

Jefferson County Photo Club January 2018 Meeting Minutes

The January meeting of the Jefferson County Photo Club was held on Tuesday, January 9, 2018. Items discussed were as follows:

The meeting minutes from the December meeting were approved.

We had a discussion about our web hosting renewal, domain renewal, and our Word Press site. The domain renewal was paid, as well as an upgrade to our Word Press site so we can use that as our website. Alice mentioned that she was having a problem with her hosting company, ehost.com. Eric offered to form a Web Technology Committee to discuss not only getting the clubs site upgraded, but to also assist club members with setting up their own sites. Eric will send an email out to solicit interest.

Since it is the new year, club dues are due. Ellen Hardesty will collect from anyone who wants to pay.

The Berkeley Art Works has a call to artists for their Eighth Annual Art and Earth Juried Exhibit. If you are interested, please click [here](#).

Our topic of the night was Composition, and had short presentations by the Program Committee. Highlights were:

- Doug gave a discussion on Ansel Adams. Not the typical landscape photos that most are familiar with, but some of his other work that displayed great use of the composition theories to draw the eye to the areas of his photos. Doug had some excellent examples to show.
- Peter gave some discussion from a few books that he brought to the meeting. These included: *How to take good photos by Kodak* – using angles to draw the eye into areas of the photos as well as breaking the rules of composition to stand out; *The Somnambulist* by Ralph Gibson; Photograms (non-camera photos), Solarization (expose photo paper to light before developing), and Surrealist photos all by Man Ray; and, last, Alfred Stieglitz book of photos of clouds as equivalents for music and portrait of hands.

- Melanie first gave out a handout with some great information regarding The Gestalt Principles and Words to Know. This will be emailed out to all club members. She talked about the photos from Annie Lebowitz and Henry Cartier-Bresson, and how they used angles in their photography. Melanie also had a graph that showed how you can over impose to your photos to see how your angles line up. The graph can be found [here](#).
- Rip gave the final presentation. He said that each photographer has their own ideas on composition and since only knows what his thoughts were on his photos, he brought some of his own to discuss. Some of the comments he provided on the subject were: Use people when you can – this will help your photo to stand out; Provide a frame with a frame, when applicable; Ask yourself – how are you going to arrange your shot; Use the quality of light to add to your composition; Put your subject in context; and, finally, Don't be afraid to use panoramic cropping.

We then moved on to Tech Talk. Alice brought up that her web hosting service, ehost.com, has gone out of business and she is trying to save her website as it is set up. Eric offered to see if he can get a snapshot of how her site is set up. We then went on to talk about other web hosting available. Melanie suggested Zenfolio, and we talked about Word Press. Eric gave a demonstration of a video he was producing and documenting for work that used a series of photos through different programs.

JD cleans cameras for a living and offered to bring his stuff at the next meeting and clean cameras for those that want to have theirs cleaned.

Our assignment for January was Cold. We had photos that were brought from Rip, Alice, Doug, JD, Peter, and Melanie. Eric bough a “camera parka” that he had purchased and brought it to share with everyone.

Our next meeting will be held on February 13, 2018. Our Assignment will be Love. Our presentation will be Black & White vs. Color photos.

Handout from Meeting:

The Gestalt Principles

1. Figure-Ground – Figure-Ground refers to the relationship between an object and its surroundings. Do you see the figure in front of you or the background?

Sometimes, it's easy to pick out the Figure, which is the object (the positive space) from the Ground, which is everything else (the negative space). But it can be difficult, at other times, to pick out the figure from the ground. It's important to keep a balance between the negative and positive space as well as making the figure a quick read. In other words, be sure to make a clear distinction between the figure and the ground.

2. Closure – One of the ways to keep the viewer involved in our photographs is to have them complete an image, a form, or an idea. In other words, fill in the . That's Closure. The brain has the ability to complete an unfinished form or subject and fill in the missing pieces. If enough of the shape is indicated, the viewer will perceive the whole. The viewer will also accept the fact that the forms are completed outside of the frame.

3. Continuance – In this concept, the viewer has an instinctive tendency to follow a path, river, beach, fence line, tree line, steps, railroad tracks, etc. These compositional elements are very important; they provide a way for the viewer to travel around our frame, and if these elements leave the frame, all the better.

4. The Law of Common Fate – This is a fairly simple concept which basically refers to “Visual Direction” within a photograph. For example, if you have two or more people moving in the same direction, you've created a directional line, and this line is known as the Law of Common Fate. Together they have a common destiny, and they become the dominant theme in a photograph; they're also perceived as one unit.

5. Similarity – Similarity is perhaps the easiest of all the Principles of Gestalt to recognize and therefore explain without going into too much detail. Similarity occurs when forms, colors, sizes or objects look enough alike to be perceived as a group or pattern in the viewer's mind. All these different elements, when occurring in your photos, give a sense of rhythm and will connote harmony.

6. Proximity – One of the most diverse, interesting, and sometimes complicated of all the principles, I've saved for last. .. 'Proximity'. If you've ever felt that your composition was a little off and you weren't sure why, you might have been suffering from a Proximity Flaw.

Words To Know

1:1.5 Ratio: The 35mm negative measures 36mm x 24mm. Mathematically it can be reduced to a 3:2 ratio. Reduced even further it will be referred to as the 1:1.5 Ratio or the 1.5 Rectangle.

Eyes: The frame of an image is created by two vertical lines and two horizontal lines. The intersection of these lines is called an eye. The four corners of a

negative can be called the “eyes.” This is extremely important because the diagonals connecting these lines will form the breakdown of an image.

Armature: When we use specific rectangles there is a system of connecting and intersecting lines that create a grid, or armature, which will form the composition. They are created by finding specific diagonal lines and their reciprocals.

Gamut: As we will see there are 360° in the image circle of a lens. This creates more lines in any armature than we would like to use. The limited number of directions we use in a composition is called the Gamut. Good artists rarely use more than 5 or 6 in any one image. As Myron Barnstone taught me, if you use all the lines of the grid your picture will look like the bottom of a bird cage.

Intervals: These are lines that are repeated throughout that create a rhythm in a picture.

The Horizontal, Vertical, & Diagonal lines: Artists have a very limited alphabet. At their disposal they have a point, a vertical, horizontal, diagonal line, and a curve or arabesque. In order to successfully design compositions all good artists and photographers organize schemes with straight lines.

Major Lines: In an image we are creating a hierarchy. If there is no hierarchy it is very difficult for the viewer to understand what is important in an image. There is usually a single vertical, horizontal and diagonal line that dominates a composition.

Reciprocal: This is a line that intersects a diagonal at a 90° angle. Introducing the reciprocal will strengthen an image by reinforcing the diagonal. But careful, it should support not compete with the diagonal.

1.5 Armature: There are two ways to break down a 1.5 rectangle. The most basic is the 1.5 Armature. It is created by drawing two diagonals from each corner of a negative. Then draw their reciprocals from opposing corners, which intersect the diagonals at 90° • Through the Eyes of the Diagonal and their reciprocals, draw vertical and horizontal lines through their intersections. The 1.5 Armature was a very popular method used by Cartier Bresson early in his career.