

Principles of Organization

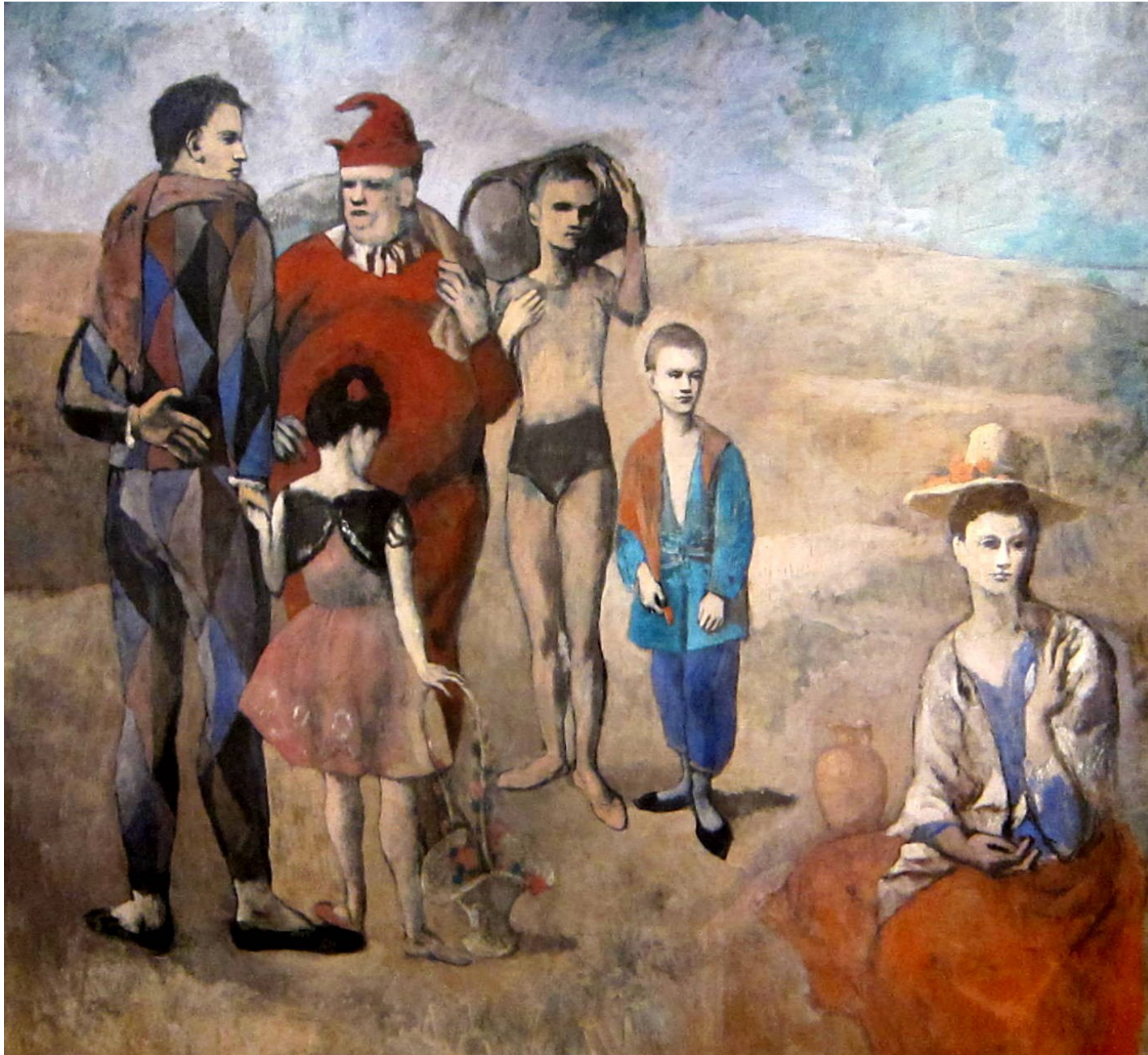
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Principles of Organization: BALANCE

The distribution of interest or visual weight in a work. If all the visually interesting elements of a work are centered in one spot, the work is off-balance and the viewer's gaze will be stuck in one place, ignoring the rest of the piece.

Some types of balance are *symmetric*, *asymmetric*, and *radial*.

Gravity is a universally and intuitively felt experience. Walking, standing on one leg, or tipping back in a chair reveals our intuitive need for balance.



Pablo Picasso
Family of Saltimbanques, 1905

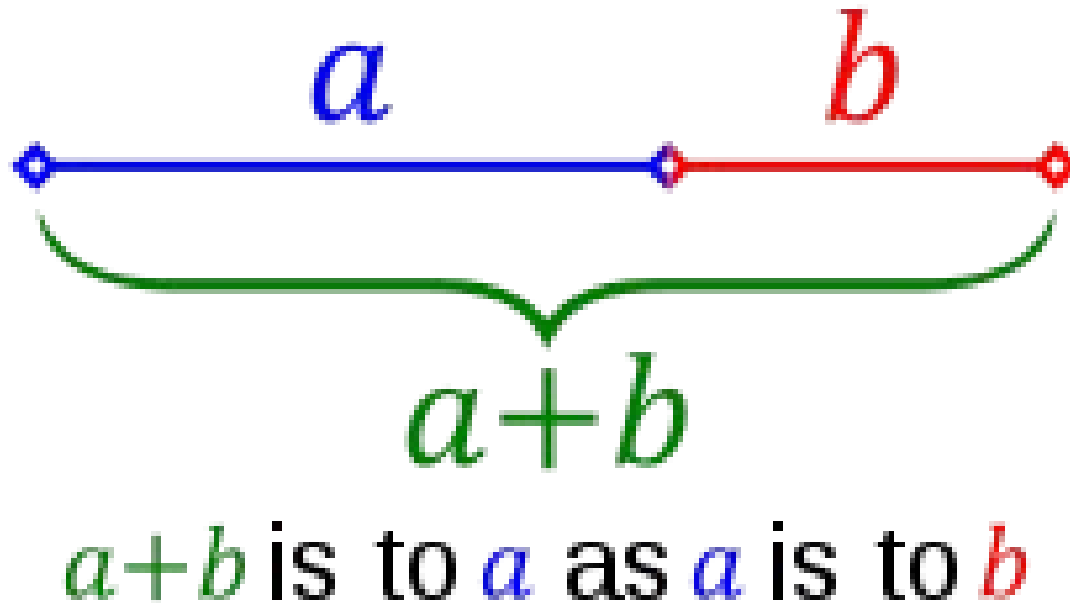
Principles of Organization: PROPORTION and SCALE

Proportion is the relationship of sizes between different parts of a work.

For example, how wide it is compared to how tall it is. Some proportions, such as the golden ratio and the rule of thirds, are thought to be more naturally pleasing.

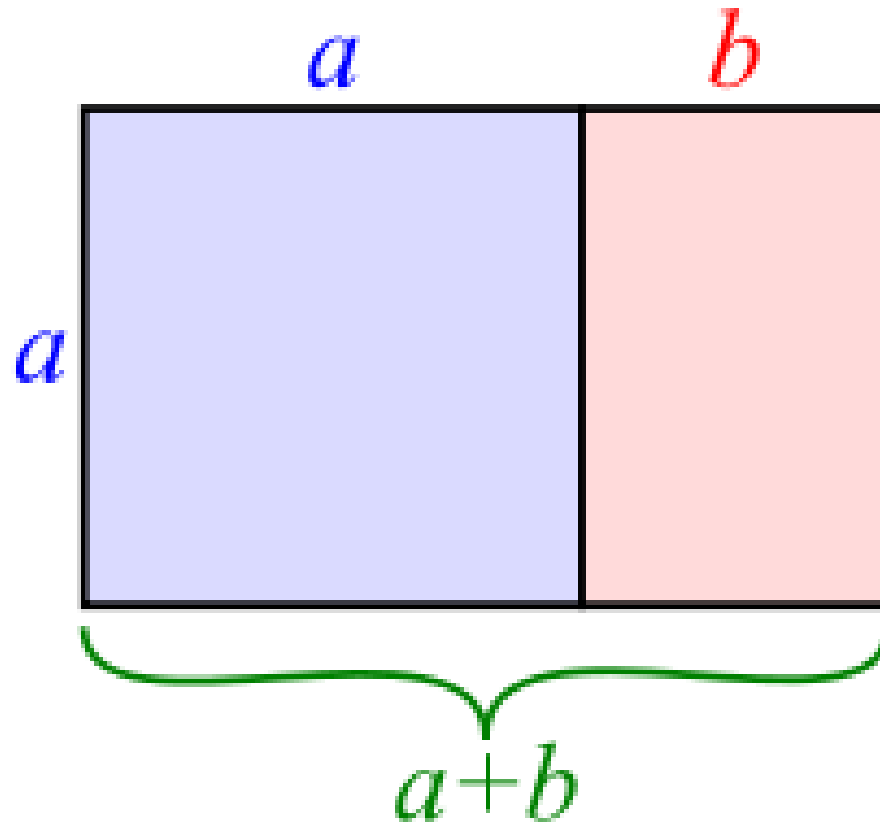
Scale is the size of something compared to the world in general.

The Golden Ratio, Section, Spiral



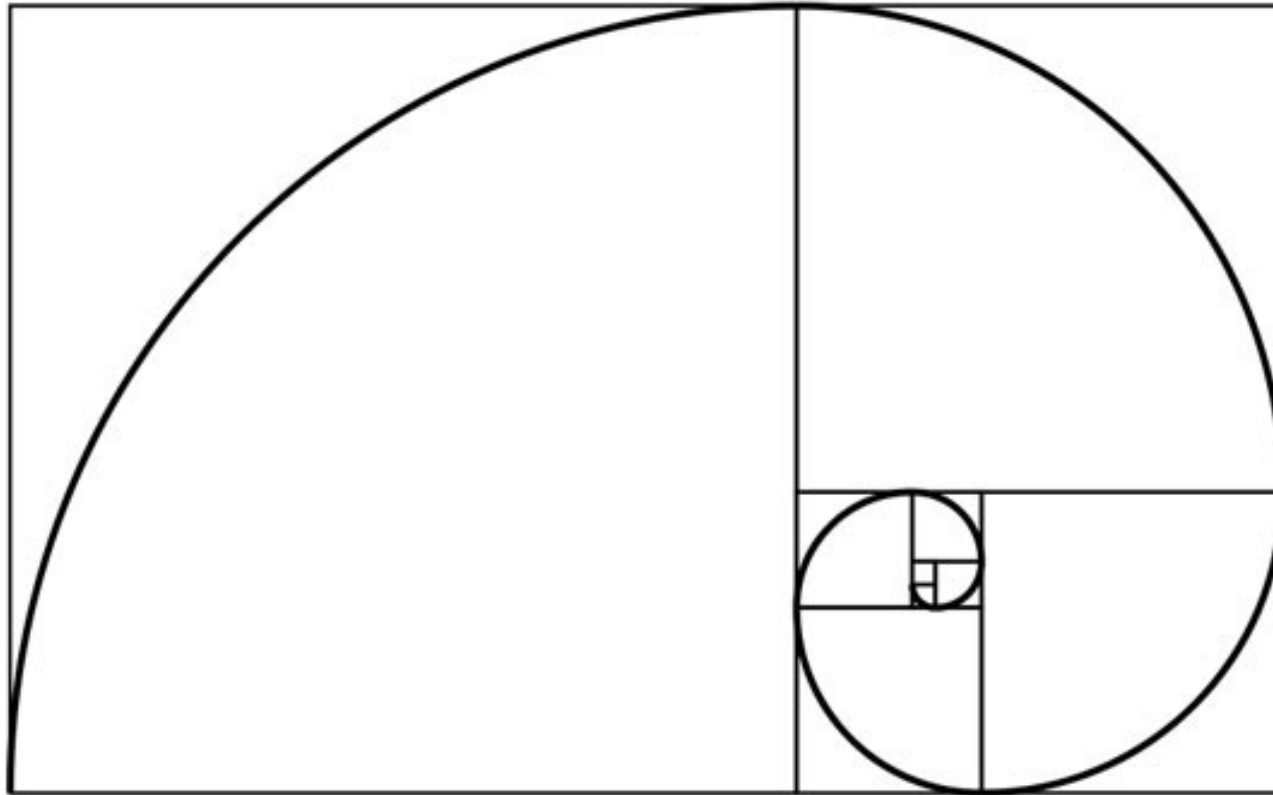
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Rule of Thirds



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The guideline proposes that an image should be imagined as divided into nine equal parts by two equally spaced horizontal lines and two equally spaced vertical lines, and that important compositional elements should be placed along these lines or their intersections.

Proponents of the technique claim that aligning a subject with these points creates more tension, energy and interest in the composition than simply centering the subject

Principles of Organization: DOMINANCE, EMPHASIS and FOCAL POINT

Emphasis is created by visually reinforcing something we want the viewer to pay attention to. Focal points are areas of interest the viewer's eyes skip to. The strongest focal point with the greatest visual weight is the dominant element of the work.

Dominance

Isolation - By separating the subject from other distracting elements and placing it against a plain background, the viewer is left with nothing else to focus on.

Leading Lines and Convergence - A line, arrow, or similar triangular or elongated element can indicate a direction and point towards something, leading the eye in that direction.

Contrast - The more strongly something contrasts with its surroundings, the easier it is to see and the more energy it will seem to have. Strong contrast in value, color, etc. can make elements "pop."

Anomaly - A single square in a repeating pattern of circles will stand out - it's not like everything else, it doesn't blend in, it breaks the pattern.

Principles of Organization: MOVEMENT

Using art elements to direct a viewer's eye along a path through the artwork, and/or to show movement, action and direction.

Also, giving some elements the ability to be moved or move on their own, via internal or external power.

Principles of Organization: ECONOMY

Very often, as a work develops, the artist will find that the solutions to various visual problems result in unnecessary complexity.

Economy has no rules but rather must be an outgrowth of the artist's instincts. If something works with respect to the whole, it is kept; if disruptive, it may be reworked or rejected.

Principles of Organization: HARMONY and UNITY

Harmonious elements have a logical relationship or progression - in some way they work together and complement each other.

When a jarring element is added - something that goes against the whole - it is said to be *dissonant*, just like an off-note in a musical performance.

Unity is created by using harmonious similarity and repetition, continuance, proximity and alignment, and closure of design elements in different parts of the work so that the parts RELATE to each other and create a unified whole.

Principles of Organization: REPETITION, RHYTHM and PATTERN

Repeating art elements in regular or cyclical fashion to create interest, movement, and/or harmony and unity.

Rhythms can be random, regular, alternating, flowing, and progressive.

Classes of pattern include mosaics, lattices, spirals, meanders, waves, symmetry and fractals, among others.

Principles of Organization: VARIETY and VARIATION

Using a range of different qualities or instances of an art element to create a desired visual effect - e.g., a variety of shapes, colors, etc.

Variety can add interest and break the monotony of simple repetitions.