

*How To Make An Amazing  
Patriotic Theme Vase Arrangement*



*Rittners Floral School  
Boston, MA*

# Introduction:

At Rittners Floral School we love to give ourselves very specific floral art assignments... to set goals for ourselves to design floral art with specific themes or defined objectives. These arrangements are not used for resale, but for teaching purposes. The resulting arrangements are photographed and used for curriculum development, for instruction, for our web site, & for social media and e-publications.

One assignment we gave ourselves recently... **To create a floral piece that is quick and easy to make...One that can quite literally be ‘thrown together’ very quickly.... yet one that definitely has an upscale look and a patriotic theme.**

The floral piece that you see on the front cover of this ebook was the result.

In this ebook you will learn how to create this design in a step-by-step manner. There are many times when this combination of **quick and easy assembly** and **upscale visual results** can be very useful--for both professional or personal use.



On behalf of all of us at Rittners it is our hope that you enjoy our modest efforts and have as much fun looking at this design as we did in creating it. Perhaps it will even inspire you to create your own amazing patriotic themed flower arrangements...

***Dr. Stephen Rittner***  
***Rittners Floral School***

# Patriotic Theme: American Style

- **Basic building blocks** of any floral design are physical items such as containers, flowers, & accessories.
- **Design elements** such as balance, scale, color, texture, etc. contribute to the structure of the piece.
- **Floral designing techniques** enable us to utilize the basic building blocks as well as the design elements to create visually interesting (and hopefully) appealing floral compositions.

What then, are the essential design elements that define a piece of floral art as a “patriotic” arrangement as opposed to a Halloween design or an arrangement that celebrates someone’s birthday?



# Color and Symbolism.....

These are the two biggies... Color and symbolism are the essential elements that make a piece of floral art appropriate for July 4th, Memorial Day, etc.



# Design Element: Color-

## Red, White and Blue....



The origins of the red white and blue go back to the 1700s. In 1776 the Continental Congress resolved to create a “seal” for our country, the colors of which were red, white and blue. These were repeated in our national flag.

Most veterans and others with a patriotic view would tell you that the red, white and blue simply stands for the ideals of our country such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion (very important ideals to be sure) that are worth defending.

According to Charles Thomson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, red represented hardiness and valour, white--purity and innocence and blue--perseverance, justice and vigilance.

One could also argue that these colors were derived from the Union Jack of Great Britain, as America originally had its origins from that country...

Regardless of origins or current interpretations, **the use of very specific colors....** of red, white and blue...make it quite easy to create floral art themes for patriotic American expression....

# Design Element: Symbolism-

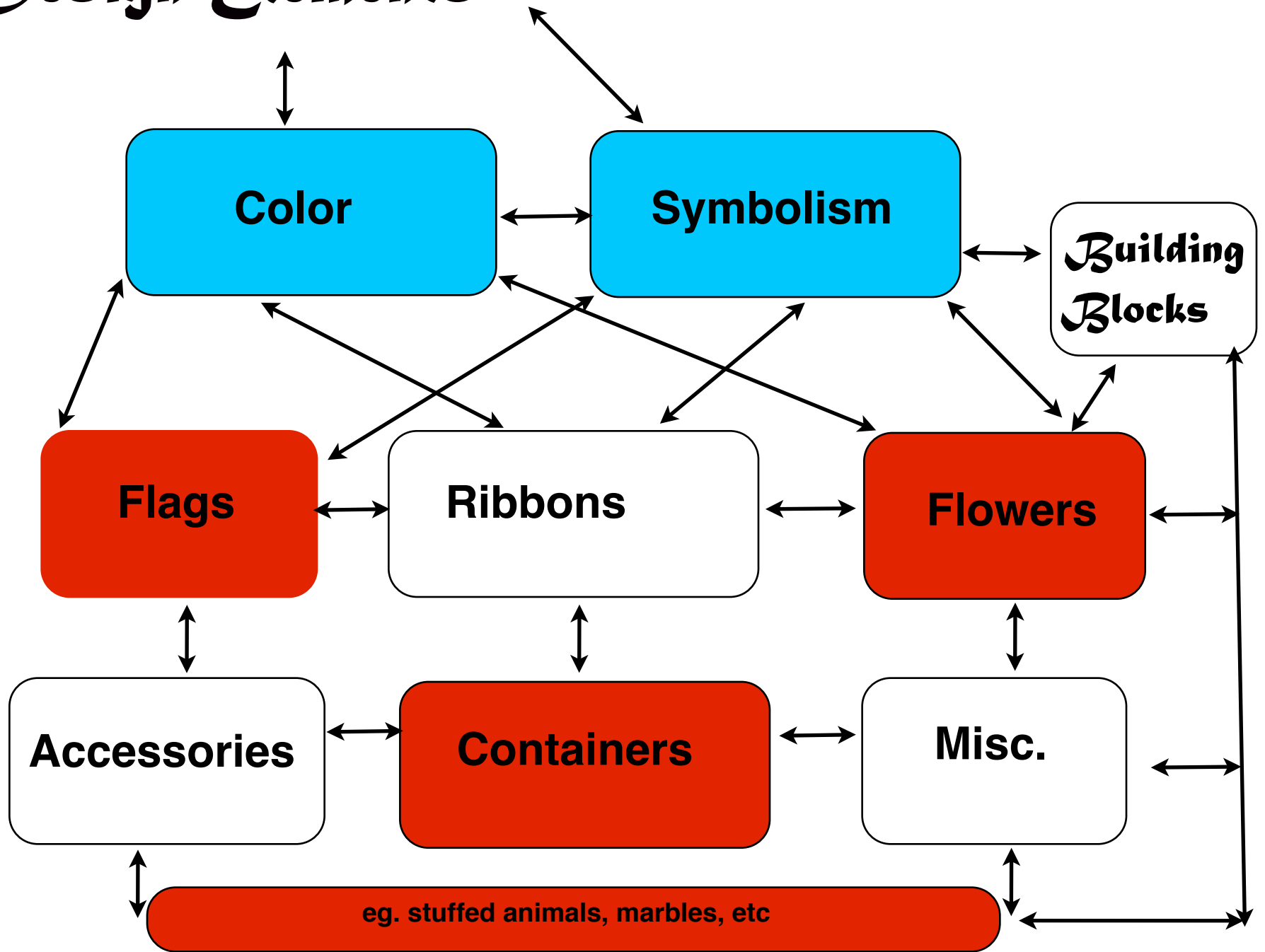


A symbol is something that represents more than it's physical manifestation... The symbol of the heart represents "love," the Jack o'lantern, "Halloween" etc.

Patriotic symbols vary depending upon the nation. For Canadians the use of the maple leaf would be significant. For Americans, stars and stripes more so....

There are many American Symbols that can be integrated with floral art to create American patriotic themes. These would include.....our flag, eagle, American maps, reproductions of historical documents, Uncle Sam, etc.

# Design Elements



# Some Applications....



American patriotic themed flower arrangements may be used by anyone who wishes to express their love of country using floral art.

It may also be used to honor those (alive or dead) who have contributed to our country such as current military members, veterans, fire fighters, law enforcement officers, civic and national security, politicians, and just about anyone who has contributed in a positive way to American life and culture.

These designs can be used for anniversaries of important dates that commemorate or recall events from American history.

They can be traditional in nature, contemporary or cutting edge.

Patriotic themes are appropriate for holidays such as Memorial Day, Veterans Day and July 4th.



# ***What you will need for this floral design:***

- **A Nice Container**
- **Hydrangea**
- **Four Roses**
- **Four Carnations**
- **Foam**
- **Some Branchy Material**
- **Foliage (eg. Salal Tips, Baker Fern)**



## The Container

The container is a very important starting point in any floral design. It sets the scene, the atmosphere, the mood and even the degree of exclusivity. It also is intimately involved with various design elements such as scale, contrast, texture and color... Choose one thoughtfully and carefully.



In this case we picked a red container to help emphasize the red, white and blue color theme....

# Hydrangea



Hydrangea comes in a variety of colors from white to green to lavender and even blue... Your color choice will impact the entire piece. We chose blue hydrangea because of the obvious red, white and blue motif....However white would work well too. Visually--white would make the design 'feel' even larger. However, we can also find both light blue as well as darker blue hydrangea. We chose a light blue hydrangea to make the flower and design "feel" larger yet still use a blue flower.

Hydrangea are a very popular flower considered very upscale... It is an amazing flower to use if you want to create an wonderful, prestige design.... One advantage of this flower is its size... It is a large flower, which means that it will cover a large amount of space when used in an arrangement....The implication is that you can create a huge floral piece with relatively small numbers of this amazing flower...



However the use of a darker blue hydrangea, (or even a white one) would not necessarily be wrong. You may want to experiment with these variations...

## Roses....



One of the most beloved of all flowers not only in North America, but throughout the world in many cultures and time periods... You never can go wrong including roses in any floral piece you make.... They come in a huge range of colors, sizes and make any floral design feel even more elegant and upscale... Available in pinks, white, bi colors, red (of course) and with modern tinting techniques....blues.

Some varieties also smell wonderful as well!





## Carnations.....

One of the best values you will find in any flower on the planet. They are available in a huge range of colors... including reds, pinks and whites. (Tinted blues too!).

They are a very good keeping flower, and they are reasonably priced.

Don't allow snob appeal to cloud your judgement on this botanical. Carnations can be mixed with more costly flowers, for great effects!

# *The Steps:*



Start with a container. This is going to be an upscale design for your dining room or perhaps entry area or living room, so pick a nice container. We are using a red container to enhance the patriotic theme. We could also go with white or blue, or even pick something achromatic (such as black or perhaps silver).

Hydrangea love water so make sure you add extra water in the container to the already wet foam.

Also be sure to condition all of your flowers (including your hydrangea) prior to using them in this arrangement.

Add a little foliage to the top of the design. The foliage used here is salal tips. Alternatively baker fern or even moss could be used. The purpose is to cover the foam, as we say in the trade -- “the mechanics” as well as adding additional texture and visual variety.







Contemporary floral designers love the use of branchy stuff...It makes your florals look very cool and 21st Century.

In this case we are using some curly willow. The curly willow is very fresh and therefore flexible.

Insert into the foam and curl it around as shown in this photograph. Secure the willow on the top right side of the container with upside down U shaped pieces of florist wire inserted into the foam.

Add a carnation in close to the base on the left side of the arrangement. The fact that the flower is placed close to the container allows the willow to circle wildly around it which looks interesting.

It also means that the flower itself helps to cover the mechanics.





Place three additional red carnations to the right of the design. Extend several of those carnations slightly beyond the actual container itself. It helps to make the design feel a little bit larger, and therefore more impressive.



Insert a light blue hydrangea into the center of the container between the carnation to the left and the three carnations to the right. It is big. It is showy. It fills the space very quickly and it also covers mechanics. Optionally if you like branchy stuff a little more can be placed at this point. The additional branchy stuff used here is a little kiwi vine. (But any branchy stuff will work quite nicely.)

Here is a close up... (Easy isn't it? .... At Rittners Floral School we make learning floral art quick and easy!)





We could have stopped at the last step if we wanted to, or we could have finished by placing a few additional flowers in close around the hydrangea and carnations, but let's make this floral arrangement a bit more dramatic!

Do so by placing several roses out to the right. One rose is placed out a little farther, another is coming in towards the container a little closer as shown in the picture to the left...

This extends the arrangement to one side and leads our eyes towards the right. It makes the design feel much larger.



Place one more rose closer to the base as illustrated above....



And finally a fourth rose as shown here. Add a little foliage or moss to the back side of the arrangement to cover any remaining foam.

The overall result is a rather energetic and lively asymmetrical, horizontal vase arrangement that leads our eyes to the right. There is a nice contrast between the straight linear aspect of the flowers, and the dynamic curves of our branchy materials.



# Placement:



\* A centerpiece is intended to be viewed on all sides and this design does have both front and back sides.

As created this arrangement would work nicely on a mantel, or perhaps on a side board or end table. It would be lovely in an entry or reception area.

Placed in a taller container it could be adapted to a larger bay window.

It could be a place holder on a dining room table before company arrives.

Although as shown here the design is not a table centerpiece\* it could be easily adapted for centerpiece use. The placement of a few more flowers placed into the other side of the design and possibly a shorter container would all be possibilities.

# Variations:



Speaking of adaptations and variations...  
Try making a mirror image of this design..  
It may or may not be your cup of tea, but it  
is fun to experiment...

And it does feel a little different.....



# More Variations:

You have a huge range of flowers available in red, white and blue to enhance your patriotic floral art...



# Variations:

Here is a chart to help you consider the possibilities. Pick any combinations from below.. And this is just to get you started!

IN PLACE OF LIGHT BLUE HYDRANGEA:	IN PLACE OF THE RED CARNATIONS:	IN PLACE OF THE WHITE ROSES:
Dark blue Hydrangea	Red, light or dark pink Roses	Red Roses
White Hydrangea	Pink, white or peppermint Carnations	Pink Roses
White Football Chrysanthemums	White or blue Iris	Tinted blue Roses
Red Gerbera	Pink or red Gerbera	White, red or pink Snapdragons
Red Hypericum Berries Clustered	Bicolor (eg. pink and white ) Roses	White, red or pink Mini Gerbera
Cluster of red Roses	Red, pink, white or novelty Miniature Carnations	White Dendrobium Orchids
Cluster of white, pink or red Alstroemeria	Pink or red Ginger	Red or pink Gladiolas
White or dyed Fuji Chrysanthemums	Bachelor Buttons	Pixiolas
Red, white or pink open Garden Roses	Short Cuttings of blue Delphinium	Blue Larkspur
White or dyed Cremon Poms	Clusters of blue Statice	Blue Delphinium
Clustered white Daisy Poms	Protea	Blue Statice
Patriotic themed bear or nutcracker	White or pink Spray Roses	White Birch Branches
American Flags or parchment like imitation historical documents	White or pink Alstroemeria	Pink or red Ginger

# About Rittners Floral School

Rittners Floral School is one of the longest running and finest private floral design schools in North America.

Located in the prestigious Back Bay neighborhood of Boston, Rittners Floral School attracts students from all over North America and abroad by the excellence of its courses. Rittners makes use of the latest educational theory and technologies, to bring its students outstanding diploma programs in floral designing....

Rittners Floral School specializes in floral education.

Whether your goals are rest and relaxation, stress reduction, or vocational, you will really enjoy the various hands-on workshop floral art courses offered at Rittners Floral School.



[www.floralschool.com](http://www.floralschool.com)

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*That's All  
for Now!!!!!!!*