Foundations for Art and Design Through Photography

Part I

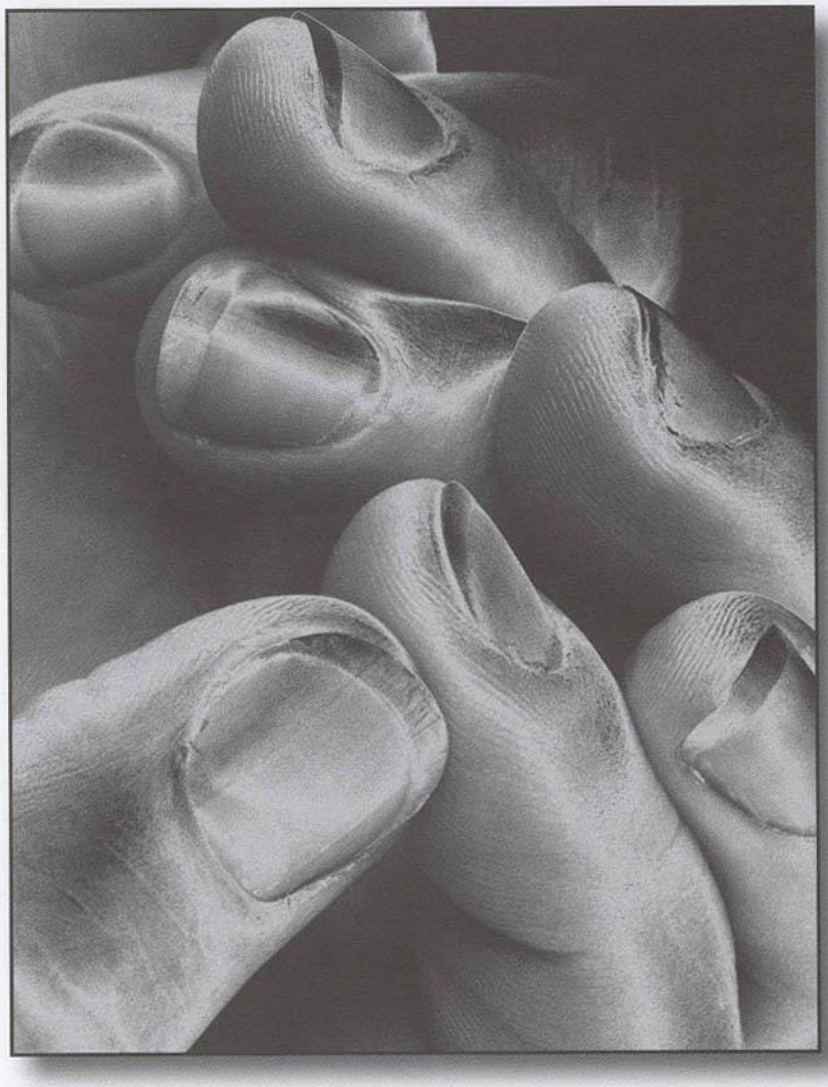
the frame

the frame

foundations foundations foundations foundations foundations foundations

Pavement - Gareth Neal

I. Introduction

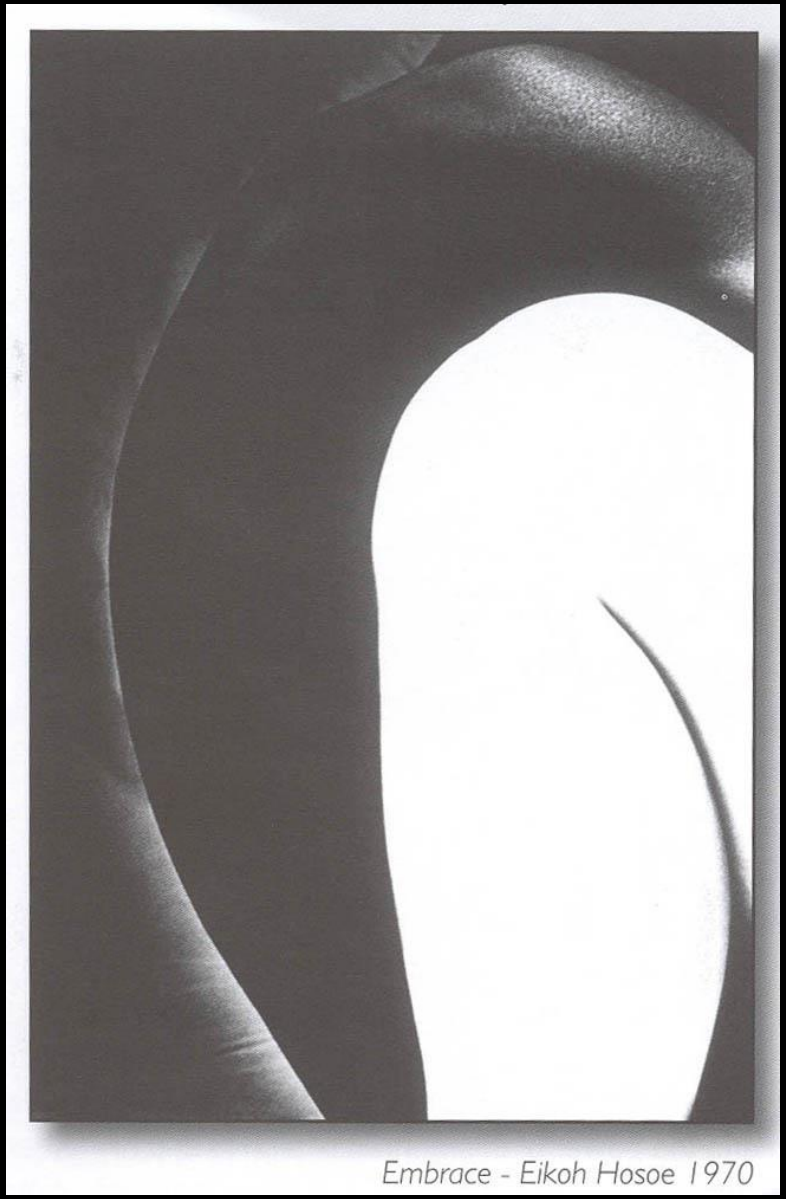


Fingers - Mark Galer

Framing the subject

Many beginning photographers stand too far away from their subject matter…this makes their photographs busy, unstructured, and cluttered. This can make the subject matter look unimportant and not worthy of closer attention and the composition may seem out of the photographer's control.

This is a photograph of the human figure while simultaneously serving as a composition of shape, tone, and line. The act of framing a subject using the viewfinder of the camera imposes an edge that does not exist outside of the camera. The shape that this frame creates must be studied in order to create successful compositions.



Embrace - Eikoh Hosoe 1970

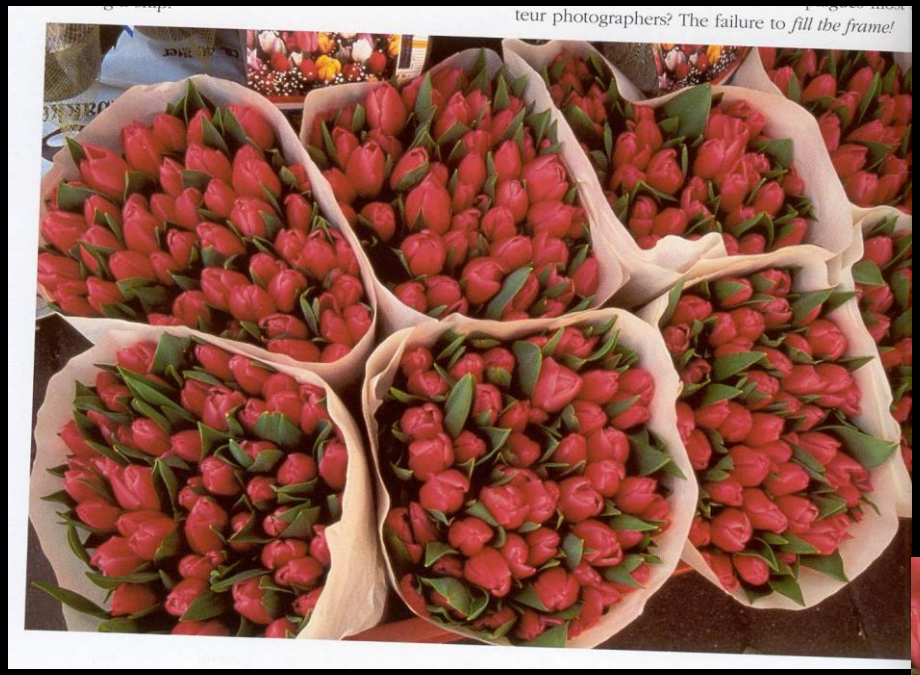
II. Filling the Frame

Activity One

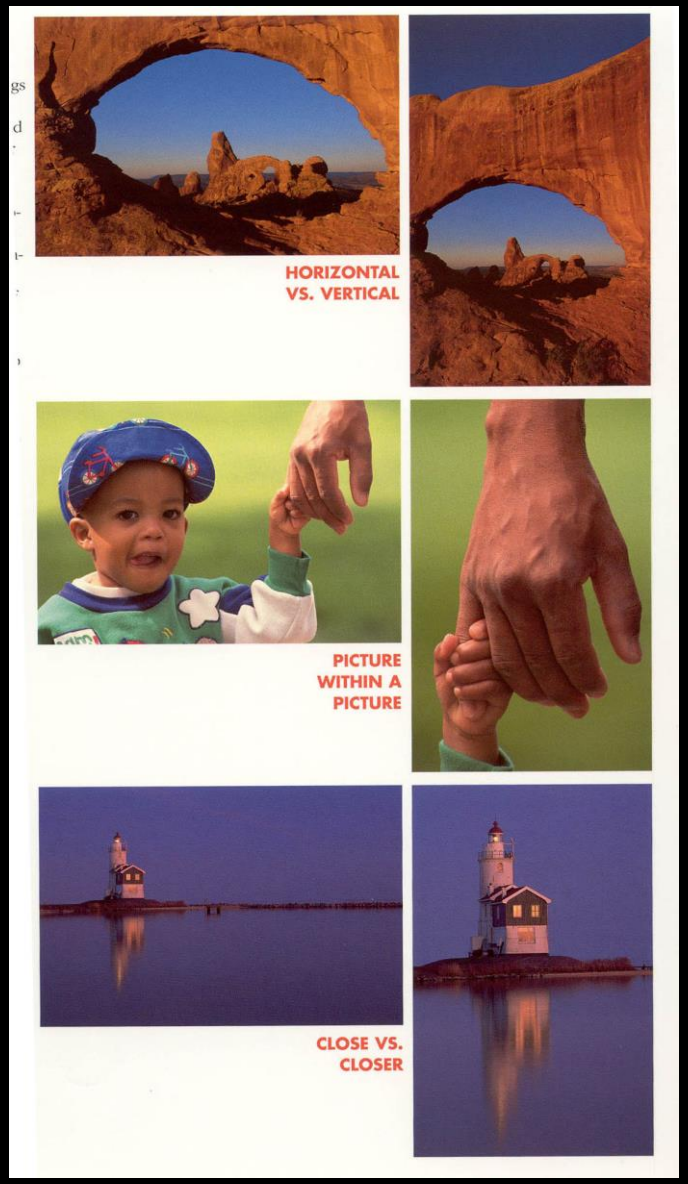
Filling the Frame

- Moving closer reduces distracting background
- There is no need to include all or the whole of the subject
- The viewer often makes decisions about what the photograph is about from the information that can be seen
- Before clicking the shutter inspect all edges of your viewfinder
- Crop within the camera

Father and Child, Vietnam - Marc Riboud/Magnum


teur photographers? The failure to *fill the frame!*

Activity 1

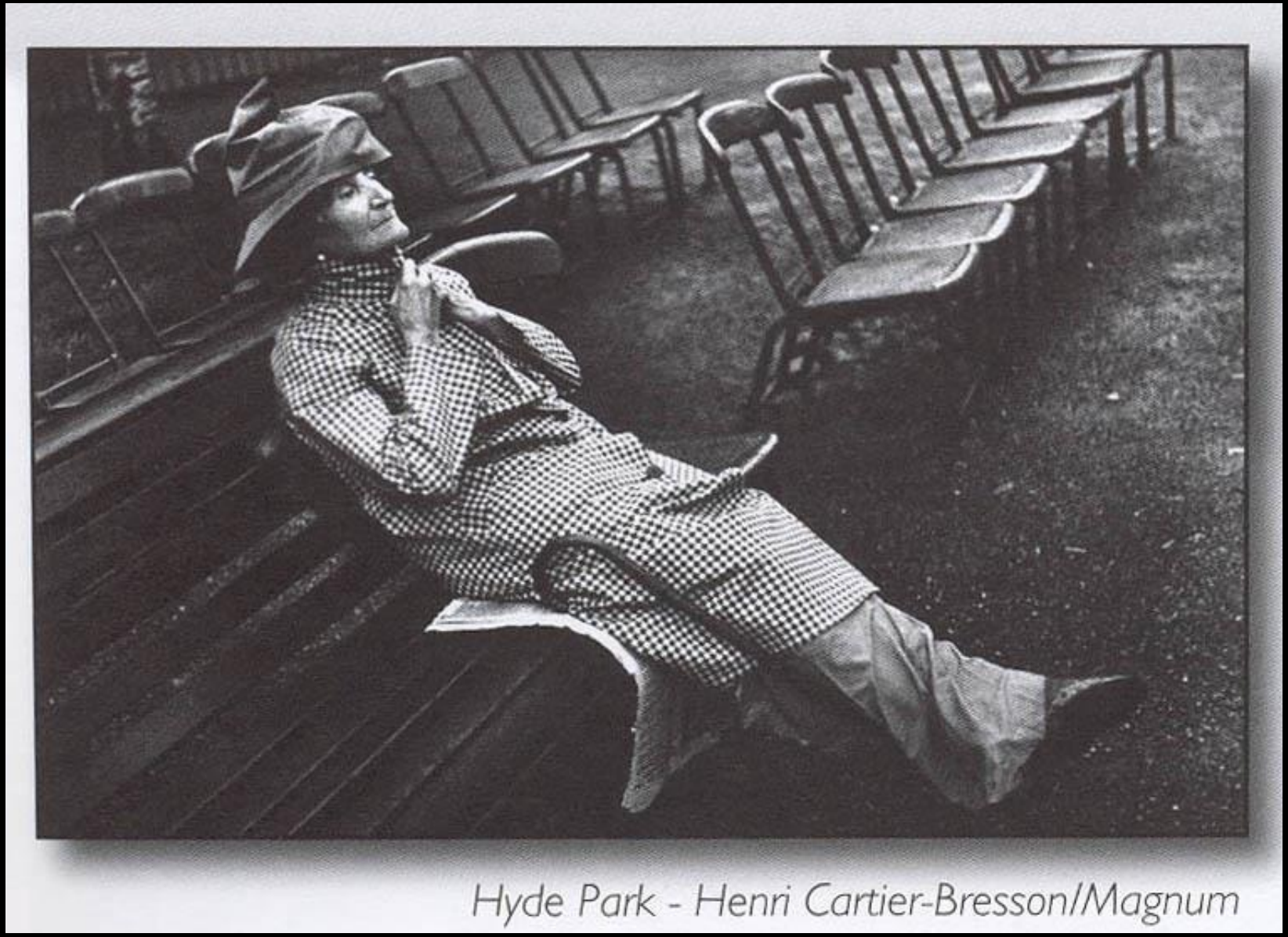

HORIZONTAL
VS. VERTICAL
PICTURE
WITHIN A
PICTURE
CLOSE VS.
CLOSER

III.The Whole Truth?

Activity Two

The Whole Truth?

- What will you include in the frame?
- How you frame the photograph will be read by the viewer – will it be accurate? Can you alter the meaning?
- “The photographer edits the meanings and the patterns of the world through an imaginary frame.” – The Photographer’s Eye, John Szarkowski



Hyde Park - Henri Cartier-Bresson/Magnum

CRUSHED

DROWNED

BURNED

FELL

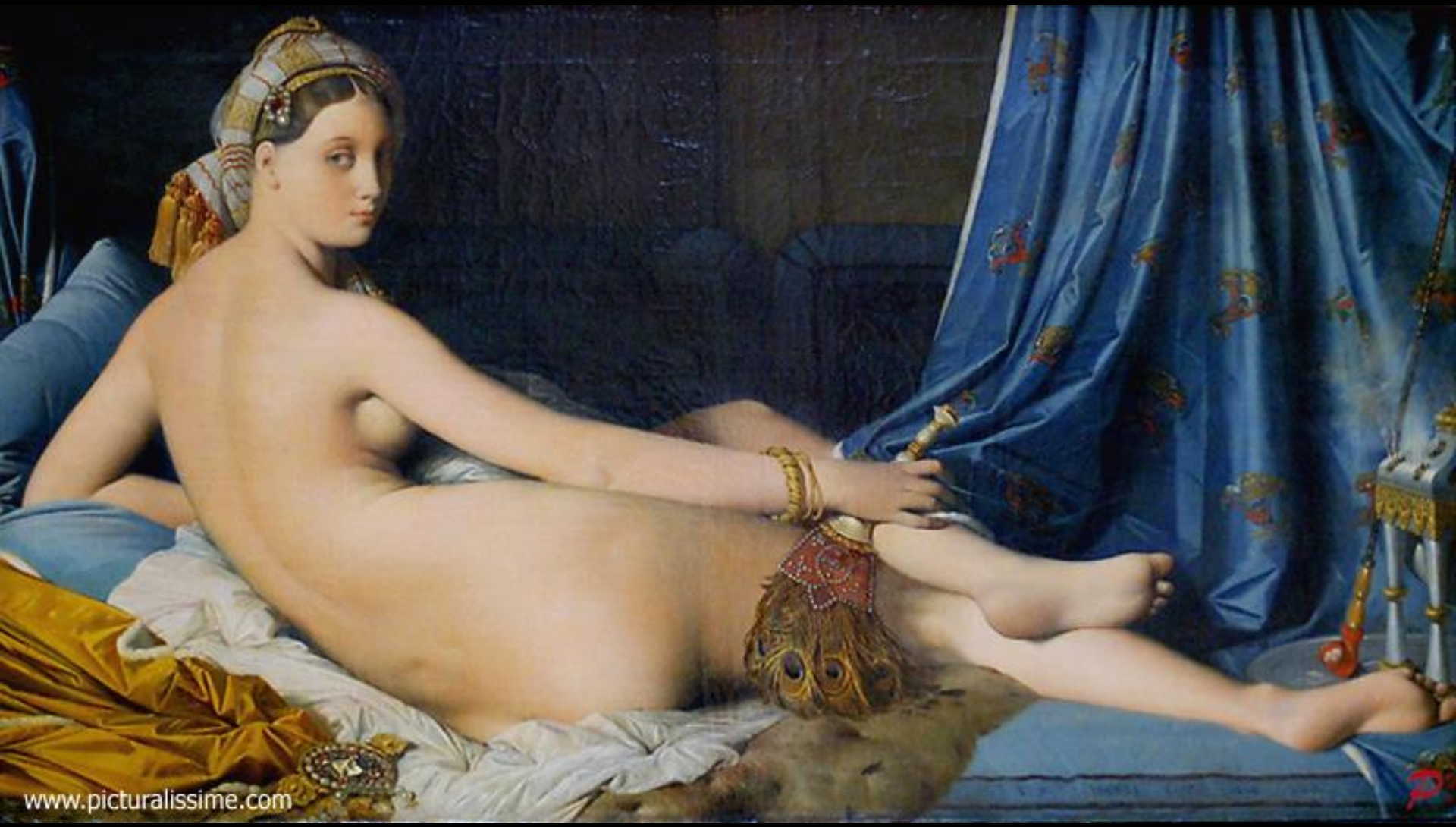
Cause of Death - John Hilliard, 1974 - Arts Council Collection, Hayward Gallery, London

Activity 2

History of the Frame in Contemporary Art

Western Art

Pre-Impressionist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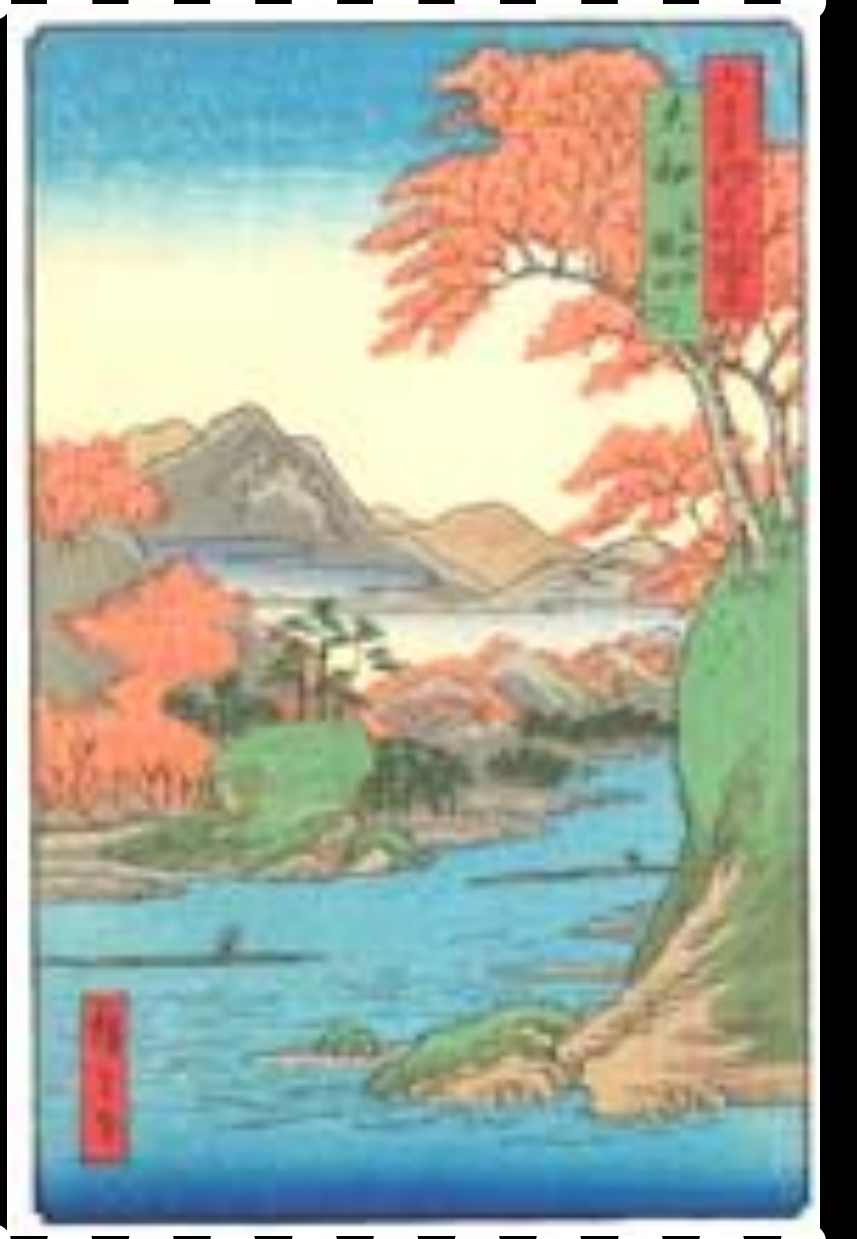
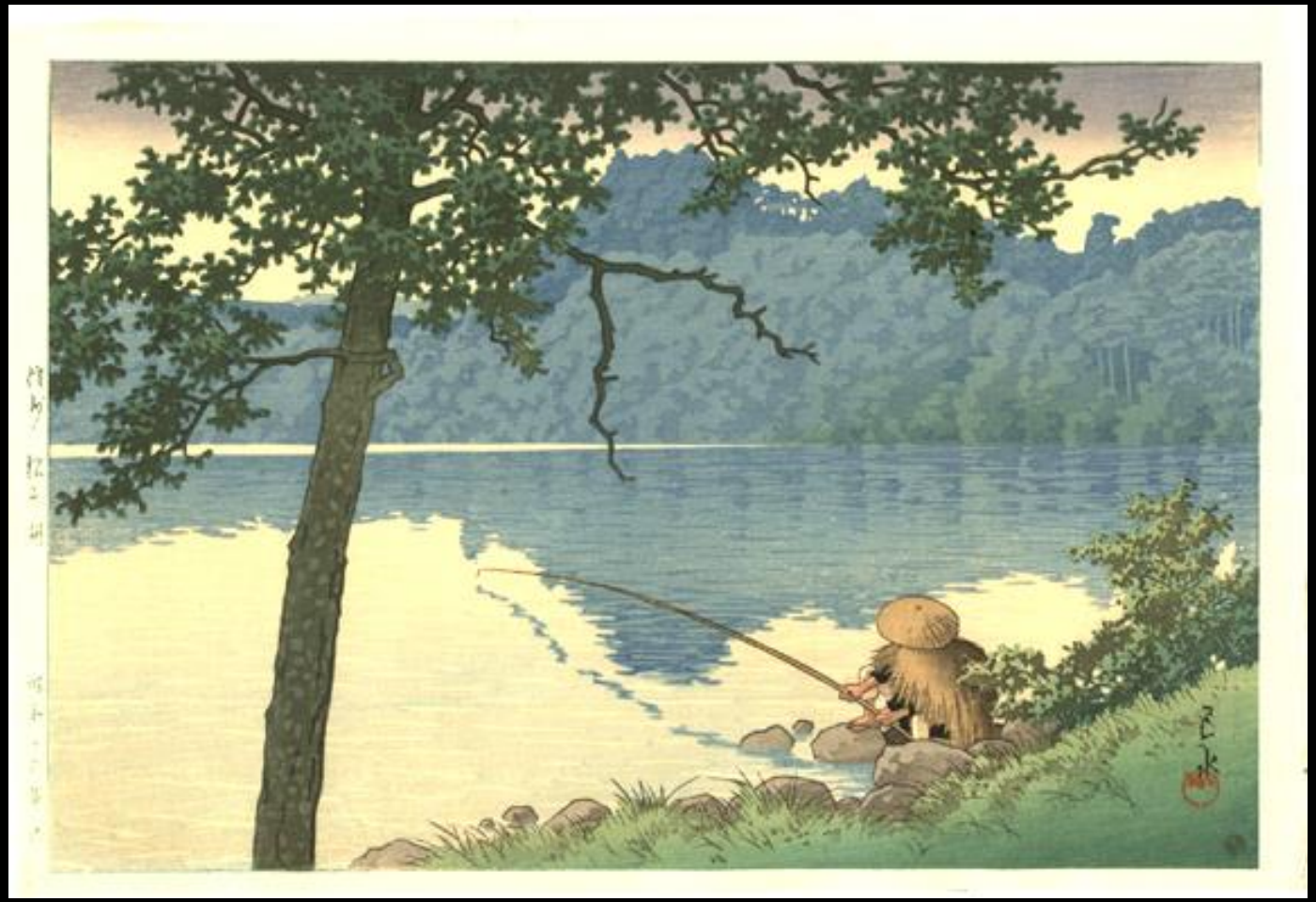
BONAPARTE

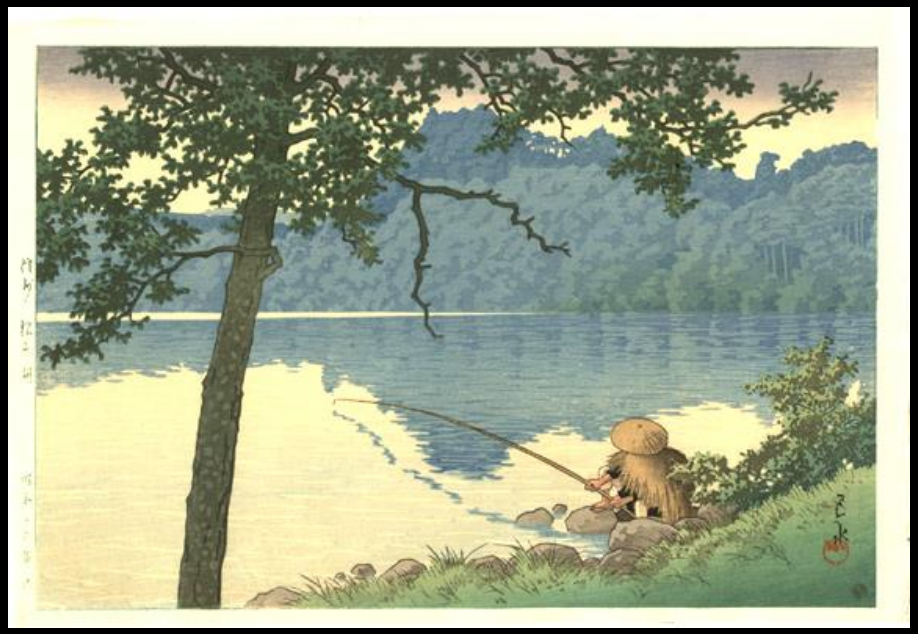
Japanese Block Prints

Late 1800's – Japan opens up to the Western world

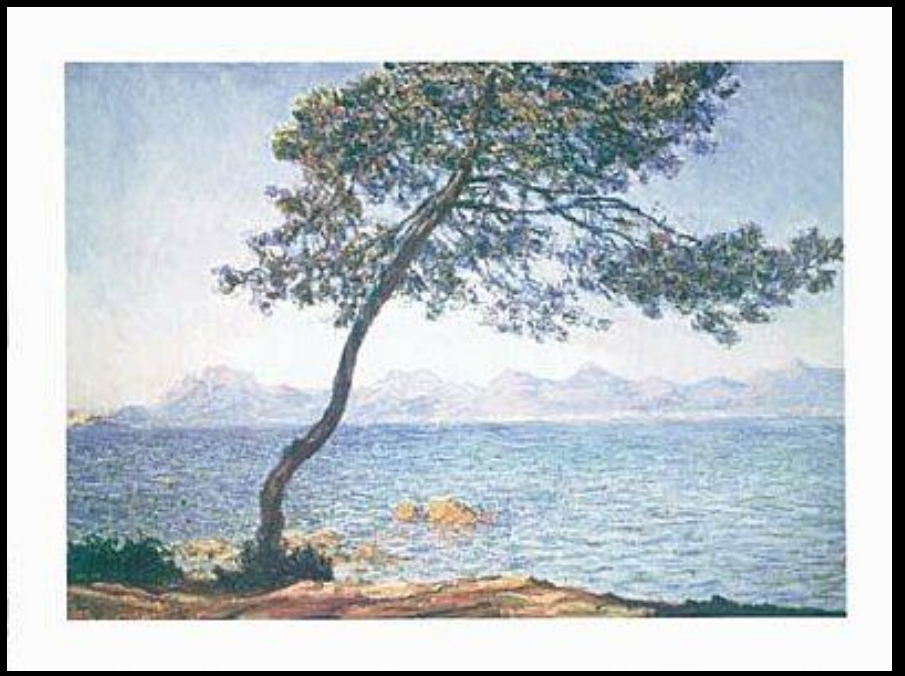


Influence on Impressionists and all of Western art composition



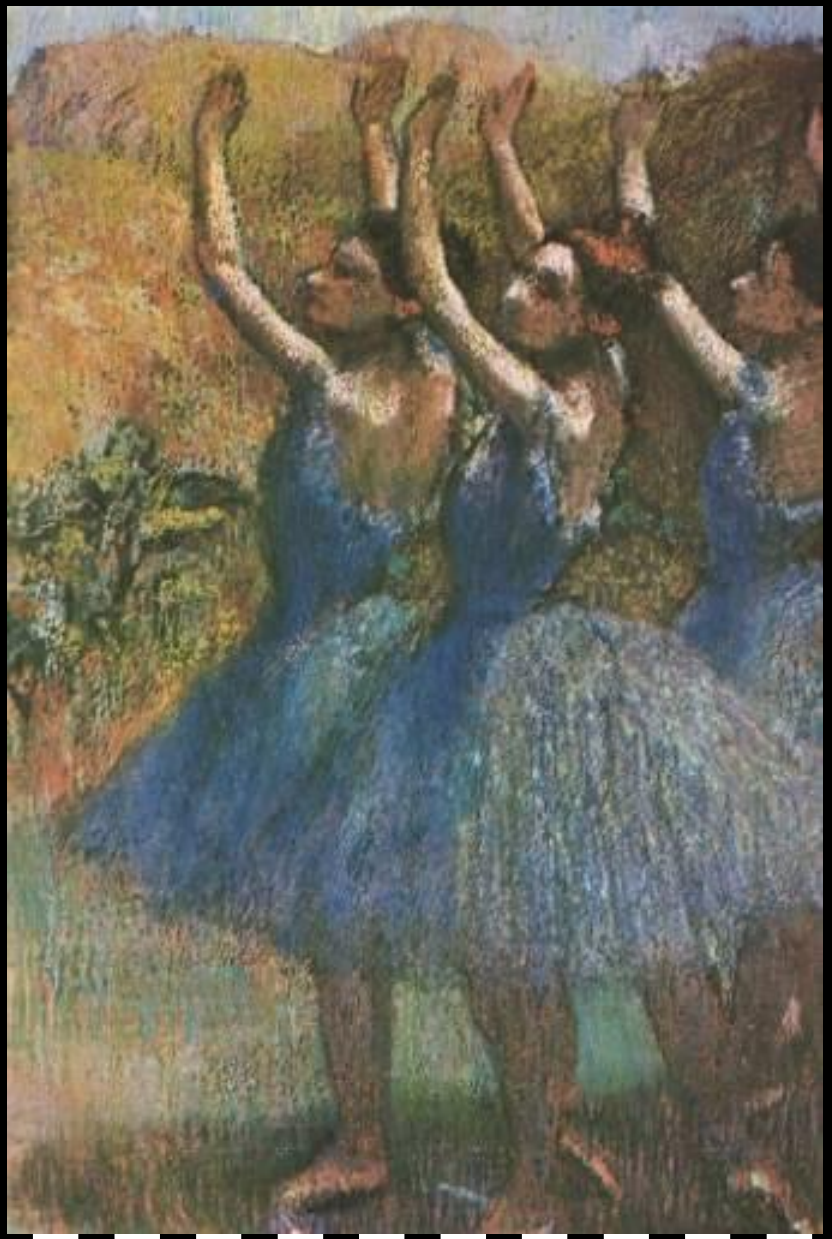


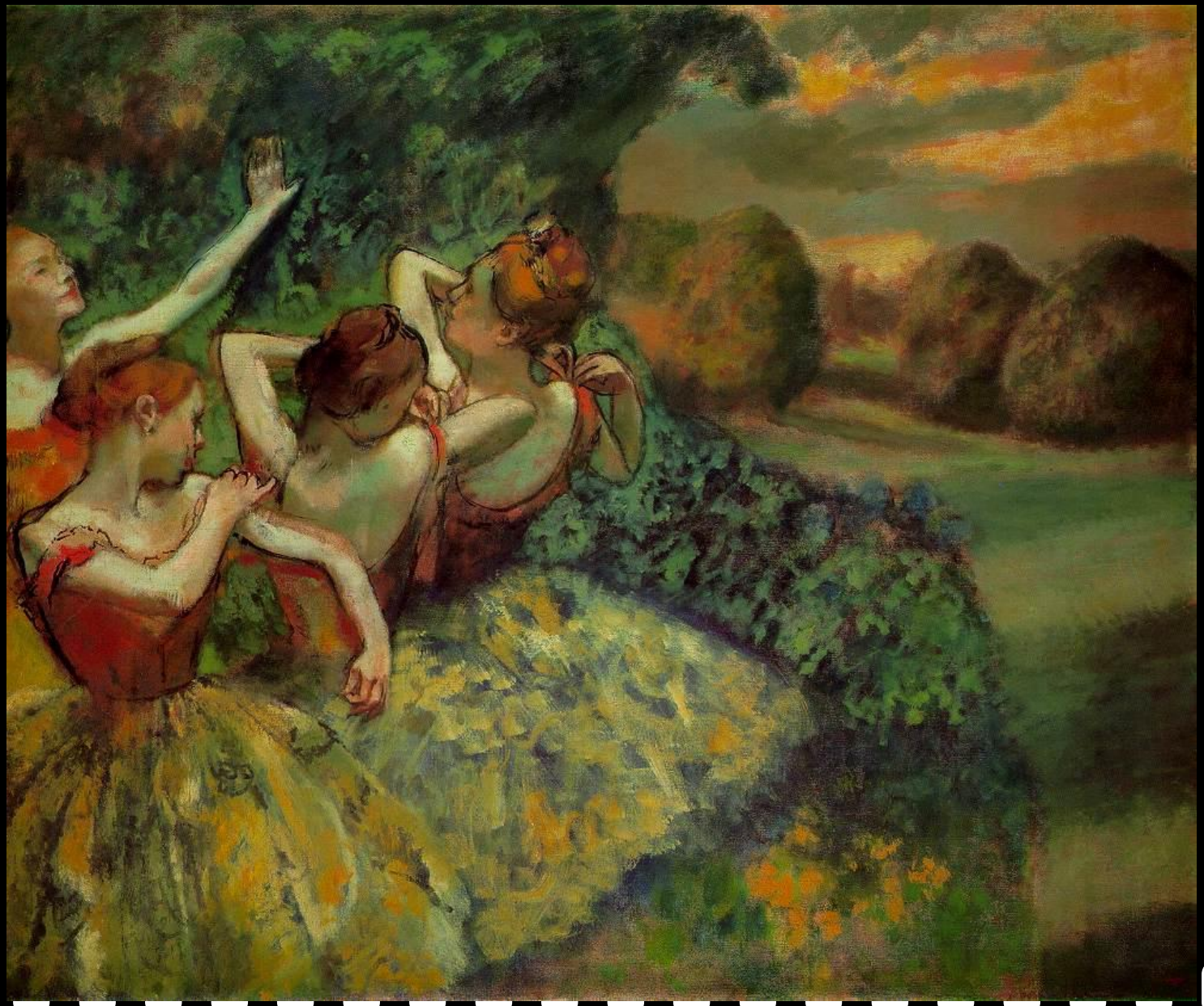
Japanese Painting



Impressionist Painting

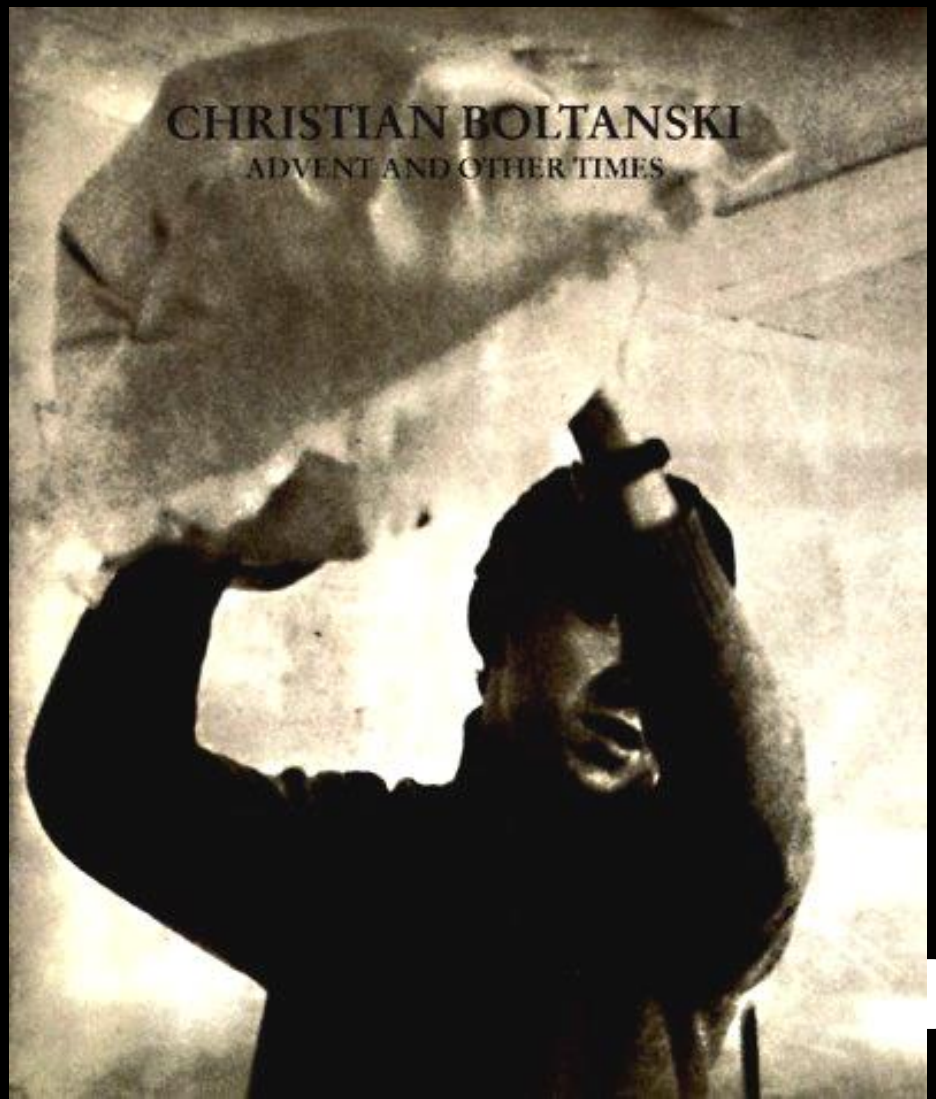
Edgar Degas



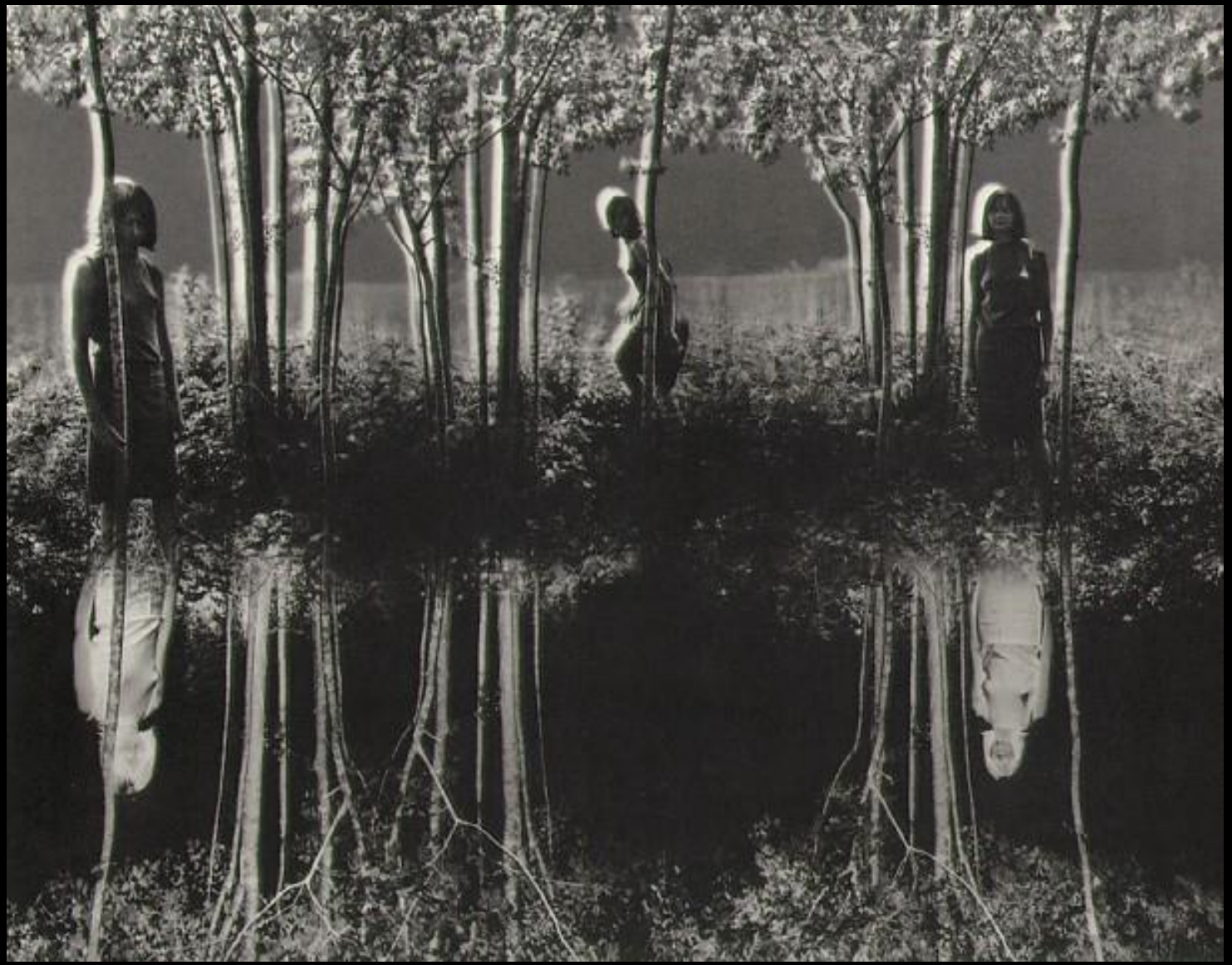


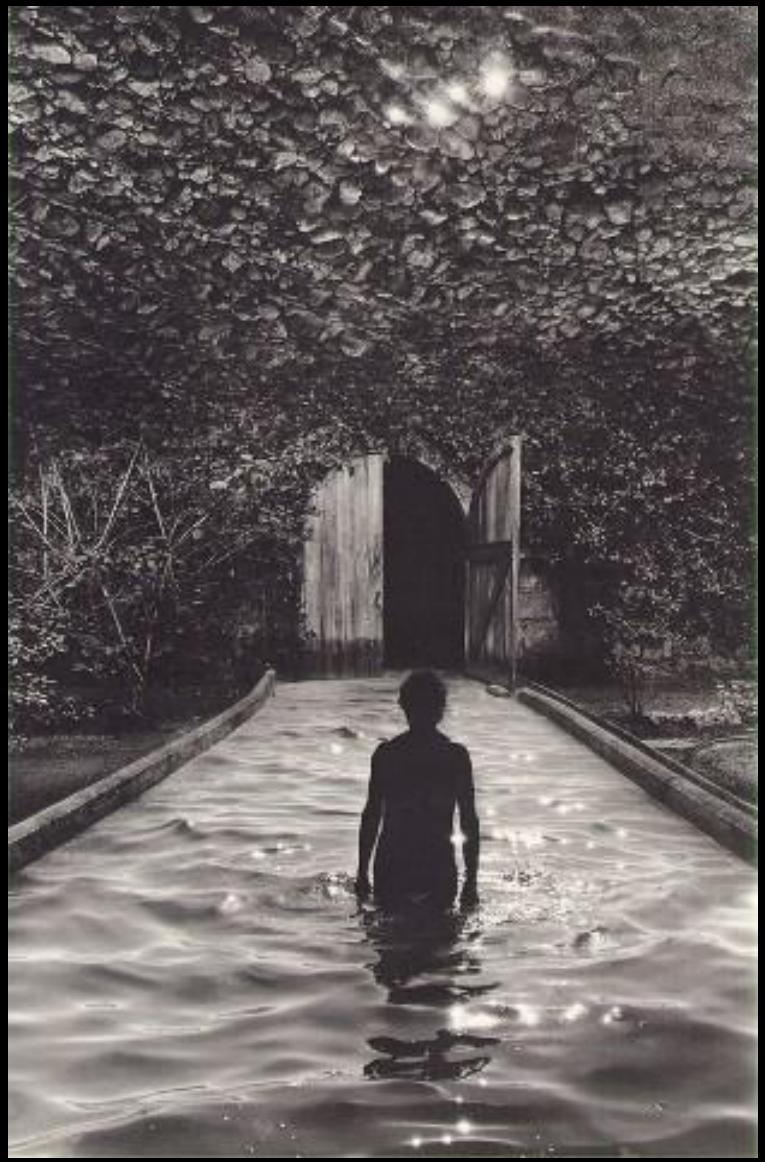
Aaron Siskind

Christian Boltanski

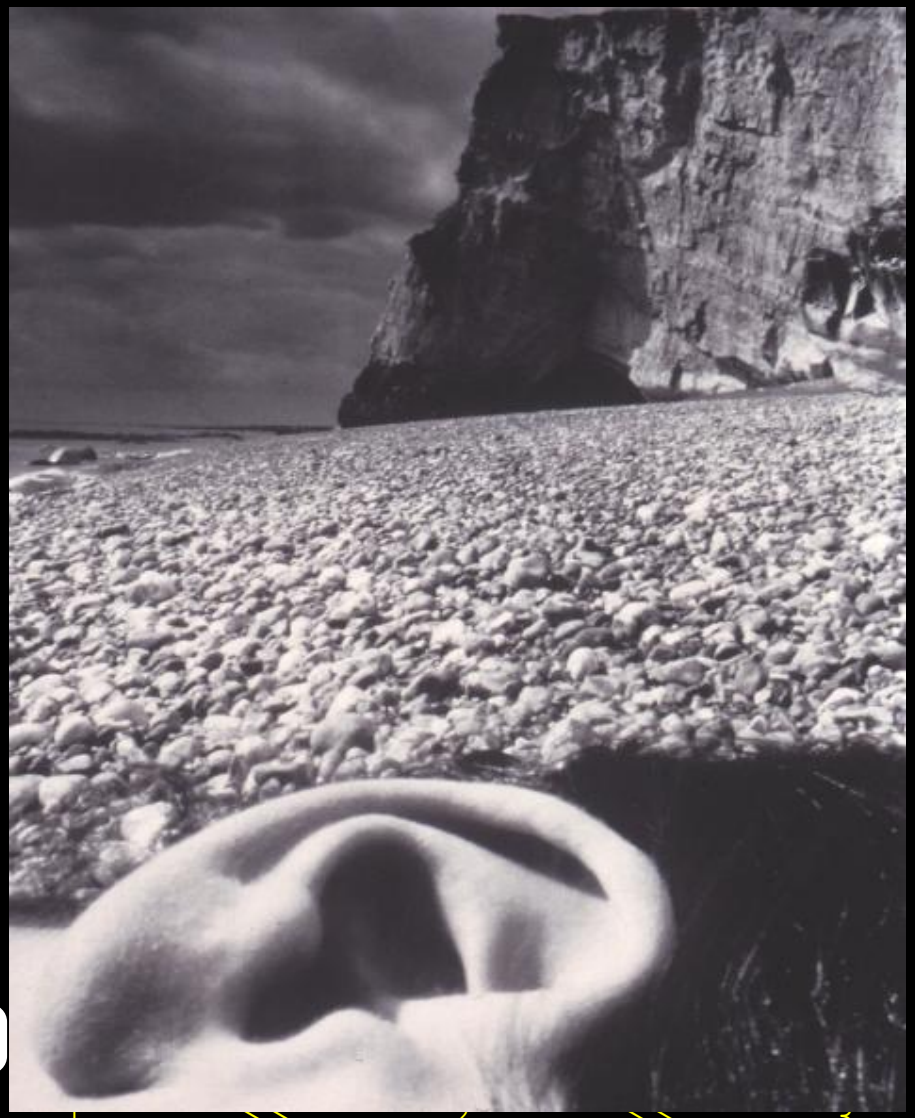


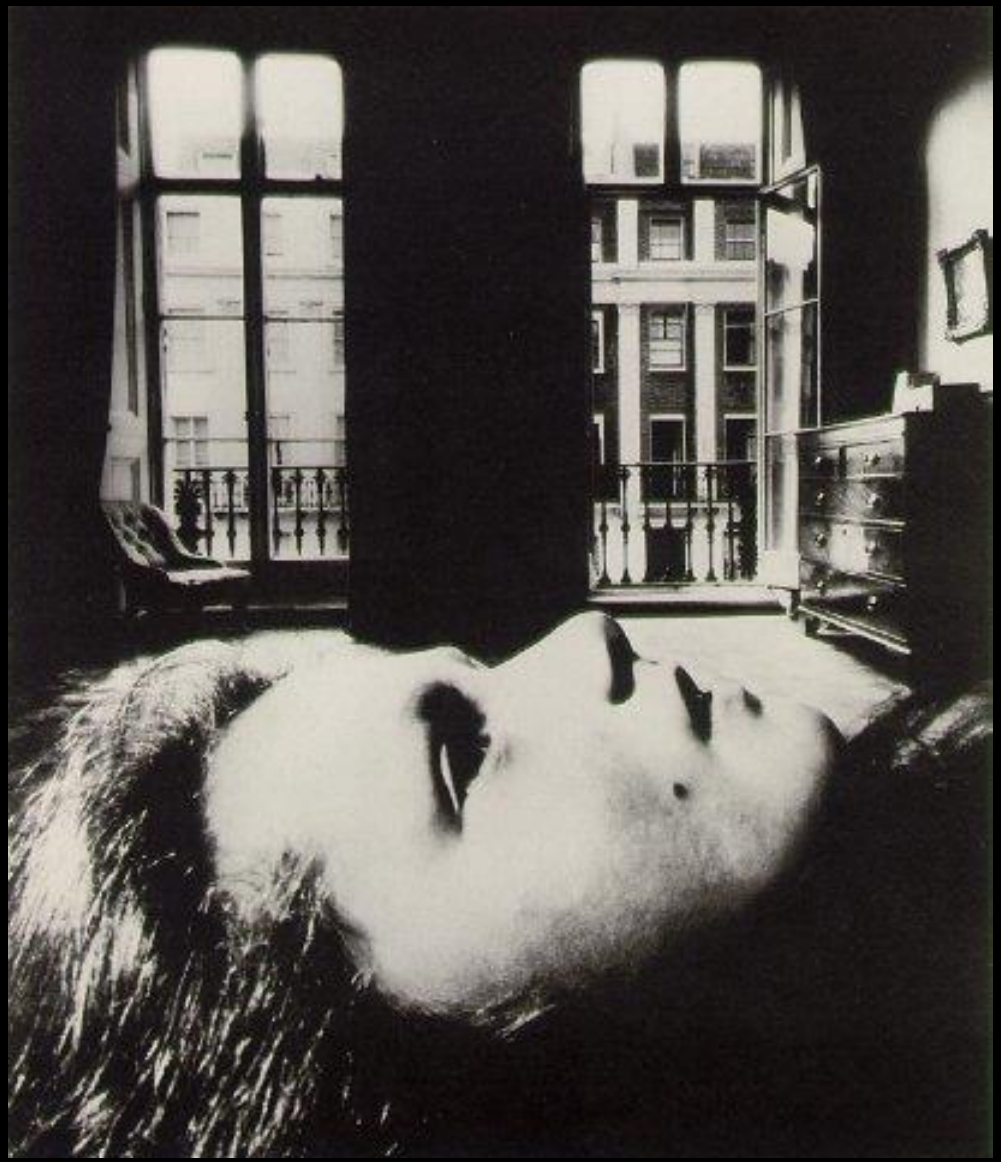
Jerry Uelsmann





Bill Brandt



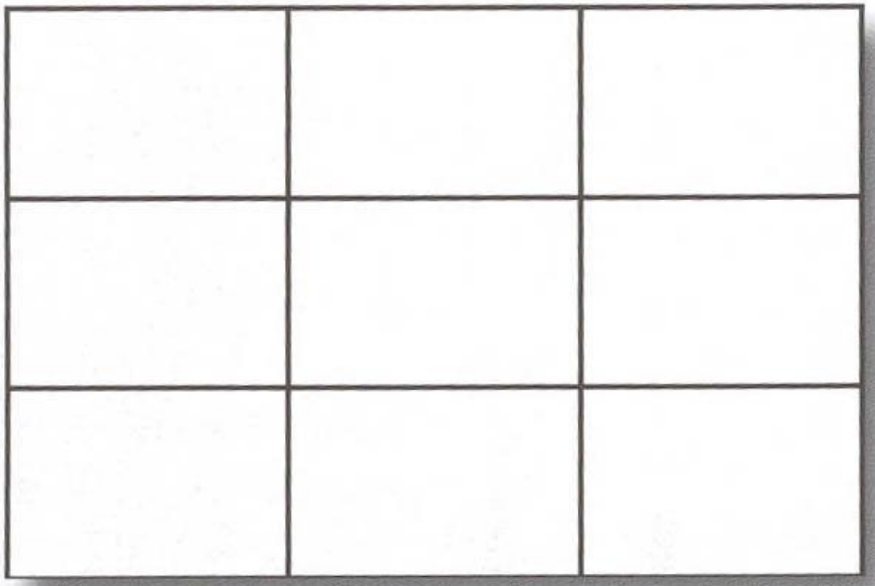


IV. Subject Placement

Activity Three

THE RULE OF THIRDS

Rules of composition have been formulated to aid designers create harmonious images which are pleasing to the eye. The most common of these rules are the '**golden section**' and the '**rule of thirds**'.



The rule of thirds

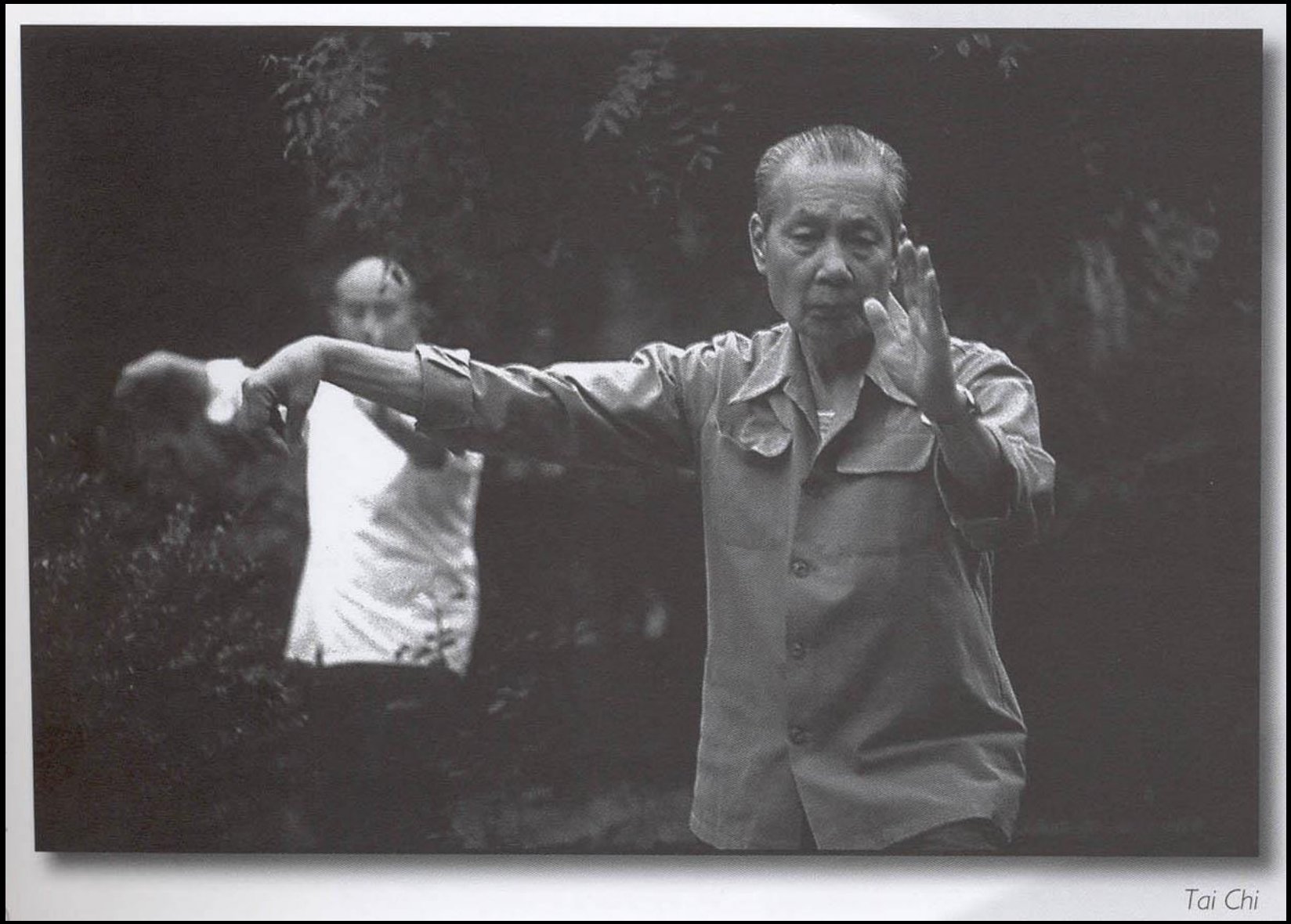
The golden section is the name given to a traditional system of dividing the frame into unequal parts which dates back to the time of Ancient Greece. The rule of thirds is the simplified modern equivalent. Try to visualise the viewfinder as having a grid which divides the frame into three equal segments, both vertically and horizontally. Many photographers and artists use these lines and their intersection points as key positions to place significant elements within the picture.

Activity 3

V. Balance

Activity Four

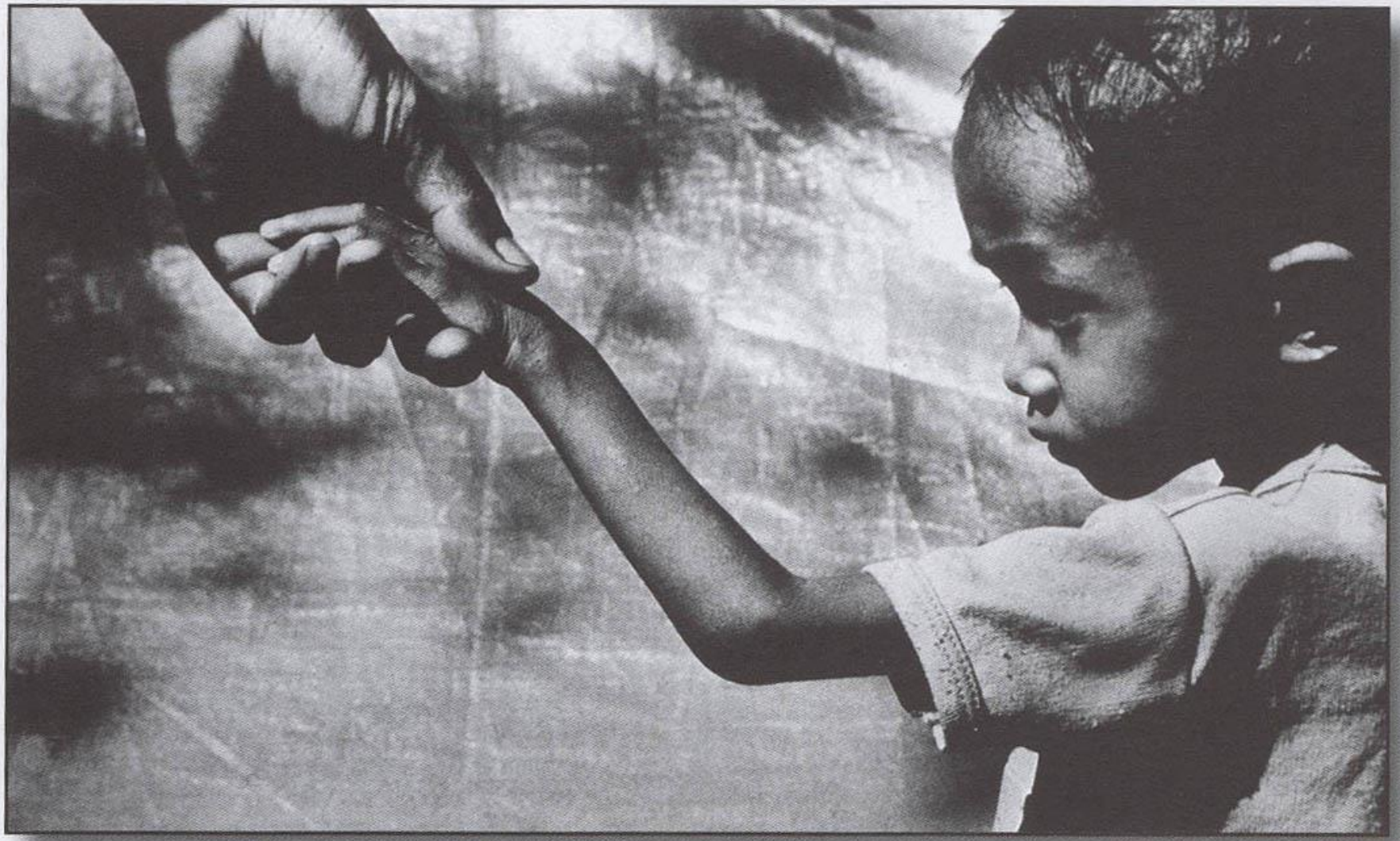
Activity 4



Tai Chi

VI.Line

Activity Five



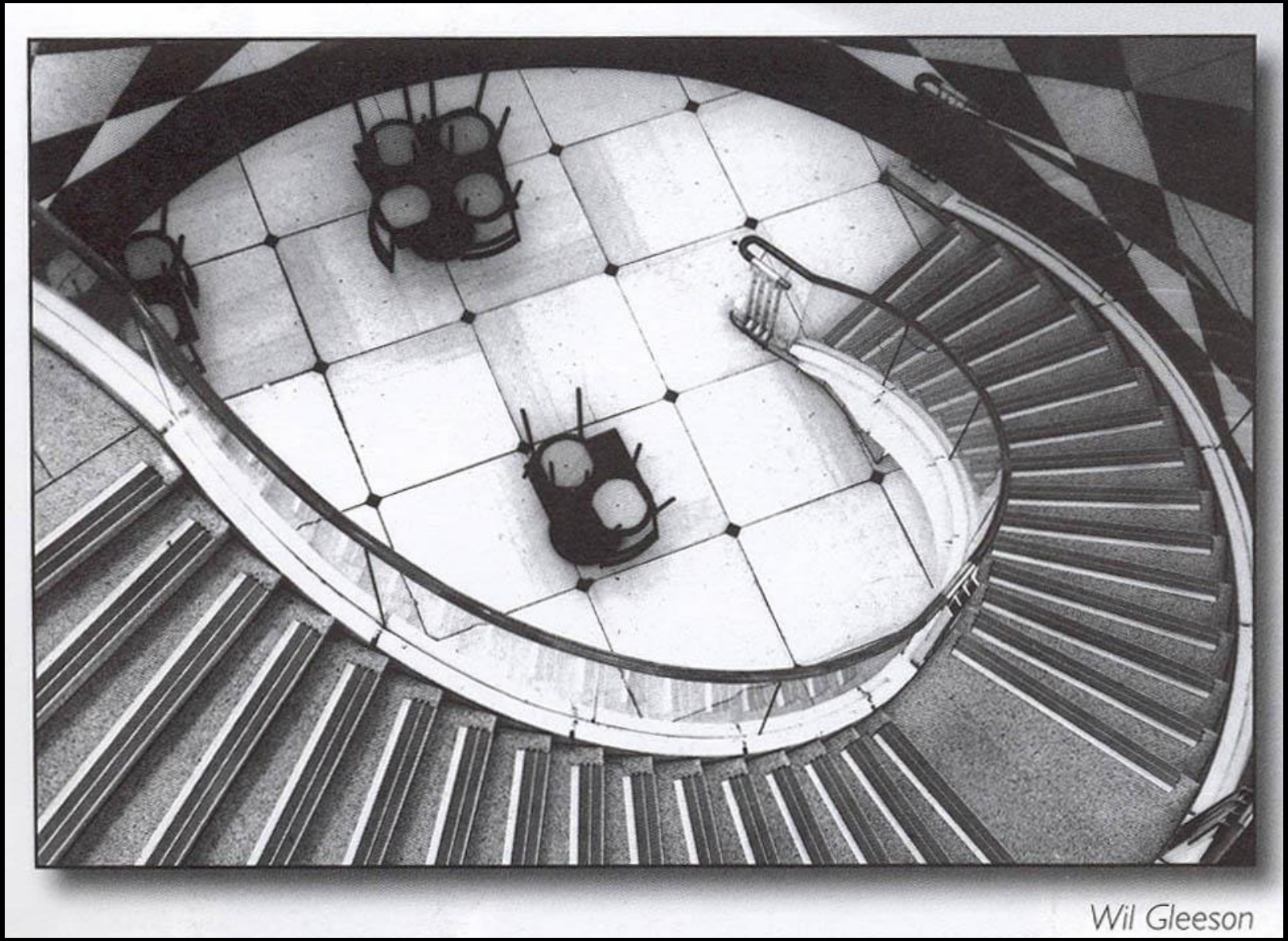
Cambodian Refugee Camp - Burk Uzzle

Daimaru

VII. Vantage Point

Activity Six

Activity 5

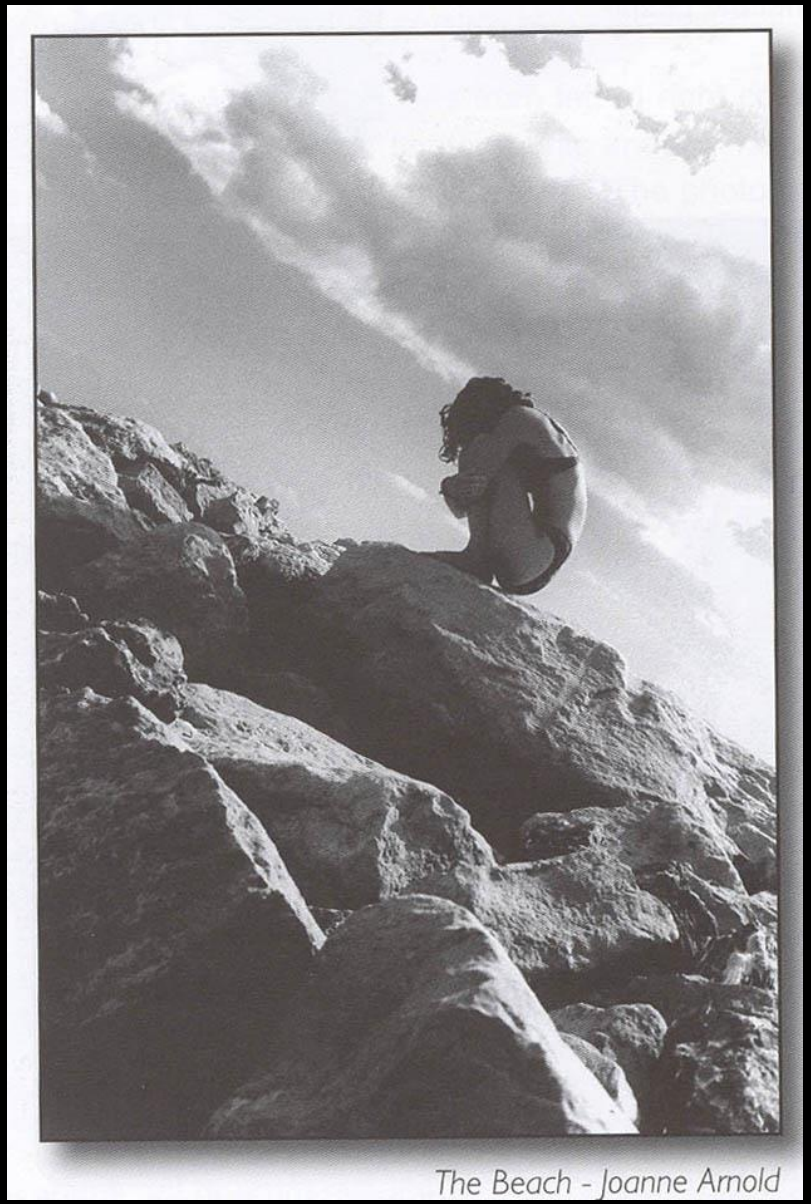


Wil Gleeson

Vantage Point

- A viewpoint that is carefully chosen can reveal something about the subject that is familiar yet strange.
- In order to keep the viewer's attention it is important to explore one's subject from all angles.
- When we move farther away form our subject matter we can introduce unwanted details into the frame that begin to detract from the main subject. Sometimes vantage point can enable the photographer to remove unwanted subject matter using the ground or the sky as an empty backdrop.

Activity 6



The Beach - Joanne Arnold

VIII. Depth

Activity Seven

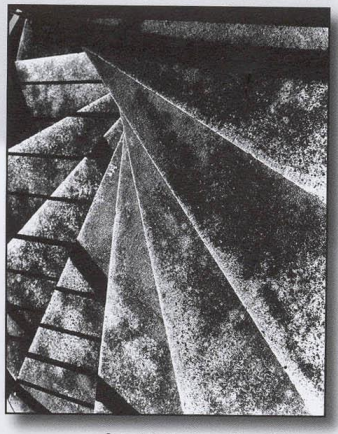
Depth

- Successful compositions often make use of depth by strategically placing points of interest ion the foreground, the middle distance, and the distance (background).
- The technique of drawing us into the photograph is used often but can be exploited using dark foreground tones that draw us towards the lighter distant tones.
- Photographers can also control how much of the image is seen “in focus”, which can contribute to a sense of depth, i.e. depth of field.

Activity 7

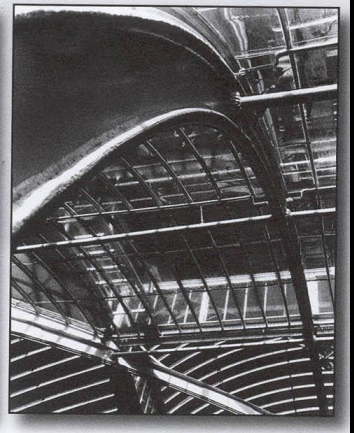
Doctor's Waiting Room, Battersea, London 1975 - Ian Berry

IX. Examples



Spiral Staircase - Tom Scicluna

Many photographers use the lines and intersection points of the rule of thirds as key positions to place significant elements in the picture.

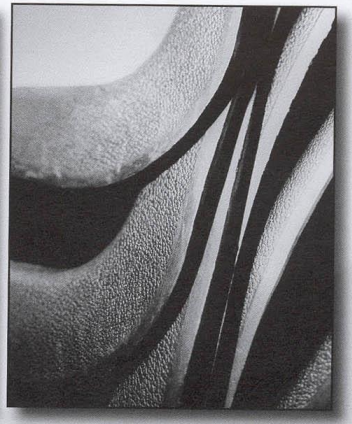


Arc - Tom Scicluna

By tilting the camera the shapes and lines can be carefully organised within the frame. The dominant arc in this image sweeps the edge of the frame and exits at the bottom right-hand corner.

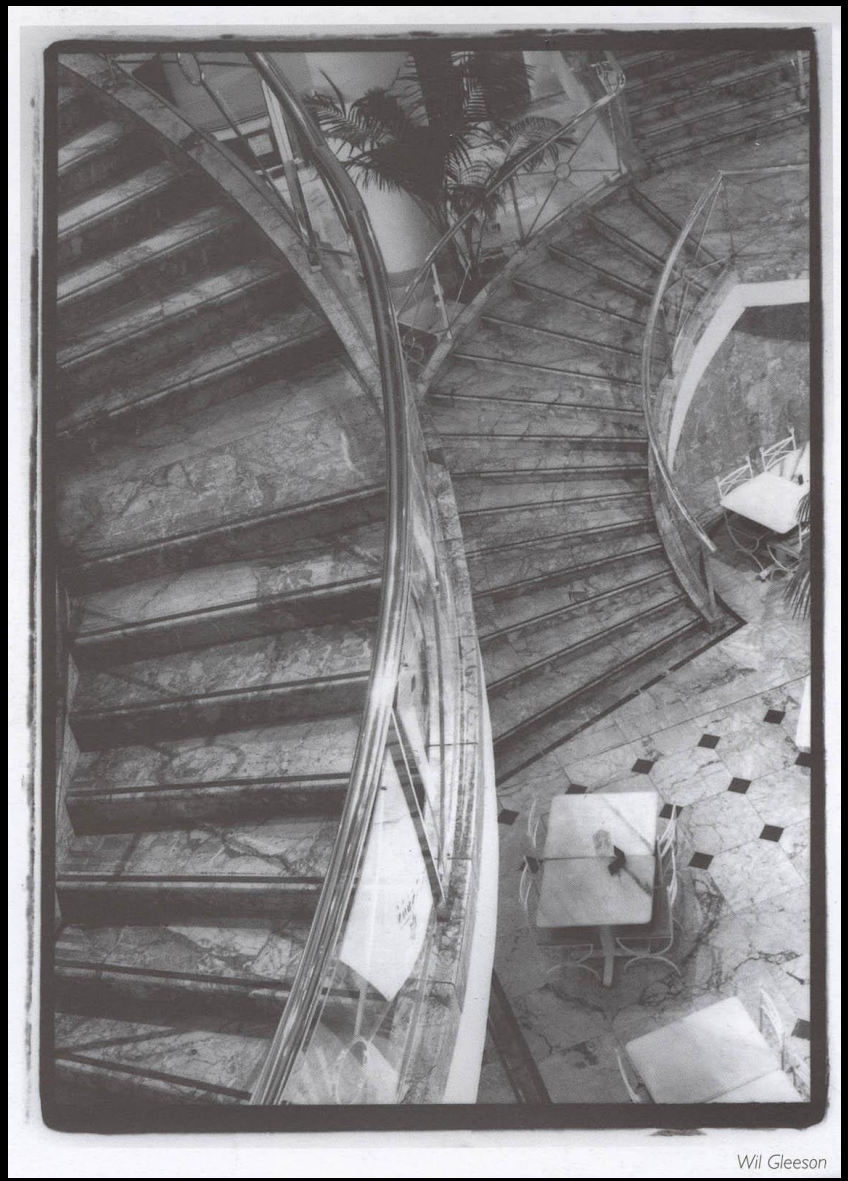
Staircase - Philip Leonard

Diagonal lines that appear in a picture, whether real or suggested, are more dynamic than horizontal lines. The diagonal lines have been arranged to enter the corners of this photograph.



Stacked Chairs - Gareth Neal

A carefully chosen viewpoint can often reveal the subject as familiar and yet strange. A student has explored the interesting lines created by a stack of chairs.



Wil Gleeson

Kat Schmidt

Chance Bublitz

Tia R

Tia Raduziner

Tia Raduziner

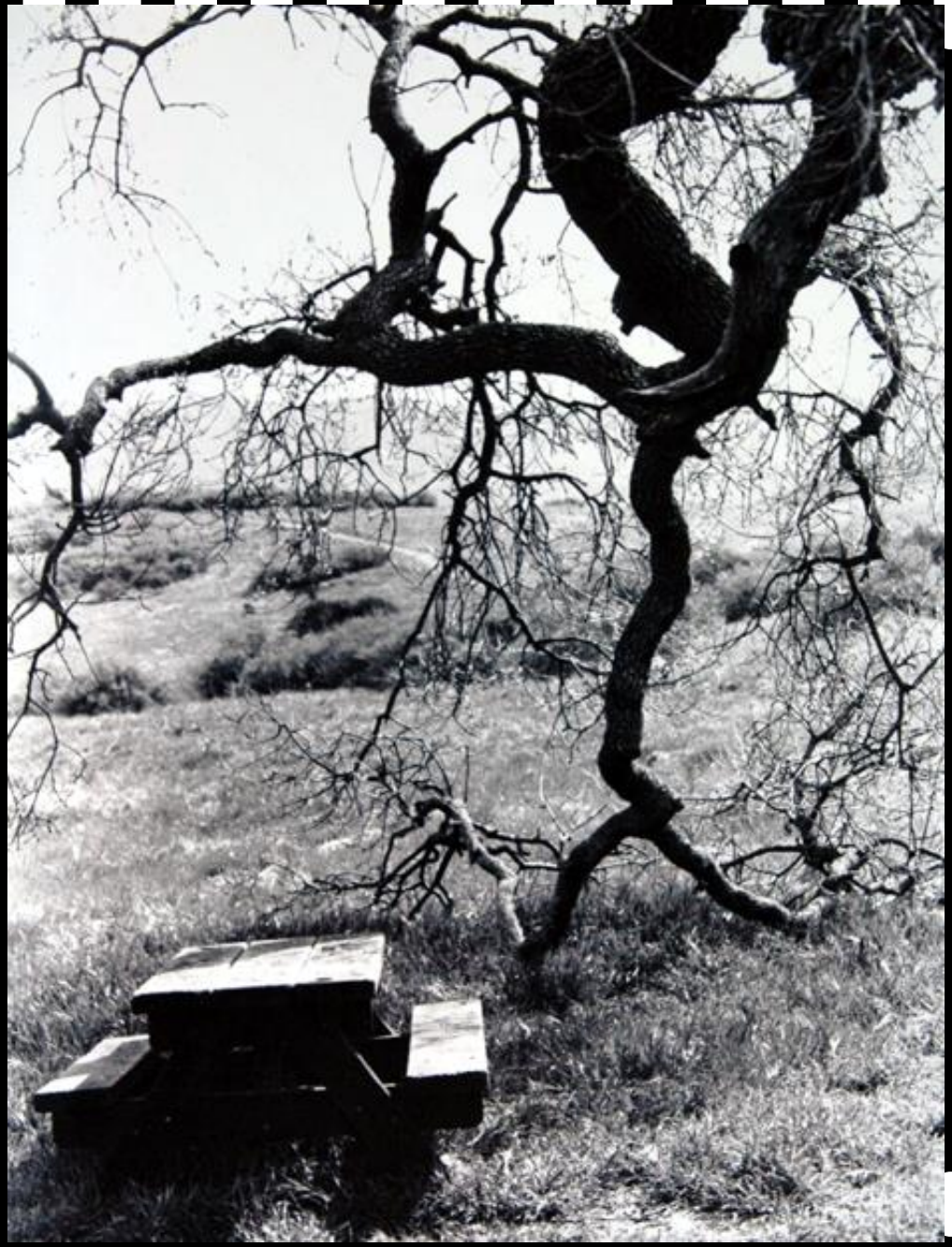
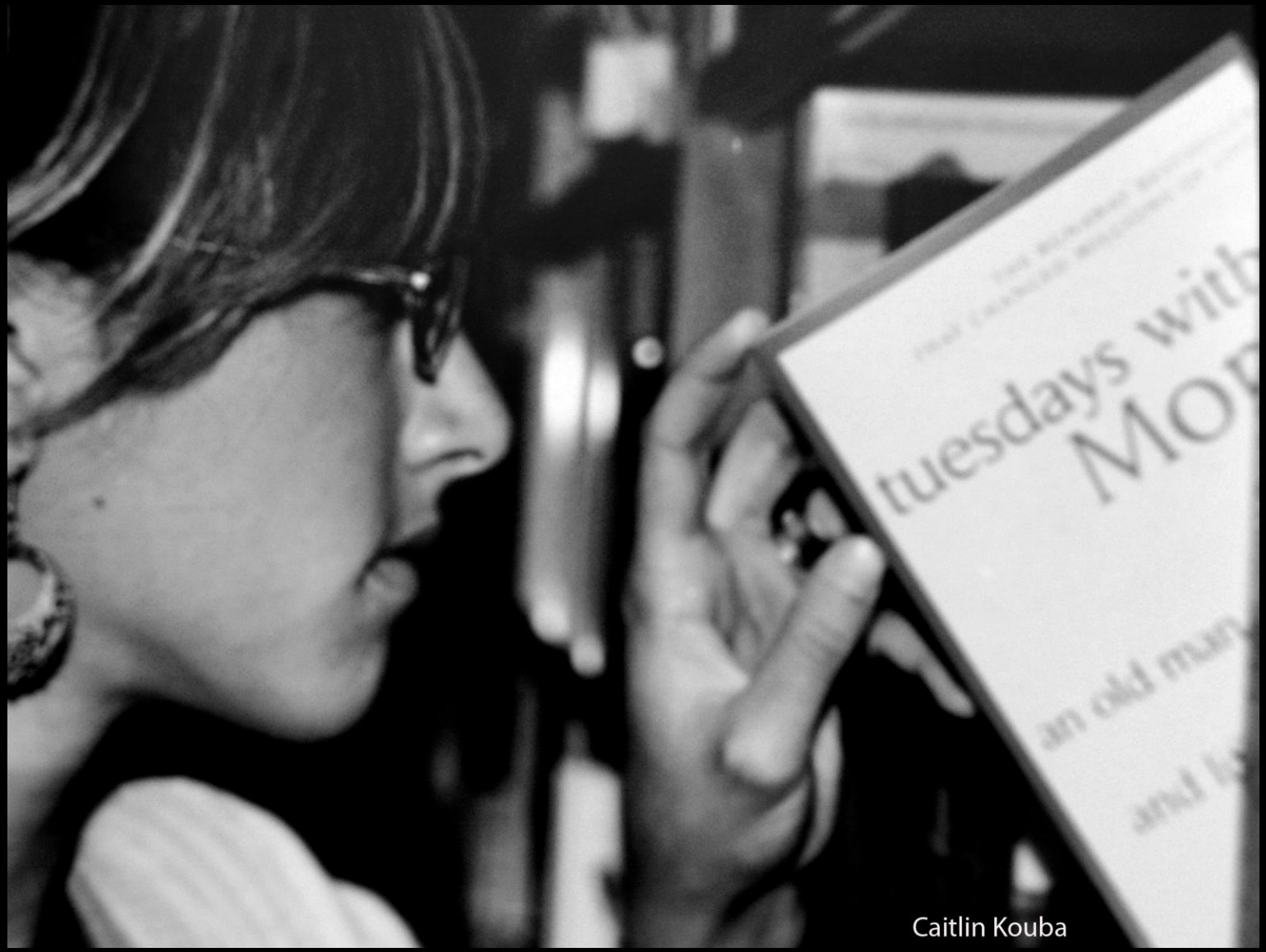


Photo by Rene Petersson

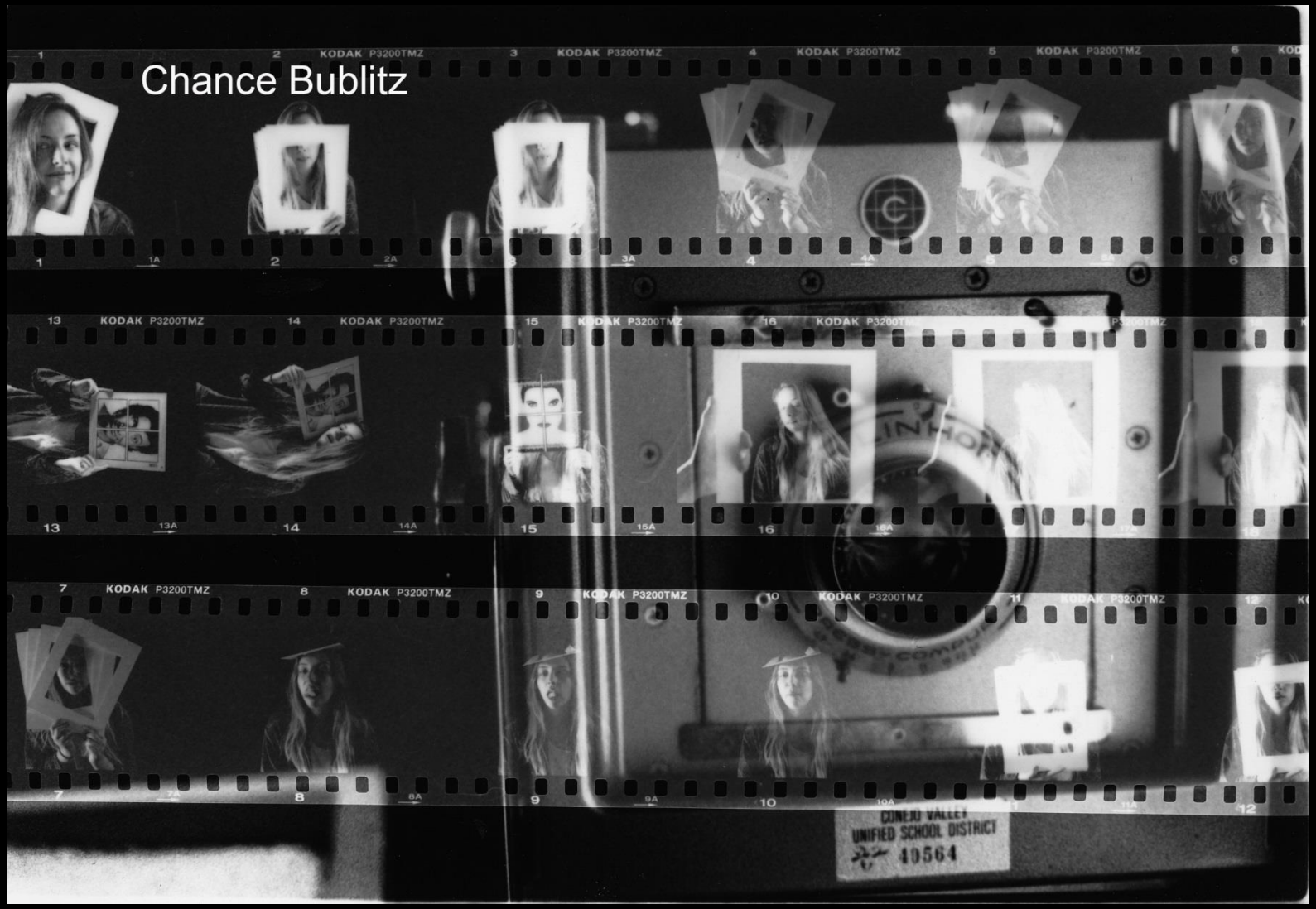
Karina Cummings

Leandra Dichirico


tuesdays with
Caitlin Kouba

EXTREME 400iso
Alex Amato

STAND BEHIND YELLOW LINE
Katie Budnik


Chance Bublitz
KODAK P3200TMZ
CONEJO VALLEY
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
40564

FOCUS

Mackenzie Culbertson