

Homework!

ADVANCED DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY | PHO 2700
INSTRUCTOR CARRIE ACOSTA, TUESDAYS 6 PM - 9:55 PM

INSTRUCTIONS

For homework, complete the following shooting assignments WITHOUT using flash, unless otherwise indicated. From each shoot, submit both a print and digital file(s) to the corresponding homework folder on the server, renaming the filename with your name. Keep close track of your progress with these. You will be amazed at your improvement. The more time you spend with the camera in your hand, the faster you will master your tool and perfect your craft.

Please see the Composition lecture and the Composition & Techniques handout for reference, as well as the web links provided.

DUE JAN 17: DECONSTRUCTING COLOR

Exploring the concept of how a color image is formed, take three different exposures of one scene (changing something in each shot) and composite it to form one new photo. The part that moves in the different shots will show as the color channel it becomes (Cyan, Magenta or Yellow). See the Deconstructing Color tutorial for complete instructions which will also be covered in class. Shoot two completely different scenes / photos and submit two final compositions.

DUE JAN 31: MOTION AND MINIMUM DOF

Capture one photo of motion and one photo using a minimum depth of field. This is a refreshment of basic camera skills you should have in your arsenal. This time around, I want to see creative use of lighting and composition in addition to the camera effects.

About Capturing Motion

Use Tv (Time-Variable or Shutter Priority) to control your shutter speed. The longer the exposure, the more motion will be visible in the photo. (For exposures longer than 1/40 sec, make sure you use a tripod.) On a point and shoot, use the scene mode of the night setting for long exposures (revealing motion).

- **About the Shutter & it's Speed:** www.digital-photography-school.com/shutter-speed
- **About Aperture and Shutter Speed Priority Modes:** www.digital-photography-school.com/aperture-and-shutter-priority-modes
- **About Digital Camera Modes (Scene Modes):** www.digital-photography-school.com/digital-camera-modes
- **Scene Modes on Point and Shoots:**
www.digital-photography-school.com/how-to-control-aperture-and-shutter-speed-on-an-entry-level-point-and-shoot-digital-camera
- **Panning - Motion 101:**
www.photography.nationalgeographic.com/photography/photo-tips/motion-photography-panning-richardson/

About Capturing a Shallow Depth of Field

Use Av (Aperture-Variable or Aperture Priority) to control your f-stop setting. Use a small f-stop such as 2.8, 3.5 or 4 to capture a shallow depth of field.

- **About the Aperture:** www.digital-photography-school.com/aperture
- **About Depth-of-Field (DOF):** www.cambridgeincolour.com/tutorials/depth-of-field.htm
- **DSLR Tips Workshop: How to take portraits with blurred backgrounds (vid):**
www.dslrtips.com/workshops/How_to_take_portraits_with_blurred_background/people_small_depth_of_field.shtml
- **DSLR Bokeh Tutorial:** www.robertsdonovan.com/?p=702
- **How to Get Shallow DOF:** www.digital-photography-school.com/how-to-get-shallow-depth-of-field-in-your-digital-photos
- **Out of Focus—On Purpose:** www.photography.nationalgeographic.com/photography/photo-tips/out-of-focus-richardson/
- **About Aperture and Shutter Speed Priority Modes:** www.digital-photography-school.com/aperture-and-shutter-priority-modes
- **About Digital Camer Modes (Scene Modes):** www.digital-photography-school.com/digital-camera-modes
- **Scene Modes on Point and Shoots:** www.digital-photography-school.com/how-to-control-aperture-and-shutter-speed-on-an-entry-level-point-and-shoot-digital-camera

DUE FEB 14: PHOTOGRAPHS AS INTERPRETATIONS - PAINTING WITH LIGHT

Despite capturing reality, Sontag argues that photographs are also interpretations. Using a tripod and a flashlight or other continuous light source, take a long exposure at night (15 sec +) and use the light source to paint with light “on camera” and “off camera.” Submit two photos showcasing each technique.

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- **About Painting with Light:** www.diyphotography.net/painting_with_light
- **Painting with Light Tutorial - Off Camera:** <http://vimeo.com/24142577>
- **Painting with Light Tutorial - On Camera:** <http://vimeo.com/21995074>
- **Painting with Light Tutorial - Orbs:** <http://vimeo.com/21438228>
- **Painting with Light Tutorial - Writing:** <http://lightpaintingphotography.com/light-painting-tutorials/pipslab/>

DUE FEB 21: BEAUTY IN THE ORDINARY - HDR

Find beauty in the ordinary by capturing an everyday scene and interpreting it with HDR and a black and white conversion. Use a tripod (required) and take three exposures for one HDR image. One photo at the correct exposure for the scene, one exposure one stop over (+1) and one exposure one stop under (-1). Use Photoshop's HDR Pro to combine them into one image.

Next, convert them to black and white using Camera RAW, the Black and White Adjustment or the Channel Mixer adjustment. Try experimenting with an infrared effect, or yellow, red or orange filters (in Channel Mixer). Submit one final HDR image that has been converted to black and white.

- **How to Shoot HDR:** <http://www.digital-photography-school.com/setting-up-your-digital-camera-for-hdr-shooting>
- **HDR Pro Tutorial:** <http://tv.adobe.com/watch/learn-photoshop-cs5/create-enhanced-hdr-images-with-hdr-pro/>
- **HDR Toner Tutorial:** <http://tv.adobe.com/watch/learn-photoshop-cs5/using-faux-hdr-toning/>
- **Photoshop CS5 Book for Digital Photographers:** Chapter 7: How to Create Stunning B&W Images

DUE MAR 20: PANORAMAS

Explore the panoramic format for both the traditional landscape, and for a portrait. Remember that you can shoot both vertically and horizontally - experiment and be creative! Using a tripod, take a minimum of four different photos horizontally or vertically and composite them using Adobe Photoshop's Photomerge. Each photo must overlap a minimum of 30% for best results. Submit one panorama featuring people and one of a landscape.

- **Creating a Panorama:** <http://tv.adobe.com/watch/learn-photoshop-cs5/creating-a-panorama/>
- **Photoshop Book for Digital Photographers:** Chapter 10: Side Effects "Panoramas Made Crazy Easy"

Extra Credit Opportunities

You can shoot and turn these in at any time during the semester.

PHOTOGRAPHS AS FRAGMENTS

Sontag points out that photographs are fragments because their context changes them. Take a series of photographs and write a fictional paragraph caption for each one that might realistically convince the viewer of the false context. Submit five photos with the captions.

INSIDER/OUTSIDER

Take a series of portraits, one set in which you are the "insider," and you know the subjects, and one in which you are the "outsider," and the subjects are strangers to you. Turn in four final portraits, two of each.

10 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN TAKING A PHOTO

1. WHAT STORY AM I TELLING?

This is an important question and one that should help you to make any number of decisions in terms of composition, framing, exposure etc. In essence what you're asking is 'why am I taking this shot? What is its purpose and what am I trying to convey?' Is it purely a way to keep a record of a moment, are you trying to capture the emotion of a moment, is it possibly a shot to give to someone, is it part of a larger series of shots or will it be the only shot to commemorate the moment etc. Read more on telling stories with photos

2. WHAT IS THE VISUAL FOCAL POINT OF THIS SHOT?

What will viewers of this picture naturally have their eye drawn to in this scene? Once you've identified this focal point you can think about where to place it in the frame (consider the rule of thirds for example).

3. WHAT COMPETING FOCAL POINTS ARE THERE?

Once you've identified what you do want your viewers eyes to be drawn towards and have placed it in the frame – scan your eyes over the shot and see if there are any competing focal points and ask yourself whether they add to or take away from the image? Secondary focal points can add depth to shots but they can also be very distracting and so you might need to reposition yourself or adjust your focal length and/or depth of field to accommodate or remove them from your shots (read more on removing clutter from photography). Also keep in mind that if your shot has more than one focal point that it might be worth taking two shots, one of each focal point, in order to keep things simple.

4. WHAT IS IN THE BACKGROUND AND FOREGROUND?

One of most common places for distractions in digital photography is the background of your shots. Run your eyes over the space behind your subject to see what else is in the image (do the same for the foreground). Consider whether you want the background in focus or nice and blurry.

5. AM I CLOSE ENOUGH?

Another common mistake in digital photography is taking shots where your subject is too small in the frame. Shots that fill the frame with your subject tend to be much more dynamic and show a lot more detail of your subject. To get this effect you have the option of moving yourself closer, moving your subject closer or using a longer focal length to give the effect of closeness.

6. WHAT IS THE MAIN SOURCE OF LIGHT?

Always give consideration to how your subject is lit. Without light you'll lose detail and clarity in your image and your camera will have to compensate by doing things like increasing ISO and lengthening shutter speeds (which could lead to noisy and blurred images). What is the main source of light, where is it coming from, is there enough light, do you need artificial light sources (flash etc), do you need to stabilize your camera on a tripod to stop camera shake due to low light etc. Read more on using artificial light here and here as well as photographing moving subjects in low light conditions.

7. IS MY FRAMING STRAIGHT?

It's amazing how many otherwise good photos are spoiled by framing that is slightly off. Sloping horizons and slightly leaning people or buildings should always be in the back of your mind to check. Read more on getting horizons horizontal and getting other lines straight.

8. WHAT OTHER PERSPECTIVES COULD I CAPTURE THIS SUBJECT FROM?

Put 10 digital camera owners in front of a scene and most of them will take exactly the same shot from the same position. Make your images stand out from the crowd by challenging yourself to not only take the standard shots that everyone else will get but to find creative and fresh angles and perspectives to shoot from.

9. HOW WOULD HOLDING THE CAMERA IN THE OTHER FORMAT CHANGE THIS SHOT?

Many photographers get into the habit of always holding their camera the same way (horizontally/landscape or vertically/portrait). While it's OK to have a preference one way or the other it's also worth remembering that changing the format can drastically change the impact of the shot. Don't forget you can also hold your camera at an angle for an effective result too.

10. HOW WILL THE EYE TRAVEL THROUGH THIS IMAGE?

This is related to asking about focal points but gets in touch with the fact that while you're photographing a still image your viewers eyes don't remain still as they look at an image. People tend to follow lines and are attracted to shapes and colors so considering all of these different visual elements and cues can help improve your shots considerably.