



A seemingly random but actually very well thought out composition. My white dots highlight the underlying thinking – simple but effective

nepalese silk dyes mark davidson

Canon EOS 300D, 27mm, 1/200sec at f/5.6, ISO 200

Here's a subtle image from Mark Davidson, of London, which he captured on a trip to Nepal. This is just the kind of picture I am always advising students to get in the bag, along with the general views. They are easy to forget but bring the viewer closer to the subject for a more rounded view of the location that contains all-important texture.

They are often a little abstract, but if you look at the underlying composition you can see how carefully this has been thought out. The central section fits well into the frame – tight side-to-side and a little more room at the bottom than the top. It's not slavish to those rules, though, so it doesn't look contrived.

It's an excellent example of how rules, absorbed and then used unconsciously, can lead to elegant pictures like this one. Being too conscious of those rules can lead to rather wooden look so, as usual, lots of practice makes perfect.



original

horizon



edited

swans ian bygrave

Canon Sure Shot AF-7, Kodacolor 100 ISO

Sloping horizons can be quite a problem, as AP's letters page recently explored, and sometimes it's not entirely clear where the horizon is within the frame. The sea is a useful, but not always fool-proof, arbiter of level. Fortunately, this image has a few other clues to the fact that it has a wonky horizon. The posts, visible in the mid-distance, are another helpful guide, and I have chosen to align the image using those as a guide.

Ian described himself as inexperienced, but there is a clever use of a frame here, which draws attention towards a distant subject. Just imagine how insignificant this group of swans might appear in a similar shot without the trees in the foreground. In the absence of a telephoto lens, this is a good technique in that it provides a frame within a frame. I'm not even sure that if had Ian used a longer lens the picture would be as memorable.

A good use of framing to emphasise a distant subject