

Photographic constructs

Photographic constructs are the compositional techniques or imaging methods that are applied when constructing a photograph that compliment the context and direct the viewer to the meaning. These can also be referred to as the creative devices.

Rule of thirds

A compositional technique where the subject is placed at the intersection of imaginary dividing lines that fall at the intersection of perpendicular one-third divisions of an image.

Dominant foreground & contributing background

A compositional technique where the subject is placed in the foreground such that it commands approximately 1/4 of the image area while the visible background provides supporting information that contributes to the understanding of the subject.

Juxtaposition

A technique where two elements are aligned in such a way as to draw attention to the subject or relationship between the elements and add a new layer of information by the visual pairing.

Introduction of color in a monochromatic scene

A photograph where the overriding tones are of similar hue and the subject is of another color such that the viewer is drawn to the subject.

Decisive moment

A photograph that captures the peak moment of action and draws attention to the subject by use of the visual intrigue in stopped motion.

Leading lines

A compositional technique where strong visual lines within the image lead the viewer to the subject. This is sometimes referred to as linear perspective.

Repeating shapes

A photograph where the repetition of element shapes reinforces the subject and/or draws the viewer into the subject.

Disorder into order

A photograph that contains repeating shapes such that there is an overriding order to the image while the subject does not repeat the shape and disrupts the order.

Silhouette

A photograph that is backlit so that the subject is lacking in detail and appears as a dark shape against a lighter background.

Reflection

The use of a reflected image within the photograph to emphasize the subject.

Symmetry

A photograph that is composed such that the elements are symmetrical or balanced.

Framing

A compositional technique where elements are included that frame the subject.

Selective focus

A photographic technique that utilizes a shallow depth of field (a narrow area that is in clear focus) so that elements closer to the viewer and those beyond the subject are not clearly defined thereby drawing attention to the subject.

Motion

Either two methods that imply movement in a still image: by following the subject with the camera as the picture is taken using a slower shutter speed so that the background is rendered in blurry streaks; by using a slow shutter speed and holding the camera still thereby rendering those elements that are in motion as blurs.