

Marquetry Matters



The Quarterly Newsletter of

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2019

IN MEMORIAM



Editorial

Firstly, my apologies for the lateness of this production which was scheduled for the end of June. At that time my wife Barbara passed away, after a twelve month battle with cancer – she lost! However life must go on and I have decided to dedicate this issue to her in remembrance of the great assistance that she gave us as a fellow member years ago, if only for a short time.

When I met Barb (as she has always been known) in 1979 she had already established herself as one of Victoria's leading women artists, painting mainly in oils. We, as the MS of V, had only been going since 1977 and were still at the fledgling stage when Barb came along and injected some art into the craft. She joined me at a few demonstrations and, before long, decided to have a go herself. The rest, as they say, is history! However, for the time that she was with us she injected such energy and enthusiasm for the work that it was inspiring to have her amongst us.

A couple of her productions are included herewith but how many others she did in those early days I do not know. But I do know that there was a Red Indian head complete with feather headdress, only half-finished mind you, lurking around somewhere that I was not allowed to touch. It hasn't surfaced yet!

Regrettably Barb decided to go back to painting with the comment: "Marquetry takes too long"! Discovering pastels a few months later, Barb went on to create some magnificent work in this medium which has since been acclaimed world-wide. Check out her website under the name of Barbara Beasley Southgate. Beware, however, of the process of it being updated as this may cause some temporary delay,

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Ex Member News – Continuing a Tribute to Barb



The fun of selection is obvious!



Remember the "Life Be In It" campaign?



4th AGM 1981 at Warrandyte

Got a Minute or Two (Designed to keep the members informed who are unable to get to the meetings)

Just a reminder that the Xmas Competition & Show theme this year is “sport”. Otherwise much correspondence of a commercial nature and one enquiry for membership has kept the Hon. Sec busy!

Dates for Your Diaries

Melbourne Timber Tools and Artisan Show 23rd-25th August

Warratina Lavender Farm Woodworking Exhibition 31st August to 13th September, 2019.

2019 Royal Show Saturday 21st September to Tuesday 1st October.

Something for the Internet Types / Miscellaneous Internet Links

Richard Sorsky of Linden Publishing, Inc. 2006 S. Mary, Fresno, CA 93721 (richard@lindenpub.com) contacted us recently alerting us to the existence of the [Woodworking Books Catalog](#). It is well worth looking at. Amongst the plethora of subjects, including woodworking, woodturning, furniture-making, woodcarving, door-making, etc. is one entry for a marquetry book: Ken Horner’s “Basic marquetry and beyond”. Whoopee, marquetry gets a mention!

News from other Societies**The Marquetry Society**

I have run out of time to review in this issue the latest two Marquetarians that we have received.

I’ll try and do so next time. In the meantime, just to whet your appetite here are the two contents lists, 266 being the Spring 2019 edition and 267 the Summer 2019 edition:

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The American Marquetry Society

Spring 2017 appears to be the last issue of this great newsletter that I have reviewed and I am somewhat shame-faced to admit it! Somehow time and /or space tend to dictate the contents of MM and the AMS has paid the price – my sincere apologies to Irena Petsche. However I appear to have not got some of the later editions in my system, yet I feel that I have in fact received them. There’s obviously a bit of research to be done before I can ‘put pen to paper’ on this subject! Again, my apologies to Irena – we will be in touch!

Technical Article

I am including the following article by Dave Peck (US AMS) which just happened to surface on my desk recently. It nicely adds to the ‘bringing the art to the craft’ concept described earlier as one of Barb’s main attributes. But where it came from I have no idea! Maybe it was found amongst Barb’s effects but the synchronicity of it appearing is interesting to say the least!

Using The Golden Mean and The Rule of Thirds by Dave Peck

As marquetarians we often look for ways to make our pictures better. For a moment let's simplify things as far as possible. Fig. 1 shows a straight line. We want to make it more interesting. The question is how? One way is to add a focal point. Again simplifying things, let's add a dot along that line. Adding a dot gives the eye a place to focus thereby making the line more interesting.

Placing the dot in the exact center of the line makes the line more interesting but it still lacks something. Fig 2 shows how the dot in the middle makes a very static, balanced, uninteresting line.

Now let's move that dot to one side or the other. In Fig 3 things start to get interesting. Our eye jumps back and forth to determine which of the sides is bigger. How much bigger? Which end is the heaviest? Is the balance point at the dot and the long end the heaviest or is the balance in the middle and the side with the dot the heaviest?

Placing the dot away from the center clearly makes the line more interesting, but where is the perfect place to put the dot? This article is about two systems that can help solve that question. First I will discuss the "Golden Mean." I'll show you how to find it and give examples of how to use it. I'll also show you a variation of the Golden Mean that is helpful in determining the "best" dimensions for a rectangular picture. The second part of the article will be on the "Rule of Thirds." Here again I'll explain what it is and give examples of how to use it. Then in conclusion I'll compare the two methods and reemphasize the importance of keeping the focal point away from the exact center of the picture.

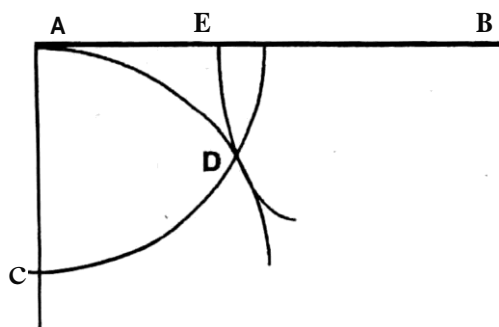
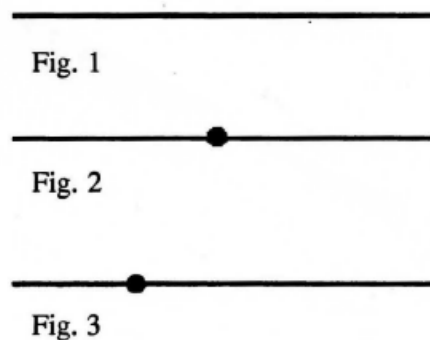


Fig. 4



The Golden Mean

Through the ages many people have tried to find the perfect proportions for abstract shapes. Over 2000 years ago the ancient Greeks spent considerable time looking for the "perfect visual relationship" set out in the question above. They felt that they had indeed found it in the golden mean.

Here is how the Greeks would divide a line into two parts to get the most interesting visual relationship. See Fig 4 to follow along with the description. Make a line of any length that you want. Label one end A and the other B. Find the center of the line and swing an arc using A as the center and the mid-point of the line to determine the radius. Extend this arc till it intersects a perpendicular line through point A. We will call this point C. Using the same radius swing an arc using the intersection C as the center. Label this intersection D. Now swing an arc from D back to the original line using B as the center. Point E, where this last arc intersects the line, is the ideal place to divide the line. This is also an ideal place to put a focal point. For example, you have a fence running across your picture and you want to put in a gate. The Golden Mean as described above would be one way to go about locating the best place for the gate. See Fig. 5.

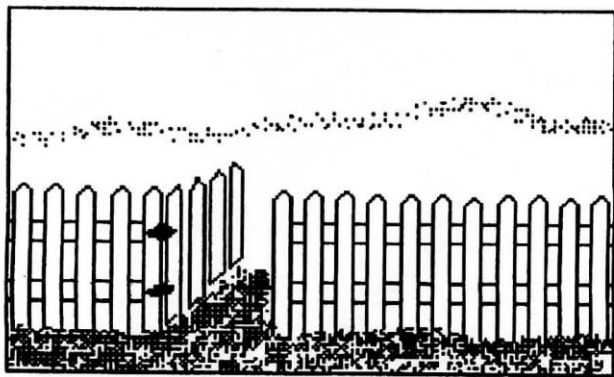


Fig. 5

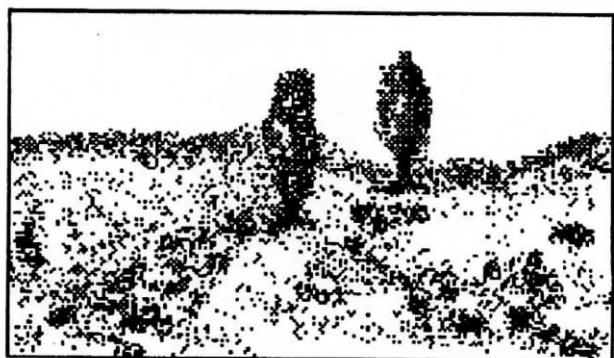


Fig. 6

Another application could be in deciding where to place a tree on the horizon line as seen in Fig 6. Put your finger over the tree on the right. Then put it over the tree in the middle. Which version do you like the best? It doesn't even have to be a line that you are dividing. Maybe it is an area. Say three men are standing in a group each separated from one another. To have the men exactly the same distance apart would not be the most interesting positioning. You could use the Golden Mean to determine just where to put the middle figure as shown in Fig 7.

While we are talking about areas, this is a good time to talk about using the Golden Mean to determine the overall dimensions for a picture. A square picture is fine but a rectangular format is often better.

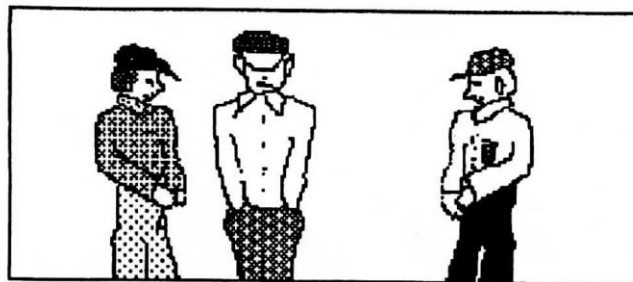


Fig. 7

The Greeks used the Golden Mean to come up with what they considered the perfect format. To construct the Golden Mean rectangle we must first decide how big we want the shorter side. See Fig 8. We will call this the base size and label it B. Now we make a square with sides equal to B. On one of the sides we find the midpoint. Using the midpoint as the center swing an arc that intersects one of the far corners of the square. Where this arc intersects the baseline gives the long side of the Golden Mean rectangle. For those of you who are into math, the long side of the rectangle is 1.618 times as long as the short side.

The Rule of Thirds

The Rule of Thirds is a technique used by photographers to make their pictures more interesting. Again this is a system that puts the focal point somewhere away from the center of the picture.

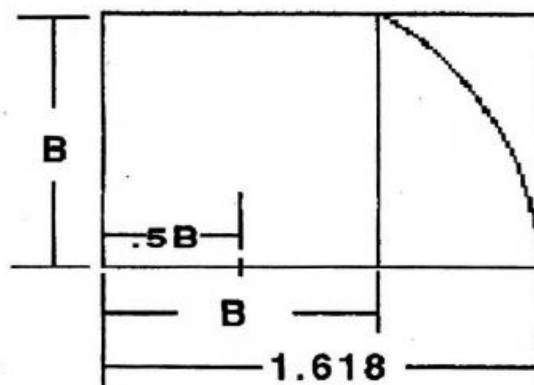


Fig. 8

In this system the focal point is placed at a point one third of the way in from an edge and 1/3 from the top (or bottom). For example, in Fig.9 the house has been placed 1/3 in from the right and 1/3 down from the top. This makes a better picture than having the house in the very center of the picture as in Fig 10.

As a continuation of this rule it is best to put the horizon (skyline) at one of the 1/3 positions. For a ground level view this would mean placing the horizon at the lower 1/3 position. For a view from a bridge or some other elevated position, place the horizon on the upper 1/3 position. Avoid the center and the one quarter positions. Fig. 11 is an example of what not to do under the rule of thirds. Don't place things dead center or on quarter of the way into the picture. If the 1/3 position isn't good try 1/5 rather than 1/4.

Fig. 12 shows a comparison between the two systems. Notice that the Golden Mean centers things a little more than the rule of thirds but they both achieve the goal of keeping the focal point(s) away from the center of the picture. A person should not feel tied into one system or the other. The object you will be placing in the picture will be much bigger than the exact point as defined above. In other words you have some room to fudge. Therefore, either system works as does "eyeballing". Try a layout. If it doesn't look right try another. If you still don't like the look try another. Should nothing work you can try one of the systems and just leave it like that overnight. The next day things may look better.

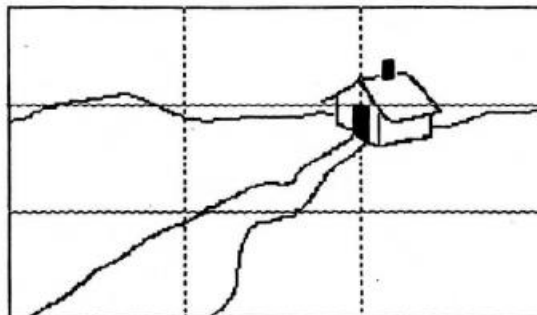


Fig. 9

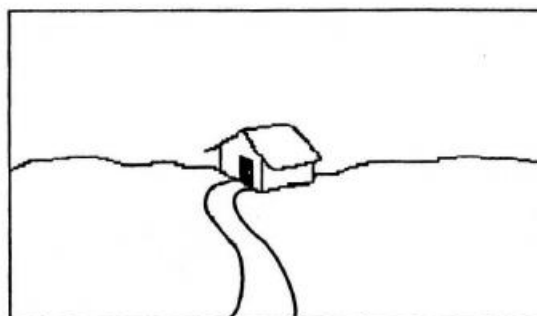


Fig. 10

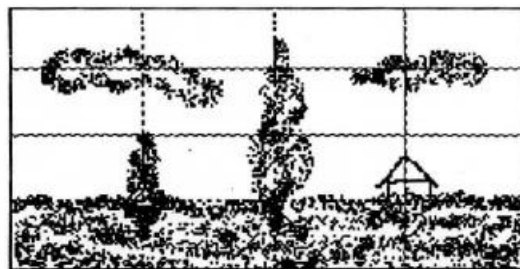


Fig. 11

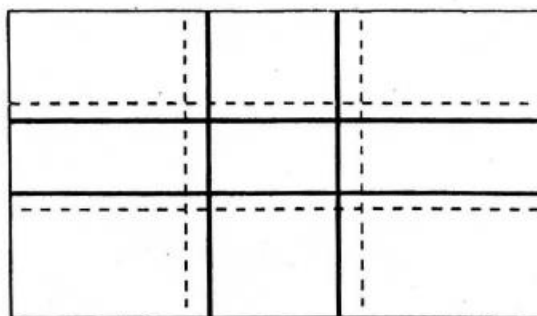


Fig. 12

Rule of thirds
Golden Mean

**THE MARQUETRY SOCIETY OF VICTORIA
INC**

The aim of our non-profit Society is to promote and foster interest in the art and craft of marquetry.

Meetings are held at the
Box Hill Community Arts Centre,
Cnr. Combarton and Station Streets, Box Hill,
Melways 47 D11

on the fourth Saturday of the month, 12.30pm to
3.30pm with hands-on workshops on the second
Saturday of the month, same times.

Hands-on workshops are also held on Tuesday
afternoon of each week, 1pm to 3pm, at the
Scout Hall, Cnr. Edith Street and Heathmont Road,
Heathmont. Melways 50-A11

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MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY

Direct all enquires to the Secretary.
An annual membership fee of \$40 and a
joining fee of \$6 apply.

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MEETING & WORKSHOP DATES

coming up

SATURDAY 12.30 to 3.30 P.M.

@ BOX HILL

| | |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| Workshop | 10 th August |
| Meeting | 24 th August |
| Workshop | 14 th September |
| Meeting | 28 th September |
| Workshop | 12 th October |
| Meeting | 26 th October |
| Xmas Break-up | TBA |