



Photograph with an Artist's Eyes

...

A Sense of the Place

This series is about Seeing

with both a Photographer's
& Artist's Eyes

Photographers tend to be left brain controlled worrying about the physics of light and the technical mechanism to capture it. *F-stops, ISO, exposure, depth of field, sharp focus*

Artists tend to be right brain controlled worrying about composition, colour, texture, tonal value. Things they must *see accurately and interpret* in the media they are using.

Why not combine the two approaches?

Overused fuzzy phrase?

Unfortunately **A Sense of Place** has become synonymous with a marketer's hollow claims, a set of warm and fuzzy buzzwords for real estate developers and/or an environmentalist excuse for nature. In my view it is none of these it is about creating memories within a strong spatial context, often with a deep personal, emotional or spiritual connections.

A Sense of Place is a very powerful aspect for an artist trying to convey to his viewers why the place and their work is important and demands a longer view. It might be the feel of the warmth of sun on their face, the chill of rain or wind in their hair, the fleeting colour of the dawn, the feeling of openness and innocence, the integrity of the pristine landscape. The viewer needs to also feel what the **artist sees in that place**.

In your sketch book draw a Tree



Take that Snapshot



Please bear with me you must let the camera do its work, for this first exercise.

Switch to **Auto-Everything**

On most DSLR and mirrorless camera this will be the green rectangle or outline on the mode dial. Even if you normally shoot Manual or Aperture Priority, please change to that green rectangle. Humor me this once.

As you half press the shutter button on the camera should auto-focus and determine the best (average) exposure, and click you have a snapshot of the place.

On Smart Phones the auto everything is the normal default, so nothing normally needs to be done. If you have or like to change the defaults, reset or resist the urge to change any settings. A smart phone may take a second or so to focus and adjust the exposure, then you can touch the “Photo” circle, or press the alternative shutter button (often the volume toggle/switch). The screen may momentarily freeze or flash and your photo will be in your camera roll.

Take that Snapshot



All you did was point the camera/phone to choose what is framed and pressed the shutter button.

The photo is probably fine, if not good. Keep it as a reference of your starting point.

Why?

I wanted to get this obvious snapshot out of the way as soon as possible. Remember this is what most people will do. Arrive look at the vista, raise the camera/phone to their eye and snap. Then move on.

The camera as done the heavy lifting on the science, physics of light aspects, choosing for you some of key settings in the process. So what are they?

- **Focus**
- **Exposure** (f-stop, Shutter Speed, ISO) [EV]

Your job was to point the camera.

I have a good analogy to remember these Scientific duties. It is as simple as the fingers on your right hand.

The Science Hand



Remembering the Science

Snapshot, get the obvious photo.

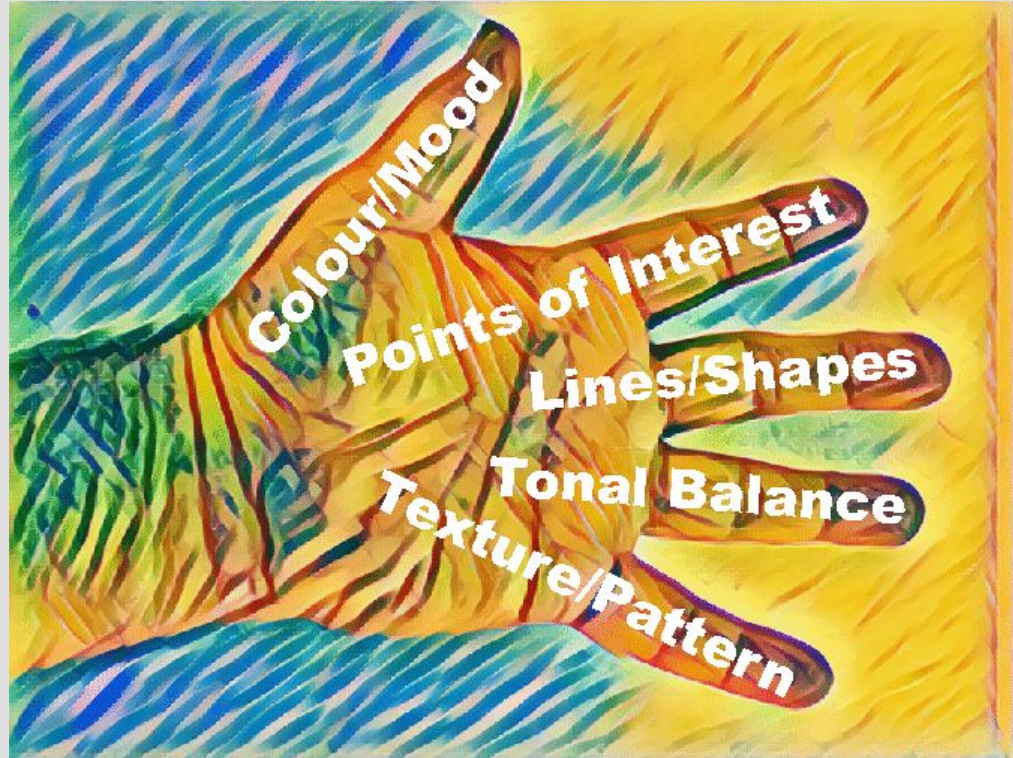
Zoom In, looking for the true subject and get a closer view, it may involve walking!

Zoom Out, get an overview which could mean moving back, taking a panorama or several photos.

Exposure, try small changes. In manual mode change the speed or f-stop, try Aperture Priority, try bracketing or on a phone \pm EV. Perhaps Exposing to the Right.

Clarity, which is about Focus and Detail, but not pixel peeping and excessive sharpening. On a DSLR perhaps use Depth of Field.

The Artistic Hand



Remember the Art

Colour/Mood/Atmosphere, A big deal but not a priority today.

Points of Interest, do you have any, what and where are they in the image.

Lines/Shapes, look at the abstract aspects of big shapes & edges. Half close/blur your eyes. Deliberately take an out of focus and/or B&W photo, turn it upside down.

Tonal Balance/Notan, the balance of Tonal Values, Darks to Lights is another important compositional aspect, eyes half closed again.

Texture/Pattern, our brain loves texture & pattern, use that to capture interest

Things	Flora/Fauna	Feelings
#Lake #Water	#Flower #Blossum	#Idyllic
#Sky #Cloud	#Bird #Animal	#Tranquil #Serene
#Pathway	#Tree #Forest	#Green
#Parkland	#Reed #Plant	#Outdoor
#Curve #Texture	#Bark #Foliage	#Spring #Winter

#HashTags

These are all Hash**T**ags that either I have used or flickr's AI based image recognition technology has added to my photos within my Year in Jells Park Album. Having select one cell from each column try to find a photo for which two or all three of these tags would be appropriate.

What to do now?

You have three subjects/topics to photograph from the mystery envelope. See if you can include two or all three in one photo. If not take a separate photo of each topic. Try to use a few of the science hand or art hand tasks to produce variations or different aspects of the subjects you have chosen to photograph.

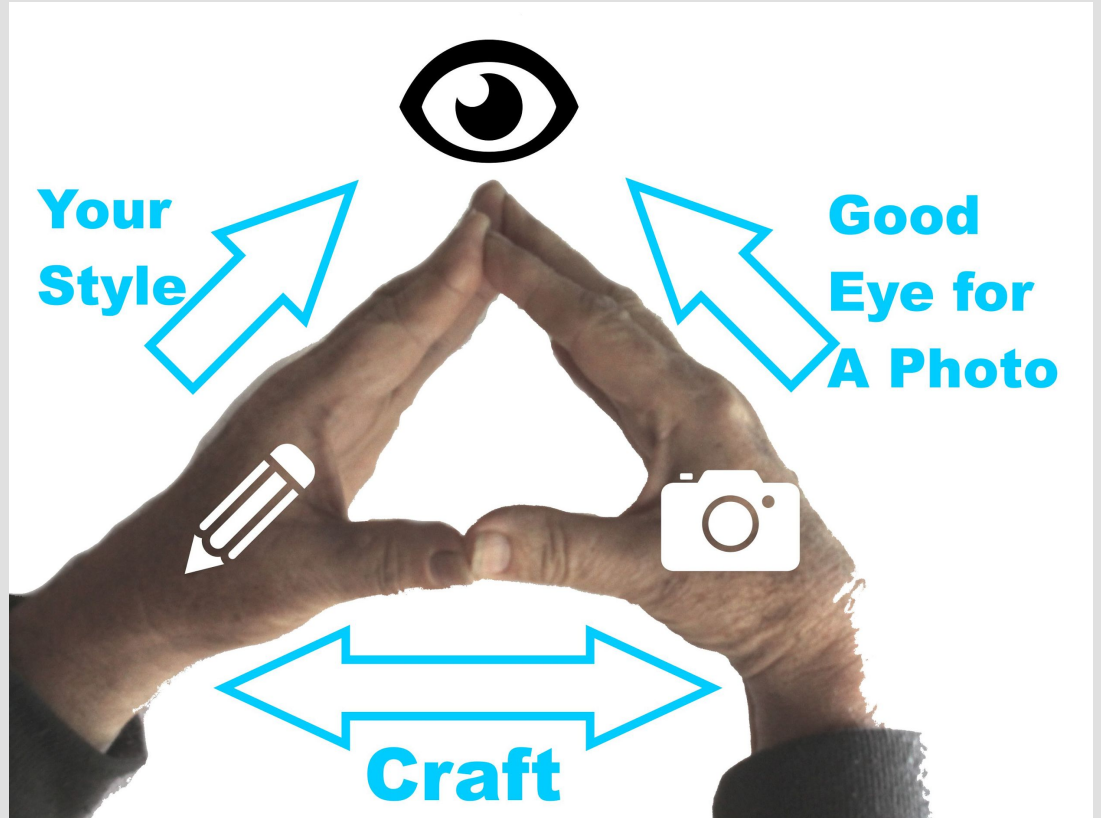
Aim to get between 5 and 10 photos that perhaps tell the story of your afternoon or capture your personal feelings and memories of the place. Six is a great number to aim for, they may not all be outstanding just aim for improvement on the snapshots.



Seeing

“ Seeing, in the finest and broadest sense, means using your senses, your intellect and your emotions. “

... Freeman Patterson



Seeing

This is the extra dimension that will bring the two sides of your brain together. Both the science side and artist side need the visual input to make sense of the world and guide you towards understanding, better photographs and a sense of the place.

Working on the science side will improve your eye for a good photo. Working on the artistic side will develop your style. Practising the tasks on each hand individually and together will help you improve your craft.

Seeing also applies to the subconscious and imaginative, but this is not covered in this series of PhotoWalks

One Final Photograph

Find that tree you drew earlier, or at least a tree that closely resembles it and take its photograph.



This was a mean trick because you undoubtedly drew a right brain symbolic version of a tree, not a real tree. Find a real tree and look to capture it left brain symbolically?

Look beyond the label

Sharing what you have photographed

This is completely optional but you might like to share your final set of photos with others on-line. This way you get to show a wider audience your Photographic works.

If sharing on-line scares you? **“Don’t!”** Print them out and just show trusted friends.

On the **JPPhotoWalk** group on **flickr**, if you have a flickr account (they can be free) and want to only share with others in the group make your photos private, but share them to the group.

Otherwise share in Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest, Facebook etc. and use the hashtags **#JPPhotoWalk** **#SenseOfPlace**