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Specific features of compositional structures in drawing and painting in training future artists of nizhny tagil decorative painting

Abstract. This article analyzes compositional structures in drawing and painting during the preparation of students studying Nizhny Tagil decorative painting. Concepts such as symmetry and asymmetry, scale, rhythm, contrast, tonal relationships and color relationships are examined, which are used in drawings, paintings and design of products made in the style of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting. Recommendations are given for organizing still-life setups for creating sketches and oil studies by future artists specializing in Nizhny Tagil decorative painting.

Keywords: nizhny tagil decorative painting, drawing, painting, higher education, composition, symmetry, asymmetry, scale, rhythm, contrast, tonal relationships, color relationships.

Training highly skilled artists in the field of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting is an important factor in preserving Russia's cultural code. A modern artist of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting must master the technique and technology of decorative painting, as well as have developed compositional thinking [1, p. 197; 2, pp. 152-153; 3, p. 211].

Knowledge and skills in the field of composition are formed in students during classes on general composition and design in the field of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting. Additionally, the foundations of knowledge and skills in the field of compositional constructions are formed during drawing and painting lessons. To ensure consistency between drawing, painting and design, it is necessary to identify those means of artistic expression that are used both in drawing and painting, as well as in design activities in Nizhny Tagil decorative painting.

Nizhny Tagil decorative painting is characterized by vibrant colors and complex, expressive floral compositions. These compositions feature rhythmic clarity, where color and tone contrasts are employed to create an artistic image [4]. Scale ratios are skillfully utilized when depicting bouquets: three main scales are chosen – the large, medium and small. Large-scale flowers serve as the centerpiece of the composition, typically consisting of 3-5 blooms; flowers depicted in medium and small scales appear more frequently, forming a painterly frame around the

central composition. An important aspect in creating Nizhny Tagil painting is the interval – a pause in composition – both within the depiction of the bouquet itself and between the bouquet and its ornamental framing. Employing compositional intervals helps organize rhythm and achieve an expressive representation of the artwork.

There are two writing techniques in Nizhny Tagil painting: swing bicolor painting and multilayer painting. For works executed in the swing bicolor technique, specific compositional solutions are characteristic: division of the image into sectors and symmetrical arrangement of objects depicted, giving the product a more decorative and monumental sound [5]. In the swing bicolor writing technique, bright and saturated colors are used. Flowers, fruits, vegetables are depicted in a more conventional manner and backgrounds of intense colors are often used. For example, the background may be red, blue, green and sector plates are commonly found, where the background consists of differently colored sectors. In this case, the artist must possess the ability to harmonize contrasting and vivid colors, constructing the silhouette of flower bouquets skillfully (Fig. 1¹⁵).

Swing technique is used to execute narrative compositions featuring human figures: everyday scenes, celebrations, folk festivities, tea parties, etc. (Fig. 2). Narrative compositions rely on expressive silhouettes of depicted human figures and household items. A properly constructed silhouette contributes significantly to creating an artistic image in the piece. Multilayer painting technique resembles easel painting with oil paints, where tonal resolution plays a crucial role in compositions (Fig. 3). Tone is used to create an effect of spatial depth.



Fig. 1. Tray in swing bicolor technique of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting



Fig. 2. Tray "Tea party" in swing bicolor technique of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting

Among items decorated with Nizhny Tagil decorative painting (Figs. 1-3), one can distinguish the following means of artistic expression in creating compositions: contrast, scale, silhouette, rhythm, accent, interval, symmetry, asymmetry, tone, color and color scheme. Figure 1 shows a tray painted in the swing

¹⁵ Figs. 1-3. Photos from the methodological fund of the department of lacquer painting at the Russian university of traditional art crafts.

bicolor technique of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting. The composition of the painting relies on the contrast between light-colored flower spots against a dark, almost black background, making the primary motif, composed of three colors and located centrally, “clearly visible”. Also critical are the proportional relationships between the size and shape of the decorative bouquet and the tray itself. The depicted bouquet should neither be too small nor too large, as this might give an impression of fragmentation. On this particular tray, the depicted bouquet is harmoniously integrated with its shape and size. The rhythm of the entire decorative composition is effectively supported by the ornamentation, which draws attention to the main motif – the floral bouquet.



Fig. 3. Tray in multilayer technique of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting

Composition and color palette differ in Nizhny Tagil decorative painting executed in the multilayer oil painting technique. Figure 3 depicts a tray painted in the multilayer oil painting technique, where the color palette is built upon close tonal relationships. In this type of painting, it is important to convey the sense of the depicted bouquet “being immersed” in the background space. Illumination is achieved through subtle touches, where the edges of flower buds gently dissolve into the background. Such effects can be obtained by applying transparent, thin layers of paint – glazing.

Analysis of artistic means of expression in Nizhny Tagil decorative painting leads to the conclusion that most of the used compositional techniques resemble methods of compositional construction in life-drawing and painting. In preparing future artists of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting, it is necessary to determine which means of artistic expression in drawing and painting will be beneficial for further use in design and mastery courses.

An artist represents volumetric objects situated in three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional sheet, resulting in graphic and pictorial representations always being more abstract. Tone, color and contrast – expressive tools of drawing and painting used in sketching and studies from nature – cannot fully correspond to real space, natural colors and sunlight. To convey their observations and contemplation of nature, artists resort to artistic-pictorial generalizations.

Identifying the specificity of compositional constructs in drawing and painting involves clarifying the term “composition” itself. Derived from the Latin word “composition” meaning joining parts together into a unified order, in any form of art, employing laws and principles of compositional structure allows creation of complete finished works, producing vibrant artistic images.

One of the principal tasks in designing pieces of Nizhny Tagil painting is to develop a project in which the decorative painted depiction of a bouquet integrates seamlessly with the item's form and scale, presenting a cohesive artistic work.

A similar task should be set before students studying Nizhny Tagil painting when performing drawings and oil studies from nature. Notions studied in drawing and painting classes, such as symmetry and asymmetry, scale, rhythm, contrast, tonal and color relationships, allow achieving realization of the artistic-compositional concept. In the composition of graphic and pictorial works, the main motif stands out, serving as the compositional center (Figs. 4¹⁶, 5).

When studying compositional structures, it is essential to consider the means of artistic expression that enable the creation of a “professionally competent” composition.



Fig. 4. Academic assignment in drawing:
"Still life drawing including a flower
bouquet"



Fig. 5. Academic assignment in painting:
"Painting study of still life including a flower
bouquet"

¹⁶ Figs. 4-9. Photos from the methodological fund of the department of drawing and painting at the Russian university of traditional art crafts.

Symmetry in composition corresponds to the principles of form construction in nature. Nature does not contain absolutely symmetric shapes; there are always slight deviations from mathematical symmetry. One method of achieving balance in compositions of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting is the use of symmetry based on equality of dark and light tones, scale of details in the composition, thereby balancing the right and left sides of the image relative to the compositional center.

When arranging a still life setting for drawing and painting, it is advisable to apply the principle of symmetry (Fig. 5) so that students, while completing their assignments, practically absorb the principles of constructing symmetrical compositions [6, p. 89].

Asymmetric compositions can also be encountered in Nizhny Tagil decorative painting. Asymmetry usually manifests itself in the shifted, relative to geometric center, compositional center of floral decoration. Consequently, dynamic impressions arise in decorative painting. For this purpose, arrangements with asymmetric compositions (Fig. 6) are used.



Fig. 6. Academic assignment in painting:
"Painting study of still life including a
flower bouquet". Symmetrical arrangement
of composition

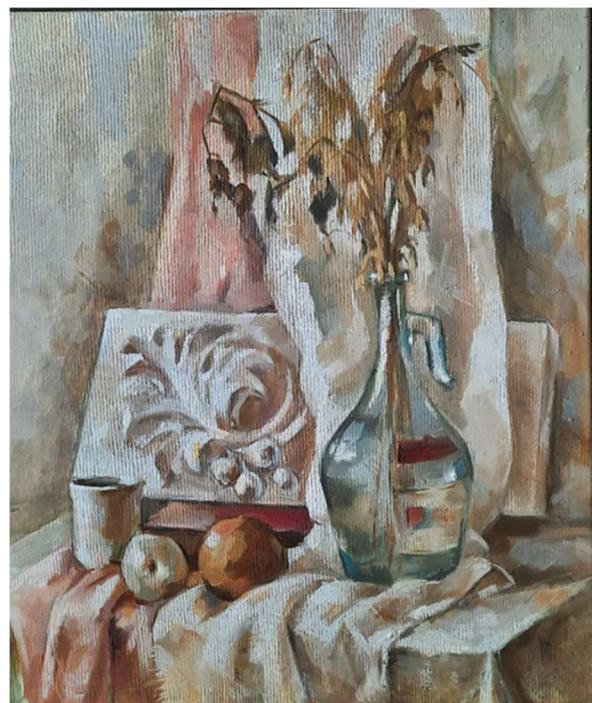


Fig. 7. Academic assignment in painting:
"Painting study of still life including a plaster
rosette and flower bouquet". Asymmetrical
arrangement of composition

Scale of elements in Nizhny Tagil decorative painting holds great significance, relating to the format size of the object on which the painting is performed. Depicted subjects must be harmoniously scaled in relation to the format of the picture plane. Overlarge subject images would create a fragmentary impression, whereas disproportionately small ones might lead to feelings of incompleteness and imbalance. When executing still lifes, it is vital to draw students'

attention to scalings of objects, as these acquired skills will later prove useful in designing Nizhny Tagil decorative painting projects [7, p. 32; 8, p. 43].

Rhythm plays a crucial and varied role in many forms of art. The very word rhythm originates from the Greek “rhythmos”, meaning movement or beat. Rhythm aids in revealing the essence of a work, helping to create a coherent and imaginative piece. In Nizhny Tagil decorative painting, rhythm creates organization and alternation of elements in the painted image. Viewers tend to perceive images by seeking patterns and simplifications, reducing forms to simple geometries like circles, squares, triangles. Utilization of geometric shapes should be incorporated into the schema of arranging still-life compositions (Figs. 8, 9). Use of geometric figures in establishing rhythm assists in highlighting the main components of the composition and unifying elements of the painted image.



Fig. 8. Photograph of still life setup with flower bouquet. Composition enclosed within geometric triangle



Fig. 9. Photograph of still life setup with flower bouquet. Composition enclosed within geometric square

Another important element of composition is contrast, which is based on oppositions in terms of scale (size), tone, color, motion, texture and silhouette of depicted objects or parts in an artwork to intensify its figurative impact.

Two types of contrasts are used in Nizhny Tagil decorative painting: achromatic contrasts (light-based) and chromatic contrasts (color-based). Both achromatic and chromatic contrasts are simultaneously applied in painting, implying that still-life settings for painting should exhibit contrasts in tone and color. For instance, a peony bouquet with petals having pale pink coloring is positioned against a backdrop of dark green draperies. Light-colored blossoms against a dark background result in a tonal contrast (contrast of complementary colors, red-green).

By working on such setups, students address tasks closely aligned with the challenges of designing Nizhny Tagil decorative painting works.

The research allowed us to make the following conclusions:

- ✓ expressive artistic means in compositional structures (*symmetry and asymmetry, scale, rhythm, contrast, tonal and color relationships*) are applicable both in drawing and painting, as well as in designing products of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting. This enables focusing students' attention on these concepts during drawing and painting classes.
- ✓ establishing connections between expressive artistic means in compositional structures in drawing and painting with design activities in Nizhny Tagil decorative painting opens paths for creating modern, highly artistic products.
- ✓ selection and practical application of concepts, terms and definitions in compositional structures for drawing and painting in the preparation of future artists of Nizhny Tagil decorative painting can be utilized in further improvement of the curriculum and methodological framework of the drawing and painting department.

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