

"I only wanted Uncle Vern standing by his new car (a Hudson) on a clear day. I got him and the car. I also got a bit of Aunt Mary's laundry, and Beau Jack, the dog, peeing on a fence, and a row of potted tuberous begonias on the porch and 78 trees and a million pebbles in the driveway and more. It's a generous medium, photography." -- Lee Friedlander

"The first picture of his I ever saw was during a lecture at the Rhyl camera club. I was 16 and the speaker was Emrys Jones. He projected the picture upside down. Deliberately, to disregard the subject matter to reveal the composition. It's a lesson I've never forgotten. (referring to Henri Cartier-Bresson)" --Philip Jones Griffiths

If your photograph's not good enough, you're not close enough -- Robert Capa

Composition Assignment

- For this assignment, you will be shooting only outdoors and off campus.
- Your goal is to apply knowledge of art elements and design principles to compose better photographs.
- Find a half dozen to a dozen or so different subjects – try a few each of people, places and things. Something about the subjects should catch your eye and engage your interest.
- As always, photograph each subject from multiple angles, looking for good subject/background relationships and breakaways from the ordinary.
- Thoughtfully compose each photograph, consciously trying one or more design principles.
- Put creative effort into your work – look to find or make interesting photos rather than easy ones.
- Shoot a minimum of 24 exposures for each week/part to earn an average score. More will give you more of a chance to develop your skills and increase your chance of getting good photos.
- For each week of the assignment, make use of each art element and design principle listed for that week. Be ready to indicate what design principle/s inform each photograph, and how your use of it strengthens the image.

Week 1

- **Rule of thirds** (often more interesting to place subjects off-center) or center the subject and break the rule (more confrontational/in your face/dividing the picture, or more balanced, calm, stable, formal)
- **Get closer** – fill the frame
- **Simplify/Isolate your subject** – move yourself and/or the subject to get rid of distractions and visual clutter.
- **Lines & leading lines** – receding lines, spirals & curves, diagonal lines, stripes, etc.

Week 2

- **Framing** – to focus attention on a certain space, to keep the viewer's eye in the photo, to tell more about the subject. Is there a frame that relates to the subject or contrasts it? A frame has to have a subject.
- **Value/Light & Shadow** – scenes containing a range of values from dark to light are usually more pleasing than low-contrast scenes. Good lighting will catch your eye. If you find an interesting subject in poor light, think if there might be better light at a different time of day and come back.
- **Texture** – Rough, smooth, soft, weathered, etc. Side-lighting shows off texture while front-lighting minimizes it.
- **Balance** – pay attention to where your eye wants to look in the viewfinder. Try to compose images so that interesting elements move your eye throughout the image or balance/complement each other.

Week 3

- **Contrast** – the viewer's eye will be drawn to the areas of greatest contrast (of value, of color, of texture, of subject matter, etc.), and to the brightest areas.
- **Juxtaposition** – arrange two or more things in the viewfinder so that some sort of relationship is created that adds meaning to the photo.
- **Patterns & Rhythms** – and things that break them
- **Movement** - tilted horizons & diagonal lines, motion blur or frozen action