CHOOSING IMBALANCE IN YOUR COMPOSITION

Using **imbalance** (or intentional unbalance) in an image is a deliberate creative choice that breaks traditional rules of symmetry to guide the viewer's eye, evoke specific emotions, or tell a stronger story.

Why Use Imbalance?

- **Create Tension and Unease:** Heavy, off-centre weights or tilted lines make a scene feel unstable, urgent, or dangerous—a technique famously used in film posters like Saul Bass's *Vertigo*.
- **Direct Attention:** Pushing your main subject to one side forces the viewer to scan the rest of the frame or follow leading lines
- **Convey Isolation or Scale:** Leaving a large, empty area of negative space next to a small subject emphasizes loneliness, vastness, or vulnerability.
- **Break Monotony:** While balanced or symmetrical images feel calm and formal, an unbalanced shot interrupts expectations and demands a longer look.

How to Apply Imbalance in Your Work

- **Heavy Weight on One Side:** Place a large, dark, or brightly coloured object (like a mountain or building) heavily on the left or right of the frame without a matching element on the opposite side.
- **Exploit Negative Space:** Instead of filling the empty side with a balancing object, let it stay sparse or open so the heavy side feels dramatically weighted.
- **Tilt the Horizon or Subject:** Slight or intentional angles disrupt the vertical and horizontal comfort zones of the human eye