

Classical Compositions in American Art

- I. Compositions : more and greater than reality, has objective rules of order and effect, that subject to cultural influence.
 - A. African Art - What is it composition? Why not depict reality (3 heads)
 - 1. Ingres - the softening of the form for compositional effect
 - 2. El Greco - mannerisms/ directional compositions
 - 3. Rubens - Sumptuousness of the flesh makes it beautiful and controls the viewer's eye movement.
 - B. Obj. Mayan
 - 1. Golden ratio swirl general proportions
 - 2. Church parthenon
 - 3. Palladio
 - a) "...the length and breadth of the room being known, we will find a number that has the same proportion to the breadth as the length has to the number sought.....if the place we intend to vault is nine feet long and four feet wide, the height will be six feet"
 - 4. Tiepolo - this is incredible, check this out!
 - 5. James Gurney art heatmap
 - C. Cultural - Chinese symbolism (white and black) as well as more ingrained
 - 1. Liu Songnian
 - 2. Tiepolo
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- II. Classical Compositions in the European tradition, and we will try to focus on works that are of the seventeenth century and older, and it goes without saying that when we do get to the American Painters themselves, we will be looking at them through the lens of these classical compositional techniques.
 - A. Golden ration - partitions
 - 1. Go through a solid black square
 - 2. Examples - caravaggio
 - 3. rembrandt
 - B. Rule of thirds
 - 1. Another mathematical fact is that odd primes are more engaging.
 - 2. Vermeer
 - 3. Velasquez
 - 4. Franz Hals
 - C. Up down left to right (though this effect is totally cultural, we will examine examples that are demonstrably of the European culture--the direction of left to right--in preparation for American examination)

1. Blockers: the triangle in the corner that re-directs the viewer
2. Vermeer
3. Michaelangelo
4. Ruben
5. All the blockers

III. American Art

A. Winslow Homer (3)

1. Brief life description
2. Golden ration
3. Rule of thirds
4. Up down left to right.
 - a) blockers

B. N.C. Wyeth (3)

1. Brief life description
2. Golden ration
3. Rule of thirds
4. Up down left to right.
 - a) blockers

C. Norman Rockwell (3)

1. Brief life description
2. Golden ration
3. Rule of thirds
4. Up down left to right.
 - a) Blocker

Discussion time.