationships, their right grouping and direction, by which the invention itself acquires its unique identity and character. It is apparent in the design sketch, thumbnail, blueprint or linear ‘comprehensive’ drawing.

Composition includes the putting of things in their proper places and the elegance

of effect is due to adjustments appropriate to the concept and character of the work.

Eloquence and awareness of precedent (6) and personal imagination characterize the design, of which the individual composition is the tangible manifestation of an invention.

Composition is about an internally coherent spacing and direction, corresponding to ‘position’, space and depth. Its principal objective (besides congruity in keeping with the overall artistic mood) is the creation of a visual hierarchy of large and small masses, and the establishment of a rank order among the elements constituting the work.

(b) Taxis, Ordination, or "Order", or “Information density” is the number of visually distinguishable regions per unit of area. It is the intuitive adjustment of the ‘distinguishable regions’ considered separately, and the creation of a hierarchy of magnitudes (sized marks or objects), in keeping with the artist’s intention to fill a space with more or less visual activity.
Ordination is shaped through quantity of space, and the hierarchy is created when the appropriate relative magnitude is attributed to each and every single composed part within a region of the whole. The harmonious character of the work derives from the proper, suitable determination of the basic relative magnitudes of the members, and their parts, according to their visual importance, to their rank. The analogy with the harmony of the invention rests, in selecting the best possible relationship between the magnitudes of the various parts in such a way as to create an hierarchically structured whole; this task cannot be carried out by basic fidelity (3) or composition alone.

In other words, simply rendering a form well is not a composition, as the composing or directing ability of the artist must come into play. This includes awareness of visual “density”, not simply that the primary objects are harmoniously placed relative to each other, or that well chosen colors and values are used to aid the eye to navigate the composition, but that some areas contain more overall visual information to process than others.

Examples:

The Deposition, by Titian

The Hemicycle, by Paul Delaroche

Portrait of Jeanne Kefer, by Fernand Knopf

Hotel Paradiso, Alan Feltus

Night Watch, by Adam Miller

Orchid with Odalisque, by Jim McVicker
6. DECORUM: Thematismos, Decorum," Transmitting and conveying earlier models through transcribing"

Decorum is about visual literacy. Visual literacy, as an informed clarity, comes when an artist’s work is authoritatively constructed on long established principles with a keen awareness of art history, and the substance gained by sources of knowledge outside that of painting that pertain to the work.

Informed clarity means the thoughtful use of symbols. Decorum arises from prescription of usage and from a natural awareness of excellence and taste. As transmission, it is a trained eloquence developed through the copying and imitating of exemplary models (mastercopies, cast drawing, etc) and from awareness of nature. Transmission and decorum is an awareness of the history of painting but especially one’s own immediate influences as evident in the work. This includes demonstrable, perhaps intuitive knowledge of the elements and principles of designing pictures that develop with familiarity of works of enduring excellence and quality. But since one is inventing with knowledge and experience, decorum results from successful emulation, not simply imitation of past models.

In considering symbols, long established principles, and awareness of precedent, I add that decorum is a kind of fluency of the communicative and social aspect, and in recognition of painting as a visual language.

Examples:

La Primavera, by Botticelli

The Art of Painting, by Vermeer

Ulysses and the Sirens, by William Waterhouse

Foreclosure, by Max Ginsberg
A Hero of Nanjing: The Courage of Minnie Vautrin, by HongNian Zhang

The Cycle of Terror and Tragedy, by Graydon Parrish
PART IV. APPENDIX: VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS (of Xie-He)

James F. Cahill:

1. The first is: Engender [a sense of] movement [through] spirit consonance.

2. The second is: Use the brush [with] the “Bone Method”.

3. The Third is: Responding to things, image (depict) their forms.

4. The fourth is: According (adapting,) to kind, set forth (describe) colors (appearances).

5. The fifth is: Dividing and planning, positioning and arranging.

6. The sixth is: Transmitting and conveying [earlier models, through] copying and transcribing

John Cikoski:

1. First, if you make the harmony of forces organically dynamic, you’re doing it right. 2. Second, if you use the brush calligraphically you’re doing it right.

3. Third, if you portray forms so as to resonate with objects you’re doing it right.

4. Fourth, if you draw on your palette so as to accord with [metaphysical] affinities, you’re doing it right.

5. Fifth, if you make your composition architectonic you’re doing it right.
6. Sixth, if you conform to and carry on a tradition, you’re doing it right.

Edward Schafer:

1. If with consonance of [vital] breaths you give vital movement, that’s it!"

2. If with bony module you employ the brush, that’s it!"

3. If with follow the genus you distribute the pigments, that’s it!"

4. If with response to the thing itself [individuality of species] you duplicate the form, that’s it! "

5. If with tracing the template you assign positions, that’s it!"

6. If with transfer by tradition you copy from [authentic] relics, that’s it!

Peter Boodberg:

1. Pneumatic Consonance: to quicken stirring

2. Osteologic method: to ply the brush.

3. Responding to things: to image forms.


5. Lining-coordinates, laying out: positioning, stationing.

6. Transferring, scale (modeling): transposing, copying."
PART V. NOTES:

[1] What all these elements and principles are, their exact number and their formal descriptions are the subjects of other writings, beyond the scope of this one.

[2] Also known as “Hsieh-Ho”.

[3] It is often assumed that Asian painting is synonymous with landscape painting, but Xie-He was primarily a figure painter even as his laws have provided landscape artists with centuries of guidance.


[10] Aristotle, Rhetorica


[15] Thus arranged, they could be said to resemble the Platonic tripartite theory of soul: θυμοειδές “high-spirited” (1,2), ἐπιθυμητικόν “appetitive” (3,4), and λογιστικός, “reasoning” (5,6).

[16] Sometimes rendered as “Convention”.


[18] “Biophilic design is the expression of the inherent human need to affiliate with nature in the design of the built environment. The basic premise of the biophilic design is that the positive experience of natural systems and processes...remains critical to human performance and well-being.” Kellert, Heerwagen, Martin.


[20] The sequence begins with what we might call expressionistic issues and ends with pedagogical issues, the reverse of the classical mimetic sequence (see Mayernik): imitation-translation-emulation.


[22] “Nōtan” (濃淡) in classical Japanese aesthetics, the principle of light/dark value contrast.

[23] Although a grid or other geometrical formulas may be applied, if desired by a painter, to formally shape the space.

[24] “Let me also suggest that Aristotle’s concept of taxis in Rhetoric 1414a ff. implies the attribution of right position and right length (that is the right magnitude) to the parts of a speech.35 It is not inconceivable that this understanding of taxis, evolved in architectural theory into two separate notions: ordinatio, concerning the ‘quantitative’ aspects – the dimensions of the members – and dispositio, concerning the ‘spatial’ aspects – the positions of the members – of a work.” -Pavlos Lefas, ”On the Fundamental Terms of
Vitruvius’s Architectural Theory”.

[25] Book VII. His discussion of color is mostly relegated to fresco painting and the sourcing of pigments. [26] Transmission, as Decorum.

[27] The agreement of two or more inductions drawn from different sets of data; concurrence. i.e.Wilson,etc.

[28] Intentional violation of human proportions is an attempt to disfigure “reason”. Comedic hyperbole, as in caricature or satire, is the only ethical justification for doing it, besides naïveté and lack of training, etc. see Decorum (6).
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