

Themes 2016

1. Reflections

The reflection is a combination of a unique moment, with the intersection of people, events and places. Although the photograph is born out of a creative moment, the construction of the image is about planning and the chasing of light.

Using reflections in photography can lead to some amazing images, where the viewer often finds it difficult to distinguish between the 'real' image and the reflected one. Using water, windows, mirrors or any sort of reflective surface can change an image from something fairly straightforward to something much more interesting. Exceptional photos depend on the photographer being able to see things differently and being courageous enough to capture it.

When shooting reflections harsh light is your friend, in order to provide the contrast, tones and the three-dimensional effect that makes a good reflective image so compelling.

2. Beautiful Blur

Blur can be defined as anything that gives an impression of softness in the edges of, and indeed throughout, the photographic elements. Artistic Blur is creating this softness on purpose, for artistic effect, either in-camera or in post processing.

There is a fine line between a good result with Artistic Blur in-camera and a mistake. Blur due to incorrect focus or camera shake is usually considered to be a mistake, not an artistic effect. When a photograph is intended to be sharp, it should be sharp. If it's unintentionally blurry or soft it usually, but not always, is indicative of a less than satisfactory capture. Intentionally creating blur to look artistic takes a lot more effort through trial and error, than blur as a mistake.

Intentionally creating blur in-camera usually requires experimentation in order to be successful. Playing around with camera settings and approach will be required for each subject and situation to find something that works well. Occasionally, you'll get something interesting on the first try. Be prepared, however, for many attempts to get one photograph where it works effectively!

Movement during a long shutter speed, either of the camera or in the surroundings, is the most common way to create blur. You can move the camera with your hands, zoom during exposure or capture movement happening around you. You will need to experiment with what shutter speed gives the "right" amount of blur for an artistic look.

Below are a few ways to generate blur

- Rotating camera motion
- Static camera, moving subject

- Moving subject, moving camera
- Static subject, moving camera
- Shallow depth of field
- Swoosh camera motion
- Zoom during exposure
- Intentionally unfocussing
- Reflections
- Shooting through something else such as glass, plastic or rainy windows.

3. Cloudscapes

Generally defined as a picturesque formation of clouds. It can be a work of art representing a view of clouds: *an Impressionist painting that is a vast cloudscape of buoyant, floating forms.*

4. Freeze Frame

A freeze frame shot is traditionally used when one shot is printed in a single frame several times, in order to make an interesting illusion of a still photograph. The flow of the action can involve long exposures or a series of multiple exposures. For example, following a BMX cyclist over a jump from lead up, to airborne, to landing, in the one image. It can also involve a single frame forming a motionless image from a film or videotape.

The action can also be frozen at its peak in the one image. For example, a sports person kicking a goal, birds in flight, a child on a swing. The best shots capture the essence of the movement – speed, flow or position – in the instant recorded in the frame.

5. I See Red

Red needs to be the dominant colour in the image. Try finding red in places expected and unexpected. To take the definition one step further, the saying 'I see red' also refers to someone whose facial expression shows anger – perhaps going red in the face!

6. Look Up

Often we are so focused on where we are going that we forget to look around us. Looking up can allow us to discover unusual points of view. For example, buildings converging at the top, moonrise through a tree, lying down and taking a pet from the angle of looking up at them, people on a ferris wheel.

7. Repetition

Repetition is where multiple objects of the same shape or line are positioned in a regular, or alternate manner, to form a pattern. Not surprisingly, repetition and patterns are all around us. For example, a row of trees; a field of flowers; a line of people; a supermarket shelf; arches of a bridge or viaduct; electricity

wires and pylons; the lines created by windows in buildings. Repetition is, however, a tool which can be used to calm the viewer, making them feel comfortable by creating a sense of order and balance. When repetition is used well it can greatly increase the emotional impact of a photograph, giving the eye a pleasing journey across the image.

“Patterns are to photography, what rhythm is to music.” (Tedric Garrison)

Further reading on the net

<http://digital-photography-school.com/using-repetition-and-patterns-in-photography>

<http://www.jeanpierreattal.com/menu-en.html>

<http://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/repetition-and-patterns-in-photography/>

8. Dust and Rust

Dust and rust can transform everyday objects into dynamic photo subjects with rich colors and interesting textures. You can find dusty and rusty subjects anywhere there is iron, steel, moisture, old objects and deserted places.

Dust and rust can create a number of different types of photographs - abstract/artistic, urban/industrial, documentary, etc. You can transform everyday subjects into works of art limited only by your creative abilities. Rust, in particular, can give subjects a sense of depth.

Macro lenses, in particular, are ideal for photographing dust and rust, but not essential. Zooming into dusty/rusty spots can create surreal images. Alternatively, maintaining reality and capturing subjects that have different shades of rust or colourful peeling or bubbling paint can evoke stories of the past, often adding character to ordinary objects.

9. Still Life

Still life photography is the depiction of inanimate subject matter, most typically a small grouping of objects. Still life photography, more so than other types of photography, such as landscape or portraiture, gives the photographer more leeway in the arrangement of design elements within a composition.

Still life photography is a demanding art, one in which the photographers are expected to be able to form their work with a refined sense of lighting, coupled with compositional skills. The still life photographer *makes* pictures rather than *takes* them. Knowing where to look for props and surfaces is also a skill and can be a great deal of fun.

10. Time Lapse

Time-lapse photography creates unique images, which usually impact highly on the viewer. Subjects can include nature and the slow changes that occur over a period of time – a flower blooming, a sunset or a moonrise. It can also include a construction project or a cityscape at night, full of activity and production. Either way it is the capture of change in a way that we don't normally see, the telling of a story and change that makes time-lapse what it is.

Put simply: We are manipulating time. Objects and events that would normally take minutes, days, hours, or months can be viewed to completion in seconds having been speeded up by factors of tens to millions. A challenge indeed!