



Seilebost beach, Isle of Harris, Outer Hebrides, Scotland

A matter of flow

walking through the image

Most images have a sense of flow. The eye is directed through the scene like a leaf floating down a river. There is a current at play.

I know this because I now look for flow in any landscape I encounter on my travels.

We often make images of a landscape because we think it's beautiful, but I often find myself making an image because I've found a sense of flow in the scene before me. Flow can aid an image and is often considered a 'device' to help add some impact to the photograph.

But it can also be the reason for the photograph too.

Whilst shooting on the Isle of Harris with a photographic workshop group, we had some very windy weather and dramatic light. I wanted to convey the sense of movement and drama in my photograph, so I deliberately looked for a scene at hand that had a sense of flow to it.

I'm a sucker for curves in a landscape. The sweeping arc of the sandy beach gives me a very simple but effective way into the scene.

I'm then drawn through the scene by the sea and the bright horizon. I find my eye escaping out of the

scene via the movement of the clouds in the top right hand side (see *figure a*).

So to recap, I enter at the bottom left of the scene and feel myself exit in the top right hand side of the frame. I'm flowing diagonally from left to right.

The top and bottom areas of the scene are pretty static. They have no flow to them. They're also devoid of any interest either because they are dark or because there is little texture (see *figure b*).

There's a sense of balance between these two dead areas. The top left dead space compliments the

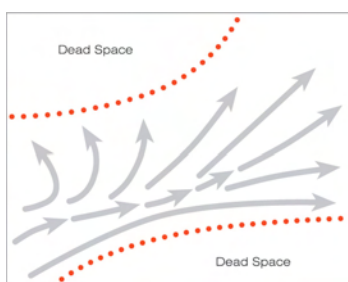


Figure b

Flow with balancing dead space

bottom right dead space. They're diagonally opposite each other.

We could in effect draw a cross in the image. We have dead space going from top left to bottom right, while we have flow going from bottom left to top right.

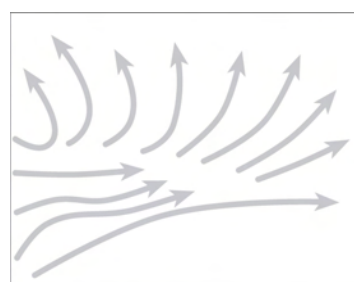


Figure a

Flow through the scene

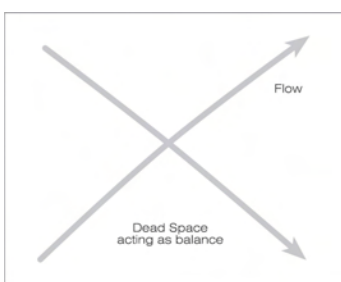


Figure c

The image is balanced in two diagonal directions