

TRCC  
Digital Photography 30416  
GRA\*K131-T3  
Fall Semester, 2010  
MWF 1:00–1:50 p.m.  
Instructor: Ben Lifson

## ASSIGNMENTS

**FOR ALL PICTURES THIS SEMESTER PLEASE  
DISABLE YOUR CAMERA'S DATE / TIME OPTION  
SO THAT NO NUMBERS APPEAR  
IN YELLOW, WHITE, ETC.  
AT THE BOTTOMS OF YOUR PICTURES**

***NB: ALL ASSIGNMENT DATES, BELOW, ARE DUE DATES***

Due Sept 8

*Technical Component  
Assignment 1 The Camera*

### *1. Depth of Field*

Choose a subject in deep space – 15 feet or more – and with a prominent vertical object about two feet from you: a thin tree, a pole, the edge of a building, the edge of a fence, etc. Frame the subject with this vertical element off to one side of the frame.

A. Set your lens at its narrowest aperture (the highest f/ number), focus on the vertical object toward the side of the frame and make the exposure.

Save in Folder "TC 1" as "DoF 1"

B. Set your lens at its widest aperture (the lowest f/ number), and, *without moving left, right, forward or backward*, focus again on the vertical object, frame the subject *exactly as in the first picture* and make the exposure.

Save in Folder "TC 1" as "DoF 2"

### *2. Wide angle/telephoto*

A. Choose a subject that extends widely left and right: a landscape, a building, a street, a river, etc. Set your camera at its wide angle setting and frame the scene to have something prominent in the middle of the frame – an SUV, a leafy tree, etc.—and make the picture.

Save in Folder "TC 1" as "WA")

B. *Without moving forward, backward, left or right*, set your camera at its telephoto setting, frame the scene so that the same object is again in the middle, and make the picture.

Save in Folder "TC 1" as "TP"

### *3. Still/Blurred: Subject Blur*

A. Set your ISO at 400 or higher. Choose a subject in which there is much rapid movement more or less all the time – traffic, a track meet, etc. Frame the scene to include as many moving objects as possible. Set your camera at its fastest shutter speed and make the picture.

Save in Folder "TC 1" as "Blur 1 "

B. Set your ISO at 100, set your camera at its slowest shutter speed *and without moving forward, backward, left or right* photograph the exact same scene with new moving subjects going through it

Save in Folder "TC 1" as "Blur 2"

### *4. Still/Blurred: Camera Shake*

A. Set your ISO at 400 or higher and your shutter speed at its fastest. Choose a still subject – a building, a tree, cars in a parking lot, etc. Frame the scene as you wish and make the picture.

Save in Folder "TC 1" as "Shake 1"

B. Set your ISO at 100 and your shutter speed at its slowest (1/2 second would be good.) *Without moving forward, backward, left or right, frame the scene exactly as before* and make the exposure, moving the camera slightly while the shutter is open.

Save in Folder "TC 1" as "Shake 2"

### *Visual Component Assignment 1*

#### *The Picture Plane*

*(50 Pictures in Folder "VC Picture Plane")*

Photograph a wide range of subjects including large and small, near and distant, inside and outside, bright and low light, moving and still, etc. *and in each case* put the principal subjects on the picture plane and give them definite, strong and imposing shape in the frame.

Due September 13

### *Technical Component*

#### *Assignment 2*

#### *ISO and Shutter and Aperture Priority*

Chose a scene with a wide range of detail and, if possible, colors and lights and darks.

Set your camera at its lowest ISO. Then set it at Aperture Priority and photograph the scene. Then, with the camera set at Shutter Priority, photograph *exactly the same scene, without moving forward or backward, left or right.*

Save in Folder "TC 2" as "ISO 1"

Then repeat this exercise through your camera's intermediate ISO settings to its highest, *photographing exactly the same scene (framing the scene exactly the same way)* each time.

Save in Folder "TC 2" as "ISO 2"

*Visual Component*

*Assignment 2*

*Figure Groups 1*

*(50 pictures in Folder "VC FG 1")*

In various settings where there are two or more people in everyday life –on streets, in playgrounds, the TRCC cafeteria, supermarket parking lots, sporting events, etc. – photograph in order to make figure groups, giving them strong, clear forms and positioning these forms strongly on the picture plane.

Due September 20

*Technical Component*

*Assignment 3*

*Introduction to Photo Shop*

Choose 1 photograph from Visual Component assignments 1-3 with a wide range of colors and darks and lights.

*A. Levels*

Select a picture from your flash drive data base of pictures taken for this course and open it in Photo Shop.

Make a duplicate and name it "PS Levels Original" but don't close it.

Make a duplicate of it and save it as "PS Levels 1" but don't close it

Using the Photo Shop Adjustment Layers option Levels, darken PS Levels 1 to your taste and save (but don't close) it it.

Make another duplicate of PS Levels Original and save (but don't close) it as "PS Levels 2).

Using the Photo Shop Adjustment Layers option Levels, lighten PS Levels 1 to your taste and save.

Save PS Levels Original, PS Levels 1 and PS Levels 2 in a folder called "PS Levels".

*B. Brightness/Contrast*

Select a new picture from your data base and repeat the "Levels" process for the Brightness/Contrast adjustment, using first Contrast then Brightness, calling the new pictures "PS Contrast Original", "PS Contrast 1" (higher contrast) "PS Contrast 2" (less contrast) "PC Brightness 1" (more brightness) and "PC Brightness 2" (less brightness). Adjust for brightness and contrast separately, not both at once. Save all five pictures in a folder called "PS Brightness Contrast"

*C. Saturation* From your data base of VC pictures select a picture with a wide range of colors, duplicate it and save it (but not close it) as "PS Saturation Original"

Make four duplicates of PS Saturation Original

Repeat the general process by increasing the picture's over-all saturation in one duplicate, decreasing it in the next, then then by increasing and decreasing saturation of a specific color.

Save the pictures as PS Sat Global 1 (increased saturation), PS Sat Global 2 (decreased), PS Sat Select 1 (increase saturation of one color), PS Sat Select 2 (decreased) and save them in a folder called "PS Saturation"

Save all pictures as titled above in Folder "TC 3"

*Visual Component*

*Assignment 3*

*Figure Groups 2*

*(50 pictures in Folder "VC FG 2")*

A CONTINUATION OF FIGURE GROUPS 1 in light of feedback in class and by instructor's comments via email

Due September 27:

*Technical Component*

*Assignment 4:*

*Selective Color*

*This assignment is designed for you to increase your knowledge of what Selective Color does. Experiment not to create colors or a color balance that you like but to make pictures whose color changes are strong examples of what this adjustment does.*

From your data base of VC pictures select one with strong Reds, Yellows, Greens or Blues. Make a duplicate and save it as PS SC Original.

Make many duplicates PS SC Original.

1. Using the Photo Shop Selective Color "Color" option, choose Reds, Yellows, Greens or Blues according to the picture you opened.

Experiment with it by adding and subtracting your color, Black and either Cyan, Magenta or Yellow. Use only one color per experiment.

Save each experiment as an appropriate name beginning with "PS SC" in Folder "TC 4".

Suppose you experimented with your picture's reds. Your saved experiments would be called PS SC Reds Black 1 (more black), PS SC Reds Black 2 (less black), PS SC Reds Cyans 1 (more cyan), PS SC Cyans 2 (less cyan) etc.

2. Choose "Neutrals", increase black and another color and save with appropriate names

3. Choose "Whites" increase a color and save with an appropriate name.

Save experiments in Folder "TC 4" Sub Folder "PS Selective Color"

*Visual Component*

*Assignment 4*

*The Still Life*

*(50 Pictures in Folder "VC SL")*

***This assignment has a dual purpose: 1. To give you practice photographing objects of everyday life and 2. To give you experience in using your camera and your environment to make a highly specific kind of picture.***

*1. Solidify your understanding of the still life*

Use The Web Gallery of Art : [www.wga.hu](http://www.wga.hu)

Click on ENTER HERE then go to the alphabet at the bottom of the next page and Click on "C"

At Artists Page C, click on "Page 3"

At Page 3, click on "CHARDIN, Jean-Baptiste-Simeon" and study Chardin's still lifes. Imagine that they are photographs, then ask yourself:

A. What lens did he use? Wide angle or Telephoto?

- B. Where was he standing? Above the objects? Level with them? Below them?
- C. Where was he standing? Close? Medium distance? Far away?
- D. Is his camera tilted down? Tilted up? Or is the back of his camera parallel with the objects?
- E. Do the objects seem to recede at sharp angles into the space? Or are they strongly vertical, rising up from the bottom of the picture and for the most part parallel to the picture plane?
- F. Are any objects on the picture plane? If yes, all or only some? If some, are the others connected visually to them or are they free standing? In any given picture, are any objects joined visually in the picture but not physically in the picture's space, as in a figure group? In other words are there "object groups" similar to figure groups?
- G. What does the ledge at the bottom of so many of his pictures do? For example, how does it strengthen the impression of the objects rising up in the frame? What part does it play in the picture's construction (if the picture were a house, what part would the bottom edge be?)
- H. Are the objects in a picture all alike? Or do they vary in size, shape, color, light, dark, the way they reflect or transmit light? Does Chardin arrange them in one row or in two or more, one behind another?
- K. Do the objects go all the way to the side edges? Or is the farthest to the left, right and top edge still far enough from the edge for us to say that the picture *contains* the objects, that there's no feeling that the objects on a table go on to the left and right of the picture, that these *are only some* of the objects there?

## 2. *Photograph*

With your answers in mind, make *50 still lifes* of everyday-life objects found a) in your home, b) other people's homes, c) public places, e.g. a restaurant table, a supermarket shelves, a dashboard, a playground's sandbox, etc.

Concentrate on two things. 1) *Recognizing* a still life arrangement when you see one in life, and going close to it to photograph it along Chardin's lines, and 2) *Making* your own still life arrangement out of the objects of everyday life. You don't need to find these objects all in one place. At home, you can make still lifes in one room with objects taken from many different rooms – or even from objects you find and collect in various places around your neighborhood and city -- and arrange on your kitchen table, etc.

Due October 4:

*Technical Component  
Assignment 5  
Curves*

***The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize yourself with the possibilities of Curves. The goal isn't to make contrast you like. Instead, try to make pictures that will give you good knowledge of how to use Curves and what its effects can be.***

From your Visual Component data base select four pictures. Make a duplicate of each. With each, use Curves to adjust contrast, making the contrast adjustment for each different, and in a different range of tones (shadows, mid-tones and highlights) from those in the other three.

Name the pictures "Curves 1"etc. and save them in Folder "TC 5"

*Visual Component  
Assignment 5  
Top and Bottom Edges  
(25 Pictures for Each  
(In folders, "VC 5 Top" and "VC 5 Bottom")*

As you work on this and all subsequent Visual Component assignments, keep deliberately practicing the skills you've acquired from preceding assignments, e.g. with the Picture Plane, Figure Groups, etc. When concentrating on the top edge don't neglect the bottom, and vice versa.

A. The Bottom Edge

Photograph in various settings both indoors and outside. Make deliberate use of the bottom edge 1) to create a foundation for the human figure, buildings, automobiles, objects, 2) to create forms (by the placement of the bottom edge to transform a person in life into a human figure in a picture).

B. The Top Edge

In the same or different settings, make deliberate use of the top edge to create forms out skies, ceilings, upper stories of buildings, stands of trees. ***At least 5 top-edge pictures must be of skies to which your top edge gives shape.***

C. The tilted frame. With both top- and bottom-edge exercise, experiment with tilting the frame in order to change the shape of the sky, etc. and, at the bottom of a picture, the shape of a road, a lawn, a floor, a lake, the ocean, etc.

Due October 11

*Technical Component  
Assignment 6  
Edit/Fill Process*

Select four pictures from your Visual Component Assignment data base.  
Duplicate each one.

Using the Edit/Fill process, adjust a detail in one for Levels, in the second for Contrast, the third for Saturation and the fourth for Selective Color. Re-name them "PS EF Levels", etc. and save them in a folder "TC 6"

*Visual Component  
Assignment 6  
Drawing  
(50 Pictures)  
(30 of the Human Figure, 20 of Objects)  
(In Folder "VC Drawing")*

To explore various ways the lens makes new, specific forms out of appearances in life. Your goal here is not *either* to record reality *or* to make a generalized figure or object but, rather, to make a form (of the human figure, of an object) as highly specific visually as if it had been "drawn" by a pencil.

*Generalized figures:* the small figures of a man and woman on the doors of public restrooms. They're all alike the world over. But a non-generalized figure is as specific to itself and only itself as a stone in a New England fieldstone wall.

Chief means of "drawing" with a camera are

- A. Vantage point. Where you stand. Move a little to the left or right and a generalized figure becomes specific
- B. The lens – Wide angle lenses tend to elongate and slightly distort the figure, telephoto lenses to flatten and compress it.
- C. Standing so that someone is behind someone. Partly hidden, that person is now a fragment of the human figure – a form, a "drawing". Thus we say that the person (or thing) in front effectively "draws" the person behind.

By the same token, someone standing by the side of a car divides the car into two separate "drawings"

- D. The edges. The sides slice *through* people and things *from top to bottom*, making fragments – forms, "drawings" – conceived vertically. The bottom edge slices *across*

people and things – across someone's waist, across a car's hub caps – making a laterally-conceived form, "drawing. Thus we say that the edges effectively "draw" the subjects.

E. Where you stand: Near to or Far From the subject.

Near enough and a piece of the subject becomes very large in the frame, a huge drawing. Far enough away and the subject becomes a small drawing, a line, a spot. (For this, consult the snapshots again.)

Select a picture from your Visual Component assignment data base. Duplicate it many times, saving each duplicate as "PS Curves 1", "PS Curves 2", etc.

Make a number of experiments to change contrast using Curves. Make sure each picture's contrast is noticeably different from the others'.

Due October 18

*Visual Component Assignment 7*

*The Shape of the Head and the Structure of a Face*

*(50 Pictures, 25 formal portraits, 25 of people – family, friends, strangers -- in the midst of everyday life who are not posing for you. In two folders, "VC Head Face Posed" and "VC Head Face Unposed")*

Make 25 formal (posed) portraits of 1 person per portrait and 25 pictures of people who are not posing for you. It's not necessary that they be unaware that you're taking their picture but not OK if they pose.

In each picture, create a-symmetrical faces and give the heads specific shapes as illustrated and in class and using the various means shown in class. For formal portraits, make sure 1) the picture is vertical and 2) that you use edge tension to intensify the contour lines of the head, especially the crown of the head (except, of course, when you use an edge to make a fragmented head along the top or either side).

Due October 25

*Visual Component*

*Assignment 8:*

*Line (50 Pictures)*

***The purpose of this assignment is to increase your sensibility to line in the world, in appearances, and to line in pictures.***

Photograph various subjects, using your acquired skills of drawing and observation to emphasize subjects with prominent lines. **At least 10 must be of trees in which the subject, "tree" is conceived visually as lines within a mass.**

For some pictures, use Photo Shop adjustments, e.g Contrast, Levels, Saturation, to enhance certain lines or groups of lines.

***Words of Caution; Guidelines:***

True, stairs, bricks, tiles, etc. contain lines. But it's a mistake to photograph these things for this assignment. It would be no discovery. And the regularity of such lines almost invariably results in bad pictures.

The best way to meet this assignment is to keep on photographing things from everyday life, but with a new awareness of the lines, in things like

Clothing – especially dresses and loose-fitting garments

Trees – the visible branches within the mass of leaves are lines

Handbags and backpacks – when the straps of these go over a shoulder and down chest and back, they are lines

Belts, especially dark belts on light colored clothing and light colored belts on dark clothing

Thin shadows of things, e.g. of cars on the street in certain slants of light

Telephone & electrical wires in the sky\*\*\*

White and yellow stripes on roads and streets\*\*\*

\*\*\*But in scenes. By themselves these subjects, like stairs, bricks, etc. almost invariably lead to bad pictures.

In short, make pictures *not of lines but with lines in them.*

As always, use the skills you've acquired so far with the figure group, the still life, the edges, the picture plane and "drawing".

Due November 1

*Visual Component Assignment 9,  
Exploring New Subject Matter  
(50 Pictures in Folder "VC New")*

Photograph subjects that you've never photographed, including many things you've never thought could *be* the subject of a photograph.

Have your pictures be a mix of things seen from up close, the middle distance, far away and of things found inside and out of doors.

***What is "Subject"?***

"Subject" usually mean a class of objects (e.g. door knobs, dogs, deserts, dads). But it can also mean a certain kind of light, a certain time of day, a visual idea (things seen from up high or far away) and for our purposes even a certain kind of picture (portrait, landscape)

***One of your purposes for this assignment can be to discover the subject of your final portfolio.***

Due November 8

*Technical Component*

*Assignment 6*

*Variation*

*In Folder "TC Variation"*

From your data bank of Visual Component Pictures, select two, each one with many images of the same thing: Many hands, many automobiles, many heads, many glasses in a restaurant or bar, many feet of dancers on a dance floor, etc.

In each picture, select just one motif – If of friends dancing at a party, just faces but not hands, or just hands but not faces.

Create variation in these many similar details via use of the Edit/Fill process and adjustment Levels and/or Saturation, Contrast, Brightness and Selective Color.

*Visual Component*

*Assignment 10*

*Variation*

*(50 Pictures in Folder "VC Variation")*

Photograph subjects w/ several instances of a single detail or motif: hands, trees, clouds, windows, cars in a parking lot, flowers in a garden or vase, a child's dolls on her bed, produce in a super market or kitchen, etc. Using all your skills from depth of field to drawing, all your knowledge of groups, of the human face and head, photograph to create variation among all instances of this motif.

Due November 15

*Visual Component*

*Assignment 11*

*Begin Work on Final Project Pictures*

*Emphasis on Composition*

*(50 Pictures Folder "VC WP 1 Comp")*

From the subjects you explored in New Subject Matter 1, or since, choose one or two that most interest you and develop them, using the visual skills you've acquired, with an emphasis on composition.

*From November 15 on, the weekly Visual Component assignments are to work on your final projects and bring the week's fifty pictures to class every day on your flash drive for review. Call each week's folder VC WP 2, 3, 4, etc.*

Your can define your subject either by content – e.g. trees, your child's Little League team, nineteenth-century Norwich architecture –by a visual property – e.g. twilight, figure groups – or a kind of picture – e.g. portrait..

Due December 10 & 13

*Visual Component:  
Assignment 12  
Portfolio Selection and Sequencing*

By this time you will have made several hundred pictures for your final portfolio. Using as many sets on your thumb drives as we have time for we will address ourselves to the now very difficult task of selecting the 12-20 from those hundreds. **COME TO CLASS WITH YOUR OWN PROVISIONAL SELECTIONS AND SEQUENCES IN A SEPARATE FOLDER.**

**DECEMBER 17: FINAL PROJECT IN CLASS ON CD FOR IN-CLASS REVIEW OF AS MANY PROJECTS AS WE HAVE TIME FOR**