

the ANATOMY OF A GREAT LANDSCAPE

BY RAY SALISBURY

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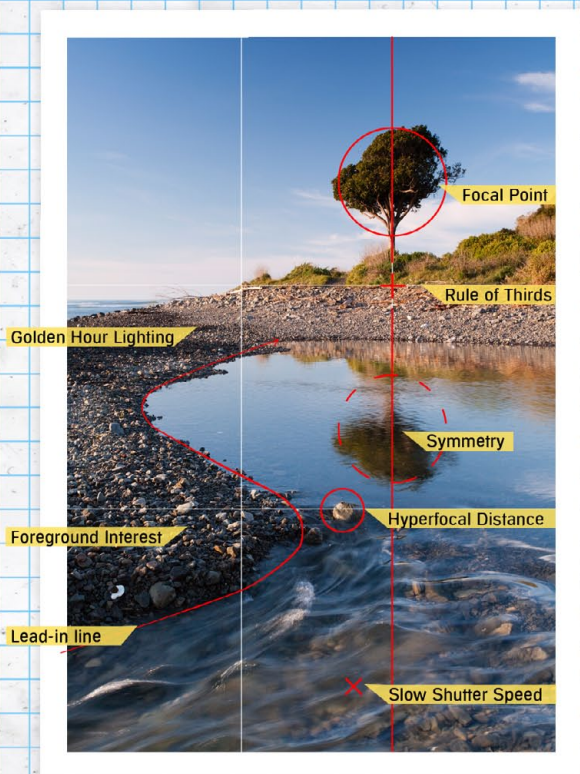
Slow Shutter Speed H

Camera: Canon EOS 5D MarkII. **Settings:** Aperture Priority | f/16 | 1.5 seconds | ISO 100 | 40mm focal length

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LEGEND

A Golden Hour Lighting

By definition, photography is all about light. Half of a successful landscape photo is in prior planning; checking the tide tables, the weather forecast, and sunset times. The magic hour before dusk is dubbed The Golden Hour, as the softer, diffused side-lighting is best for giving 3D form to an object (and the shadows are longer.)

B Foreground Interest

Provide the viewer with something to lock their eyes onto, before scanning the scene. Having a foreground, mid-ground, then a background creates the illusion of depth.

C Lead-in line

Lines are handy devices to create depth and direction. These visual guides can help the viewer's eye to navigate through your composition, finally arriving at a focal point.

D Focal Point

What is your photograph about? Is it a person, or a landmark? Choose a single object, then craft your photo around this solitary focal point.

E Rule of Thirds

Place your main subject on an intersection of the 3x3 grid. Here, the lone tree is positioned two thirds of the distance across the frame.

F Symmetry

Having an object mirrored in the calm lagoon adds a sense of tranquility and balance to the scene.

G Hyperfocal Distance

Focus your camera about one third of the distance into the scene. This is called the hyper-focal distance, and will help you get all the elements in your photograph pin sharp.

H Slow Shutter Speed

Lock down your camera on a sturdy tripod, using a cable release so you don't bump it. Now, all static objects in the scene will be tack sharp. To show the passage of time, employ a slower shutter speed.

In this image, 1.5 seconds was enough to blur the water as it emptied from Oaro Lagoon into the Tasman Sea.

ABOUT

Not a morning person, I set an alarm to wake me on this rather frigid winter morning. I drove my car for 20 minutes to a place I had spotted on the map. After some time scouting, I noticed the potential for this composition.

While this photo is not perfect (it lacks the element of mood), it does well to illustrate a wide range of compositional techniques.

Would you like to learn more? Enroll in my Composition Course. Click the graphic below:



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