

Proportion, Orientation, and Format

We've been working mostly in square and rectangular formats thus far. In this lesson we're going to experiment with exaggerated proportions, different orientations, and modular format. There is an initial warm-up exercise, which is optional. Then we do a series based on an earlier assignment of your choice, and then a modular piece (a piece made up of more than one section) based on another earlier piece of your choice.

Warm-up exercise, optional

Choose a composition style. It can be from a previous lesson or from the list of common compositional types - grid, abstract landscape, stripes, etc - listed in your original handout. Choose a group of materials to work with in this series. The idea is to make the same composition, more or less, with varying proportions. Of course, each one is going to be different, but keep them consistent in color, materials, and format. Make the first one in a comfortable, familiar size and orientation. 8"x10" vertical, for example, or square. Then make several more in different proportions. Here are some suggestions to choose from:

- tall skinny vertical
- short horizontal
- perfectly square, if that is new to you
- much larger than the original
- as a tiny miniature



You can play with the *proportions* and placement of elements as well, as they relate to orientation and format. Here is my series of abstract landscape studies in which I play with proportion and orientation.

My original is a square format

My horizontal version, at right, has collage elements much larger in proportion to the painted sections.





In this version, at left, I exaggerated the lower section, raising the horizon line.



In this one I lowered the horizon, changing the proportions of "sky" to foreground.



This one is my tall, skinny version.

Meat of the Lesson

Exaggerated Vertical or Horizontal

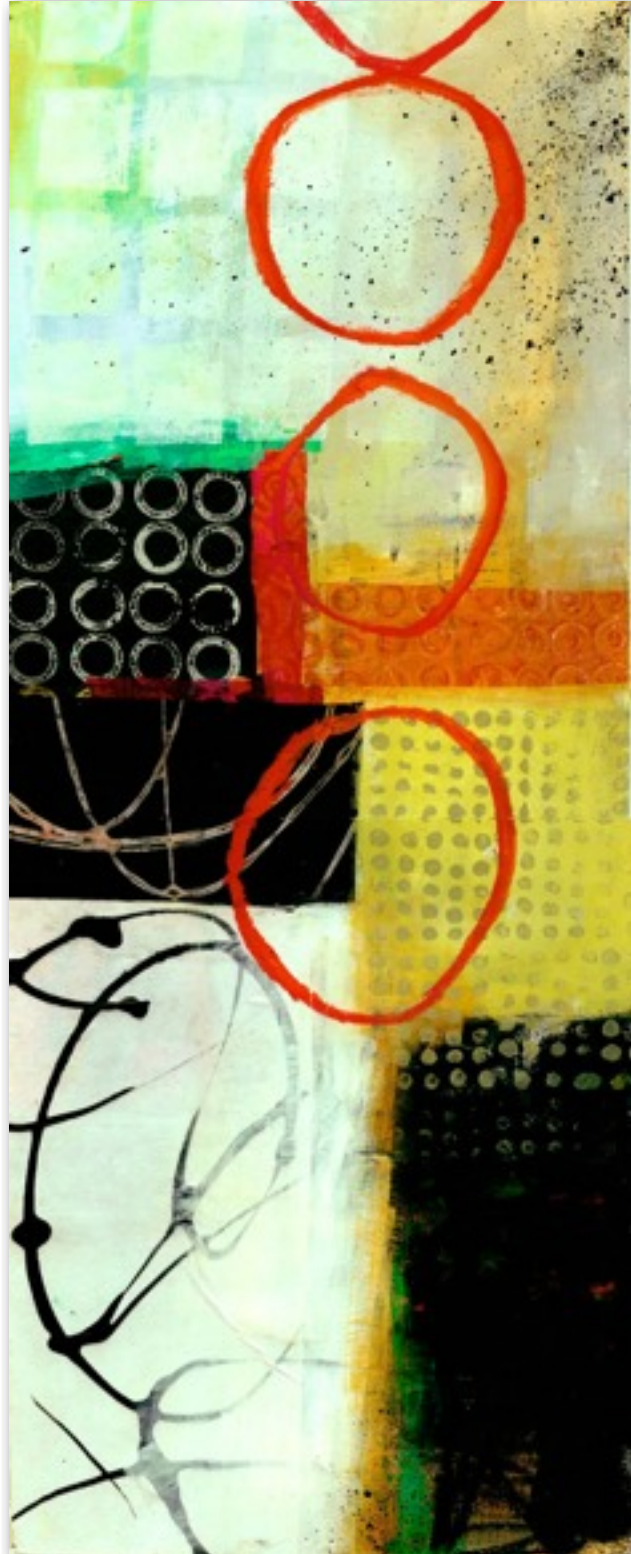
Choose one of your pieces, or a series, from previous lessons, that you would like to explore further. Use it as a starting point to develop a series of pieces in either exaggerated vertical or exaggerated horizontal format. Simple enough, right? Here are a few things to consider:

- This series can be as few as three pieces.
- Use your original piece(s) as a starting point. If you feel boxed in by the vocabulary of the one piece, then bring in new elements, or use vocabulary from another of your pieces.
- In this series, each piece should stand on its own (we'll be doing modular pieces in the next section).
- You don't need to use EVERY element from the original piece in each of your series pieces.



I used these two pieces from Lesson 4 for my inspiration. The series, shown on page 4, are each 22" x 3.5". They can be shown together, but are meant as individual pieces.





These two pieces, as well as the one on the next page, are more loosely derived from the same pieces as the series on the previous page. I've used some of the same elements, but departed from the original vocabulary more than in the first three pieces. I consider all six of these to be part of the *series* inspired by the two pieces from Lesson 4 on page 3.



Working in Modular Format

For this exercise you are making one piece that consists of a number of sections. It can be a diptych, a triptych, and so forth, or a grid. The sections can be vertical, horizontal, or square, and may be, but need not be, exaggerated. Below are a few examples of modular formats.

Modular Formats

horizontal triptych, varying widths

horizontal triptych, varying heights

vertical triptych

modular grid

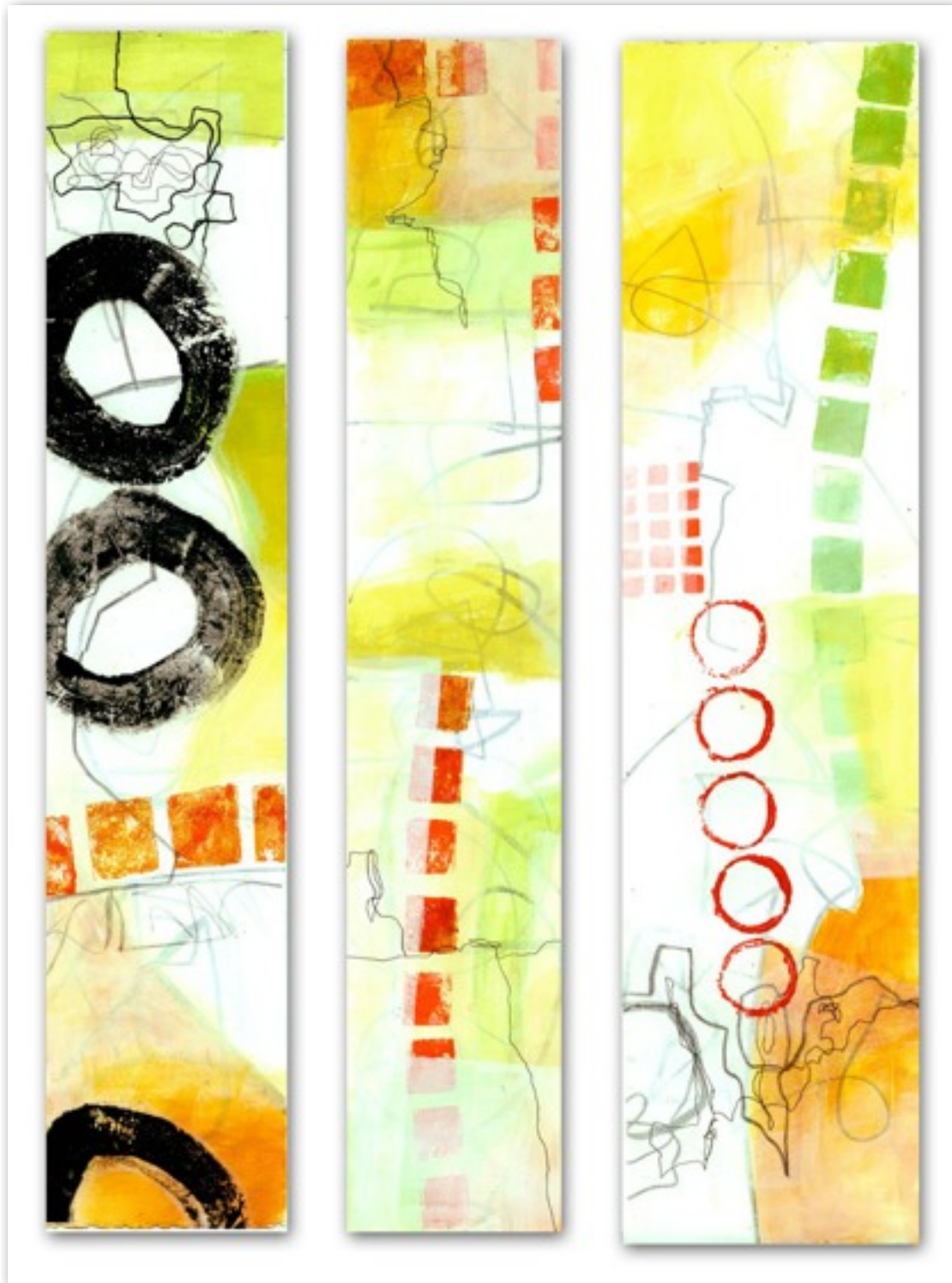
Extreme Composition: Lesson 6

7

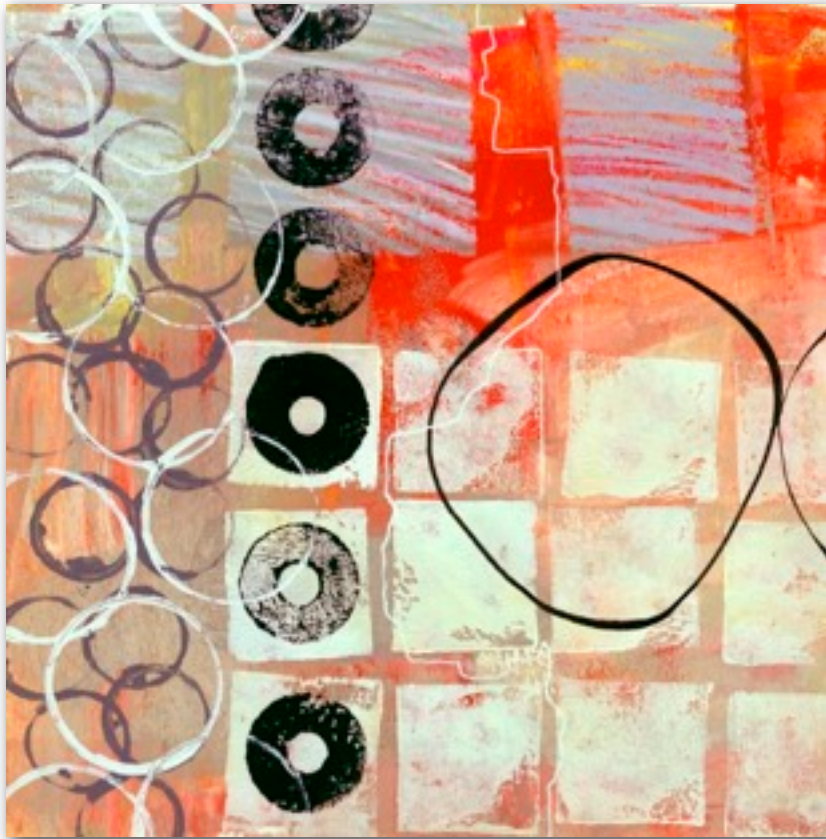
For your modular piece, DO NOT simply make an image and cut it up into pieces, or have an image continuous over the sections. Each section should be a necessary part of the whole, but should not be like a puzzle piece. Here are a couple of examples of my modular pieces.

The first example is based on the piece below from Lesson 5.



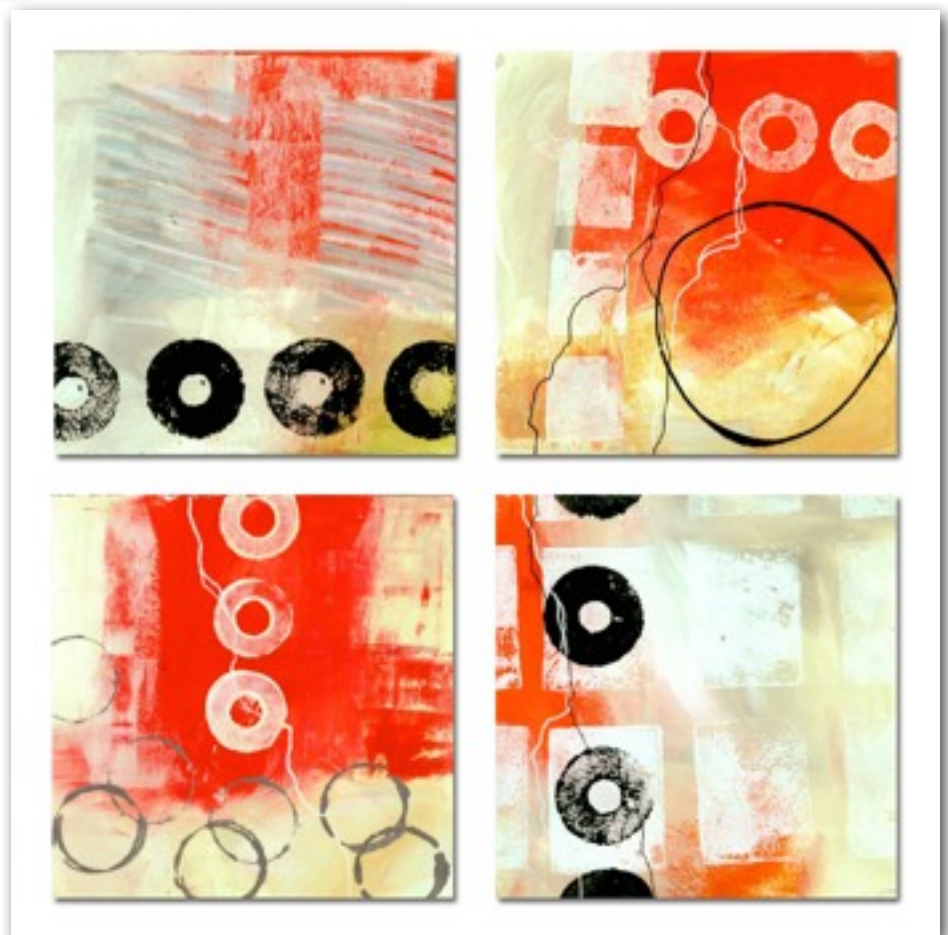


In this triptych I used elements from the painting above, on page 7, and gave them some breathing room over the space of three sections.



This is a piece from Lesson 2, a shape and line study, on which I based my modular grid piece.

I created nine sections for this piece, but thought it worked better as a four square grid.



Here is the “nine-patch” version.



Use this lesson to expand on any of the previous lessons. First you are doing a series in an exaggerated format. Then you are doing a modular piece. Each of these projects is based on an earlier lesson of your choice, and you may feel free to combine lessons. Take your time. And have fun!