2-Point Perspective

Lettering with Depth!

Introduction to Perspective

The Renaissance (1400 - 1600) was a great rebirth of European learning and discovery. It ended 1000 years of superstition and ignorance that followed the fall of Rome. The Renaissance began in Italy and then spread throughout northern Europe. Art, science, and literature all grew tremendously during the Renaissance, led by artists like Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, scientists like Galileo, and writers like Shakespeare.

Renaissance artists concentrated on investigating and representing the real world. Artists continued to depict religious subjects but also began to portray the human experience. There was renewed interest in naturalistic styles and formal rules of composition such as perspective. The Greek classical ideals of ideal proportions (for depicting the human body as well as for architecture and painting) also regained popularity.

Important artists of the Italian Renaissance were Donatello, Piero, Raphael, Titian, along with Michelangelo and Leonardo Da Vinci. In northern Europe, important Renaissance artists were Albrect Dürer, Hans Holbein, and Pieter Brueghel.

Exploring Linear Perspective

Perspective is a technique for representing three-dimensional space on a flat surface. Many artists around the world have employed various techniques for portraying depth. However, it wasn't until the Renaissance that artists invented a mathematical system to show depth logically and consistently. The system of linear perspective gave artists a powerful new tool for creating realistic art.

Linear perspective is based on the way the human eye sees the world-objects which are closer appear larger, and more distant objects appear smaller. To create this illusion of space, the artist establishes a vanishing point on the horizon line. Objects are drawn using orthogonal lines which lead to the vanishing point(s).

Perspective Vocabulary

- Horizon Line - The **horizon line** runs across the canvas at the eye level of the viewer. The horizon line is where the sky appears to meet the ground.
- Vanishing Point - The **vanishing point** should be located near the center of the horizon line. The vanishing point is where all (orthogonals) that run towards the horizon line appear to come together like train tracks in the distance.
- Orthogonals Lines - **Orthogonal lines** are "visual rays" helping the viewer's eye to connect points around the edges of the canvas to the vanishing point. An artist uses them to align the edges of walls and paving stones.

One-Point Perspective

In one-point perspective, the forms are seen face on and are drawn to a single vanishing point.

Two-Point Perspective

Objects seen at an angle would be drawn with two-point perspective using two vanishing points. Note, artwork with two-point perspective often has vanishing points "off the page".

Additional Techniques to Create Depth

- Size: objects appear smaller as they get farther away.
- Position: objects appear higher on the page as they get farther away.
- Overlap: Overlapping objects show which is farther.
- Detail: Objects have less detail as they get farther away.
- Saturation of color: Close objects are brightest and sharpest. Objects in the distance appear pale and washed out.
- Atmospheric perspective: Objects in the distance may appear bluish.
- Warm colors advance/cool colors recede: Warm colors may appear closer. Cool colors may appear farther away.

During the Renaissance, European artists began to study the model of nature more closely and to paint with the goal of greater realism. They learned to create lifelike people and animals, and they became skilled at creating the illusion of depth and distance on flat walls and canvases by using the techniques of linear perspective.

The most praiseworthy form of painting
is the one that most resembles what it imitates.
~ Leonardo Da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci trained as a painter during the Renaissance and became a true master of the craft. His amazing powers of observation and skill as an illustrator enabled him to notice and recreate the effects he saw in nature, and added a special liveliness to his portraits. Curious as well as observant, he constantly tried to explain what he saw, and described many experiments to test his ideas. Because he wrote down and sketched so many of his observations in his notebooks, we know that he was among the very first to take a scientific approach towards understanding how our world works and how we see it.

Below is a painting of the *Annunciation*, a painting Leonardo completed when he was only 21 years old. See if you can find the **horizon line**, **vanishing point**, and **orthogonal lines** in the *Annunciation*.

In this study for *Adoration of the Magi*, Leonardo has carefully drawn all of the lines needed to create perspective before sketching in all the figures. Look carefully and see if you can find the **horizon line**, **vanishing point**, and **orthogonals.**
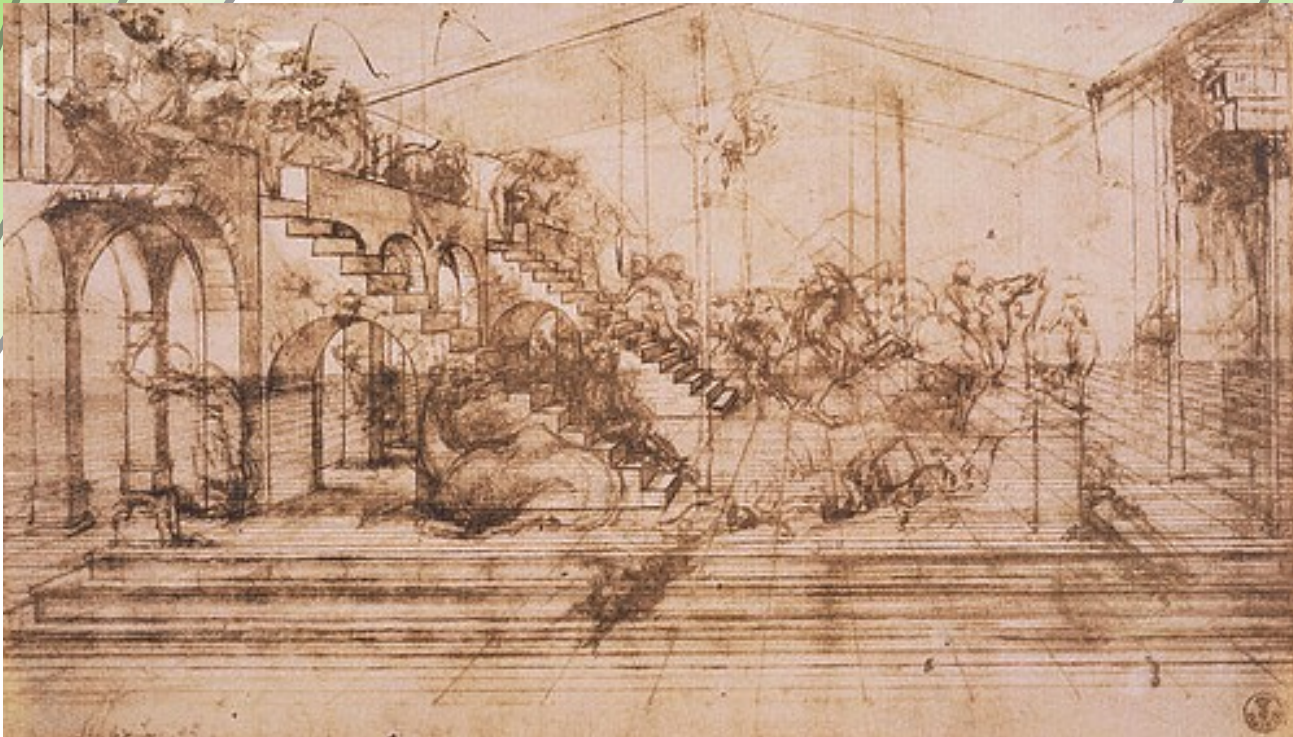
Drawing Letters in 2-Point Perspective

- After mastering the art of 2-Point Perspective, you will use this skill to create the letters of your name.

- The letters do not need to be drawn in sequential order.

- You can incorporate other 2-Point Perspectively drawn images as well to make an interesting composition.
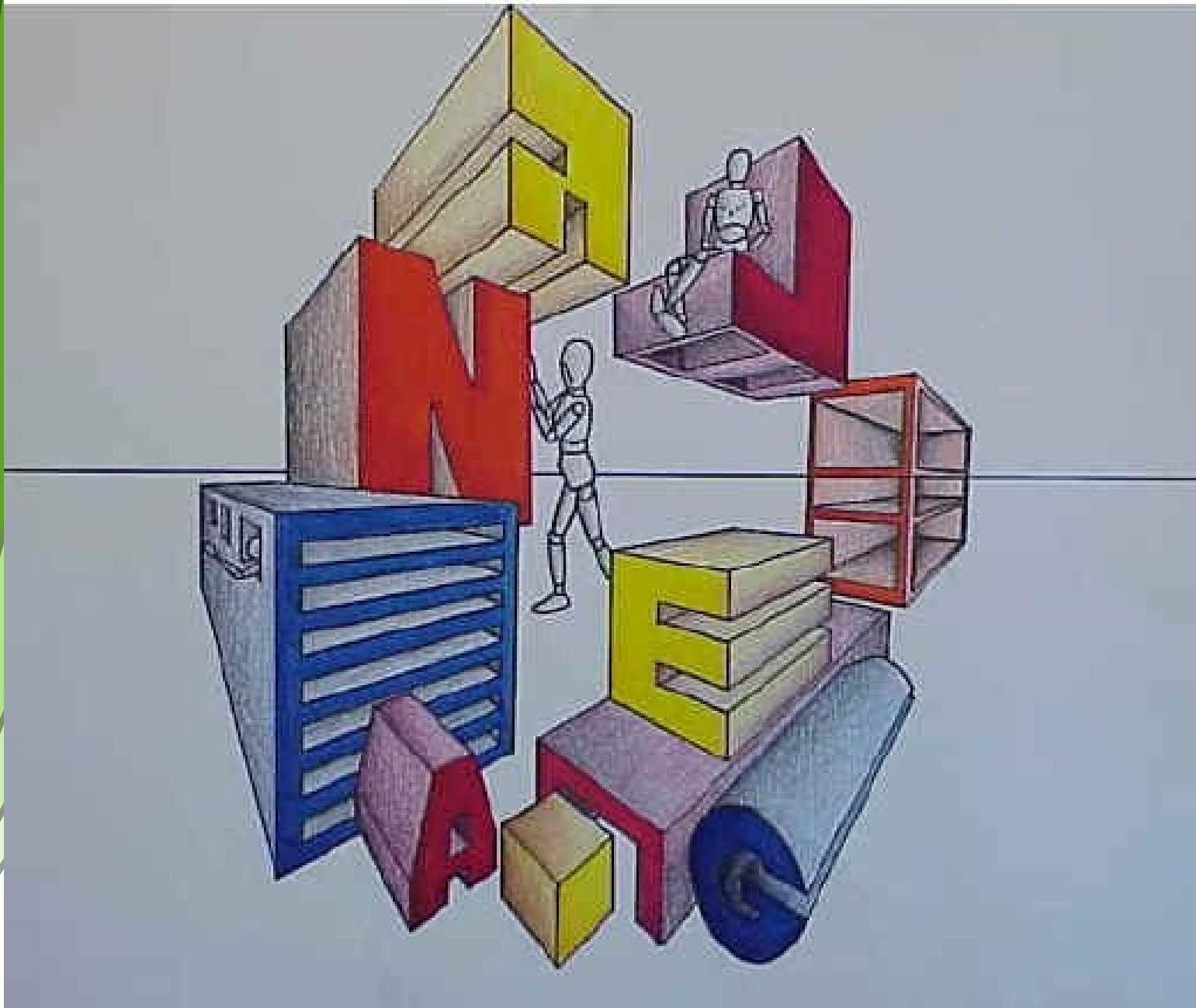
Perspective is nothing else than seeing a place or objects behind a plane of glass, quite transparent, on the surface of which the objects behind the glass are to be drawn.

~ Leonardo Da Vinci