

MANDATORY ASSIGNMENT 01: PHOTOGRAPHY

INTRODUCTION

The first real Mandatory Assignment we were given was also the one we finished last, so for a few months I have brought my camera out with me quite a lot in order to get the perfect shots for the 10 topics we were given. I tried challenging myself in terms of shooting both inside and outside, as well as in both daylight and at night time. Finally, composition and an interesting element or object were important details for me to consider every time I went out.

Message/Achieved Action

Out of my final 10 photos, I chose the categories Drawing With Light, Freeze Water, and Golden Section for my final three images.

Photo 1: Drawing With Light - f14 - 5 sec - ISO 100 - Focal Length 50

Photo 2: Freeze Water - f4 - 1/250 - ISO 160 - Focal Length 50

Photo 3: Golden Section - f29 - 1,6 sec - ISO 100 - Focal Length 105

RESEARCH AND WORK PROCESS

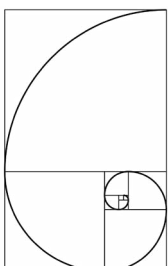
Before I started taking photos for this assignments, I decided to put some main *key words up on my blog*, as well as creating moodboards and a few notes on my ideas in relation to all the 10 different topics we needed to explore.

Coming Up With Ideas

I didn't do any sketches for this assignment, as I rather prefer bringing my camera with me somewhere and do the "sketches" through the camera, always looking around and trying to find nice and interesting compositions.

Equipment - For this assignment I used a Nikon D7000. I also used an external flash when there wasn't very much light available, and a remote control when I had a long shutter to avoid any shaking when pressing the buttons. As for lenses, I used a *Nikon AS-S Nikkor 18-105 mm 1:3.5-5.6G*, and a *Nikon AF-S Nikkor 50 mm 1:1.4G*.

My 10 Photos - I have put the 10 photos for the topics Contrasts, Curves & Lines, Depth, Drawing With Light, Freeze Water, Golden Section, High Key, Misty/Veil, Motion and Night Photo on *my blog here*.

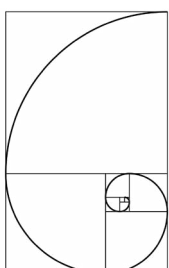
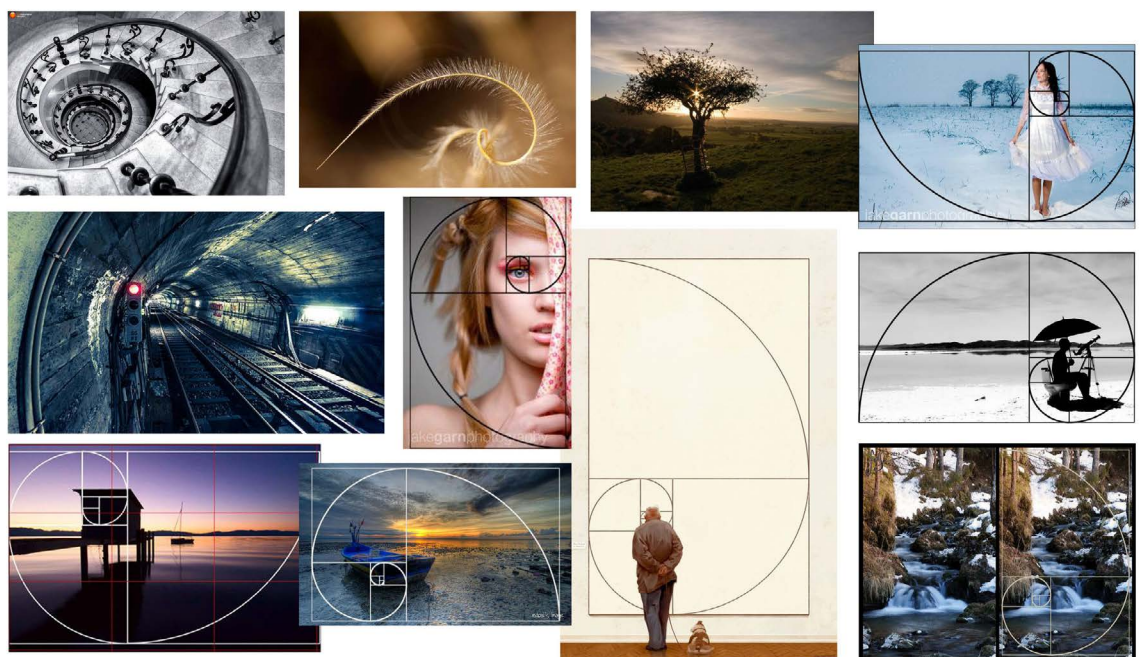


Freeze Water - Good light is essential when trying to freeze water, as you need a very fast shutter speed. So before trying to shoot this photo, I made sure I was in a well lit room, and did my best to get a rather clean and bright background. My external flash also came in handy here, as this helped me avoid getting much noise in the photo because of a high ISO. I have always been thinking about trying to capture something falling into a glass of water like in the example with the lemons, so I quickly decided I might try and do this for this topic.

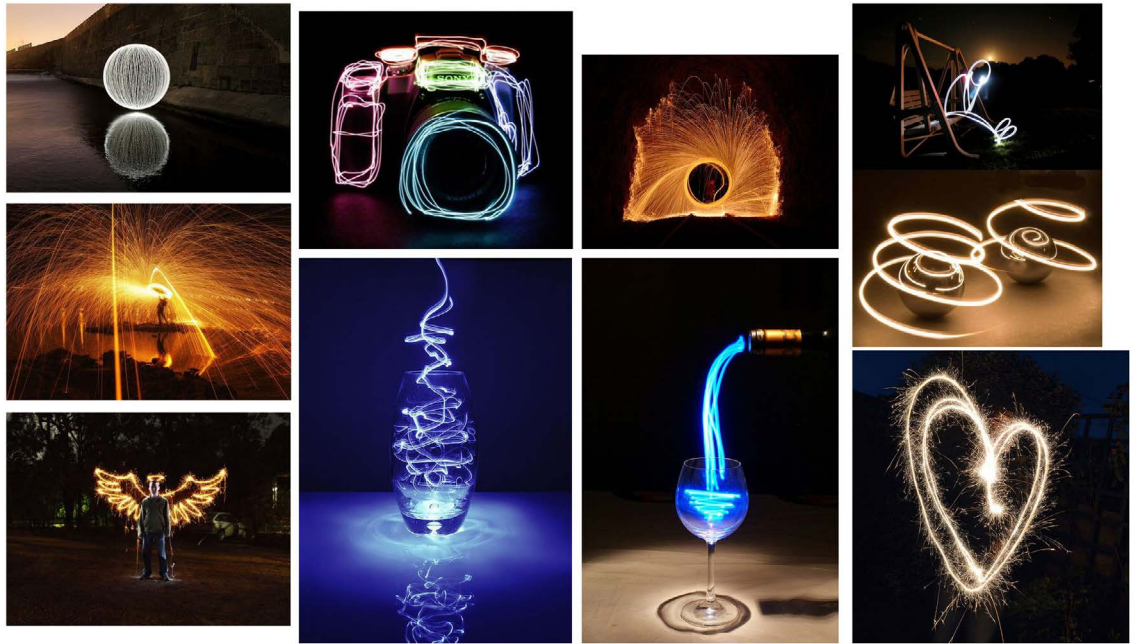


Golden Section - A good composition is always nice to see in photographs. Ever since I was told about it in my photography class a few years ago, I've seen the rule of thirds everywhere.

To quote *Zhamkov.com*: "Objects containing "golden section" are regarded as the most balanced. That was the proportion which famous painters referred to when they chose canvas. (...) In our mind we divide a frame into three parts horizontally and vertically. At the crosses we place the main objects of the picture."



Drawing With Light - The main idea here is to have a long shutter speed, to have time to draw with light. Using a torch and playing around in the dark seemed like a fun way to go about this. I also thought what I found online with the glasses seemed really cool, and tried doing this myself.



DESIGN CHOICES

Drawing With Light

Settings - f14 - 5 sec - ISO 100 - Focal Length 50

Elements - An empty bottle and a torch

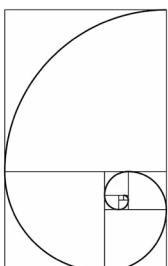
Composition - Portrait orientated picture, with a front view perspective

Contrasts/Colours - Image with quite high contrasts, and the colours black, white and green dominate

This photograph was taken in a dark room, and with a rather dark background to avoid any elements that may disturb the photo. The bottle was placed on a table, and the camera on a tripod. I then used a long shutter speed (5 seconds), and using a remote control, I moved my torch from above the bottle and to the bottom whilst taking the photo.



The focus is on the bottle - the element - itself, and despite all the lines from the label, I believe it's a rather clean image with a good focus point. It's also interesting to look at, as the lines (from the torch, the label and even the edge of the bottle) sort of guide the eye around the frame.



I think the photograph itself is very interesting to look at, and because of what is still left of the bottle's label, I even think the whole image kind of reminds me of the movie *The Matrix*. The colour green also helps emphasize this, and is something I find very interesting about this photograph.

If I were to change anything with this photo, I think I would try to make the bottle look even sharper by adjusting the aperture a tiny bit. However, I really like the way the torch made the whole bottle look almost a little magical. The colour green makes the whole image stand out a little.

Freeze Water

Settings - f4 - 1/250 - ISO 160 - Focal Length 50

Elements - A glass, water and strawberries

Composition - Portrait orientated picture, with a front view perspective

Contrasts/Colours - Image without too much contrasts, but the colours red and blue create an interesting dynamic. These colours against the white wall also make it more contrasty

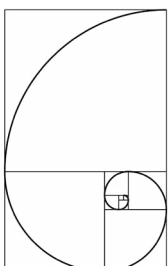
I shot this photograph in a bright room, but since I needed a quick shutter to freeze the water, I also used an external flash for more light. This allowed me to have a shutter of 1/250, which I think was enough. Placing my camera on a tripod, I did about 50 shots, repeatedly dropping a strawberry into the glass filled with water.



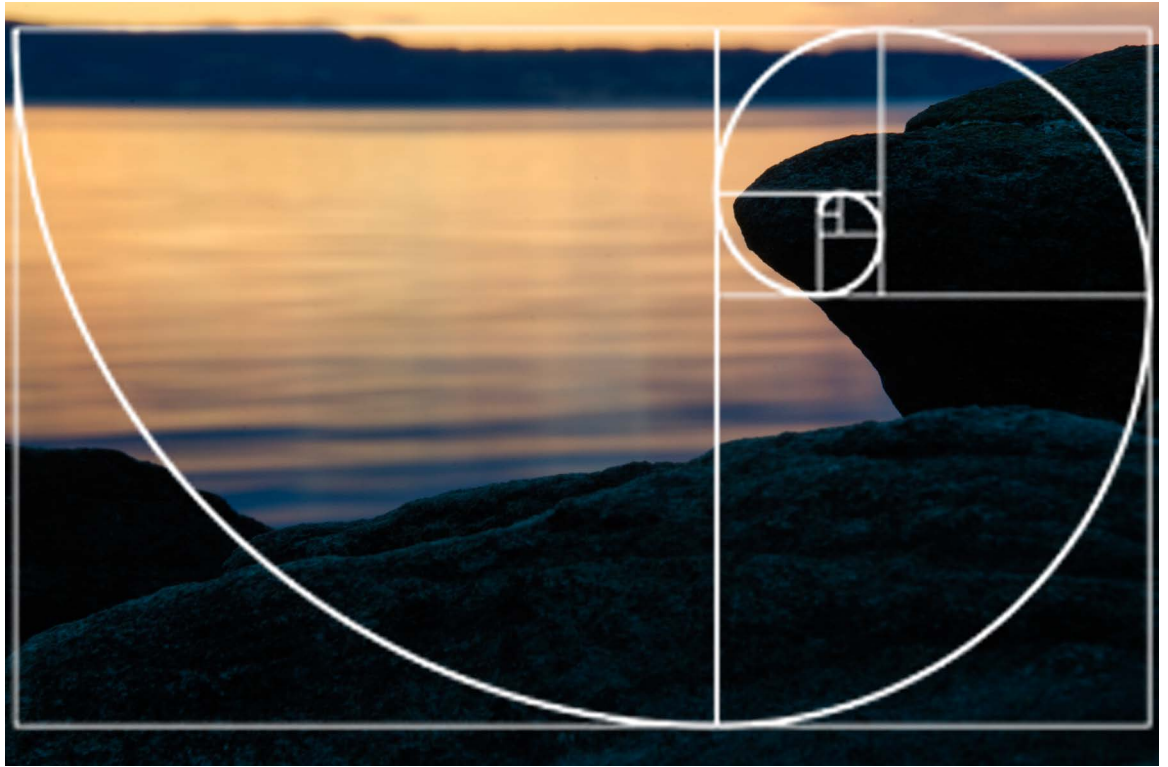
My focus point in this image was the glass and the water inside, but pretty much all the elements are in focus. Since the whole photo is rather clean, there is also no confusion as to what is the element in focus here. And even though the wall itself may be a little busy with its texture, I believe this makes the image itself more interesting: these are all organic shapes, which I believe work well with water.

What fascinate me the most with this photograph are the pretty much perfectly circled drops that you can see both in front of the glass, as well as a bit up and to the right. I also like how some of the water hits the table, as this first of all creates an interesting shape, and also shows how quick the shutter was. The colours are also something I find very nice, as they work well together.

I'm rather happy with the way this photo eventually turned out, but if I had to improve it, I would probably try to avoid getting that line separating the wall and the table, as this annoys me a little. Other than that, I'm happy with the composition and contrasts.



Golden Section



Settings - f29 - 1,6 sec - ISO 100 - Focal Length 105

Elements - Rocks in front of water

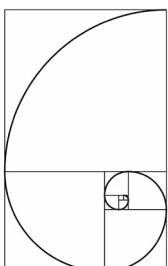
Composition - Landscape orientated, with a front view perspective

Contrasts/Colours - Image with quite a lot of contrasts between the rocks and the water, and with beautiful colours that give the photo a nice mood.

Setting up my camera right before sunset, I was able to capture some really nice moments as the sun disappeared over the horizon. Even though this was shot during the summer, it was a little dark outside when I took this, which means I needed a longer shutter speed. So I had my tripod and remote control with me - and with a shutter of 1,6 seconds I found a well balanced exposure.

I didn't want a very narrow depth of field for this photo, and thus set my aperture to f29, even though my main focus were the rocks in the front. This made the water look even more calm and relaxing, which is something I think is a nice quality for a sunset photo.

I like the whole mood in this photograph, as I think it captures sunsets very well. I also like the way I did the focus, and especially this being what I chose for my Golden Section image, I think the whole composition itself is very relaxing and comfortable to look at. There are also some interesting lines here I believe, and these guide the eye through the composition.



If I were to shoot this photo again, I would probably try to either have more time before the sun actually went down and try to capture that as well, and probably stay even longer, until a point where I could have an even longer shutter speed and have the water more blurry than it is here. However, with an aperture of f29 and my ISO at its lowest, I couldn't let the exposure be too much longer before the whole image would have become too bright.

SELF EVALUATION

Reflection around finished product

All in all I think the three photos I have chosen for my final submission all work very well. The compositions are nice, and I believe I have been able to work with the topics. My Drawing With Light photo does what it is meant to, and this is something I achieved by using a long shutter. I also froze water by using a fast shutter, and managed to capture the water whilst splashing. And finally, my Golden Section photograph fits with the golden ratio and is a relaxing and comfortable image.

I don't think there is too much with any of the three final images I would change, apart from what I have earlier mentioned.

Development and Process

I made sure I spread out the topics over several weeks, so that I was able to work with the assignment over the whole semester. This way I have had the chance to photograph different times of the year, and I have tried being outside both at night time and in bright daylight.

Photography is an art form I don't think anyone will ever be 100% perfect in, and at times you'll miss out on the perfect shot - I probably did the day I was out taking photos near the water, as there was some lightning that night. However, I think it's all about dealing with what you have, and make the most out of it - and utilising all the functions of the camera the best one can.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

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