Compositional Techniques in photography

PART 2

By Clem Wehner

PART 1- PREVIOUS LESSON

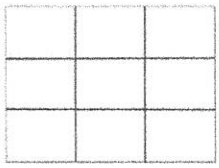
"TIPS FOR TAKING GREAT PHOTOGRAPHS"

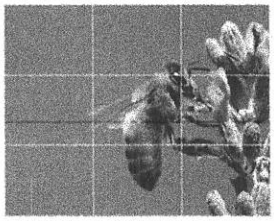
KEY POINTS:

1. Don't shoot down on subjects
2. Leave room for subjects to move
3. Eliminate distractions
4. Beware of bright objects
5. Chose appropriate orientation
6. Position the horizon properly
7. Use foreground objects to show depth
8. Crop for emphasis

The "Rule" of Thirds

1. Divide image (in viewfinder) into thirds each way.
2. Place center of interest at an intersection of lines.

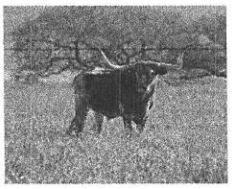




Position the subject using "The Rule of Thirds"

OK **much better**

photo by John Powers photo by John Powers



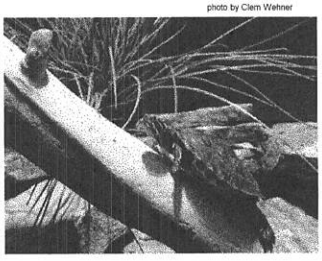
PART -2
More Compositional Techniques
(to improve your photographs)

- **THIRDS**
- **DIAGONALS**
- **FRAMING**
- **TRIANGLES**
- **LEADING LINES**
- **BALANCE**
- **S-CURVES**

Using the Rule of Thirds

OK **better**

photo by Clem Wehner photo by Clem Wehner



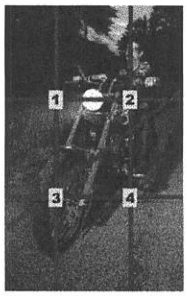
Using the Rule of Thirds

Both good

photo by Clem Wehner

photo by John Powers

DIAGONAL COMPOSITION



The subject is on a diagonal in the image

But, the "rule" is really only a suggestion

These photos DO NOT follow the rule of thirds

but, both are good

photo by John Powers

photo by Clem Wehner

Of all the lines used in photography diagonals are the most dynamic.

Create a strong impression of movement

Create a sense of depth

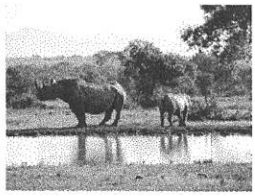
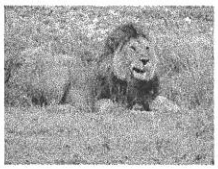
Add interest to the image

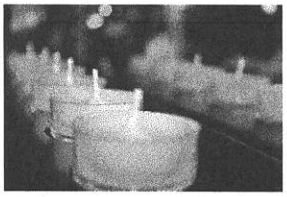
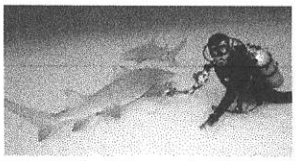
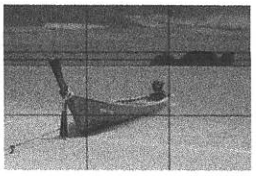
DIAGONAL COMPOSITION

by Clem Wehner

Subjects are on a diagonal

Subjects are NOT on a diagonal

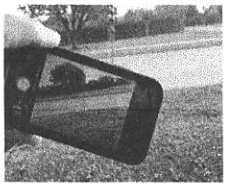



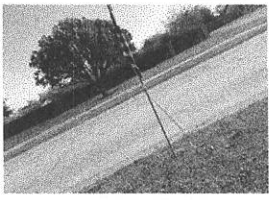
Diagonal Composition Examples

How to get diagonal composition

Just tilting the camera



makes a tilted <u>image</u>



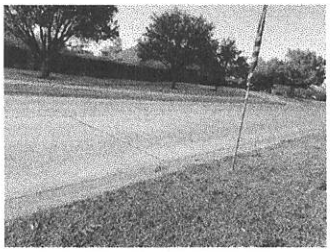
This is NOT diagonal composition!

You want a tilted <u>subject</u>

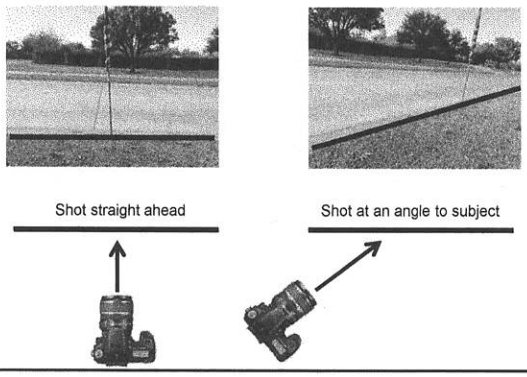
(diagonal composition)

NO

YES



MOVE TO THE SIDE



LEADING LINES

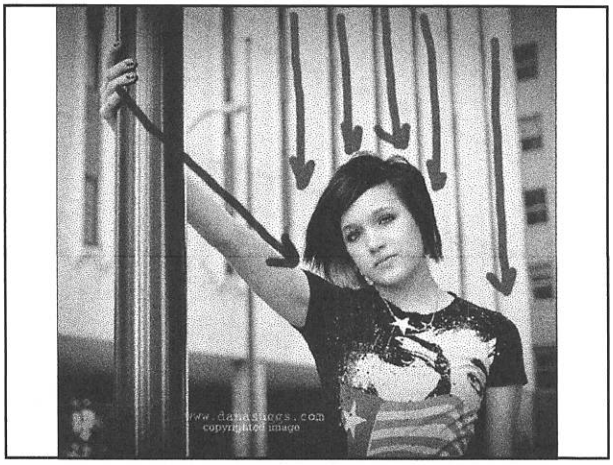
- **POINT TO A SUBJECT**
- **LEAD THE EYE TO THE CENTER OF INTEREST**
- **LEAD THE EYE THROUGH THE IMAGE**
- **ADDS A SENSE OF DEPTH**
- **CREATE A SENSE OF MOVEMENT**

HOW TO USE

LEADING LINES

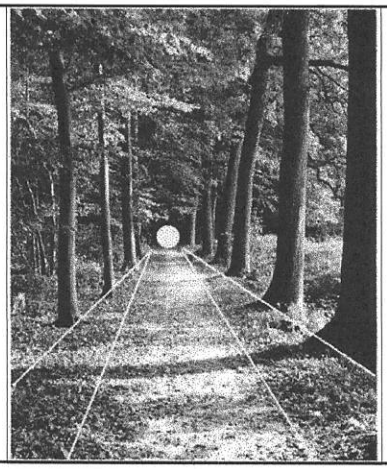
IN COMPOSING PHOTOGRAPHS

By Clem Wehner



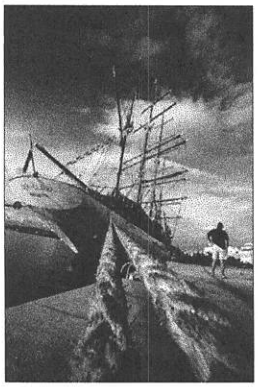
LEADING LINES

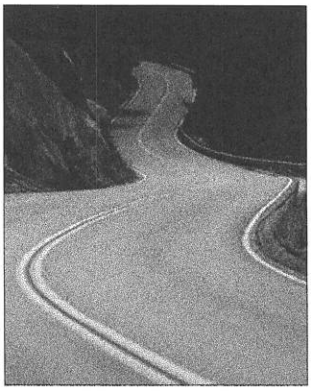
A technique in which the viewer's eye is attracted to lines that lead to the subject of the image.

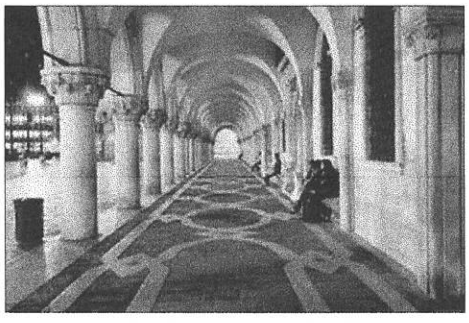


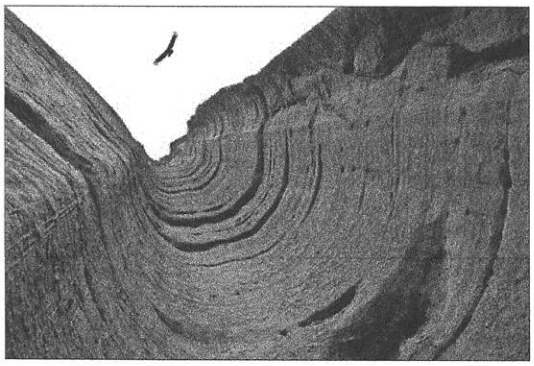
LEADING LINES

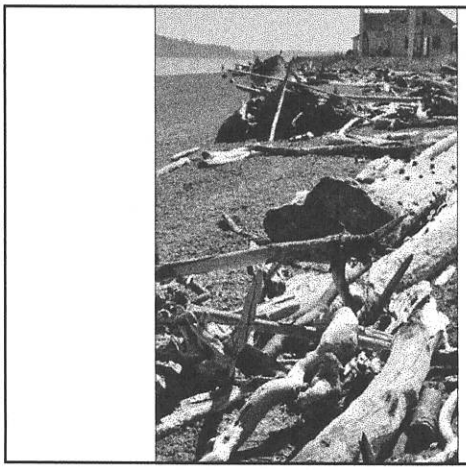
- POINT TO A SUBJECT
- LEAD THE EYE TO THE CENTER OF INTEREST
- LEAD THE EYE THROUGH THE IMAGE
- ADD A SENSE OF DEPTH
- CREATE A SENSE OF MOVEMENT











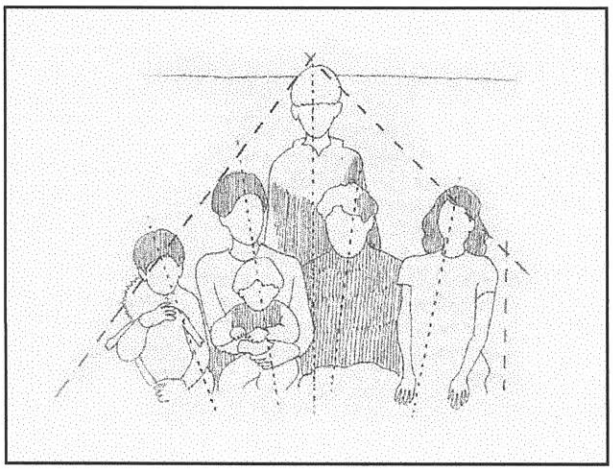
HOW TO USE TRIANGLES IN COMPOSING YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS

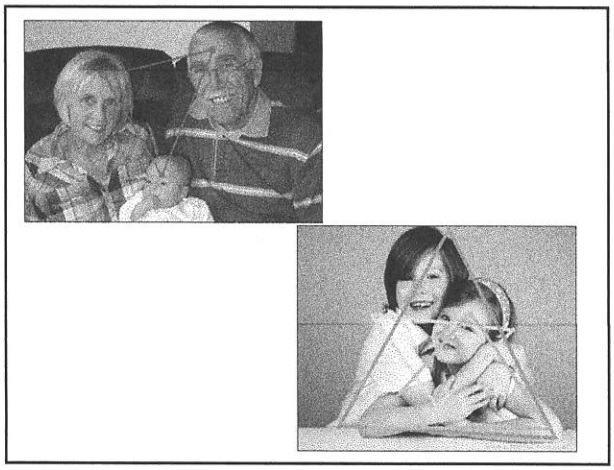
By Clem Wehner

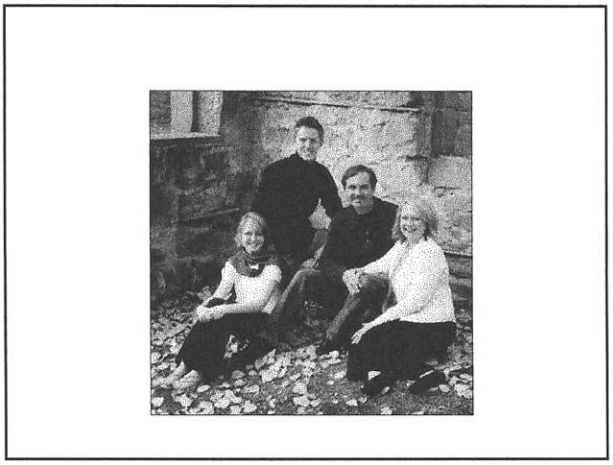
Sometimes, the leading lines are not so obvious

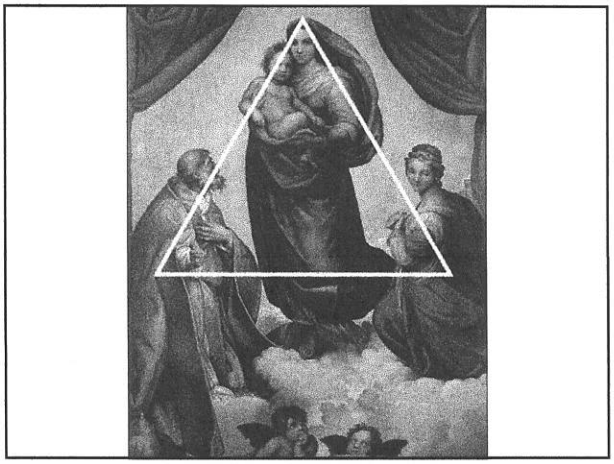
Triangles in Compostion

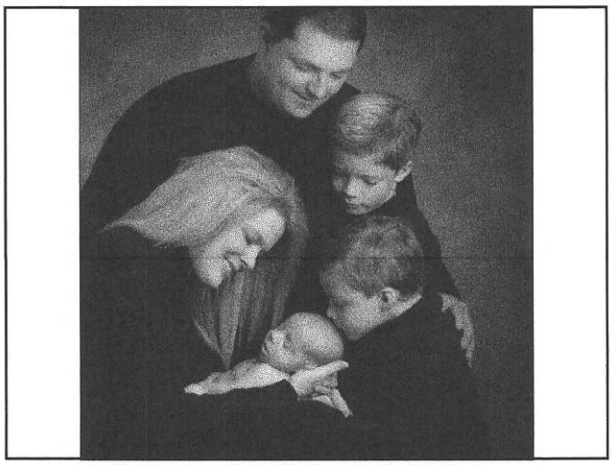
- Great for grouping 3 elements of an image
- Gives balance
- Fills the frame
- Makes the image more "stable"
- Often more an implied triangle than actual
- Very important in portraits

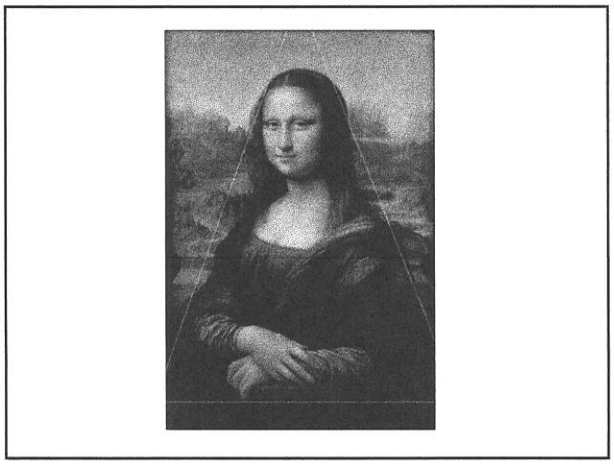


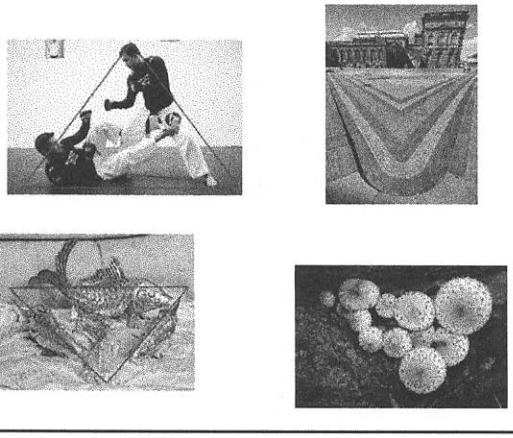


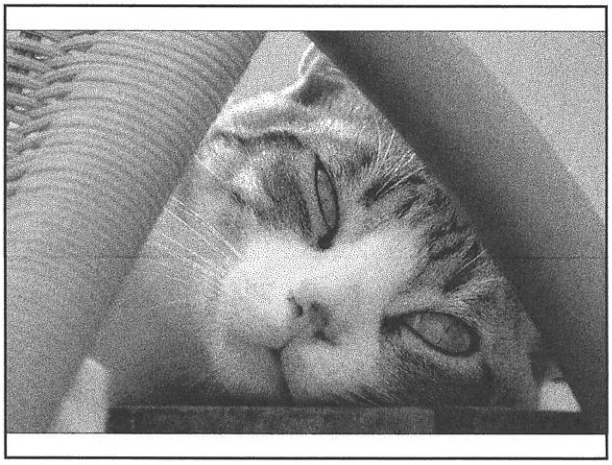


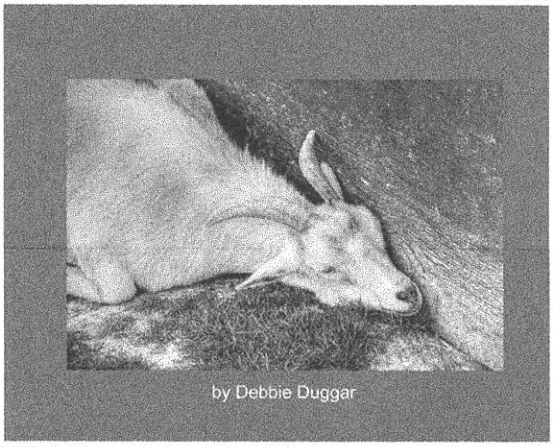


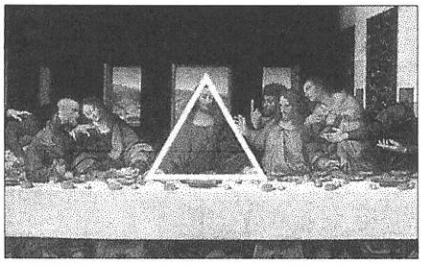


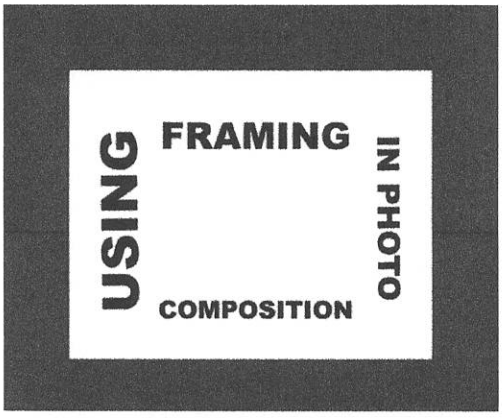




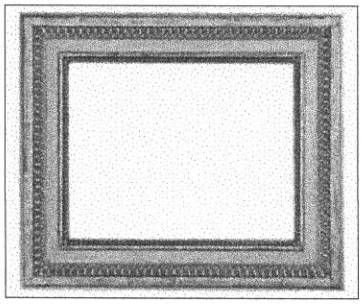



by Debbie Duggar




USING
FRAMING
IN PHOTO
COMPOSITION

Not this



Framing in composition

Using objects in the photo to frame the main subject

Gives the photo context

Creates a sense of depth

Leads the eye towards the main focal point

This

Using objects in the photo to frame the main subject

Gives the photo context

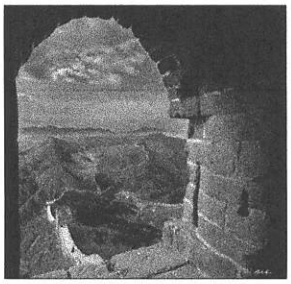
Creates a sense of depth

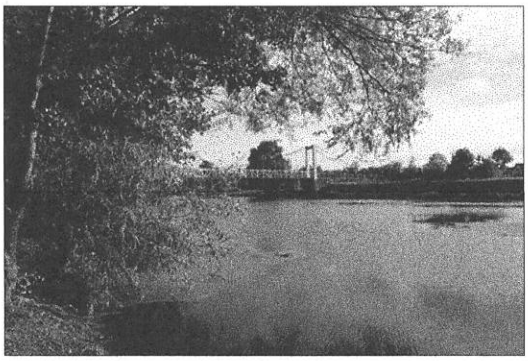
Leads the eye towards the main focal point

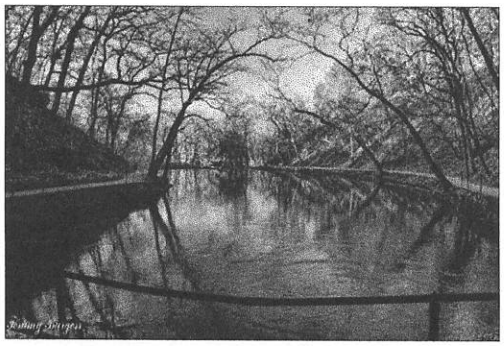
Does NOT need to go completely around the edges of the image

Framing in composition

Using objects in the photo to "frame" the main subject







Using objects in the photo to frame the main subject

Gives the photo context

Creates a sense of depth

Leads the eye towards the main focal point

Does NOT need to go completely around the edges of the image

In focus or not—you decide

Will it improve the image? —you decide

Using objects in the photo to frame the main subject

Gives the photo context

Creates a sense of depth

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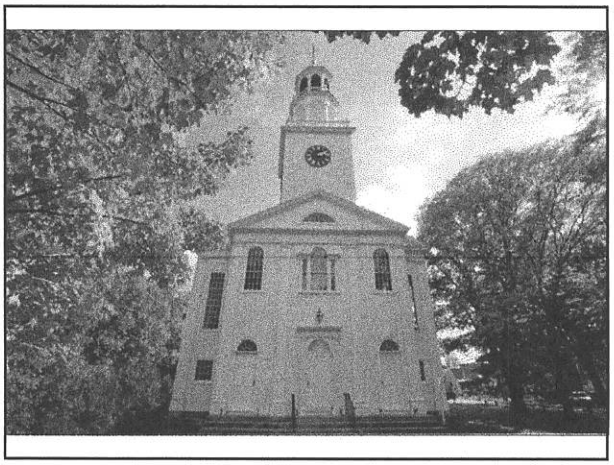
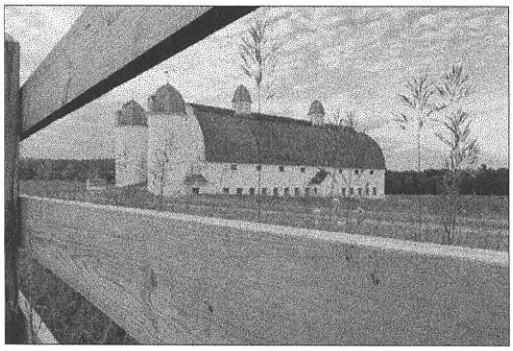
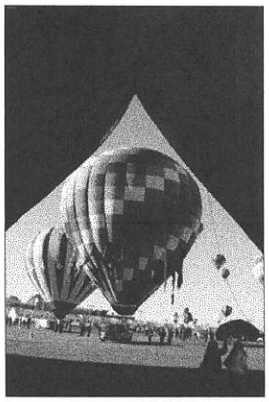
Does NOT need to go completely around the edges of the image

In focus or not—you decide

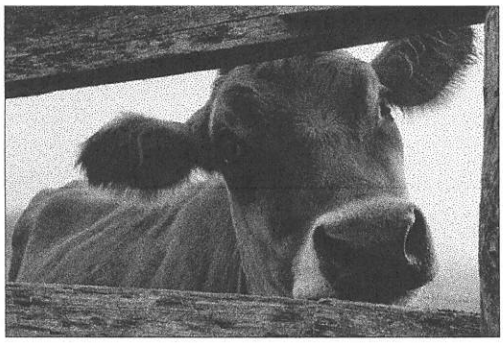




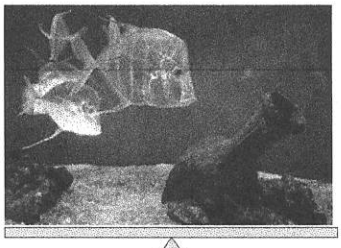


B A L A N C E

IN PHOTO COMPOSITION



BALANCE:
Composing the image so that similar weight is on each side.

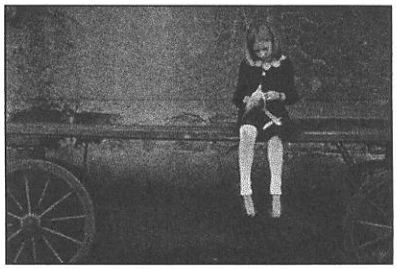


UNBALANCED

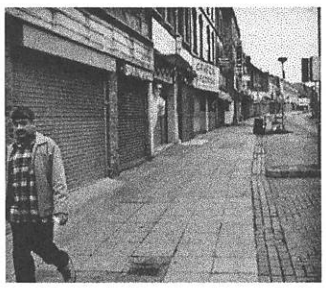
UNBALANCED

The "Rule of Thirds" can make an image more interesting, but can create a void on one side.

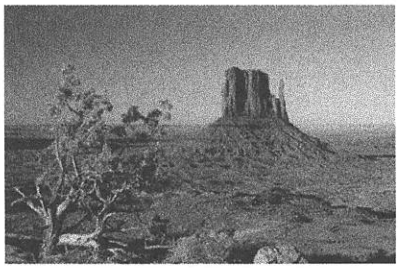
A balanced image feels pleasing to the eye, and not lop-sided.



BALANCED OR UNBALANCED?

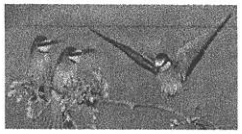


To keep balance, compensate for each element with a counter-weight



Counterweights can be different subjects, colors, or levels of contrast.

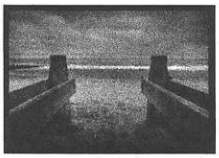
INFORMAL BALANCE



Balance can be formal or informal

Balance makes images look harmonious, comfortable, not distracting, and pleasingly presented.

FORMAL BALANCE



BALANCED OR UNBALANCED?

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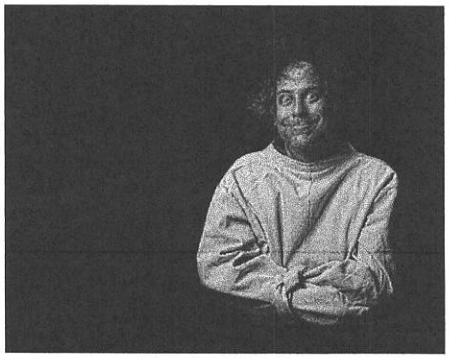


BALANCED OR UNBALANCED?

HOW TO USE

S- CURVES

IN COMPOSING PHOTOGRAPHS

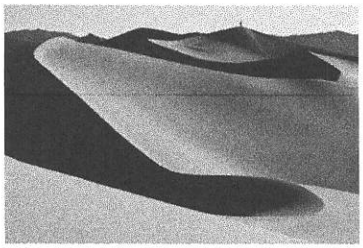
By Clem Wehner

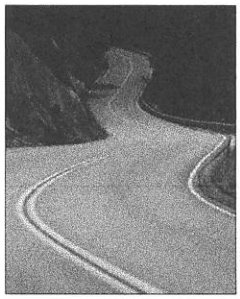
BALANCED OR UNBALANCED?

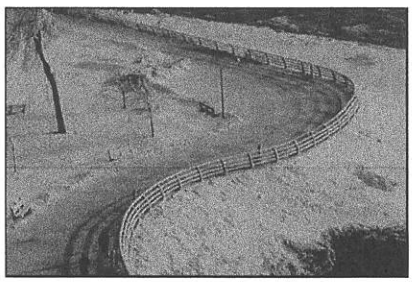
An *S-Curve* is an imaginary line in a *photo* in the shape of an S

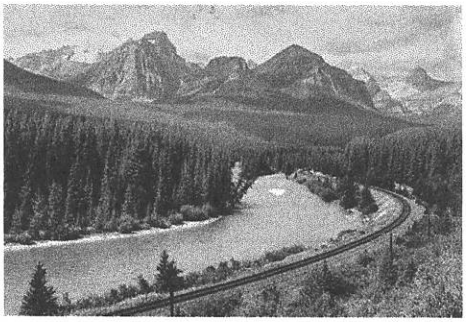
- S-curves are soothing
- The eye enjoys following "S" curves
- They add grace and balance
- They create dynamic images
- They give a sense of rhythm and movement

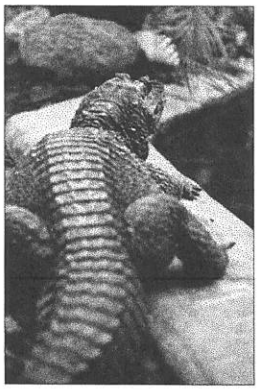
S-curves are compositional gold. If you see one, you know there's a good picture to be had



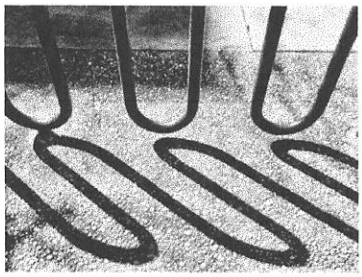


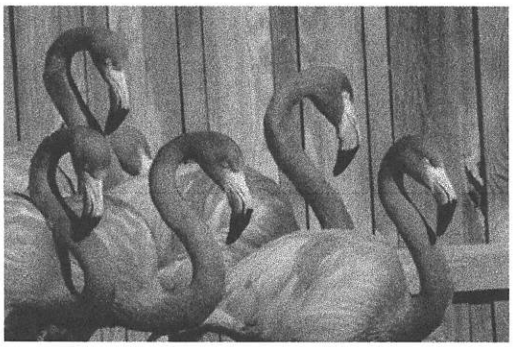






The S curve is just about the only geometrical shape that can stand alone as a main subject

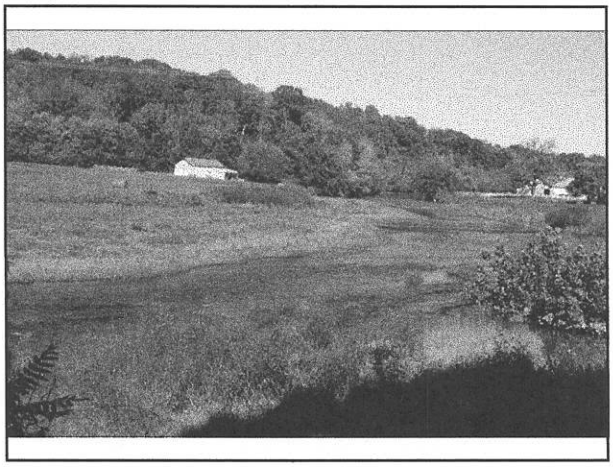




But, the "S" is NOT

always PERFECT or OBVIOUS

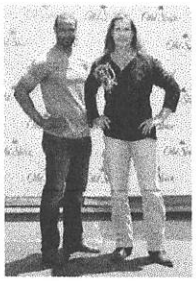
Using S-curves in portraits



S-curves are flattering in feminine portraits

Understanding the use of S-curves is ESSENTIAL in portraits of women

Men are NOT posed in S-curves

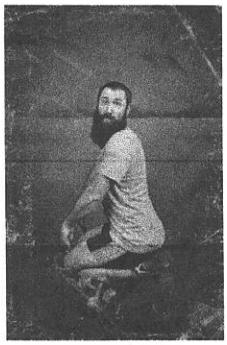
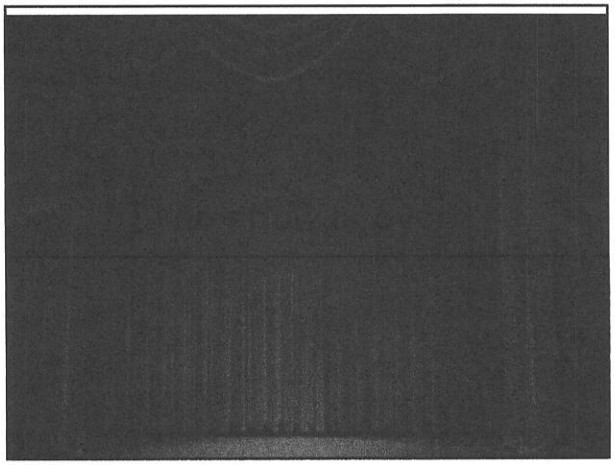


Without S-curves you get unflattering images

NO S-CURVE

SLIGHT S-CURVE

DO NOT use S-curves to pose men!



Curves are good with women