

STM PHOTO- GRAPHY

Photography Composition
using the Elements and
Principles of Art

Elements

The basic building blocks

- Line
- Shape/Form
- Space
- Texture
- Colour

Lines

- A mark made by a moving point.
- Has greater length than width.
- Directs the eye – horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curvy, zig-zag, etc.
- Can be actual obvious lines or the borders or edges of shapes.

Lines



Lines



Lines



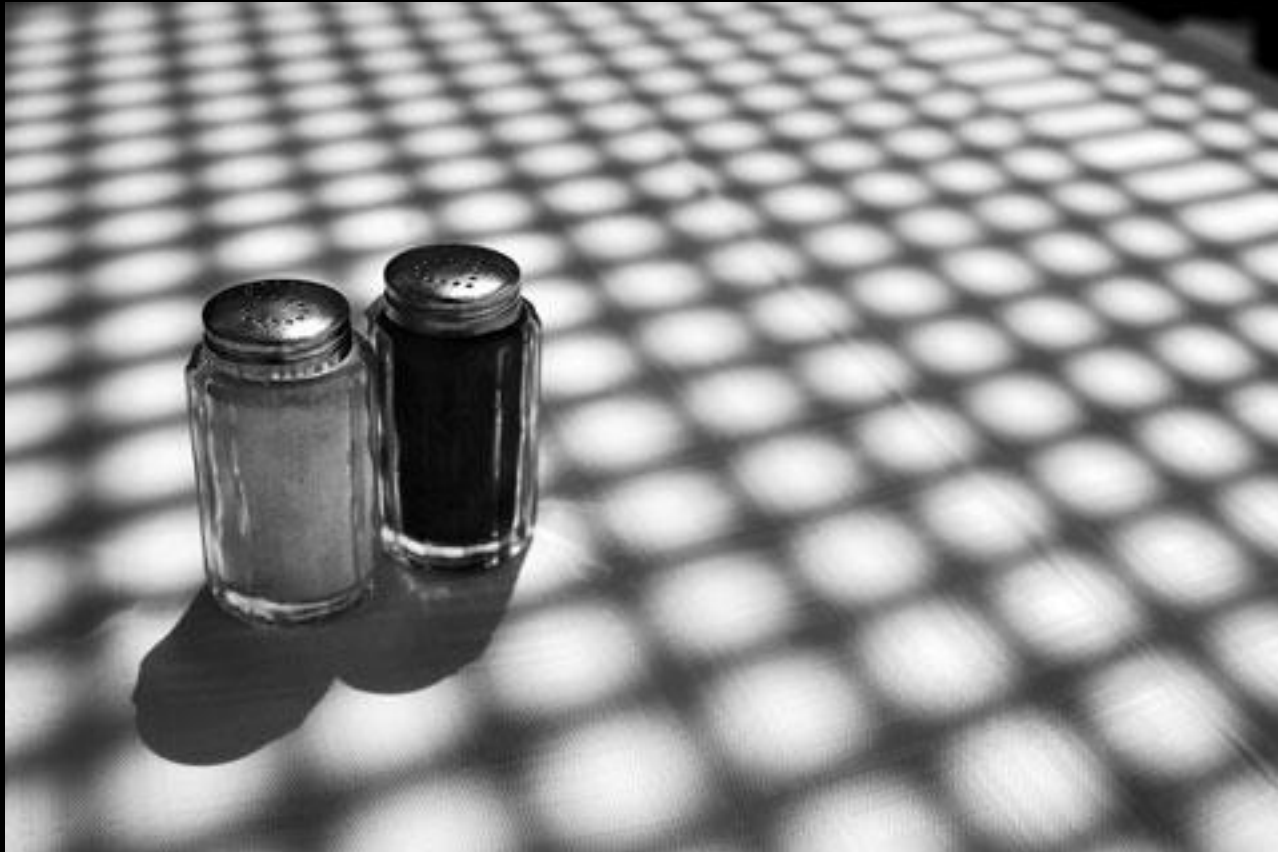
Shape/Form

- A contained area.
- Can be GEOMETRIC (man-made) ex. Square, triangle, circle, etc.
- Can be ORGANIC (natural) ex. Leaves, humans, puddles, etc.
- Shapes are 2-Dimensional and flat. (circle)
- Forms are 3-Dimensional with height, width and depth. (sphere)
- Used to create a sense of space and substance.

Shape/Form



Shape/Form



Shape/Form



Space

- The area used or unused in a composition.
- Positive space – the area the objects/subject takes up.
- Negative space – the area around, under, through and between.
- Gives the photo a 3-dimensional feeling. (Depth)
- Foreground (closest), Middle ground, and Background (farthest).
- Can be open, crowded, near, far, etc.

Space



Space



Space



Texture

- The surface quality.
- How an object feels, or how it looks like it feels.
- Rough, smooth, bumpy, gooey, sharp, etc.
- Adds interest! Sense of sight and sense of touch involved.

Texture



Texture



Texture



Colour

- Artistic term is HUE
- Need light to see color.
- Primary, Secondary, Intermediates.
- Use colour schemes to enhance appeal or make impact.

Colour



Colour



Principles

- The different arrangements – or *compositions* - of the ELEMENTS of design to create artistic, interesting, more visually powerful photographs.
- Principles

What are the Principles of Art?

- Emphasis
 - Balance
 - Unity
 - Contrast
- Movement/ Rhythm
- Pattern/Repetition

Pattern/Repetition

- An element that occurs over and over again in a composition.
- Can repeat the element in a consistent pattern.
- Can repeat the element in a variation of the pattern.

Repetition Examples



Repetition Examples



Repetition Examples



EMPHASIS or Focal Point

Emphasis in a composition refers to developing points of interest to pull the viewer's eye to important parts of the body of the work.

Emphasis Examples



Emphasis Examples



Emphasis Examples



Emphasis Examples



Balance

Balance is a sense of stability in the body of work. Balance can be created by repeating same shapes and by creating a feeling of equal weight.

Balance Examples



Balance Examples



Balance Examples



Scale

Scale is the relationship between objects with respect to size, number and so on including the relationship between parts of a whole

Scale Examples



Scale Examples



Scale Examples



Unity

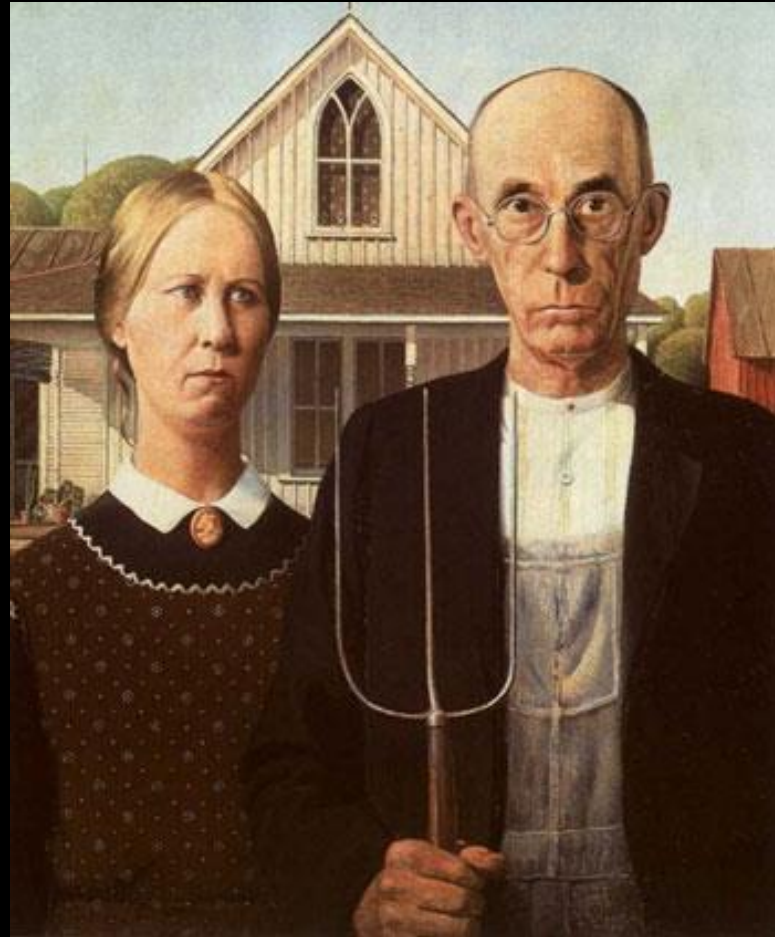
Unity is the relationship among the elements of a visual that helps all the elements function together.

Unity gives a sense of oneness to a visual image. In other words, the words and the images work together to create meaning.

Unity Examples



Unity Examples



Unity Examples



CONTRAST

Contrast refers to the opposites and differences in the work. You can achieve variety by using different shapes, textures, colors and values in your work.

Contrast Examples



Contrast Examples



Contrast Examples



'Morning Fog Emerging From Trees' by A Guy Taking Pictures on Flickr (via Sprixi). CC BY licence.

Movement

Movement adds excitement to your work by showing action and directing the viewers eye throughout the picture plane. **Rhythm** is a type of movement in drawing and painting. It is seen in repeating of shapes and colors. Alternating lights and darks also give a sense of rhythm.

Movement



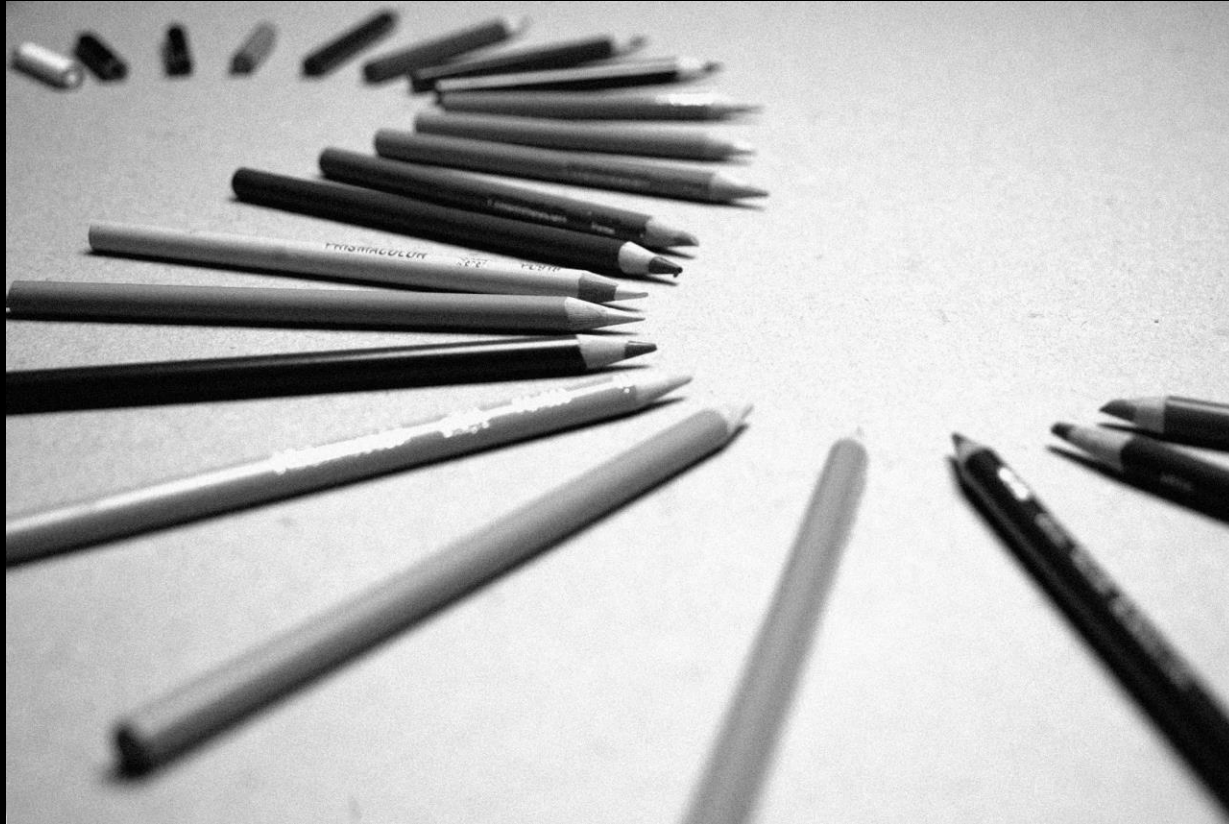
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Movement



Movement



Elements and Principles in Photographic Composition

- You have to know and understand the elements and principles of art to *see* them all around you and capture them in your photos.