Composition

Technique and Form:
thirds, triangles and divine proportions
What makes a ‘good’ picture?

Rules?
Guides?
Shape?
Form?
Meaning?

Henri Carter Bresson
What makes a ‘good’ picture?
What makes a ‘good’ picture?
Golden Ratio, Divine Proportion

\[ \frac{a}{b} = \frac{a-b}{b} \]
Golden Ratio, Divine Proportion

1.618:1

\[ \frac{a+b}{a} = \frac{a}{b} = \phi \]

A+B is 1.618 times A
A is 1.618 times B

phi
Golden Ratio, Divine Proportion

1.618:1

\( \Phi \) \( \phi \)

phi

A+B is 1.618 times A
A is 1.618 times B
Balance and proportion
in nature...
in the human body...
in the human body...
in ancient architecture...
in ancient architecture...
in art...
What makes a ‘good’ picture?

Balance + Direction

Henri Carter Bresson
Horizontal balance
Horizontal balance
Vertical balance
Vertical balance
Both...
Focal points + Directional space

Moving into space - eye scan direction.
Three-step composition

1. Identify the Focus Point or Cluster
2. Identify the Secondary Point
3. Identify the direction of Eye Scan
Golden Rectangle
Golden Rectangle
Golden Rectangle
Golden Rectangle
Golden Rectangle
Golden Rectangle
Golden Rectangle and the Cluster
Golden Rectangle and the Cluster
Divine Spiral
Divine Spiral
Triangular Composition:
Strength, Direction, Momentum
Aspect Ratio and Golden Ratio

1.33:1 4:3
1.66:1
1.78:1 16:9
1.85:1
2.35:1
Aspect Ratio and Golden Ratio

1.33:1 4:3
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2.35:1
1.618:1

Φφ
Rules or Tools?

Divine Ratios, Triangles and Thirds are tools to USE rather than rules to follow.

They are guides to balance and visual strength.

They are tools for leading the viewer’s eye.

They are implements shape and define space.

They are utensils to leverage 4000 years of visual culture.
Readings + Resources

Concept Art Composition
http://features.cgsociety.org/story_custom.php?story_id=3275&page=1

Digital Camera Composition

35mm film and the golden rectangle
http://fotogenetic.dearingfilm.com/golden_rectangle.html

The Golden Ratio

The golden ratio and aesthetics
http://plus.maths.org/issue22/features/golden/

Composing a more dynamic frame with depth
http://provideocoalition.com/index.php/freshdv/story/composing_a_more_dynamic_frame_with_depth1/