

COMPOSITION RULES AND GUIDELINES

Definition: Finding variety in a piece of art, which catches the viewer's eye, by diversity.
Organized not to distract, and represented with unity.

Old Saws

- ** Rule of "Three" - everything grouped by 3 -5- 7
- ** Have things "going on" in each corner, but different things.
- ** 2/3 - 1/3 rule- for relative dark and light areas
- ** Have things that overlap. It helps to create depth and dimension.

Methods that Help to Compose

- ** Golden Mean--or Greek Mean--
The ratio of 4 to 6 is the most pleasing visually as well as mathematically
- ** Use geometric shapes to help to compose.
A triangulation of colors helps to balance them .
- ** Avoid having lines or shapes going off right at the corners. It leads the eye out of the composition.
- ** Avoid having anything interesting in the exact center of the composition.
- ** Think of interesting silhouettes to help background shapes be easily identified.

POOR COMPOSITION

Center of Interest placed in the center, or divided in the center (boring)

Items scattered across the area—too fragmented.

Object heading or leaning, in many directions... confusing

One large shape... boring,.... sometime a hard to identify silhouette can also be confusing

One basic method in composing is to use the Golden Mean/ Greek Mean, which uses the ratio of 4:6 as the most pleasing proportion visually and mathematically.

Other methods of composing a painting can be handled by using the Principles of Design- Discussed elsewhere.

