VIRTUAL SESSION

THRESHOLD EXERCISE



THE ART OF ATTENTION, CONFLICT AND COLLABORATION

Walking, 1958, oil on canvas by Charles Henry Alston



Charles Henry Alston (1907–1977), Walking, 1958, oil on canvas, 48 x 64 in., © Charles Alston Estate Collection of National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Sydney Smith Gordon, TR2007-4



4 PRINCIPLES OF ABSTRACT COMPOSITION

THE RULE OF THIRDS

The center of interest, should be placed in the intersection between imaginary lines that cross the picture into thirds, both vertically and horizontally.

DIAGONAL THRUST

A painting is seemingly more attractive and draws more focus if the elements on it are placed diagonally, rather than on the simpler composition of vertical or horizontal.

EACH CORNER UNIQUE

As the name suggests, this rule simply entails that each corner of a strong painting will be different.

STRONG VALUE COMPOSITION

The most important principle: employing strong value composition means utilizing a variation of colors and elements in your painting.

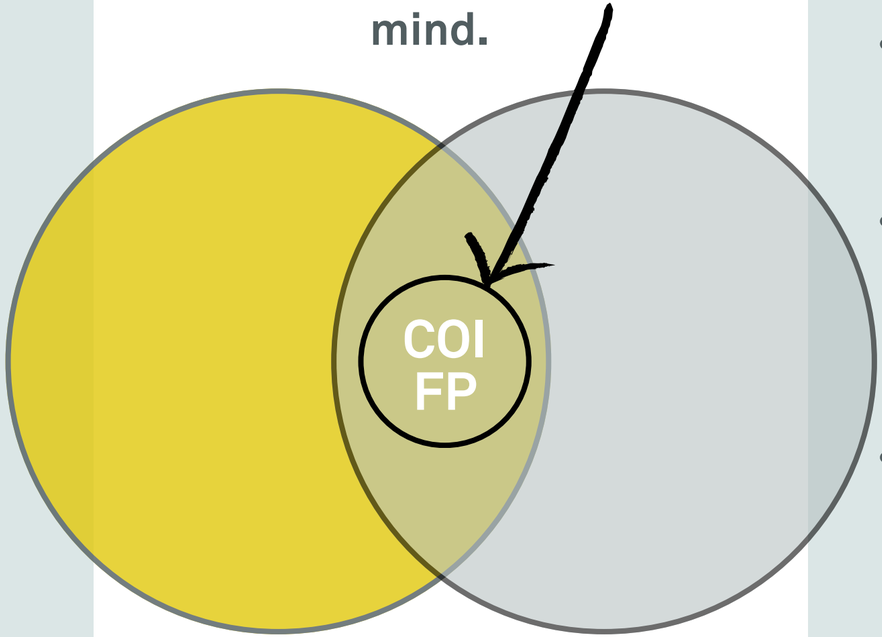
2 KEY ELEMENTS IN COMPOSITION

Center of Interest

The part of the picture which attracts the mind

- The “attention getter”
- Commands the viewer’s curiosity and is the part we find naturally fascinating and want to know more about.
- Examples are eyes and faces, the human figure, animals, letters, symbols, etc.
- As we scan for the first time, we’re drawn here.

For a picture to be successful, the center of interest should also be a focal point: one area that attracts both the eye & mind.



Focal Point

The part of the picture which attracts the eye

- The “visual magnet”
- Strong tonal value contrast (light vs. dark) is the most powerful eye magnet.
- Bright colors, fine detail, sharp edges, anomalies, patterns and any arrow-like “pointers” also attract.
- Any part of a picture that exhibits these features will make the viewer focus his gaze upon it.









