

by John Parkinson

# LOANN'S NEGATIVE SPACE COMPOSITION

Creating design value with **LOANN BURKE, AIFD, PFCI**

**Designer**  
**LOANN BURKE**

**Shop:**  
**FURST FLORIST**

**Location:**  
**DAYTON, OH**

**Established:**  
**1905**

When Loann Burke, AIFD, PFCI, is teaching florists about designing, she often talks about the concepts of negative space and perceived value. For the former, it is the space around and in between the physical components of the design. For the latter, it is the idea that if an arrangement is priced at \$50, it must look like it is worth at least that much. "Especially in today's economy, the customer wants to make sure they are getting the most value for their money," explains Burke. The two are not mutually exclusive, but rather negative space can increase perceived value.



With a minimalist theme in mind, Burke went to work to create Loann's Negative Space Composition that had the designer bending materials to intentionally create negative space within the arrangement. "The whole concept is to deliver maximum impact with minimal material," explains Burke. The piece is designed to be linear, and grouped with Estelle roses, gerbera daisies, and calla lilies. By grouping them, each flower type stands on its own merits and unique characteristics, according to Burke. This piece, with its copper, orange, and yellow colors, would lend itself to the fall season. 📌



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## Inspiration and arrangement necessities

To recreate such an arrangement, the following products will be needed:

**FRESH FLORAL** Estelle roses, calla lilies, and gerbera daisies

**FOLIAGE AND FILLERS** Curly willow, hypericum berries, pittosporum, sheet moss, steel grass and galax leaves

**HARD GOODS** tangerine aluminum wire, Spirit square bowl, and Oasis floral foam

- 1 We start with an orange Spirit square bowl. Next, pan glue a dry half block of Oasis foam, which eliminates the need for anchor tape. Then, float soak the foam and bowl.
- 2 Place three Estelle roses to one side of the arrangement, forming a line then balance them with gerbera daisies on the opposite side.
- 3 Wrap tangerine aluminum wire around the curly willow so it can be bent over the Estelle roses. The willow highlights and shelters the roses. The wire allows the designer to manipulate the willow and arch it. Then insert two yellow calla lilies in the foam on the same side as the roses, and bend them to form a curve. This creates more negative space within the curve of the stems. Secure with Smithers-Oasis UGlu (a floral adhesive) the calla stems to the willow and rose stems where needed to form the curve.
- 4 Lastly, to green the arrangement and cover up the exposed foam, place in fresh sheet moss. Accent with pittosporum and galax leaves, also grouping the greens and hypericum berries. Place one stem of pittosporum and then add two galax leaves and some clusters of hypericum berries brought through the center of the arrangement. To finish, place steel grass behind the roses to emphasize the line.