



## The Artist in Landscape

One of the re-occurring subjects among artists is the artist in the Landscape. The artist is typically shown packed with art supplies and is trekking toward that perfect view of nature or possibly the artist is shown in the act of painting the landscape. The above images are works by Courbet and Van Gogh.

To begin my explanation I will start with the drawing. What the drawing will show is that what you see in the painting is not real but made visible only through the mind and eye of the artist. In this painting nature is used to structure the composition and direct the focus of the viewer. Nature is not drawn as is but changed into rhythmic and geometric structures. As you look at the drawing you will see how nature conforms to the red and blue lines of radiating circles, triangles, angled lines and rectangular shapes. It is in these lines you can deduce that nothing was rendered but created to meet the compositional needs of the painting.



Seldom is the intent of the artist made available with the image. It is up to the viewer to determine their own interpretation of the work. In this case I will explain what I was thinking as I made the choices for the painting. It begins with the time of day. It is a transitional period when time is most apparent through change. There is no point of reference to determine if it is sun up or sun down so it remains ambiguous. Another reference to time and change is the old and abandoned building. What is more difficult to tell is that the fields contain Queen Ann's lace which also references time. If you look at the artist you will notice that the artist is linked by color association to the old abandoned building as well as to the flowers of nature which implies that he is a part of nature which is cyclical and a part of time that is linear and finite. Next there is a clearly defined path that angles across the foreground and also turns to go deeper into the painting composition and away from the viewer. Note that the artist is walking away and not toward the viewer which I would think suggest leaving. So if we add this idea of leaving, choosing a pathway, ambiguous time of day and the connection to nature then the following idea can be supported. The idea is that there is luminosity/enlightenment and there is darkness/death and both are unclear. What I wished to express is that the path to luminosity and darkness is the same path. The path itself is a choice and I display what I have chosen to take along this path/journey. It is not all dark and gloomy as the colors suggest, It is merely recording change which always contains a beginning and an end just as the painting itself has a beginning and end.

**Stages of painting**



