



Photography with an Artist's Eyes

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Some Concepts

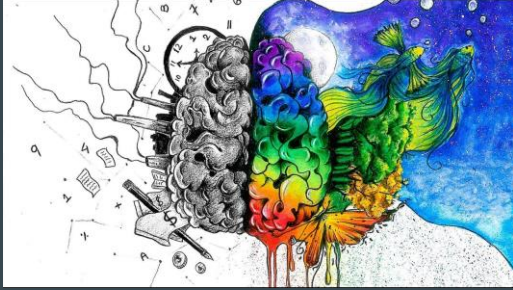
This series is about Seeing

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 Concept?

The idea of a lateral split of thinking into two hemispheres a right brain (logical, analytical, procedural and subjective) and a right brain (artistic, intuitive and objective thinking), dates from the 60s and was really made popular in Betty Edward's book "Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain". Detail analysis using MRI technology shows that the human brain does always use both sides, whether its doing maths or painting.

However the two styles of thinking are well established. The left side does control many aspects of language and logic, while the right side tends to handle spatial information and visual comprehension. This will be useful in considering Seeing.

The Science Hand



Remembering the Science

Snapshot, get the obvious photo.

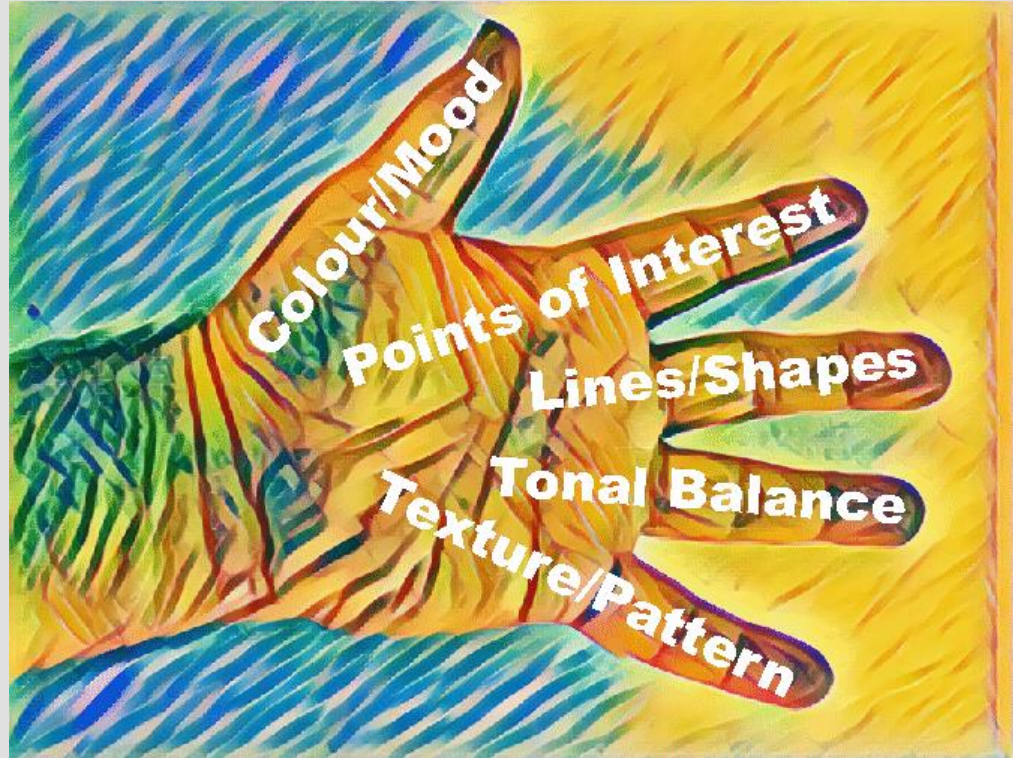
Zoom In, looking for the true subject and get a closer view, it may involve walking!

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 also 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.

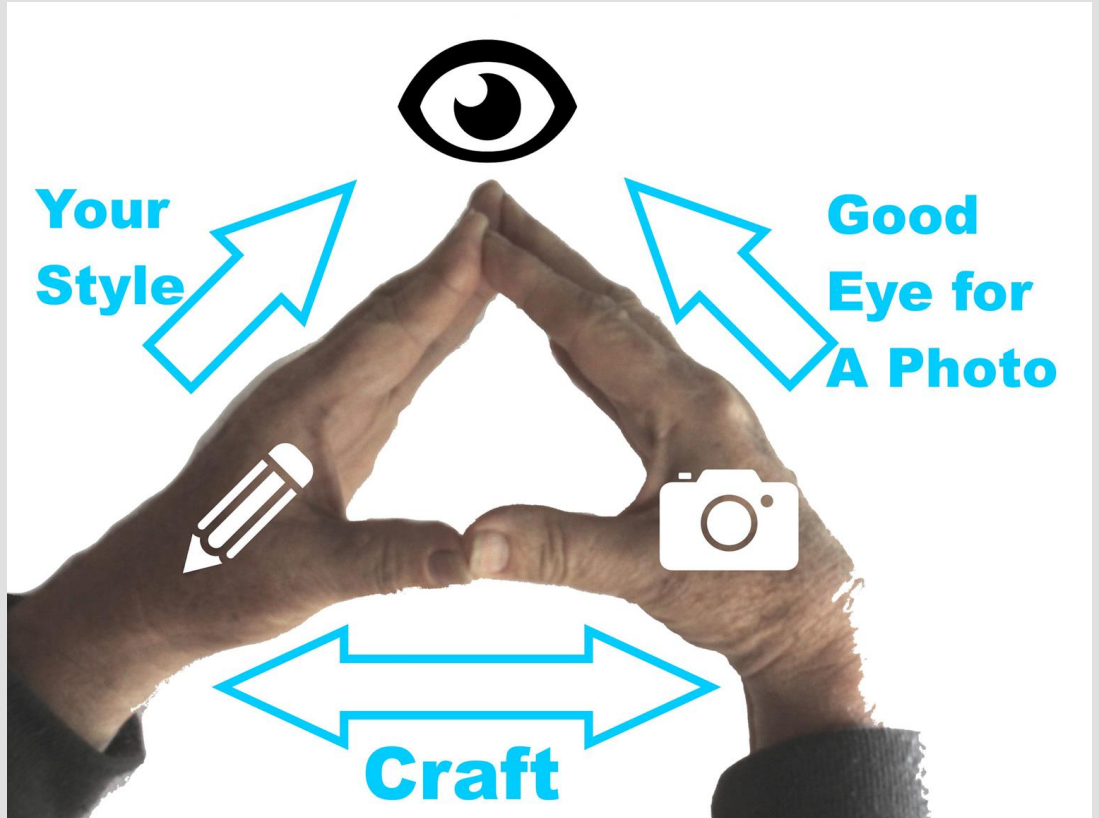
Tonal Balance/Notan, the balance of Tonal Values, Darks to Lights is another important compositional aspect, eyes half closed again.

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

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 quality photos. Working on the artistic side will develop your style. And better composition. Practising the tasks on each hand individually and together will help you improve your craft, towards originality and Art

Seeing also applies to the subconscious and imaginative, but this is not covered in these notes.

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 use the back facing camera and 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 has 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.

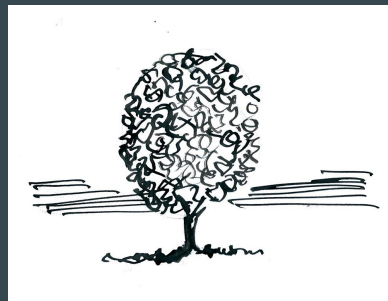
I have a good analogy to remember these Scientific duties. It is as simple as the fingers on your right hand.

Think of a Tree



Look Beyond the label

Your task will be to take a photo of that tree



Originally I would have made you physically draw your image of a tree. This was a mean trick because you undoubtedly would have drawn a right brain symbolic version of a tree, not a real tree.

Instead find a real tree and look carefully at its unique tree-ness. Try to capture it in a left brain symbolically fashion (using your left hand guide)

Betty Edwards + Freeman Patterson

Ways to get past your verbal conscious brain stopping at the symbol of what is a tree.

Betty Edwards likes to trick the brain by forcing a different view like turning the subject upside down or just looking at shapes,

Rather than photograph the full tree find a view that shows strong negative shapes enclosing the tree (eg trunk and branch) concentrate on the texture and pattern in that negative shape (even letting the trunk go out of focus).

Look at your photo Upside Down, in Black & White or in Mirror Image

Freeman Patterson suggests we need to step sideways a little and “think” other ways to find tree-ness (or any subject) using the excuse of breaking a rule.

For example Break the rule “Always Hold Your Camera Steady”; “always use (your camera's) Light Meter/Histogram”

Strong Negative Shapes

Using ICM (Intentional Camera Movement)
to blur the image but preserve the
feeling of vertical strength



Rule Broken: Keep your camera steady

Trick your Brain with Different Views

Upside down



Mirror Image



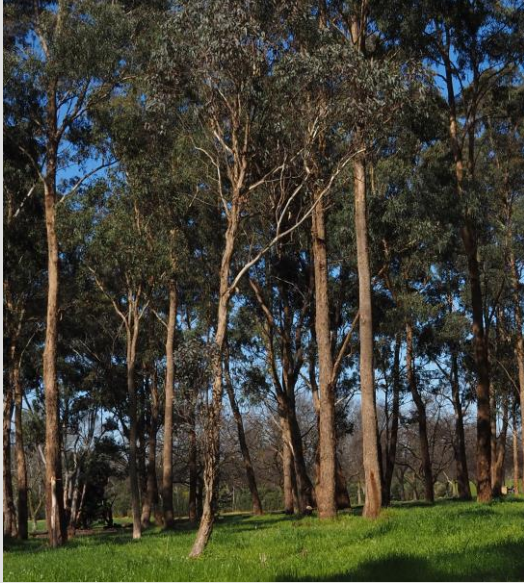
Black & White



It can help to take a check different views

Tree-ness can be Abstract

Using ICM (Intentional Camera Movement)
to blur the image but preserve the
feeling of vertical strength



Rule Broken: Keep your camera steady

Horizon on the Center Line

This can work really well for reflections



Rule Broken: Rule of Thirds

Subject in the Center

Square (instagram) formats



Underexposed to emphasise the feeling “Deep in the Trees”

Strong Photos can be Highkey or Lowkey
Use Ev compenstation to set mood



Rule Broken: Follow your Camera's Light Meters

Where to find me

Be patient
I like to photograph & paint
and live life.

Internet often takes a back seat

 norm.hanson@imageo.com.au

 [@normhansonphoto](https://www.instagram.com/normhansonphoto)

 [@normhansonart](https://www.instagram.com/normhansonart)

 imageo.blogspot.com

 [www,imageo.com.au](http://www.imageo.com.au)

At the moment I am running Photowalks in
assocaite with the mga Gallery. Roughly every 6
weeks
