

SYLLABUS – SPRING 2021

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In preparation for our classes, you will be given weekly homework assignments consisting of readings, YouTube videos, and individual photo shoots with photo submissions to the class for discussion. Classroom format will consist of presentations of different photography topics and discussing the participants' submitted photos. Photo shoots will be done on your own. Details of the shoots will be communicated in class, with suggested subjects and locations for each assignment.

BEYOND THE SNAPSHOT SYLLABUS – SPRING 2021

(Click on the following link for a printable PDF version of the calendar: [Beyond the Snapshot – Spring 2021 Calendar v2](#))

Pre-Assignment for First Class – Due Tuesday, March 16 by 5PM

By Tuesday evening, March 16th, please email 3 of your favorite photos to us that you have taken of any subject that you like, e.g., landscape, portraits, nature, street photography, abstracts, etc. Please e-mail images to ALL 3 coordinators (tpausa@icloud.com, dparker1@me.com, sbarker@alumni.risd.edu) and copy yourself.

Class #1 – Thursday, March 18

Topics: Photography and seeing / How do we find our photographic vision? / Review Student Images

Homework for Next (March 25) Class

Explore the ordinary

- Rest and explore your surroundings for about 15-20 minutes before choosing your subject to photograph. Choose something that catches your attention while exploring.
- Choose one of the following images: Garbage dumpster, Car, Section of a sidewalk, Parking meter, Wall, Fire hydrant, or Doorway.
Or choose something else you prefer to photograph.
- Create at least 10 photos of one subject that are thematic and cohesive.
- Send us 3 images (the first image, last image, and your favorite image – please label each image).

Purpose of exercise: Go beyond limiting your ideas of interesting and boring and find new perceptions.

Think of Edward Weston's Peppers in Black and White!

(Optional Creative Exercise)

- Find about 10-12 photographs you like.
 - Explore what interests you in the images. Look at the lines, light, whether or not there is a slow shutter speed that blur some action or shallow depth of field caused by a wide angle and note these. Also notice the subject, the point of view of the photographer, and the choice of the moment.
 - Examine the images to see what made you care about these images. Knowing what connects with you visually and emotionally is the first step in understanding how to make your own photographs connect with others.
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Class #2 – Thursday, March 25

Topics: Rules of Composition / When do we use the rules and when do we create new ones / Review student images

Homework for Next (April 1) Class

Exploring the Energy: Composition

Part 1

- You may want to choose one of the rules of composition like Point of View or Foreground Interest and Framing to challenge yourself to see differently, rather than the easier or more straightforward Leading Lines, or Color/Pattern/Texture, or Symmetry and Asymmetry as ways to approach a subject that intrigues you as you go out to shoot this week. (That said, if those things really speak to you, or the subject that jumps out at you this week calls out for those, then, by all means, of course you should choose what makes sense.) You could return to a favorite subject with this in mind, or go for a walk around the house or outside and see what presents itself. Hopefully, there may be a little flicker of excitement when you see something interesting. Pay attention to that – get curious about it. Get clicking.
- Take at least 10 images (or maybe you get into it and shoot off 50 as you think about more things you could do as you shoot – it's called "Working the Scene"). You may find you start off thinking about the rules of composition, but soon the subject matter will lead you into completely different thoughts – good! That's as it should be; by all means play around. Play is the operative word here.

Part 2

- Choose a few images to crop, **paying attention to where the energy is in the image**, removing the extraneous parts that make it harder for the viewer to feel what you're seeing in it (you're removing the visual static so your vision is clearer). This is where returning to the "rules of composition" can help, the rule of thirds especially. Ask yourself: Does the crop help draw the eye in and through the image? Does the image feel more dynamic or powerful in its emotional impact from whittling away at it?
- **Note:** If you need help with your cropping tool, please email one of us and we can help.
- **Hint:** Often you will wrestle with 2 things you really like in the photo, but keeping both in frequently weakens the impact. It's usually better to choose one and crop optimally for that. You can make a duplicate and do a second crop featuring the other option and see which ends up being stronger. It's that cake and eat it too thing – usually can't have things both ways.
- **Choose 3 pictures of cropped photos to send us (before and after – a total of 6).**

NB: You may have nailed a good photo that doesn't need a crop – hooray! Send that one – this isn't a cropping exercise, but a learning to see exercise.

Purpose of exercise: How a photograph is organized or composed will affect its visual power and it's meaning. Also, how do the rules of composition affect your image?

For Further Study (Optional)

- Six Advanced Tips for Photography Composition – <https://improvephotography.com/11769/six-advanced-tips-photography-composition/>
- Shoot for the Light – Improve Your Composition – <https://digital-photography-school.com/shoot-for-the-light-improve-your-composition/>
- Bridging The Gap: Classical Art Designed for Photographers – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwk3YFknyNA>

Class #3 – Thursday, April 1

Topics: Composing with Color/ Review student images

Homework for Next (April 8) Class

Composing with Color

- Capture color as your first goal. Keep a narrow focus only on color and free from any association. Look at colors rather than objects – see the redness of red and blueness of blue without superimposing anything on them.
- Things NOT to do: 1) do not take photos that are black, white, gray or beige – instead, look for bold, vivid colors; 2) do not shoot graffiti or graphic designs; 3) do not shoot words or letters or numbers; and 4) do not shoot flowers. Try not to think about the meaning of anything you see.
- Get in close so that you can see what attracted you
- Examine whether it is a vertical or horizontal perspective and take a shot.
- Send us 3 color images.

Purpose of exercise: this exercise emphasizes the use of color to help you tell your story.

For Further Study: Color Wheels

- <https://www.canva.com/colors/color-wheel/>
- <https://color.adobe.com/create/color-wheel>
- <https://paletton.com/#uid=1000uokllllaFwogOqFqFgowaF>

Class #4 – Thursday, April 8

Topics: Composing with Light / Review student images

Homework for Next (April 15) Class

Composing with Light

- Choose 1 subject and photograph it in different light situations. Try to spend at least 20 – 30 minutes photographing your images. You may want to take the pictures at different times of the day. See the different feelings from the different lighting. See what lighting best expresses your intent. Vary the light from different directions by either moving the object or light source.
- Send us 3 light photos that best express your intent.

Purpose of exercise: this exercise emphasizes light as an essential element of composition and the powerful impact of light on how and what we see. Explore different options.

Class #5 – Thursday, April 15

Topics: Black & White Photography / Review student images

Homework for Next (April 22) Class

Black and White Photography

- Rest and explore your surroundings for about 10-15 minutes before choosing your subject to photograph.
 - Choose something that catches your attention while exploring.
 - Think of the qualities that help create a dynamic black and white image (composition, visual impact, mood, intentional darkness or lightness, and presence of textures/patterns).
 - Create at least 10 photos. Send us 3 photos that you find compelling, interesting, and that you like based on your vision for your work. What are the elements of the photo that make it work?
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Class #6 – Thursday, April 22

Topics: Exploring Abstraction / Review student images

Homework for Next (April 29) Class

Exploring Abstraction

- There is no end to the approaches to abstraction but one thing is a constant: a good composition. How does the eye move around the image? There may be no focal point, no “real” subject, just a satisfying arrangement of shapes, patterns, textures, lights and darks. It can be fun to play around with an object (at home, in nature, architecture, water illuminated in your sink), and just try zooming in enough that we lose our usual cues as to what the object is. Is it still interesting? Different kinds of lighting can make a big difference – a table setting in dramatic side lighting feels very different from the expected. Post processing can add some fun and a million more options if you’re comfortable with doing that, or even if you want to play with it for the first time (try grunge in Snapseed – it’s not what you might think). I’m not saying we shouldn’t know what the object is, but if you can show it to us in a way that helps us see it freshly, or we recognize it secondarily, only after looking at it for a moment, then you will help us see anew. In trying to lose the “itness”, you might find something else. It’s a treasure hunt, of course – all photo shoots are.
- Alternatively, you can move the camera, and play with color blurs, or, or...
- The more you can approach this playful, “I wonder what would happen if I...”, the more fun you may have. You can even just try randomly taking a picture randomly when you go for a walk or are just walking around the house. I’m sure we’ve all taken pix when we didn’t intend to, and I’m finding some of those pretty interesting – I haven’t deleted all of them.
- Send us 3 pix this week – it can from the same “subject” or three different subjects.

Purpose of the exercise: Since we tend to take the familiar for granted, this will give you the opportunity to find mystery in the familiar.

Class #7 – Thursday, April 29

Topics: Examining the Great Photographers and explore their creative imagery / Review student images

Homework for Next (May 6) Class

Examining Great Photographers

Choose a Great Photographer and explore someone who inspires you. (You may choose a photographer from the list provided, or if you prefer, you may choose someone who inspires you. Try taking pictures using some of their ideas that have inspired you. You may want to look beyond individual images and study their work in more detail. See how their images work together.

Send us 3 images using some of their ideas that inspired you and how they influence you and your personal vision.

Great Photographers to Choose From (or pick someone who inspires you)

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|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Sebastiao Salgado | 13. Alfred Stieglitz | 24. Annie Lebowtitz |
| 2. Edward Weston | 14. Richard Avedon | 25. Imogen Cunningham |
| 3. Elliott Erwitt | 15. Walker Evans | 26. Vivian Maier |
| 4. Robert Capa | 16. Yousof Karsh | 27. Roy Decardeva |
| 5. Steve McCurry | 17. Henri Cartier Bresson | 28. Robert Frank |
| 6. Diane Arbus | 18. Gary Winogrand | 29. Margaret Bourke White |
| 7. Consuelo Kamagu | 20. Cindy Sherman | 31. Gregory Crewsdon |
| 8. Art Wolfe | 19. Josef Sudah | 30. Phillip Halsman |
| 9. Paul Strand | 21. Larry Beard | 32. Peter Lik |
| 10. Man Ray | 22. Andreas Gursky | 33. Eliot Porter |
| 11. Phillipe Halsman | 23. Sally Mann | 34. Joel Meyerowitz |
| 12. Frans Lanting | | |

Youtube Videos to Watch

Ansel Adams – Art of Photography: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gySXVFEFSfQ>

Margaret Bourke White – The Great Artists: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2U6UIt5ZgOU>

Class #8 – Thursday, May 6

Topics: Cell phone Photography / Review student images

Homework for Next (May 13) Class

Cell Phone Photography

- Take at least 10 images of any subject using good (intentional) composition and also incorporating any of the photographic topics discussed up to now (Abstraction, Black & White, Color, etc.).
- Perform basic edits on 3 of the images or add filters (special effects) using mobile phone photo-editing software, such as **Snapseed**.
- Send us the 3 edited images

Note: Feel free to use an iPad or another other mobile device to take or edit your photos. If you don't have a functional mobile device, just use your regular camera and edit 3 pics as noted above.

Purpose of exercise: To get more comfortable shooting with your cell phone and utilizing mobile phone photo-editing tools. This is an easy assignment – try to have fun with it!

For Further Study (Optional)

Class #9 – Thursday, May 13

Topics: Contemplations on a Theme: Telling a story – What do you find inspiring? / Review student images

Homework for Next (May 20) Class

Create a story and share your vision

- Create a story and choose a topic for yourself. (ex. graduations, children playing, pets, flowers/gardens, the current environment, buildings, beaches, reflections or any other topic you prefer.)
- Using the tools we explored, take up to 10 photographs and create your personal story.
- Before you share your ideas through your work, go through the photos and find those that have the elements in the pictures that tell the story.
- Also examine your photos – did you follow the rules of composition? Did it work or not work? What would you change and why?

Send us 3 photos that communicate your vision

Class #10 – Thursday, May 20

Topics: Review student images / Slide how of all images / Wrap up