

INTRODUCTION TO COMPOSITION IN PHOTOGRAPHY & ART: Learning to Express Creative Vision With A Camera

This class is for photographers & artists who want to learn to see more creatively and express that creative vision with a digital camera. The focus of the class will be on learning to use composition to express creative vision, including learning to “see” differently.

What is Composition?

"Composition is the art of arranging in a decorative manner the diverse elements at the painter's command to express his feelings." - Henri Matisse

The term composition means 'putting together'. Composition is an arrangement of elements for a purpose. In visual arts, the purpose of composition is usually to express an idea and emotion.

Why is it important to study Composition? Compelling and “successful” art touches people using a visual language. The grammar of this language is composition. Artists of all genres often struggle with this grammar – the structure of creative expression. Learning the principles of composition is the first building block of learning to speak this language.

Class Requirements:

- Participants should own a digital camera.
- Participants should bring their camera's manual for reference.
- Participants should have a fully charged battery in the camera.
- Participants should have a working knowledge of how:
 - turn the camera on
 - zoom from wide angle to telephoto
 - use the camera's buttons and menu items

This is NOT a class to learn to the technical skills of using a camera, although some camera skills will be discussed.

Classes will include:

- Lectures with handout materials and on-screen visual examples of concepts
- Practice time with instructor demonstration
- Homework assignments
- Homework sharing (show & tell)

Class Schedule and Topics
Saturdays from 9:30 to 12:30 for 4 weeks

Week 1:

Introduction to Key Concepts:

1. How our brains "see"
2. How cameras "see"
3. Camera Concepts: Techniques in using the camera properly
4. Camera Concepts: Exposure (aperture, shutter speed, ISO)
5. Camera Concepts: Zoom
6. Camera Concepts: LCD vs Histogram
7. Understanding light

Week 2:

Introduction to Composition:

1. Telling stories & knowing your subject
2. Understanding the "Frame"
3. The Rules of Composition: understanding them so you can break them
4. Pre-visualizations
5. Knowing your own voice and style

Week 3:

Visual Elements of Composition:

1. Line
2. Shape
3. Form
4. Space
5. Texture
6. Pattern
7. Color

Week 4:

Putting It All Together:

1. Tips
2. Tools
3. Resources
4. Sharing: Show & Tell

About the Instructor – M.E. Parker

A photographer since childhood, M.E. Parker runs a photography, graphic design and training business in Bonita Springs, FL. She teaches classes in photography, Photoshop, web design and basic computer skills.

A full time SW Florida resident for over 15 years, her landscape, nature and abstract photography has been shown at several local galleries and various art fairs. She is the founder of Side Street Artists, a diverse group of local artists. She also does assignment aerial and architectural photography of luxury homes and developments.

An instructor of many subjects for nearly 40 years, M.E. loves working with individuals and small groups and watching “the creative light in their eyes and imaginations come on.”

You can learn more about her work at www.meparkerphotography.com.