



**PHOTOGRAPHY "AU" FINE ART**

**BY**

**WILLAINÉ OTTO**

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## SUMMARY

This dissertation concludes that photography is an art, the same as painting or sculpting. Photographers have struggled, for years to have their work acknowledged as an art.

The visual elements are discussed in Chapter One, seeing that these are the very most important aspects of the "technical" photograph.

The importance and role that early photographers played, their different styles and views are also discussed in Chapter Two.

Creativity plays an integral role in Fine Art Photography. In Chapter Three the use of angles and the use of different lenses;      Soft focus lenses,  
Fisheye lenses,  
Zoom lenses.

Darkroom techniques are also very important when it comes to creativity. The use of different films, such as Infra Red, Black and White films, can create a whole different feel of mood. In Chapter Four the author's own work and techniques are discussed. Slides are included at the back of the dissertation as reference to the work discussed.

An important part of being a successful photographer, is being able to market your own work. A basic price guide and direction on how to go about pricing one's work, is discussed in Chapter Five.

Today the use of digital imagemaking is widely used with great success. Computer Manipulation has made the job of the photographer a lot easier.

Fine Art Photography is a way of living, seeing new things everyday and seeing them differently everyday.

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## INTRODUCTION

Since its invention in 1839, photography has become a phenomenal technical means of communication and visual expression and unquestionably the world's most powerful image-making system. It's a combination of science and art, and one cannot exist or function without the other.

Considering its brief history and then looking at its quick growth and global acceptance, it is astonishing. No one alive today can escape the media of illustrated publication and television.

When more emphasis is placed on the technical aspects of photography, such as lighting and type of format, the creativity of fine art and other areas of photography like fashion, industrial or advertising could be undermined. The undermining of creativity and the ignorance about photography has led to the perception that it is not an art, whichever form it comes in.

The author concentrated on different techniques, composition and people to accentuate the fine art and abstract side of photography. Techniques are discussed, so too the people photographed, for no subject can be complete without its history and origins knowledge of.

Some aspects of this dissertation have nothing to do with photography. The Surrealist Leonora Carrington, was not involved with photography, but the way in which she perceived life, are perfect examples of the Surrealist way of thinking. She lived by her own rules and repelled against anything conventional.

*"I didn't have time to be anyone's muse .... I was too busy rebelling against my family and learning to be an artist".*

*(Woman artists and the Surrealist movement, Whitney Chadwick)*

Part of this script refers to the history of photography and art, their relationship

to one another and the role Surrealism, Dadaism and other subjects had on male and female artist and their work.

More examples are poems by Kay Sage and Pailthorpe which shared the visions of the Surrealists and artist of that time and also today, like the author of this script.

*(Poems follow on the next page)*

The market for fine art photography is very limited. Caused by the ignorance mentioned earlier. It is also discussed how young photographers can enter this market, the part galleries play, as well as the pricing of work.

*(Discussed in Chapter 5, THE MARKET FOR FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY)*

The script surveys the field of fine art photography, gives the oriental and technical data about the different aspects of photography, but in the end the photographs speak for themselves, and show that photography has an important role to play in the word of art.



**(A) "TOWER"**

I have built a tower on despair,  
you hear nothing in it, there is nothing to see;  
There is no answer when, black on black,  
I scream, I scream, in my ivory tower.

The following poem, like the previous one by Kay Sage, evokes the quality of brittleness.

**(B) "ACROBATICS"**

When you walk  
on a tight rope,  
at the least unexpected thin  
you break your neck;  
leave me alone  
I will manage  
all by myself.

Unfortunately she did not manage and on January 8, 1963 shot herself through the heart.



(C) "THE CORPSE"

Don't go! Don't go! Don't Go there!  
'Tis only a dead man's bones.  
You wouldn't wish to see that  
a corpe of putrefaction.  
Don't go! Don't go - Whose is that corpe?  
Who knows - can't tell - but none from here.  
You pale, Why so? Your father's far away  
in distant lands -  
What can it be that you should pale at the  
corpse of an old man?  
He is old, is he?  
Then that is good, it can't be he of whom  
I thought.  
He can't be dead.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE VISUAL ELEMENTS

Tonality is created by light, which assists in building the formal elements such as volume, plane relationships, texture, space, shadows and cast shadows.

Tonality creates / generates mood and individual statement.

"Chiaroscuro" (light-dark) was born during the Italian Renaissance and became an established method in formal studio procedure to create variations of light such as highlight, reflected light, shadow, cast shadow and the (darker part) core of the shadow.

It (graduations of light) makes it possible to have a 3-Dimensional feeling on a 2-Dimensional surface. Hand-in-Hand with chiaroscuro goes the "value scale" which starts white and runs about seven graduated greys to a black. Knowing the "value scale" one could suppress or accentuate extraneous details, expand or reduce volume and create the illusion of deep shallow space.

## COLOUR AND BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

The artists colour means pigments, to psychologists it means perception which exists within the mind and to the man in the street it is the way he experiences life.

Photographers make the mistake of considering colour as the most important factor - to the exclusion of composition. Colour is a dominant element in the visual arts and ideally a photograph should have only the dominant colour, but don't make this a law to live by. The two basic approaches to photography in colour are to produce reproductive colour and to use colour imaginatively. There can be no colour without light. Light is part of the electromagnetic spectrum and is a radiant energy. The physical characteristics of the light source, the reflection characteristics of the object's surface on which the light falls, the nature of the human eye and the interpretation that the brain puts on the retina stimulation of the observer, are the factors that colour is determined by.

If used correctly, colour transmits information accurately emotionally and it represents reality. You perceive life in colour and that is why most people prefer photographs and illustrations in colour.

The reality that colour portrays is perfect for landscapes, still lifes and advertising photography. Colour can also be used to contribute to abstract effects in a photograph, but there are no definite rules in most things in life, it is up to you to decide whether your photograph would look better in colour or black and white. There is no law that says the one works better than the other, or which one portrays "mood" best.

A lengthy dissertation could be written on this subjects, but what it comes down to is that the photographer will have to decide which medium is going to reflect his or her intentions, ideas and vision in the best possible way.

## LIGHT

In early history, light has been the object of mysticism, worshiped, glorified and adored by humanity, used as a regulator of human life, studied, analyzed, written about poetically and scientifically, depicted in countless works of art as spiritual, natural, unnatural, tapped as a source of energy to serve humanity in its struggling existence on the planet earth. Our physical and psychological balance revolves around light. The stream of life and all that it means is supported by light.

It is the medium that forms a photograph. Light which makes reality possible, manageable and transparent may be seen through the photograph, in which we recognize ourselves inhabiting our self-constructed modern environment.

Photographs are free standing objects of matter, reflecting our history, past and present and are made possible by a single source, light.

## COMPOSITION

According to the dictionary, composition means ordaining of components to the totally in art, to create harmony in chaotic materials by obtaining and combining the elements. There is more to composition than just the definition of the term. It is one of the most important components of a photograph, painting or any art medium.

Composition should serve a greater purpose than bettering a photograph visually. It can create a specific mood of feeling or emphasize detail in a photograph. By using composition correctly the artist can direct the viewers' eyes to important areas, away and also back again. The fact that it has been carefully composed should not be obvious in the final result, but the viewer should receive the artist's intent.

Good composition is the result of patience, sensitive looking and careful planning.

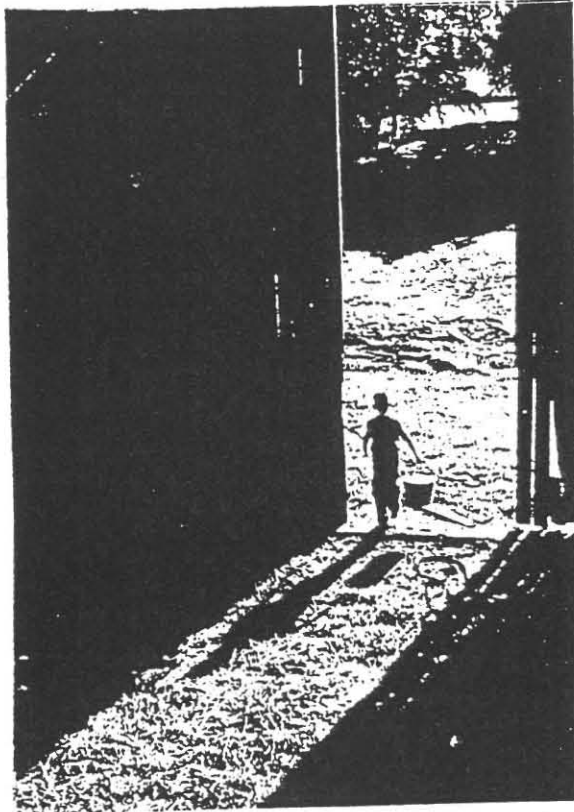
Basic guidelines to remember: Graphic elements of a photograph should carry forward only one idea, then find a centre of interest which is visually strong. If the background is cluttered, it could be distracting but otherwise it can add to the composition and help set the mood of a picture. Take time to look at your background, it could be the difference between an ordinary and visually excellent shoot.

The centre of interest should stand out and should be emphasized, it must stand out from the background. The foreground and background should be viewed carefully to determine this. Background should be more subdued and is important because it could determine the photograph's visual effectiveness, and the centre of interest should have the full range of tones.

Lines are very important. A dominant line should lead attention into the picture, not out of it. Lines can be found anywhere. Shadows are also important, they are ever-changing and their shapes form part of the picture, and is probably the most important

compositional element in it.

### FIGURE 1



### Untitled

Figure 1 shows how shadows can contribute to composition and its ability to emphasize the centre of interest.

*(Photograph by John Fish).*

Always follow your immediate impulses and take a picture, but don't stop there,

also visualize the actual scene in your mind when you crop in the viewfinder.

Consider correct shapes, angles and composition of the existing elements before taking your picture. Move around until you see the correct composed picture you visualized. Dead centre, the "Bull's-eye" syndrome is the most common problem with beginners composition. It leads to static, boring and uninteresting composition. The most interesting photographs are simplicitic ones, achieve this by moving in close and filling the frame.

Everybody developes their own style of composition and it will later establish a prominent characteristic edge in ones' work.

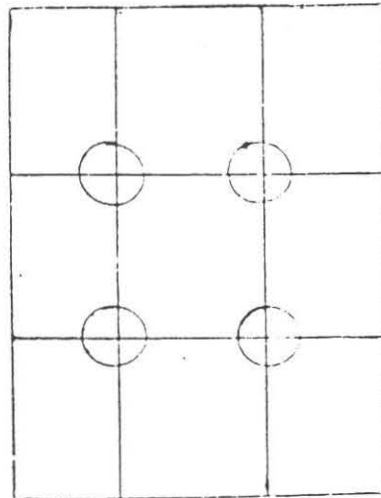
## THE RULE OF THIRDS AND THE GOLDEN SECTION

The "Golden Section" in photography is used to divide a photograph into rectangulars which consist out of thirds, horizontally as well as vertically.

Bert Eifer stated, that the rule of thirds is universally known as the Golden Mean or Section, in his book "*Developing the Creative Edge in Photography*". In the book "*Practical Composition in Photography*" by Axel Druch and "*Photographic Composition*" by Tom Grill and Mark Scanlan, distinctions are made between the rule of thirds and the Golden Mean.

The rule of thirds and the Golden Section are aids that can be used to strengthen your composition in a photograph. The rule of thirds is based on dividing any space, mentally, into thirds - both vertically and horizontally. The eye focuses where the lines cross each other. When you arrange the important elements of the picture on these points, your picture will be successful.

**FIGURE 2**



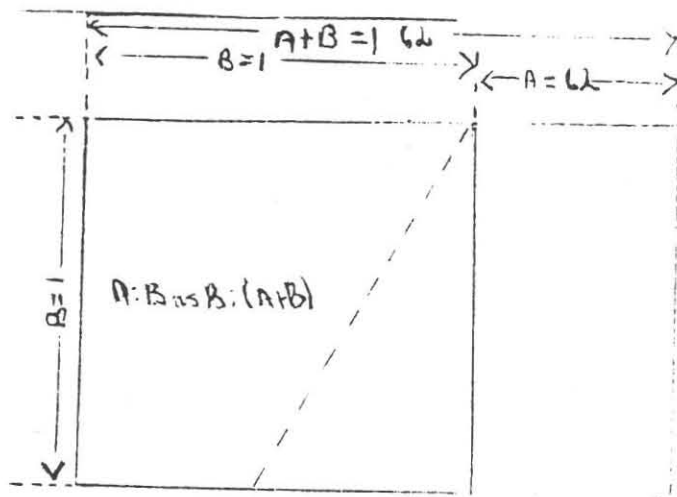
**"The rule of thirds"**



The Golden Section or Mean suggest that mathematically a line can be divided into unequal parts  $a$  and  $b$ , so that the length of the shorter segment, as compared to that of the longer one ( $a:b$ ) is equal to the length of the longer segment ( $b$ ) compared to the whole line, thus:  $a : b = b : (a + b)$ .

When planes and lines are divided according to this principle they would be aesthetically harmonious. The Golden Section has been used in art and crafts, Roman and antique architecture and in the Italian Renaissance.

**FIGURE 3**



## SHAPE AND FORM IN COMPOSITION

The visualising of shape, form, texture and colour is the first step for a photographer, but one picture should not have all these elements to be successful.

To make patterns, symbols and pictures, different shapes are combined, thrown together and organized, geometric shapes can make endless combinations of abstract patterns. Shape is the 2-Dimensional outline of an object. It identifies the objects and needs the correct lighting and use of shadows to make it recognizable. Shape is the simplest component of a photograph, suggesting only horizontal and vertical dimension. Without tone of colour, shape becomes only a silhouette.

Shape becomes more visible if its dominant in size, colour and in strong contrast with its background.

*Shape is like the soul of a photograph, "because it is the fundamental structure of the picture"*

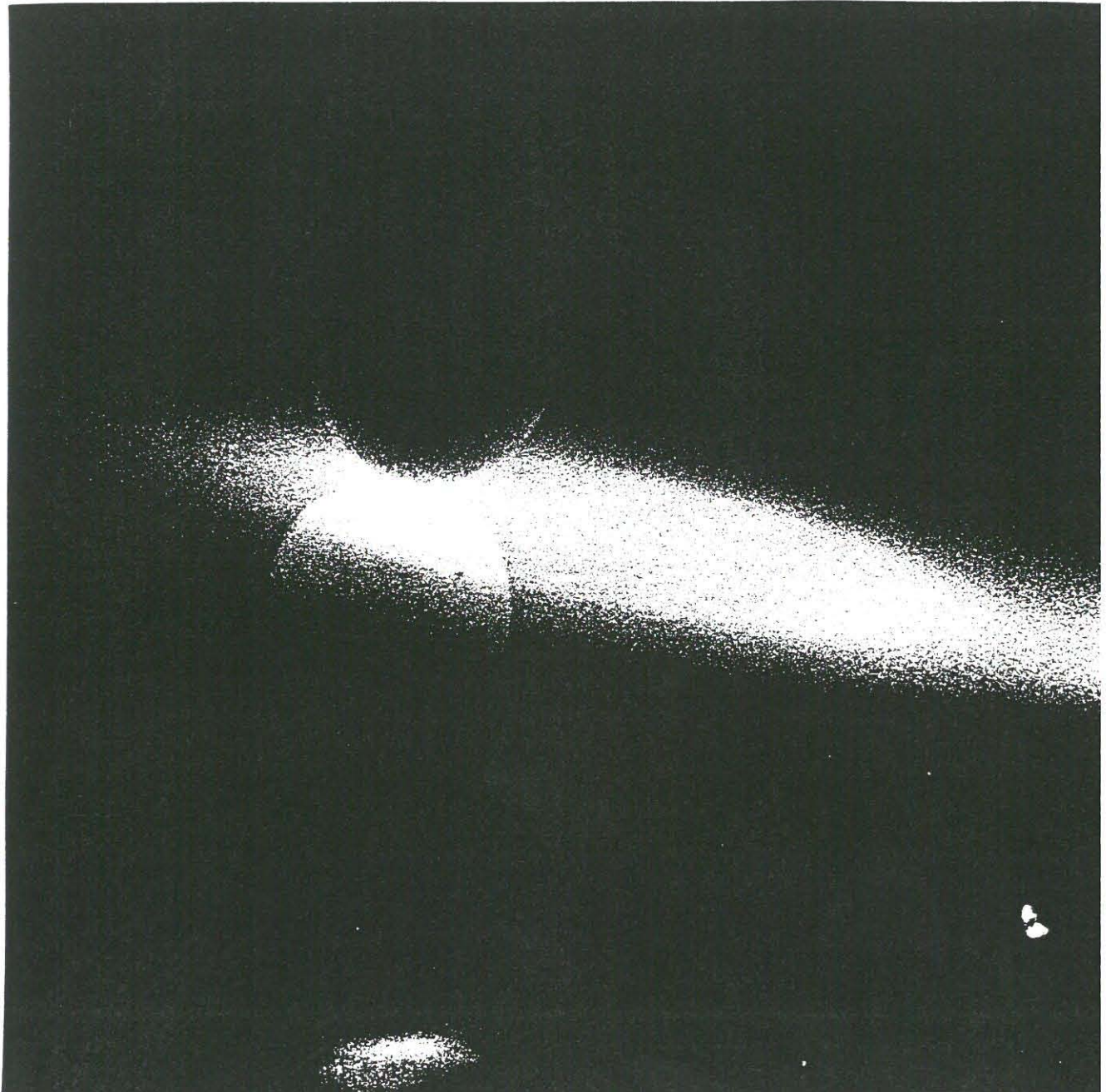
*(Developing the Creative Edge in Photography, Bert Eifer, Page 71).*

When shoot from an unusual or abstract angle, it serves (shape) as something to attract the viewers attention.

Form is 3-Dimensional and, unlike shape, it occupies space. Shape, texture, patterns, line and colour contributes to this 3-Dimensional aspect of form. The space around something is very important to enable the viewer to experience the 3-Dimensionality.

Correct use of lighting and shadows brings out the form of an object, and shape alike. For example the roundness of a ball is enhanced by the gradual progression of tones from light to dark.

FIGURE 4



"Egg" 1990



Figure 4 was photographed by Liezel du Plessis in 1990 and is a low key black and white image of an egg. The use of light brings out the shape and the 3-Dimensional form that occupies space, even though it is partially (a little) distorted; also shot from an unusual angle to give the abstract appearance. Object was shot on 35mm Pentax camera with a standard 50mm lens and the main lightsource was Elinchrome studio flashes. Ilford HP5 film for the grainy effect shot at f16 for greater Depth of Field.

## REVEALING FORM

### **(Modulation of light and shape)**

It entails that light should be directional, casting distinct shadows also angled for balance between the light and the shade.

Lighting from the side is always the better option. With front lighting shadows cover only a small visible part of the object, and with back lighting, the lit areas appear very small. The strength of contrast, direction of lighting and the degree of diffusion alters the darkening of an objects surface from one side to the other, and the shadow edge itself.

## TONE

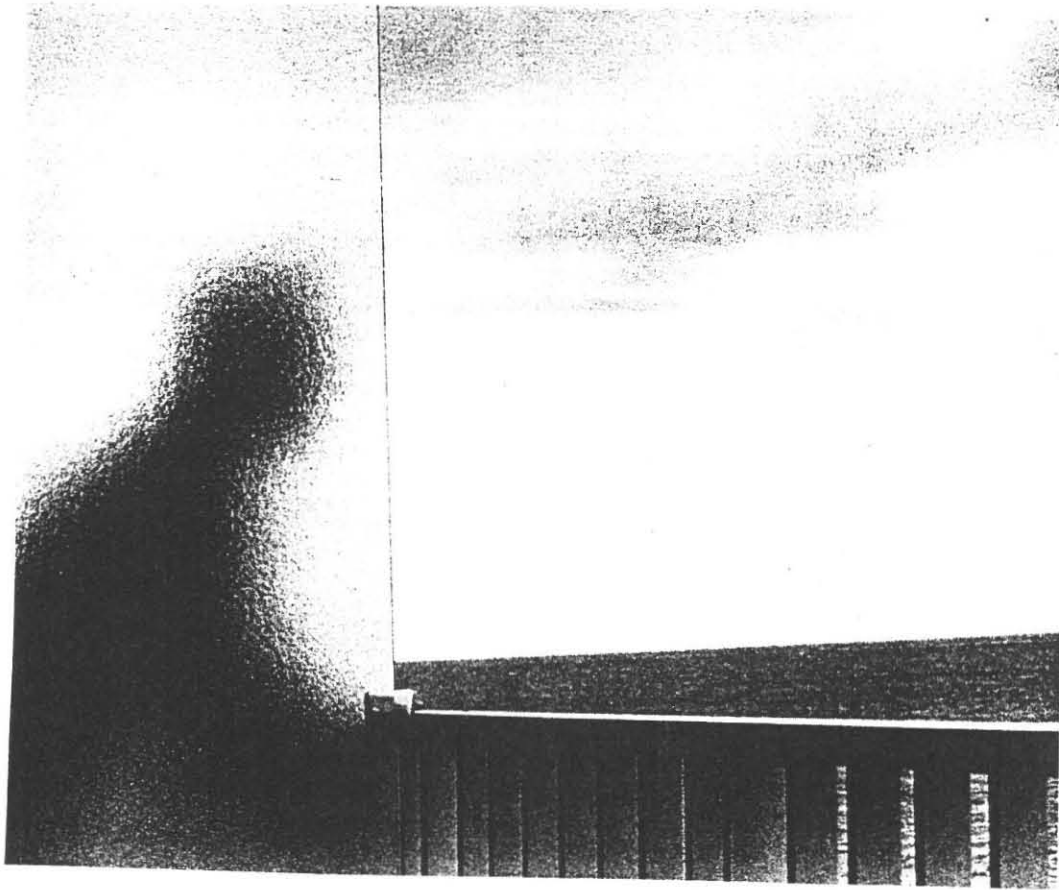
### **(The graduation of colour from light to dark)**

Tone is of great value to black and white photography where everything becomes monochromatic.

Zone scale is a series of tones arranged from white to black, covering about eight greys. The zone scale can be manipulated to create low-key, high-key or middle-key images.

High-key images are composed of zones from the light end of the scale and low-key from the dark. Manipulation is also possible by changing grades of paper or controlling exposure. The correct use of tones can enhance the shape of an object. Range of tones depends upon lighting and properties of materials, such as density, transparency, texture, colour and the ability to reflect. By using tonal values in a photograph, it can express different kinds of moods and emotions.

**FIGURE 5**



**"Martinique", January 1, 1972, by Andre Kertesz.**

It appears to be grey but at a closer look one can see that it consists of many greys, black and white.

The composition, based on a picture-plane division of thirds, that divides the major tones into three distinct areas. This compositional-tonal division gives strength to the simple geometry. The figure is totally diffused which compliments the great depth of field. The figure is a mystery, its gender unknown.

The waves in the water creates texture which works well with the texture of the glass. The thin white line on the railing contrasts with the thin edge of the glass, which is another division in composition.

The sky exists of all the high tones. Kertezs makes subtle use of tones within the highly structured composition to produce a sense of timelessness through anonymity.



## SHADOWS AND CAST SHADOWS

Like other visual elements they too build an image. Like photography, they cannot exist without light. The quality and angle of light determine the fundamental characteristics of shadows and cast shadows, these characteristics include Penumbra, luminosity, transparency, density, elongation and contraction, which depend on light and surrounding reflecting surfaces.

Cast shadows create mood which is important to composition, it builds space and heightens the illusion of space through perspective and also gives a greater sense of volume.

Shadows and Cast Shadows can turn an ordinary situation into an extraordinary one.

**FIGURE 6**



**Imogen Cunningham's environmental portrait**  
**"John Winkler, Etcher, 1958.**

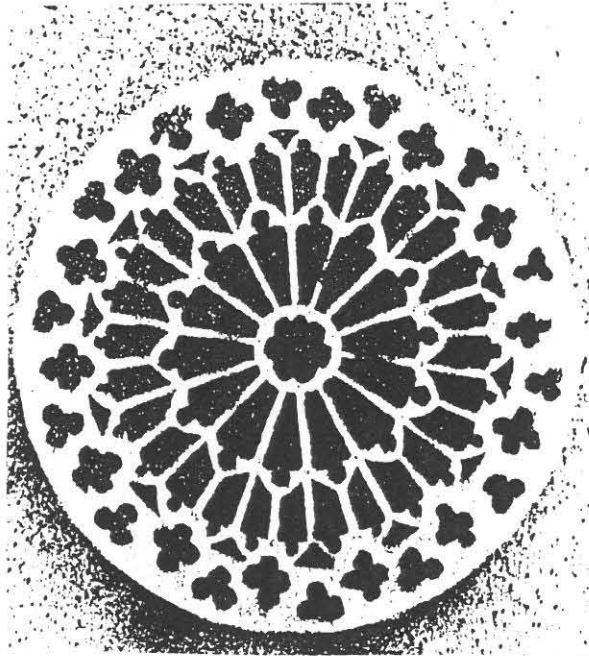
Made interesting by using a single cast shadow from an oculus window. Certain areas of the image are so filled with light that sections of the columns and hanging curtain have lost their detail. The cast shadow compensates for loss of detail.

The cast shadows, falling over the curving surface of the columns, describe the smooth roundness of each column as well as their slender elongation. The radiating lines burst forth from the upper center of the composition, writing all parts, while also providing the image with a secondary focal point.

The figure have been placed off-centre, his head out of alignment with the central section of the cast shadow.

Cunningham has put together an enviromental portrait with the greatest finesse and ingenuity by the intelligent, sensitive use of a single photographic visual element, the cast shadow.

**FIGURE 7**



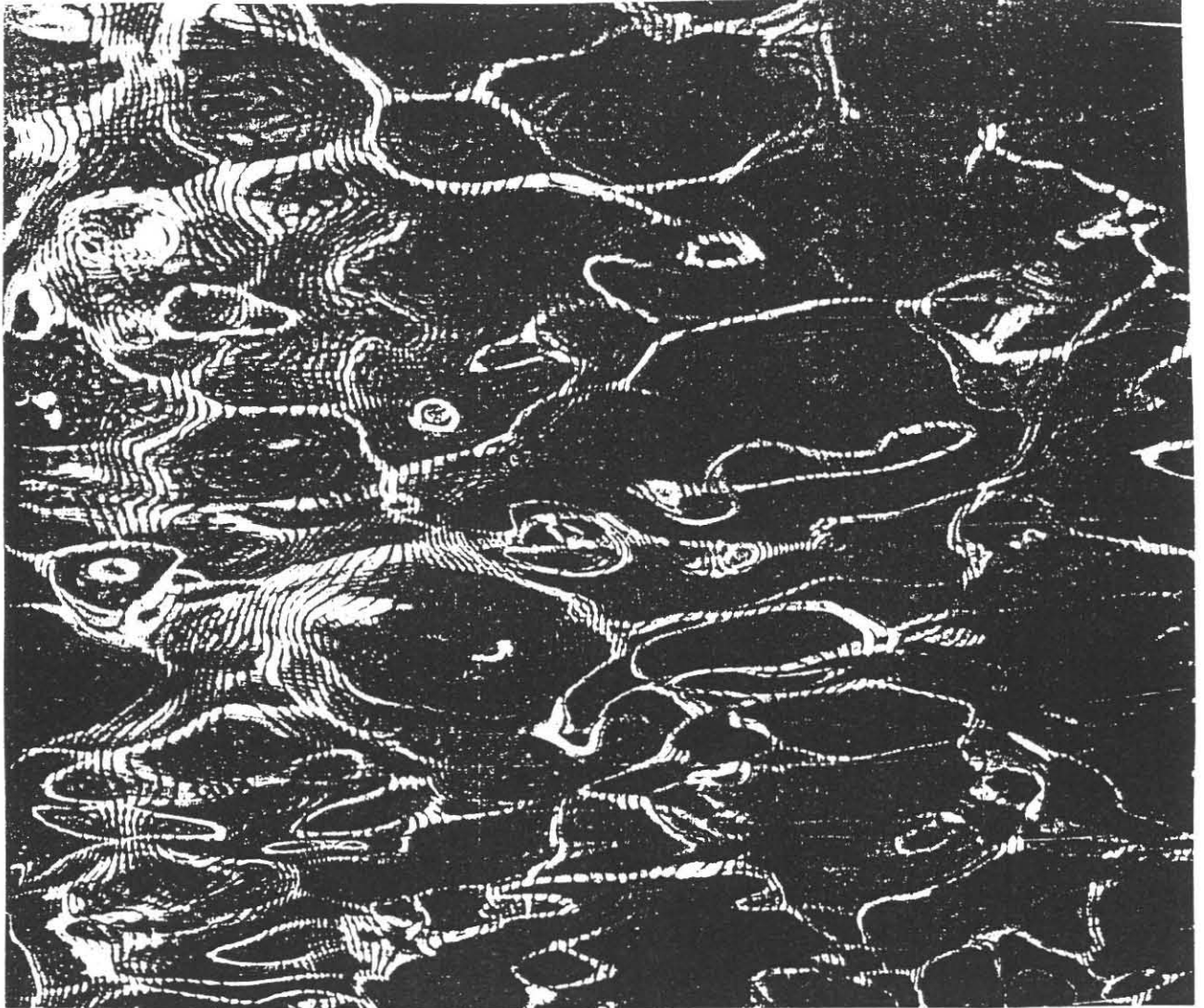
**"Patterns', Liezel du Plessis**

They can be 2Dimensional or 3-Dimensional, can be created out of any number or combination of shapes or lines. Patterns are the orderly or disorderly arrangement of elements into some form of repetition. When shapes and lines are repeated, a rhythm develops and a significant pattern is created. To control a pattern, a center of interest is needed, otherwise it could become disorganized.

We are surrounded by patterns daily, nature provides us with an endless number of patterns, for example the patterns on animals and plants which works as camouflage. These patterns could become better known through close-up photography.

Patterns are readily found and should be used creatively.

## ABSTRACT PATTERNS



### "Abstract Patterns", Liezel du Plessis

For abstract pictures, patterns can be explored from all angles and distances. The pattern created by an abstract photograph is very important. The shape should be captivating, fascinating and even disturbing.

One should however take care when using patterns, because too much of the same thing could become boring, monotonous and dull. Leaves, sand, boats, bricks, ripples on water and even cars all apply to abstract patterns.

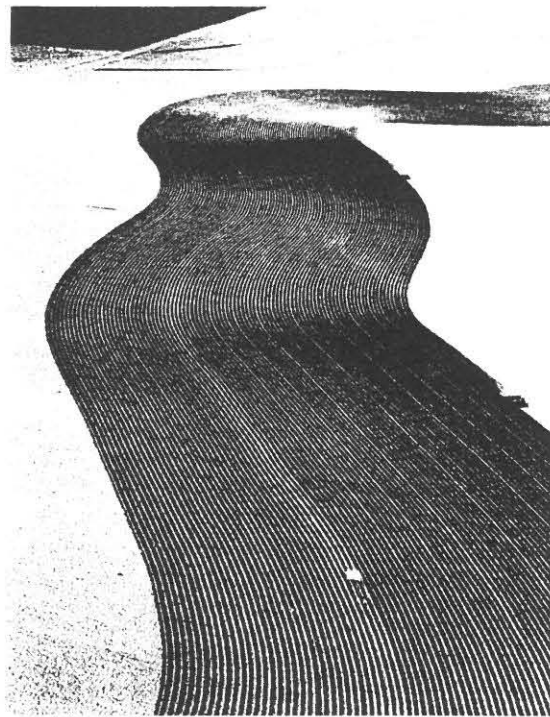
Since prehistoric times line has been the common method of communication, through writing, painting and drawing. Manmade lines spring from perceptions of line observed in the environment and are refined to serve the artist, draughtsman, designer, teacher and others.

The definition of line is a dot moving across the surface of a support.

Our perception of line in the environment is determined by light, form and shape. Shape overlapping shape is read as line, so too negative and positive shapes and spaces are perceived as line. Also read as line are silhouettes, cast shadows, tree branches, a plowed field, the steel frame of a building against the sky, only to name a few.

Any line can suggest direction, create pattern, texture, give a sense of movement, depth, volume and height. Line can also have various widths, tones and texture and lengths. Line is not only descriptive, but expressive; the qualities of line that distinguish individual drawings, paintings, photographs, prints, letters and diagrams betray attitudes and temperaments and can be modes of self-discovery reflecting the creator.

**FIGURE 8**



**"Protective Pattern", 1954**

**Margaret Bourke-White (Life Magazine)**

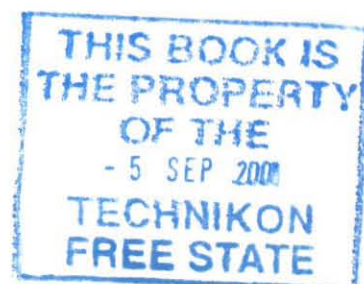
It is generally understood as the surface of any object infused with a sensory, sometimes even emotional, quality that is conceived through sight and touch.

Smooth surfaces are often considered cool, remote or cold; rough surfaces as warmer, more inviting to the touch.

A great deal of mixed, broken texture can give the feeling of confusion and be disconcerting. Texture may also advance and recede, just like colour does. Through scale, variations, density, texture can advance, whereas a less defined, more open texture will recede.

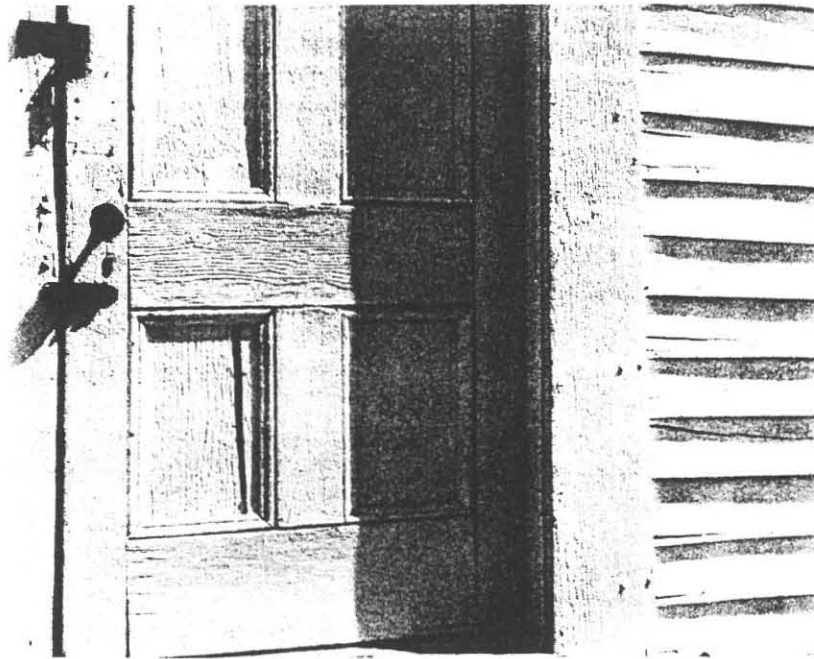
Photographed close-up or from a distance, the quality of lighting is crucial in revealing the textural aspects of the subject. Harsh and angled sunlight emphasize the strong textures, while soft, diffused light can bring out the textural qualities of the subject without creating dark shadows lacking texture.

Texture functions in different ways in different styles, and photographic styles depend on the manner in which the visual elements such as texture are perceived and acted upon in creating images and individual statements.





**FIGURE 9**



**"Church Door", 1940, Edward Weston**

This image depicts a number of textures - wood, metal, and glazed ceramic - but is dominated by the texture of weathered, heavily painted wood. A strong diagonal light from above brings out the texture in high relief over the clapboard wall and door. Luminous shadows and cast shadows are transparent enough to allow one to read texture through them, and the high-key tone is punctuated by sharp black cracks and joints in the wood. The texture of the wood moves in vertical and horizontal directions, keeping it from becoming monotone.

## TEXTURE SCREENS

Textured screens add texture to photographic printing images; these include lens-cleaning tissues, textured paper, or cloth, and sheets of textured glass or plastic.

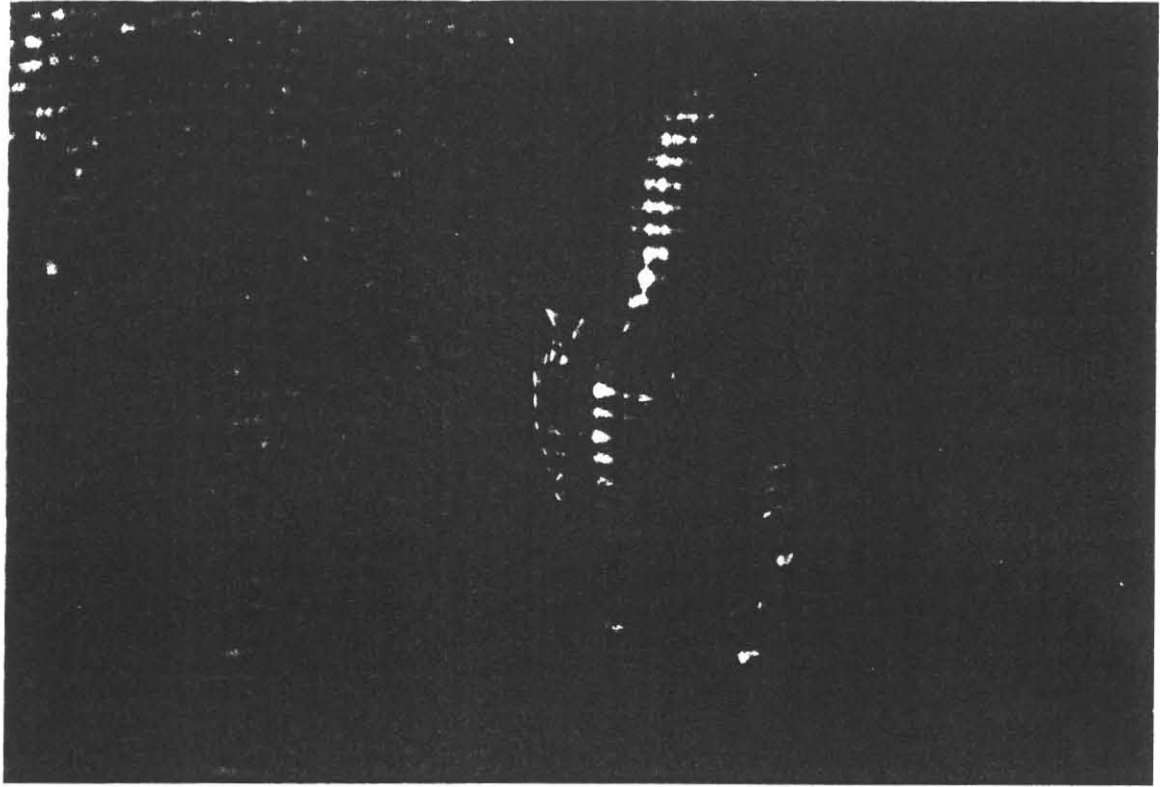
They change the densities in the print image, so the texture is apparent rather than real.

Texture screens can also be made by photographing textured surfaces, using strong sidelights.

- (a) canvas
- (b) gravel
- (c) leaves or grass
- (d) rugs
- (e) bark
- (f) a plastered wall

Sandwiching a close-up negative of one of the above mentioned surfaces with the negative that is going to be enlarged, and print like that.

FIGURE 10

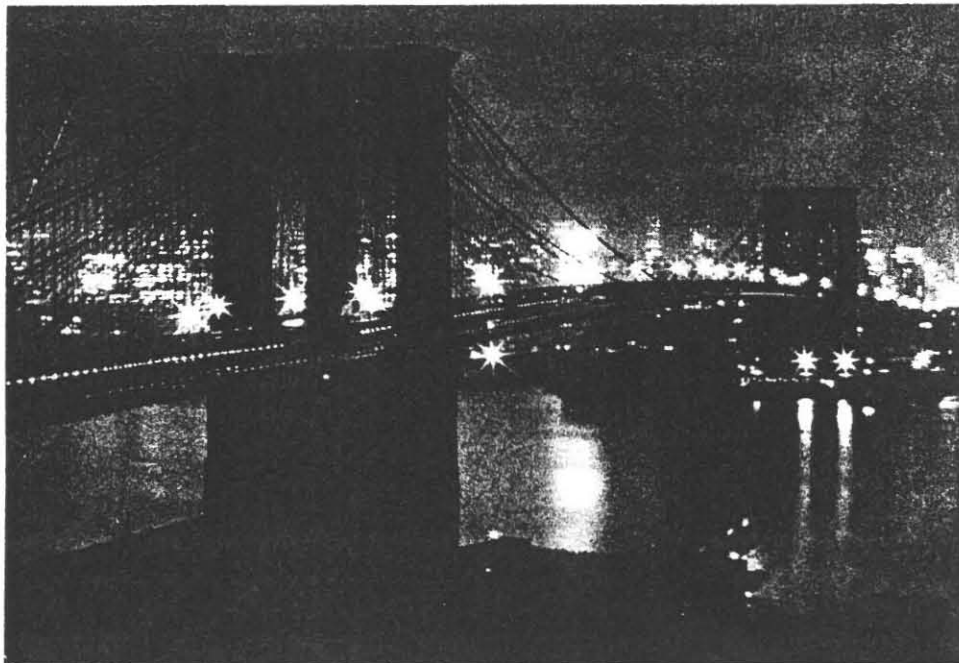


Untitled", 1990  
Liezel du Plessis

The basic principle is that parallel lines will converge to a vanishing point established on the picture plane. This effect may be observed by looking along the lines of telephone poles, railroad tracks, or any regular spaced objects following a straight or curved line. The vanishing point is placed on a line called the horizon line, at the actual eye height of the viewer in relation to the scene depicted.

In the broadest sense, for photography, perspective simply means a point of view, referring to lines and surfaces of the flat film of the camera; it is also the effect of size relationships and camera angle related to the viewer's interpretation of the image.

**FIGURE 11**



**"Brooklyn Bridge", 1948**

**Andreas Feininger**

A night photograph of the Brooklyn Bridge by Andreas Feininger brings together all the aesthetics of the bridge and the majesty of its architecture seen through aerial perspective. Silhouetted against the glittering lights of the cityscape, in fog and river mists, the bridge is sharply contoured and dark-toned in the foreground.

Rays of artificial light scattered by the fog and mist are reflected in the river, which is modulated in tone from high to low following the laws of natural phenomena observed in aerial perspective.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE OTHER ARTS

Since the birth of the camera and the photograph it has had an undeniable effect upon the other arts. This effect has been strongly evident, at times, changing the visual appearance of other art forms, while at other times the effect has been less pronounced.

The exchange between photography and the other arts, to many photographers, presents a threat to photography as a pure art form. To date, no comprehensive study has been made of the relationship of photography to the other arts.

Photography and the other arts have not been judged by equal standards until recent years. Photography has made enormous aesthetic and technical advances, offering both to the other arts. The new breed of art, which is the consequence of the interaction between photography and the other arts, must be considered dispassionately and in the light of artistic evolution.

The recent cross between photography and other disciplines is not a matter of more technical gymnastics, but has resulted in new perceptions, new self-motivation, and new self-actions postulating our new identity in the twentieth century.

## INFLUENCE OF ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY ON EACH OTHER

Painters construct their pictures whereas photographers often search for a ready-made scene. Both mediums are affected by norms set by critics, editors, art dealers and graphic designer.

David Chamerlain, *Art is a state of mind, it is not the medium which is used to create the work. Surely, this in itself is enough to resolve the question of whether photography be considered as "art"?* It can when it is the medium chosen by the artist to express his art. A painter's palette, vanvas and brushed are not art, neither are the sculpture's hammers, chisels and unworked slab of stone. These materials require the application of the artist's mind, through the artist's hands before art can be created"

**(The photo, Robin Scagell, Volume 18, page 2).**

(1923 - 1971)

**FIGURE 17**



**"Portrait of Diane Arbus" "1970"**

Taken by Stephen Frank during a class at the Rhode Island School of Design in 1970.



She took her photo's in the subjects' natural surroundings, in public parks, their homes, in parades and on holidays. She avoided photographing celebrities, and stuck to photographing unknown people.

To her, the camera was like a nuisance. She was not a technical person - the subject meant more to her than the picture itself, the quality and the technique behind it. Her photos were very grainy, and she was fascinated by what the grain did, it made a kind of tapestry of little dots. Her impression was that skin would be the same as water, water the same as sky and that one dealt mostly with dark and light, not so much in flesh and blood.

She loved working in Nudist camps, it being her favourite subject. During one year she visited three Nudist camps. She also loved photographing "freaks", she adored them.

*"There's a quality of legend about freaks. Like a person in a fairy tale who stops you and demands that you answer a riddle. Most people go through life dreading they'll have a traumatic experience. Freaks were born with their trauma. They've already passed their test in life. They're aristocrats", she said.*

*(Diane Arbus, Doon Arbus, page 7).*

She hated the idea of composition, she did not know what good composition was.

*"Sometimes for me composition has to do with a certain brightness or a certain coming to restness and other times it has to do with funny mistakes. There's a kind of rightness and wrongness and sometimes I like rightness and sometimes I like wrongness. Composition is like that"*

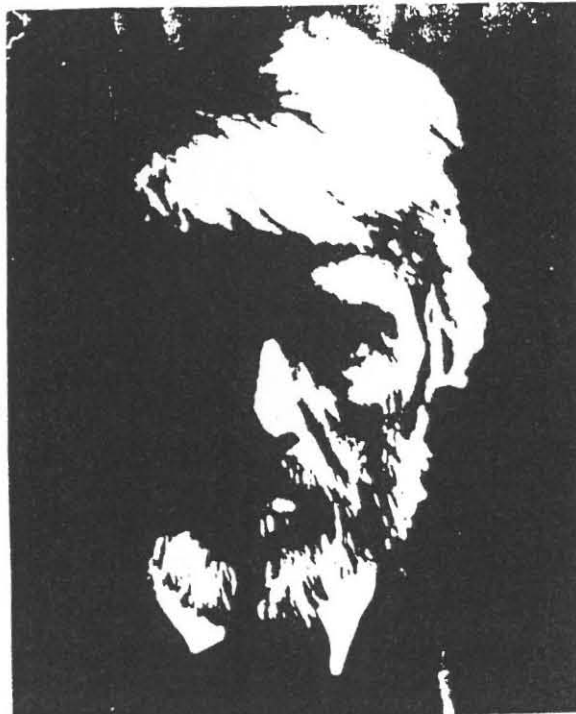
*(Diane Arbus, Doon Arbus, page 21).*

(1815 -1879)

Got a camera as a present and then took up photography in 1963. Lived in Freshwater Bay, in the Isle of Wight. She knew many rich and famous people, and started to do portraits of them. It took a year before her photographs became successful. Her work was very different from other photographers. Her photos had an out of focus look, which gives it an art-type feel and is emphasized by the dramatic use of lighting. These qualities make her work unique and different.

The author of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll, admired her work greatly.

**FIGURE 12**



**"Thomas Carlyle" 1867.**

**Albumen Print of Thomas Carlyle.**



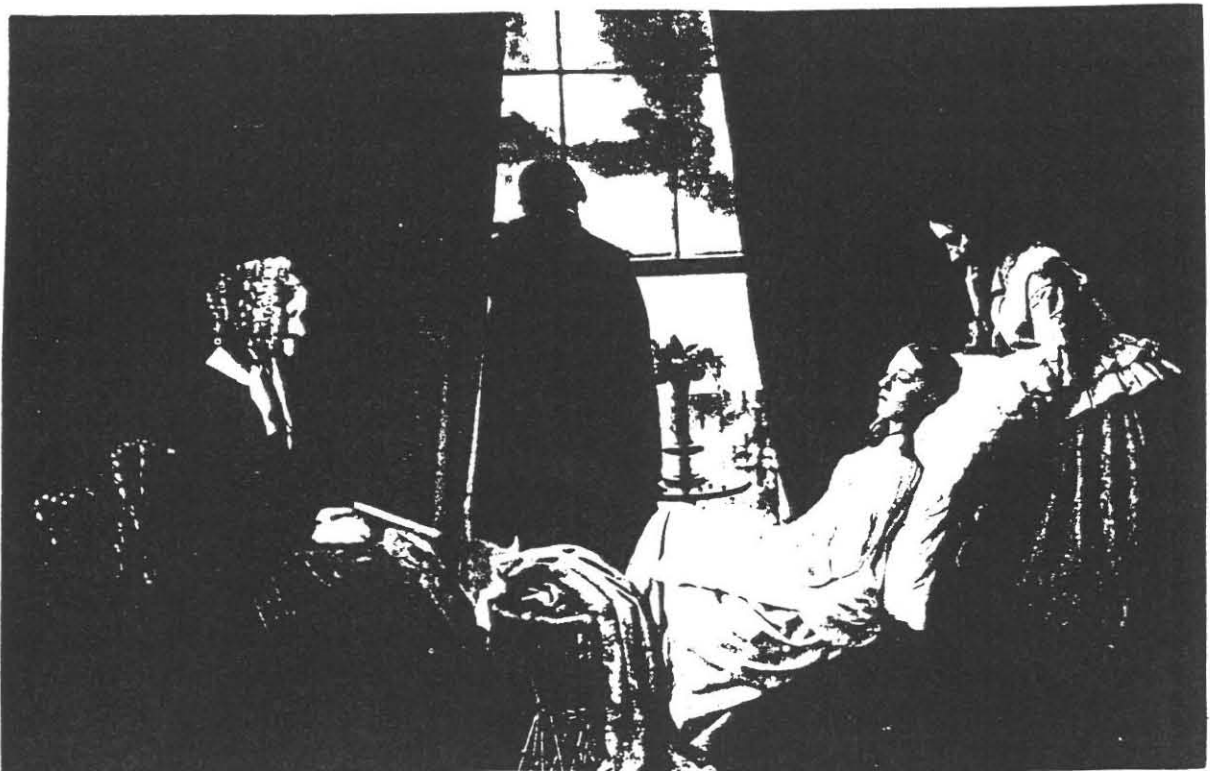
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## HENRY PEACH ROBINSON

(1830 - 1901)

He was a painter and etcher in Leamington, England, who took up photography as a profession in 1852.

FIGURE 1



"Fading away". 1858.

A combination print of a dying girl attended by grief stricken parents was the first photograph that made him famous. To make this print five negatives were used. The girl in the picture was actually very healthy. "The picture was done to see how near death she could be made to look"

*(The History of Photography, Beaumont Newhall, page 76).*

The photograph shocked the public, the fact that it was a photograph, made it the truth, and the scene was viewed literally.

In 1859 Rejlander wrote this letter to Robinson:

*I am tired of photography for the public, particularly composite photos, for there can be no gain and there is no honour but cavil and misrepresentation. The next Exhibition must, then, only contain Iviad Ruins and landscapes forever beside bortraits, - and then stop"*

*(The History of Photography, Beaumont Newhall, page 76).*

Robinson published an art photograph every year. A critic, Jabez Huges praised Rejlander and Robinson's work, but was very much against combination printing.

## OSCAR G REJLANDER

(1813 - 1875)

a Technique called combination prints to produce dramatic seascapes, was used by, Gustave Le Gray, a Swedish artist whom worked in Wolverhampton, Engeland, and these were shown in London in 1856.

Oscar G Rejlander was an ex painter. Ran a studio in Wolverhampton, which produced reference photographs and figure studies for artists. Rejlander took multiple image making a lot further that Le Gray. He constructed a composite photograph called "*Two ways of life (figure 14)*". Copies were bought by Royalty ans its moral storytelling was greatly admired.

### FIGURE 14



"Two ways of life." 1857

A father leads two sons into life. Once calm and self satisfied turns towards religion, charity, married life, industry and other virtues of life; the other rushes madly away from the fathers guidance towards and into "bad" influences, including gambling, drink, sex and other vices, ending in suicide, insanity and death.

He used over thirty negatives, masked together so they would fit like a puzzle. Background was photographed in a garden as well as the draperies in Rejlander's own studio. Also used a troupe of strolling players and photographed them in groups.

Sold 41 x 70 cm prints for ten guineas and reduced size copies for twelve shillings and sixpence.

## DADA AN SURREALISM

These, in their broadest definition, are children of Freudian psychology and have has a profound influence on Twentieth Century photography.

I was the expression of a revolt against Western civilization and culture. Dada became an instantly recognizable image brand surpassing natural boundaries.

Dada and Surrealism's bizare power and originality made them the most popular and recognizable of all types of modern art. Dada means rocking horse and was chosen at random form a dictionary.

Marcel Duchamp was the leading member of the Dadaist Movement, which formed in Switzerland during Word War I. Their work was anti-art, anti-logic and intended to outrage. It was against art and contemporary society who used art as a reflection and product of itself. If stand for embittered individualism, universal doubt and aggressive image-breaking. Rejected all reason, order and dicipline in society and above all the rationally controlled inspiration in imaginative expression.

Man Ray, a man of unsatisfied curiosity and inventiveness, went on to produce perfect Dada works. Art became a debased currency, just a matter for the connoisseur, whose taste was hereby based on habbit.

Dadaists and Surrealists were not interested in photography, but frequently made use of photographic images in their collages. Dada envolved into Surrealism and Constructivism, which, in turn, influenced member of the Bauhaus in Germany in the early 1920's.

## MAN RAY

### FIGURES 15



### "Self portrait." 1930

In New York Man Ray became a commercial artist and did layouts, lettering and typography for a publisher of maps and atlases. He then later attended evening classes at the National Academy of Design and after that the avant-garde Art School of the Francisco Ferrer Social Centre.

He was one of America's first abstract painters and was directly involved with Dada and Surrealism. He associated with progressive writers and poets and anarchists. This and his ambitious nature inspired him to change his name, which revealed his Russian-Jewish origins, to a pseudonym made up of two short syllables: Man, (an individual alone in the midst of universal humanite) and ray of light, or of the sun.

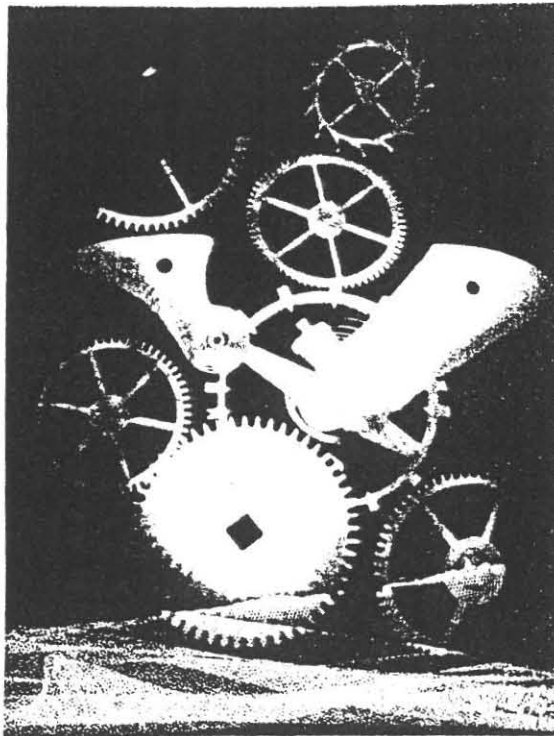


He took up photography in 1915 to document his paintings, but it was not until 1920 that he became a serious photographer.

He held his first one-person show of paintings and drawings at the Daniel Gallery in New York in 1915. He began his series of Aerograph and abstract paintings done with an airbrush, in 1918. With Marcel Duchamp, he published the first and only issue of the *Magazine New York Dada* in 1921.

He had his first exhibition at Mick Sospault's Librairie Six in December 1921.

**FIGURE 16**



**"Rayograph." 1924**

**Man Ray**

After eleven years in Hollywood, from 1942, where he made a living as a free-lance photographer and painter, he returned to Paris in 1951. Around 1960 he experimented with colour photography, but his primary focus remained painting.

*"I paint what cannot be photographed, something from the imagination ..... I photograph the things I don't want to paint, things that are already in existence. I would photograph an idea rather than an object and a dream rather than an idea"*

**(Man Ray, Jean-Hubert, page 112).**

Man Ray used photography and paint to bring his worlds of visual existing elements, reality, fantasies and dreams closer together. Photography is to do what the eye can not, where painting circumscribes our vision of things. Reality itself is focused on when the photographer mechanically records the visible world of objects, places and people that are his direct subject matter.

Photography gave him a way of looking at things as well as doing them. Thus, photography does not serve our desire to look at things, it becomes a constructive part in visual-literary construction which seeks to appeal to our thought as well as to our imagination.

He worked and lived in Paris until his death in 1976, but till this day his work continues to inspire photographers and other artists alike.



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**BILL BRANDT**

(1904 - 1983)

**FIGURE 16**



**"Northumberland Coal miner at his evening meal." 1937.**

**Bill Brandt**

Born in London, May 1904, Lived in Germany and Switzerland. Only became interested in photography in the twenties. He was strongly attracted to the School of Modern French Photography, which had just been accepted by the Surrealist movement. Moved to Paris and briefly became a student-assistant to Man Ray.

Man Ray: "*He was my pupil. He came to my studio and asked if he could study with me. I said, I can't teach you anything. You watch me, and you help me too!* He puddled around a bit and he finally became a photographer"

*(Man Ray, Jean-Hubert, page 38).*

He became a social photographer for *Lilliput Weekly Illustrated, Picture Post* and other magazines, when he returned to London in 1931, until the beginning of the Second World War. A complete resume is given of the English People's comfortable middle-class life styles and their environments, in contrast with the depression-torn existence of the working classes in London's East End and Northern mining communities in his first book. *The English at Home.*

Figure 16 is an image produced when Brandt took photos of miners before World War II. It was not reproduced in his first book, but is a typical example of his early portraits. It was important that the subjects and their surroundings were in harmony. There remains an integrity for the subject far beyond mere reportage throughout these images. He was merely the spectator, intensely involved with his subjects and took his work very seriously.

Strong, deep blacks appeared in his work caused by the use of high contrast paper, also made prints more dramatic. To him it was essential that each photographer does his own printing and enlarging, his own style was hidden in that aspect.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CREATIVE APPROACH

#### (Equipment and techniques)

#### THE ABSTRACT

The photographer is an interpreter and photography is a language. The abstract photographic image is just one of these varying number of languages, so to speak.

Abstract photographs are created in many ways. The techniques that are going to be described later in this chapter, are the creating factors of any distorted or abstract image. These techniques usually involve no more than finding new ways of emphasizing and showing patterns, lines, form and shape already in existence. They could be frozen in time in a way only the camera is capable of.

These pictures can be considered as images and works of art in their own right, or they could be used as ingredients in other images by multiple exposure by projecting them onto faces or as part of a slide sandwich.

## THE USE OF ANGLES

Horizontally or vertically are the natural ways to hold a camera, because it looks correct. It can also be used at very interesting angles, and a photograph gains immense and exceptional impact when shot from an unusual angle or position.

The rule of composition for horizontal and vertical lines do not apply in abstract photography. Never feel restricted to conventional ways of cropping, framing and composing a picture, a photographer should try every other angle too.

Put the camera on the ground, hold it above your head, it is not compulsory to always hold it to your eye. You can also go in as close to a subject as possible, or even only photograph sections of an object. All these different positions give new abstract meaning to a picture and can make it visually more interesting. Bizarre angles can also add to the compositional characteristics of an image. The effect of these images are more intense in black and white photography and could become even more dramatic when copied on line or lith film, which turns everything into pure black and white.

Different angles can further be emphasized by the use of different lenses.

The only limitation on this aspect of abstraction is your imagination, so consider every possible option and experiment with the "angle", before actually pressing the button.

## WIDE TO ULTRA WIDE

These include all lenses that have angles of coverage ranging from about 60 degrees to about 180 degrees. Wide angle lenses allow you to include more of the object than any other lens, but can give bizarre, unwanted effects if not handled carefully. Wide angles has symmetrical designs and relatively small aperture due to difficulties in correcting optical aberrations.

The image from such lenses, with focal lengths between 13 and 21 millimetres, are immediately recognizable from the outward sweep of detail near the corners.

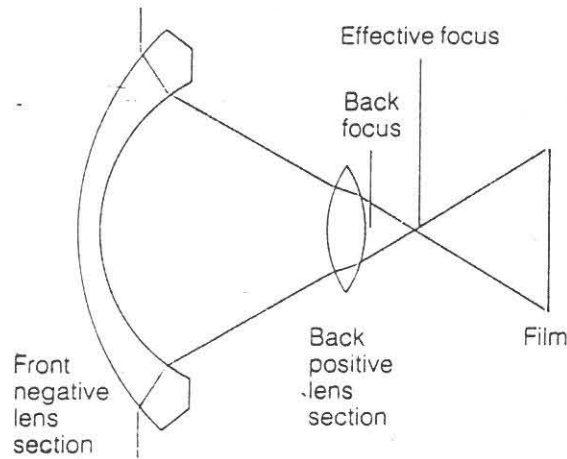
They have a variety of uses:

- (a) valuable in confined spaces
- (b) includes more of the surroundings than a standard or traditional wide angle lens
- (c) creatively increase or produce apparent picture depth or distortions

Distortion exaggerated perspective, which results from taking photographs close to the subjects. The edges of the field of view do tend to show more distortion than those of a 24 millimeter lens. These distortion are useful in creating bizarre and very interesting effects.

Wide and ultra-wide angles are perfect for abstract and fine-art photography, because of it's distortion possibilities.

## FISHEYE LENSES



The distortion capabilities of these lenses are endless. They have a field of view of approximately 180 degrees and do not have rectilinear rendition.

There are two different types of fisheye lenses, namely circular and full frame fisheye. The circular produces a circular image with an angle of view of 180 degrees in all directions. The full crops a rectangle out of the 180 degree circle that fills the frame. The 180 degree coverage is only diagonal.

Fisheyes are very costly, but fisheye adapters that screw onto the front elements of standard or average wide-angle lenses are available.

Almost all fisheye lenses are designed for 35 mm cameras. When handling these lenses, use caution, because the dome-shaped front surface can damage easily.



**FIGURE 18**



**"Fishey view"**

How to make your own Fisheye.

Materials; an old plastic lens cap and a wide angle door view. Choose the door viewer with care, because the quality of the image depends on the make of the item.

Cut a hole in the true centre of the cap, then push the door view in, and make sure that the end does not touch the front element of the lens.

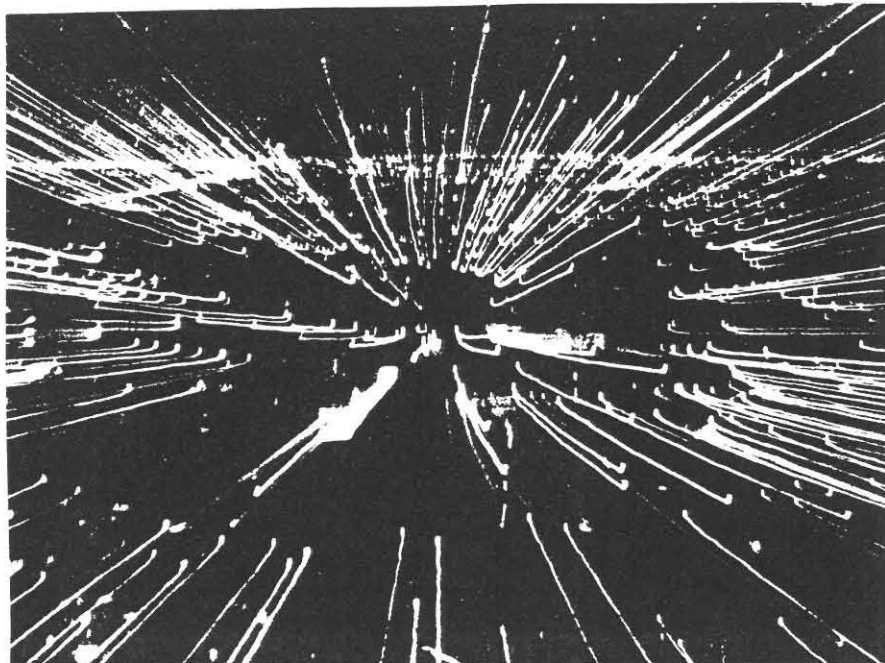
Use your depth of field preview to see the effect. Experiment with the exposure, and depending on the door viewer, stops smaller than  $f5.6$  may make the circle of the fisheye image smaller.-

## ZOOM LENSES

The longest and shortest focal lengths are marked on the zoom. The zoom's magnification from the shortest to the longest setting.

Interchangeable lenses have one big drawback, you have to remove one lens to fit another when a different field of view is required.

In sport photography, zoom lenses are irreplaceable, because of the various lens outfits in one.



"Untitled" 1992.

Liesel du Plessis

To obtain these images, set the zoom at its shortest focal length and then zoom it to its longest focal length while exposing. Use a tripod. The images are streaked and seems to rush out of the photograph towards the edges.



## SOFT FOCUS LENSES

Soft focus is NOT out of focus.

The differences between soft focus and ordinary images are:

- (a) The reduction of the images contrast and
- (b) the loss of definition

There are two types of soft focus lenses. One uses an aperture plate that has a large hole in the centre and is surrounded by smaller holes. The second type is not corrected for all spherical aberrations, at full aperture these lenses produce maximum softening. To ensure better results with soft focus, use high-key subjects.



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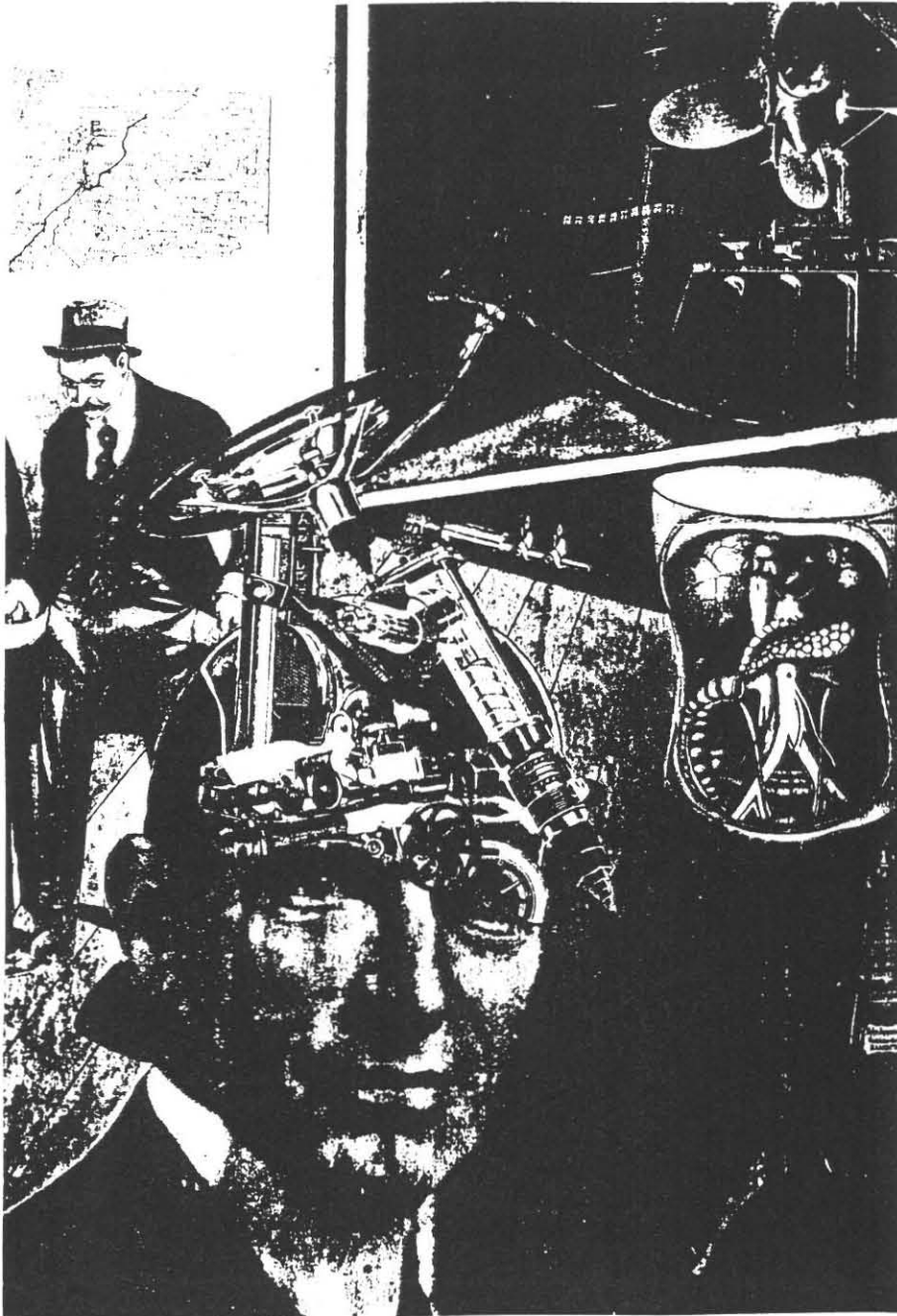
## SANDWICHING

The combining of two or more negatives can enhance your photographs and create completely new pictures which would not be possible by other means. Skillfull combination printing opens up an entirely new world of creative possibilities. By printing two or more negatives onto the same sheet of paper you can add that extra detail that makes a good photograph, great.

Montages are created when different 2-Dimensional images are cut and joined together to form a single image. You can for example combine a black and white figure with a colour landscape. The result must then be copied onto a negative or transparency. When cutting out the images you should use a very sharp scissor or blade and it is best to undercut the surface of the paper by angling the blade.

Montage has been used for expressive, commercial, and scientific purpose. Montage can also be use to create an image that cannot be made by multiple exposure of combination printing.





"Tatlin at Home" 1920.



## SABATTIER EFFECT

Dramatic and interesting images can be created by using this technique. It was discovered by die Frenchman, Armond Sabattier, in 1962. He discovered that if a wet collodion plate negative was exposed to light during development, the image was partially reversed and became positive. This is known as the Sabattier effect. The image produced by this technique is partly positive and partly negative.

The images formed throught the Sabattier effect often have prominent lines between dark and light tone areas. They are called Mackie lines and are caused by exhausted developer flowing from dark areas onto less heavily exposed areas. The high concentration of alkali bromide in the exhausted developer restrains development of the fogged pale tone and a sharp line of low density appears.

It is produced most easily with high contrast materials such as lith film, colour printing paper and hard bromide paper. The degree of control is limited and it is impossible to repeat pictures, because the appearance of the image is affected by many factors:

- (a) Intensity of the first and second exposures,
- (b) duration of development and
- (c) agitation of the film or paper.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### OWN WORK

FIGURE 1



"Mounted fruit" 1998.

Shot with a Mamiya RB 6 x 7 camera. Agfa RSX 100 ISO film was used. A 90 mm lens was used set on f8, in the studio, using Elinchome Flashes.

The image has very saturated colours which contrast well with one another. The bright red background complements the colours of the fruit as well as the shadows.

cast by them. A strong sidelight brings out the shape and texture of the fruit and it being mounted on wire help to make the composition interesting.

The film was cross-processed, developed with the C41 process, which automatically brightens the colours.

## **FIGURE II**



### **"Door" 1998.**

Shot with a 35 mm Pentax camera, using a standard 50 mm lens. Film used was Ilford SFX 200 ISO, which has infra-red properties, and it was printed on semi-matt paper.

This door is one of the only ones left in an old building in the industrial area of Bloemfontein. The building was destroyed in a fire and was left deserted. The contrast of the image brings out the texture on the door and the bird droppings also leads quality to that and the fact that it is deserted.

One does not know where this door is, or where it would lead to, if entered.

**FIGURE III**

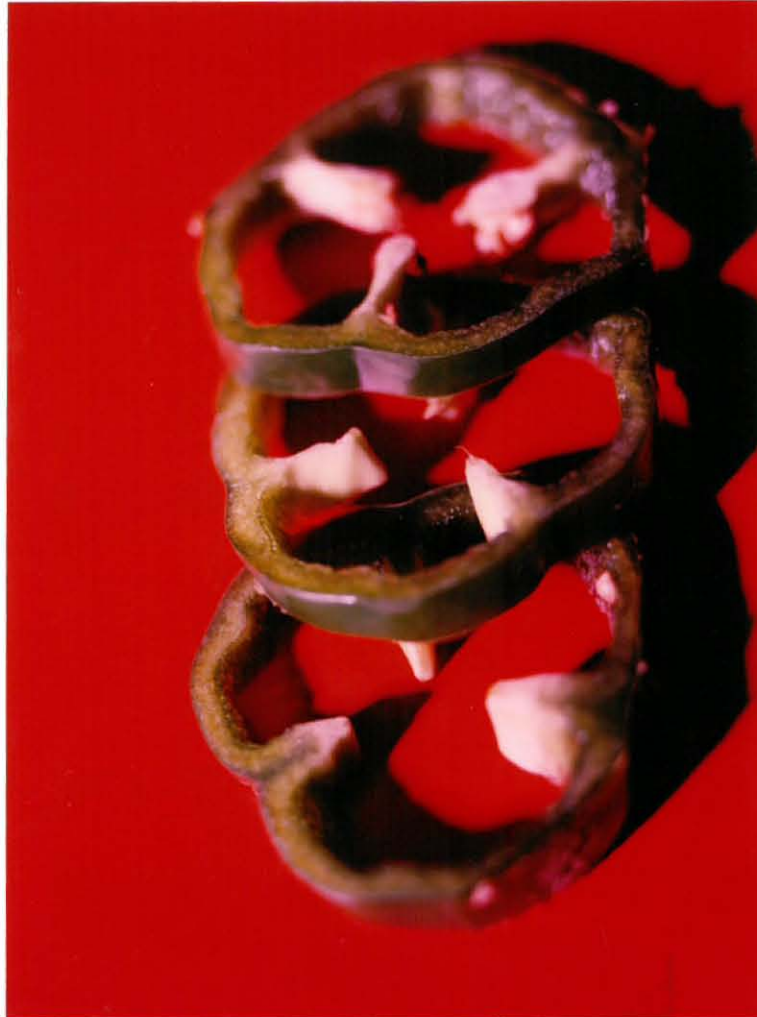


**"Sunflowers" 1998.**

Shot with Mamiya RB 6x7 camera, on Agfa RSX 100 ISO film, which was reversed

with the C41 process, to enhance the colour of these flowers. A standard 90 mm lens was used set on f16, and shot in the studio, using Elinchrome Flashes. Although the flowers look real, they are in fact artificial. The colour is pure and true to life and the composition is loose, but in this case, because of the shape and texture of the sunflowers, it is not disturbing.

**FIGURE IV**



**"Peppers" 1998.**

Following the same procedure as with the "Sunflowers" and "Fruit", this shot was also done on a Mamiya RB 6x7 camera, also using colour reversal film, developed

in the C41 process.

The colours are bright and saturated. Compositionally, the simplicity works well and the repetition of the peppers' shape leads the eye back and forth. Very shallow depth of field was used, f5,6, to create a sense of depth, because so little is in focus.

A strong sidelight was used, in the studio, to create the shadows, which appear black and enhances the green on the red, broken by white, even more.

**FIGURE V**



**"Bath" 1996**

Shot with a 35 mm Pentax camera, using FP4 125 ISO black of white film, and a macro lens set on f8.

The bath was lying between bushes, very dirty, but with great ambiance. The composition includes the most interesting part of the bath, and the visible dirt creates the feeling that water should be flowing from the taps, even though it's clear that that won't happen. The front tap is much larger than the rear one, which leads the eye into the image, and the shallow depth of field helps to keep the focus on the taps. The angle also helps in this respect.

It was printed high contrast, to help create mood. The taps took almost real, as if one could reach out and open them.

**FIGURE VI**



**"Untitled" 1997**

Shot with a 35 mm Pentax camera, using FP4 125 ISO film. A standard lens was used set on f11.

In this image, all the curves and lines are very flowing. The water, which moves in places, also brings on the feeling of flow. The shapes of the rocks and its textures, and the water are all in harmony with one another. It is not at all grainy, which gives it an even softer feel. The image is rich in tones, ranging white, through greys and black.

**FIGURE V11**



**"Untitled" 1998.**



Shot with a Mamiya RB 6x7 camera, using Agfa RSX 100 ISO film, which was reversed, developed in the C41 process. A standard 90 mm lens was used, set on f8.

The image has a warm, comforting feel to it, caused by the colour, composition and the texture of the seeds. The composition is loose, but not disorganized. I was printed monotone, to keep the focus on the seeds and their texture and shape, because more colours would have distracted. The seeds have great detail and their texture is dual; having very hard, prickly exteriors, and on the other hand very soft and fluffy interiors, a contradiction which works well.

**FIGURE IIX**



**"Untitled" 1996.**

Shot on a Mamiya RB 6x7 camera, using Agfa Professional Agfapan 100 ISO film, a standard 90 mm lens, set on f8. The camera was almost on the ground, to get the angle which creates perspective. It leads the eye into the image, with the foreground out of focus on tends to look toward the middle of the image immediately.

There is a lot of detail on the tracks itself and on the surrounding gravel, which contrasts with each other.

The tracks are not in the centre of the photo, which breaks the traditional rules of composition and which makes it more interesting.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE MARKET FOR FINE-ART PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography has finally moved into the mainstream of the fine art world. This market is defined by everybody who shares in it, including the critics. There is more to creating photographs that will sell as fine art, than just understanding the market, although understanding the market is usually helpful in the creative process.

The fine-art photographer should be obsessive about creating and in order to survive be obsessive in finding the right market for your work. It is up to you whether you want to work through a Gallery or promote your own work.

Everything about your display should say that you are an artist, but it must be friendly so it does not alienate the viewer. Keep a high standard to ensure that influential people see your work, but also be prepared to interact with the general public.

All great artists struggled, and nobody will be spared this, but success is yours if you are serious about your art.

## PRICING

It comes down to the same as any other business, making a profit.

Each job is estimated on time, material and usage. The pricing is also affected by die photographer's background and experience and his productivity. The buyer must always be satisfied, that is why your quality of work must be irremediable.

Image is important when it comes to pricing. You could have a low price image, or charge high priced to create an image, but the quality of your work might be more of an image creator than the high prices you charge.

## PRICE GUIDE

### PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA-PPRA

202 Thrupps Centre,  
Tyrwhitt Avenue, Rosebank  
P.O. Box 47044  
PARKLANDS 2121

TEL: (011) 880 - 9110

AFTER HOURS: Rate + 50%

SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS: Rate + 100%

All prices include VAT:

There is not compulsion for photographers to charge the minimum rates listed below:  
Recommended average rates are quoted below in addition to the minimum rates.

### RATES PER CATEGORY

#### ADVERTISING / CREATIVE / AERIAL / MINING

	HOURLY	HALF DAY	FULL DAY
Minimum	R 480,00	R1 760,00	R3 200,00
Recommended average	R 770,00	R2 800,00	R5 100,00

### COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL / AUDIO-VISUAL

	HOURLY	HALF DAY	FULL DAY
Minimum	R 380,00	R1 400,00	R2 500,00
Recommended average	R 600,00	R2 200,00	R4 000,00

### PUBLIC RELATIONS / EDITORIAL / JOURNALISTIC

	HOURLY	HALF DAY	FULL DAY
Minimum	R 300,00	R1 100,00	R2 000,00
Recommended average	R 480,00	R1 750,00	R3 200,00

### WEDDING / SOCIAL

	HOURLY	HALF DAY	FULL DAY
Minimum	R 330,00	R1 200,00	R2 200,00
Recommended average	R 530,00	R1 950,00	R3 500,00

### CAR TRAVEL

Cost for car travel should be charged at current AA rates based on the replacement value of the vehicle. Applying average parameters for the use of a motor vehicle by professional photographers in South Africa the average rate works out as

R4.00 per km.

## CONCLUSION

Photographers have always struggled to have their work recognized as a form of art.

In 1893, William Powell Frith, a genre painter of Victorian England, stated: "In my opinion photography has not benefitted art at all:

*(The History of Photography, Beaumont Newhall, page 83)*

Charles Baudelaine was extremely harsh when he reviewed an exhibition that was held in the Palace of the Champs Elysees. He stated:

*"... if photography is allowed to supplement art in some of its fuctions, it will soon have supplanted or corrupted it altogether ...It is times, then, for it to be the servant of the science of arts"*

*(The History of Photography, Beaumont Newhall, page 83).*

Photography is the combination of science and art and for the one to exist or function without the other is impossible.

Photography was originally used to permanetly record reality and to document artists' work.

Man Ray believed that photography was an art inferior to painting and he himself only used it in the beginning to document his paintings.

*"If photographers found inspiration in paintings, painters found photography a useful ally"*

*(The History of Photography, Beaumont Newhall, page 82).*

Man Ray, Bill Brandt, Julia Margaret Cameron, Henry Peach Robinson and Oscar

G. Rejlander were photographers that used photography for more than just the representation of reality, which led to wider acceptance of this medium as a form of art.

Robinson wrote: *"beautiful photographs could be made by the mixture of the real and the artificial and that this perfect truth, this absolute rendering of light and shade and form .... are beyond the reach of painters and sculptors"*

*(The History of Photography, Beaumont Newhall, page 78)*

The present challenge of the photographer is to express inner significance through outer form.

*"It is important that we photographers show our recognition of the New Status Quo by entering our work in the Cape Town Triennial and other competitions, fully expecting our entries to be judged not as poor relatives to art, patronisingly and condescendingly, but on equal footing to any other art medium which is as it should be. We must be seen to be worthy of the recognition given to us"*

*(Profoto, October / November 1990, page 3).*

Whether something can be considered art, exist only in the viewers' mind, and that ignorance, if they are willing to change in themselves, can be changed.



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