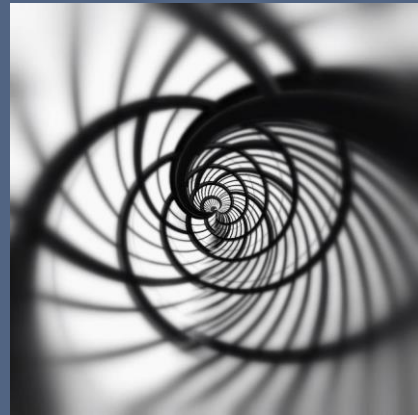
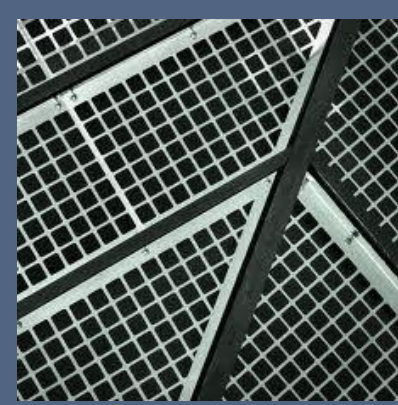
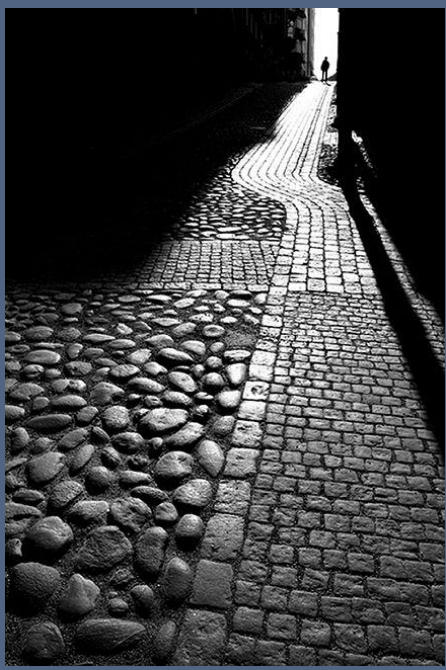


# THE FORMAL ELEMENTS

- The Formal Elements are the parts used to make a piece of artwork. The art elements are **line, shape, form, tone, texture, pattern, colour and composition**. They are often used together, and how they are organised in a piece of art determines what the finished piece will look like.
- The Formal Elements are fundamental to creating and analysing any artwork; they are the building blocks of the visual language needed to communicate ideas, feelings and responses.
- When looking at artwork and analysing your own and others' work aim to find the Formal Elements to aid you to break an image down into its main components.

# LINE

- Line is the path left by a moving point. In Photography we find **leading lines**. **Leading lines** refers to a technique of composition where the viewer of your photos attention is drawn to **lines** that **lead** to the main subject of the image. A **leading line** paves an easy path for the eye to follow through different elements of a **photo**.
- A **line** can take many forms. It can be horizontal, diagonal or curved. It can also change over its length, starting off curved and ending up horizontal, for example.
- **Line** can be used to show many different qualities, such as:
  - contours – showing the shape and form of something
  - feelings or expressions – a short, hard line gives a different feeling to a more flowing one
  - movements

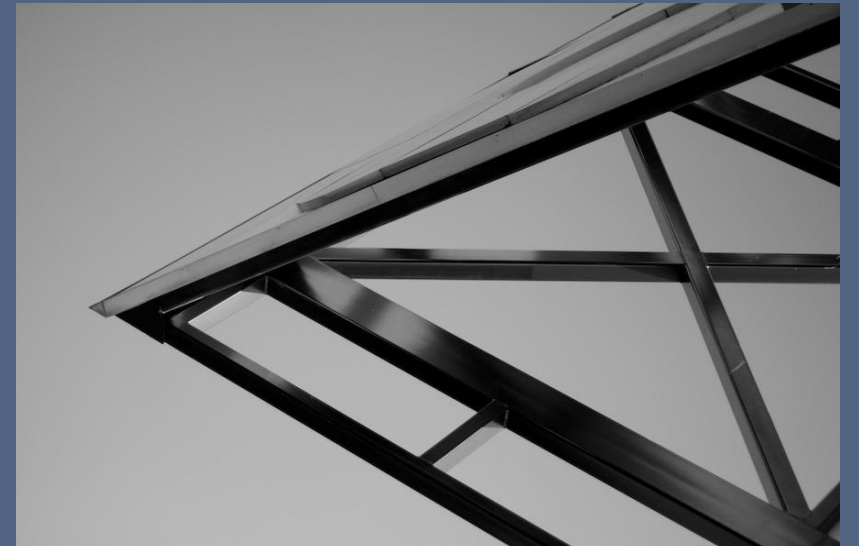
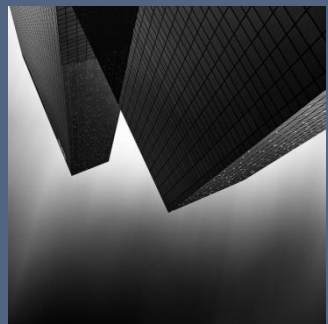
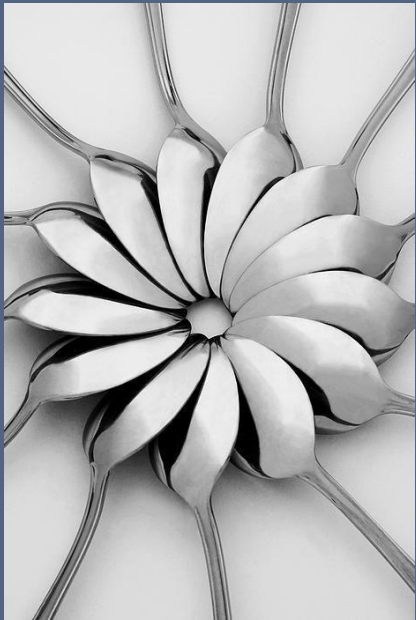
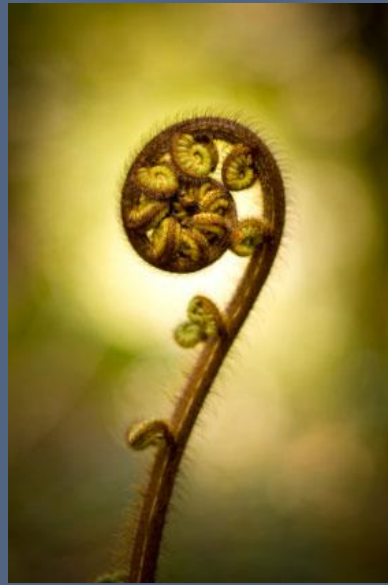


# SHAPE

- A **shape** is an area enclosed by a line. It could be just an outline or it could be shaded in.
- **Shapes** can be either **geometric**, like a circle, square or triangle, or **irregular**.
- When looking for and photographing **shapes**, you must consider the size and position as well as the **shape** of the area around it. The **shapes** created in the spaces between **shapes** are referred to as **negative space**.

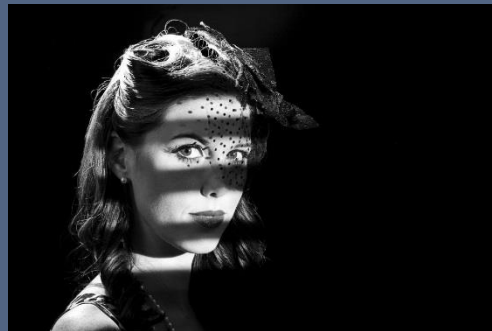
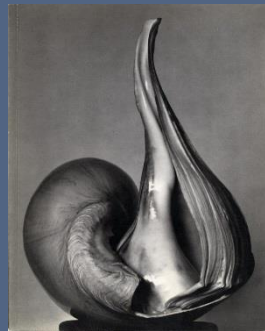
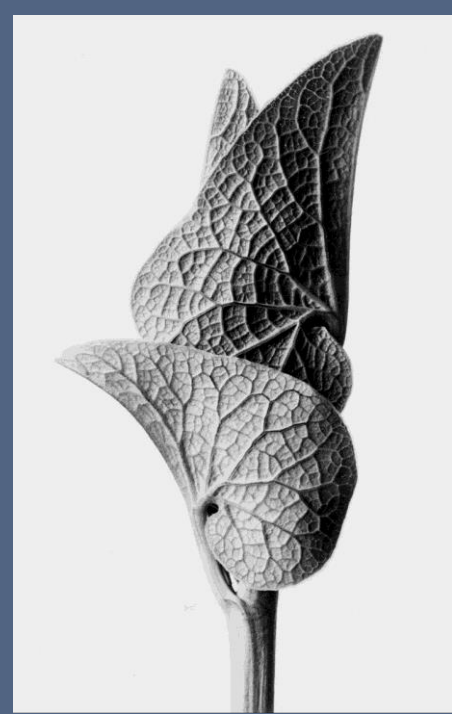
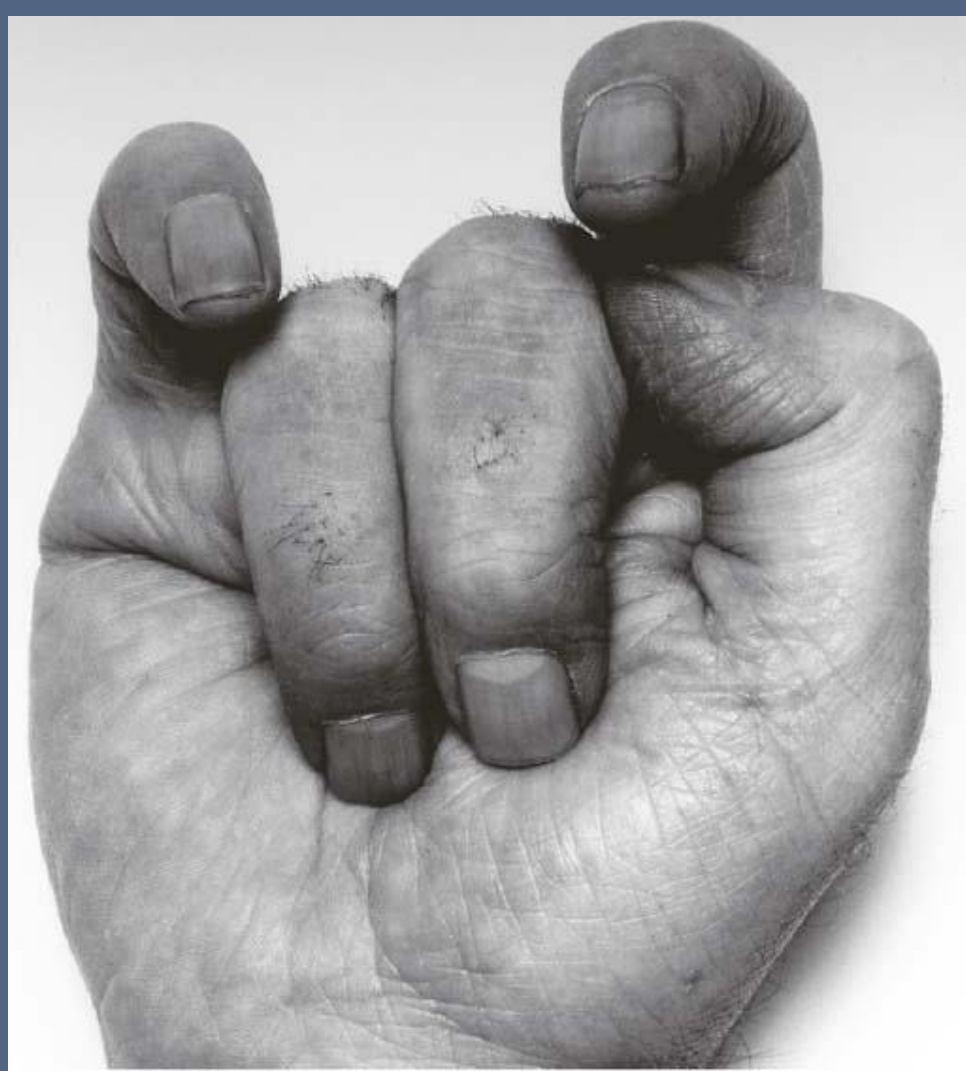


P. Suarez



# FORM

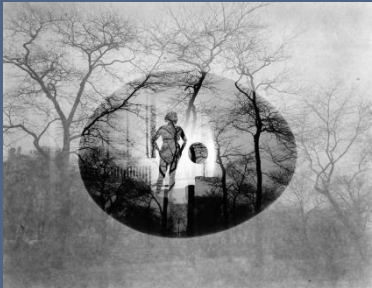
- **Form** is a **three dimensional shape**, such as a cube, sphere or cone.
- In Photography, **contrast** and **tone**, **light** and **dark** help to create the illusion of **forms** and make objects appear three-dimensional on a flat surface such as photographic paper.
- In 2D artworks, tone and perspective can be used to create an illusion of **form**.
- In Photography, using a light source to light the subject from one side such as low key lighting, helps to create **form** through the use of **light** and **dark tones**



# TONE

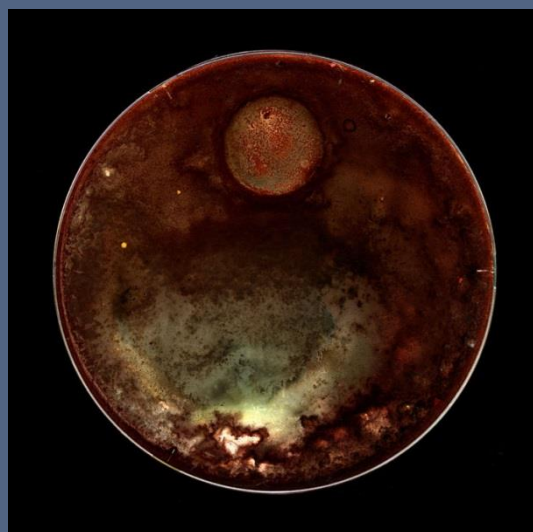
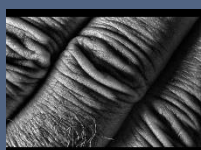
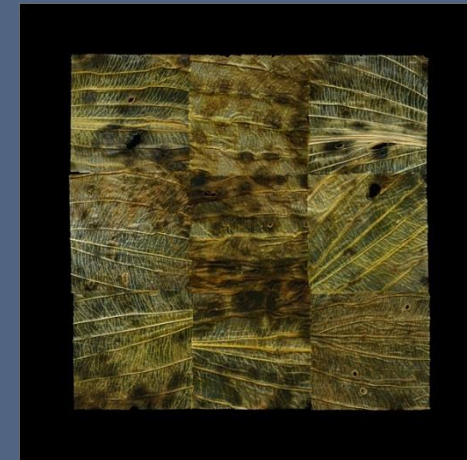
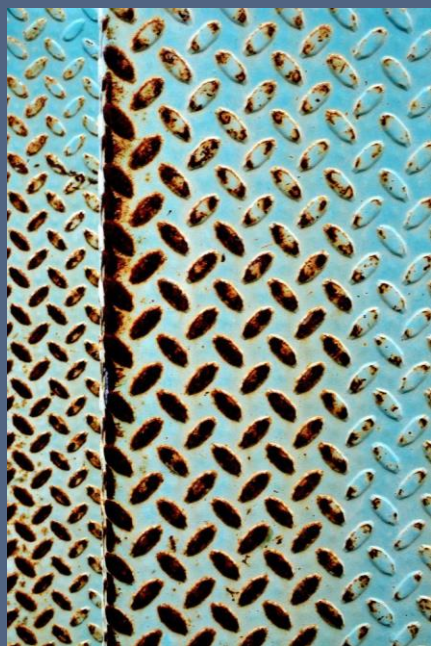
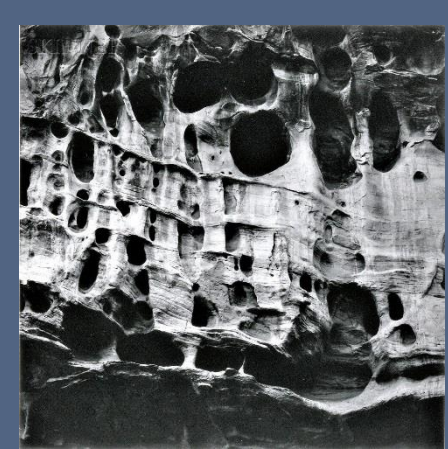
- This refers to the **lightness** or **darkness** of something. This could be a **shade** or how dark or **light** a **colour** appears.
- **Tones** are created by the way light falls on a 3D object. The parts of the object on which the **light** is strongest are called **highlights** and the **darker** areas are called **shadows**. There will be a range of **tones** in between the **highlights** and **shadows**.





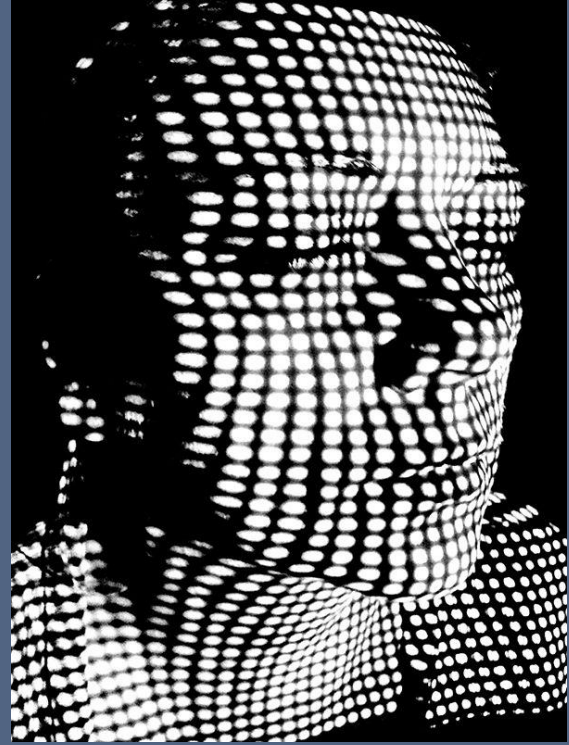
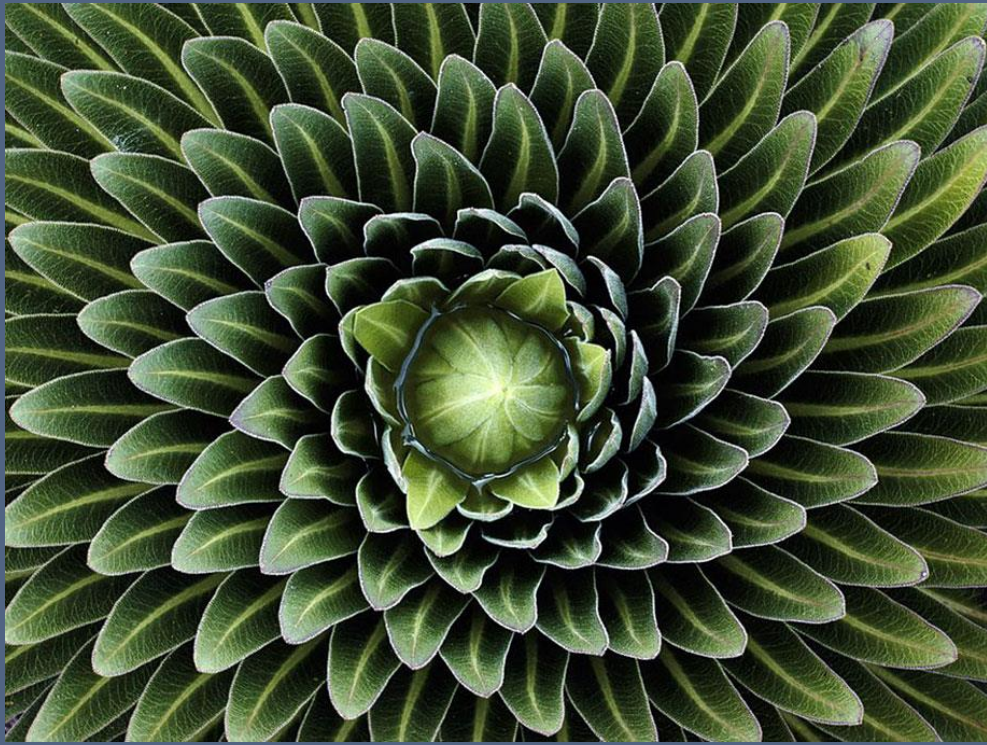
# texture

- This is to do with the **surface quality** of something, the way something feels or looks like it feels. There are two types of **texture**: actual **texture** and visual **texture**.
- **Actual texture** really exists, so you can feel it or touch it. You can create actual **texture** in an artwork by changing the surface, such as cutting and sticking different photographs together in a photomontage. Combining different material techniques can create interesting **textures**.
- **Visual texture** is created using marks to represent actual **texture**. It gives the illusion of a **texture** or surface but if you touched it, it would be smooth. You can create visual **texture** by using different lines, shapes, colours or tones. Think about how different marks can be used to show **texture**. In Photography this can be created by experimenting with lighting; low key lighting, lighting from one direction can help to make **texture** stand out.



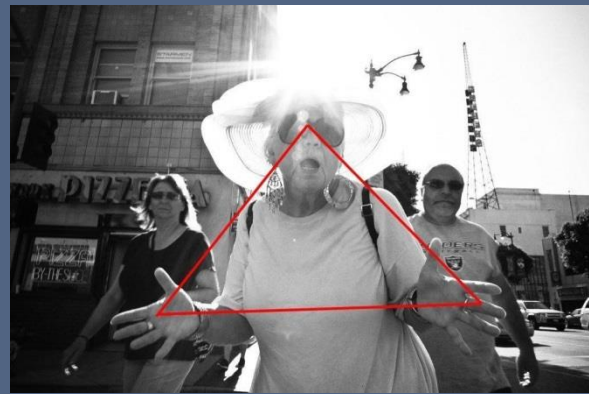
# PATTERN

- A design that is created by repeating lines, shapes, tones or colours. The design used to create a **pattern** is often referred to as a **motif**. Motifs can be simple shapes or complex arrangements.
- **Patterns** can be man-made, like a design on fabric, or natural, such as the markings on animal fur.



# Composition

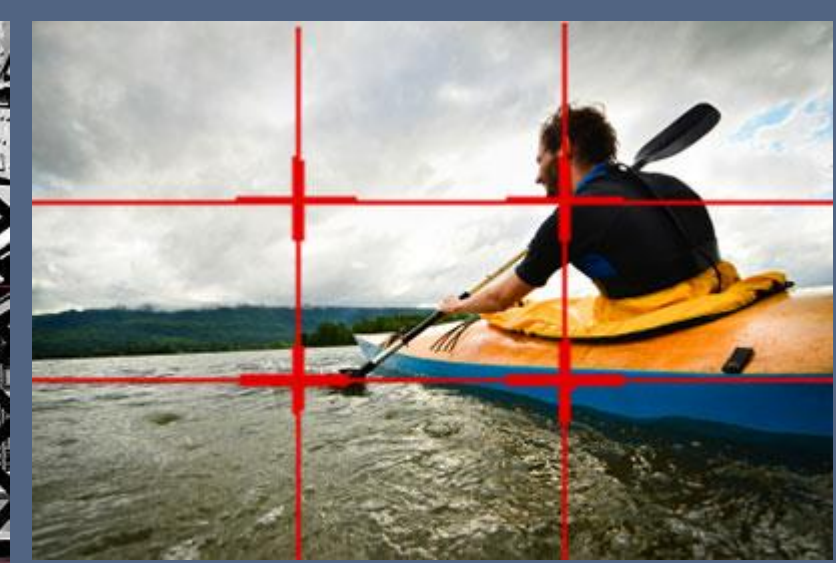
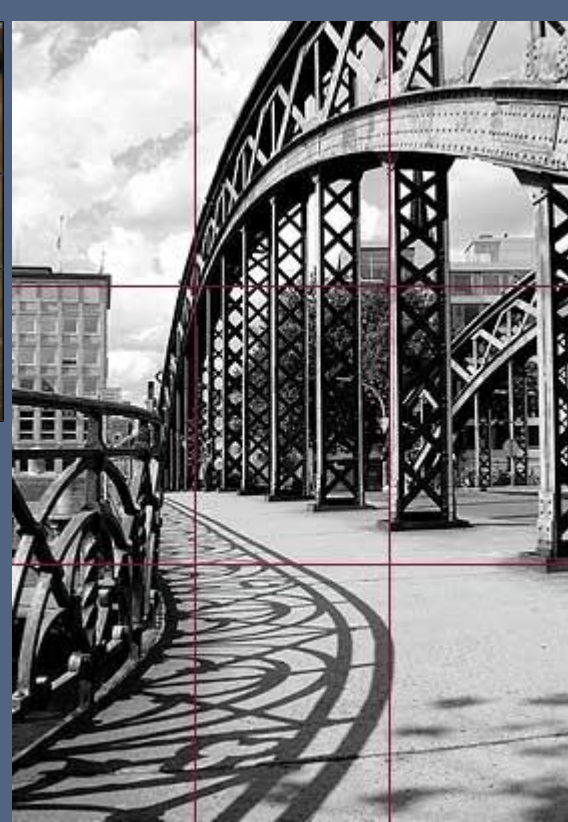
- The term **composition** means ‘putting together,’ and can apply to any work of art, from music to writing to photography, that is arranged or put together using conscious thought. In the visual arts, **composition** is often used interchangeably with various terms such as *design*, *form*, *visual ordering*, or *formal structure*, depending on the context.
- There are numerous approaches or “**compositional techniques**” to achieving a sense of unity within an artwork, depending on the goals of the artist. For example, a work of art is said to be aesthetically pleasing to the eye if the elements within the work are arranged in a balanced **compositional** way. However, there are artists such as Salvador Dali whose sole aim is to disrupt traditional **composition** and challenge the viewer to rethink balance and design elements within art works.



# Rule of thirds

- The **rule of thirds** is a guideline followed by some visual artists. The objective is to stop the subject(s) and areas of interest (such as the horizon) from bisecting the image, by placing them near one of the lines that would divide the image into three equal columns and rows, ideally near the intersection of those lines.
- **The rule of thirds** is thought to be a simplification of the golden mean. The golden mean is a ratio that has been used by visual artists for centuries as an aid to composition. When two things are in the proportion of 1:1.618 (approximately  $3/8$  to  $5/8$ ), they are said to be in the golden mean.
- Dividing the parts of an image according to this proportion helps to create a pleasing, balanced composition. The intersection points on a golden mean grid appear at  $3/8$  in and  $3/8$  down/up, rather than at  $1/3$  in and  $1/3$  down/up on the grid of thirds.

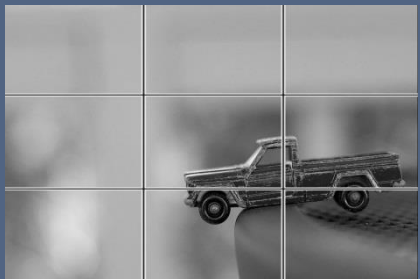
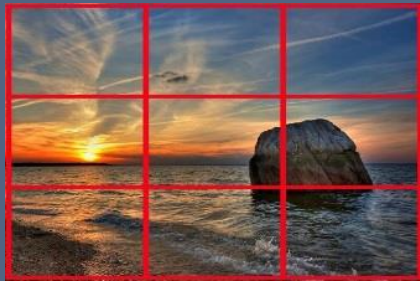
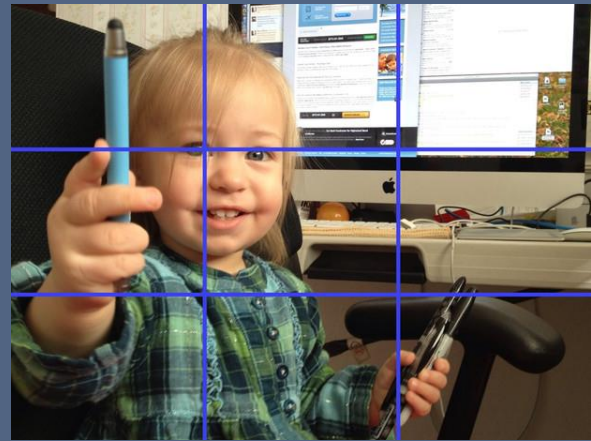




### Rule of Thirds

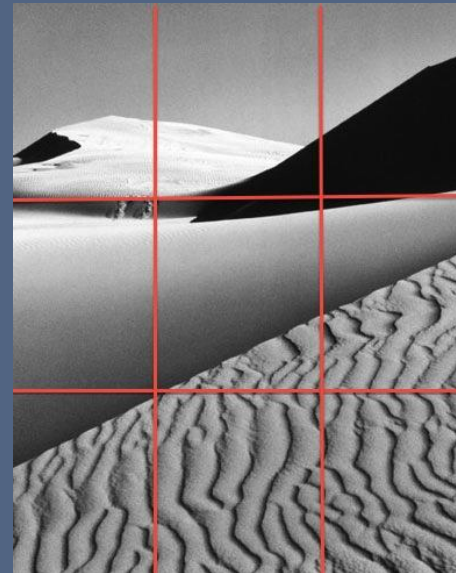
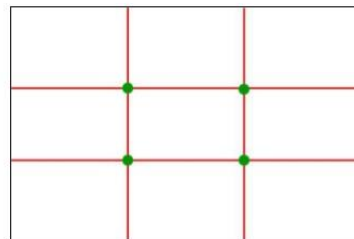


Cartier-Bresson



### What is it?

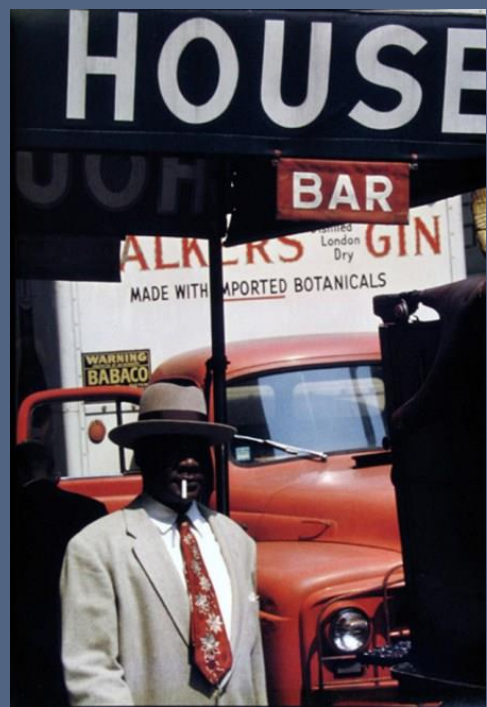
- Frame is divided into three horizontal and vertical sections
- Image is placed at intersections





# colour

- **Colour** can help tell us stories (visually) and it can be used to communicate on an emotional level.
- Certain **colour** combinations are considered harmonious (analogous) and they work to give balance and a feeling of calm in an image. Analogous colour schemes use **colours** that are next to each other on the **colour** wheel. They usually match well and create serene and comfortable designs. Analogous **colour** schemes are often found in nature and are harmonious and pleasing to the eye.
- **Colours** that are opposite each other on the **colour** wheel are considered to be complementary **colours** (example: red and green).
- The high contrast of complementary **colours** creates a vibrant look especially when used at full saturation. This **colour** scheme must be managed well so it is not jarring.
- Complementary **colours** are tricky to use in large doses, but work well when you want something to stand out.
- **Colour** can be used to draw the eye to a certain point of an image; accent **colours** help to capture and hold attention in the viewer.



# overexposure

- In traditional **photography**, **overexposure** is a **term** used to describe the process of exposing film to too much light, which results in the photograph being too bright. In **digital photography**, where there is no film, **overexposure** refers to a white-looking or washed-out image (**overexposed** image).
- Often this is considered a poor quality due to the wrong camera settings be used and the result being an image which is difficult to see in terms of detail.
- However, there are times when overexposure can be used effectively and creatively to communicate a certain message in an image.



Under exposed



Normal from camera

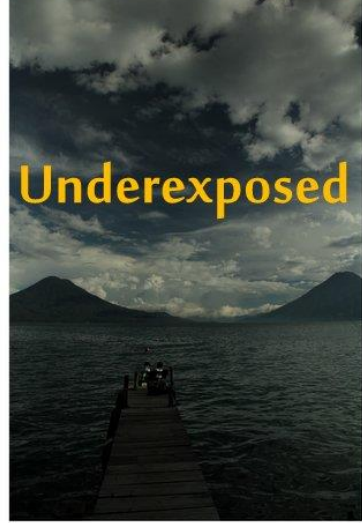


Over exposed



# underexposure

- A photograph may be described as **underexposed** when it has a loss of shadow detail, that is, when important dark areas are "muddy" or indistinguishable from black, known as "blocked-up shadows" (or sometimes "crushed shadows", "crushed blacks", or "clipped blacks", especially in video).
- Often this is considered a poor quality due to the wrong camera settings be used and the result being an image which is difficult to see in terms of detail.
- However, there are times when underexposure can be used effectively and creatively to communicate a certain message in an image.



# DEPTH OF FIELD

- In Photography this is the distance between the nearest and the furthest objects giving a focused image.
- You may have heard the term depth of field (DoF), but if you are new to photography you may not yet be taking advantage of how DoF can enhance your photos. A basic definition of depth of field is: the zone of acceptable sharpness within a photo that will appear in focus. In every picture there is a certain area of your image in front of, and behind the subject that will appear in focus.
- This zone will vary from photo to photo. Some images may have very small zones of focus which is called shallow depth of field. Others may have a very large zone of focus which is called deep depth of field or wide depth of field. Three main factors that will affect how you control the depth of field of your images are: aperture (f-stop), distance from the subject to the camera, and focal length of the lens on your camera.





...distance, the lens will be  
...scales on a lens barrel  
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