

## Topic 039

### Composition

It refers to the overall pictorial aspect of the stage or SET, as influenced by the lighting. Composition also deals with the FORM of an object. A stage scene may be broadly flooded with soft, even lighting, revealing every object equally, or it may be illuminated by highly localized lighting on the actors only - or anything in between. So, composition in lighting must reveal actors, objects and scenery in proportion to their importance, by building a visual picture.

**Composition concepts include: balanced, unbalanced, symmetrical, asymmetrical, simple, complex, abstract, geometric, fragmented, symbolic, dynamic, linear, random, crude, horizontal, vertical, diagonal, and many more.**

One of the first qualities of a photo that catches and captures a viewer's eye is the composition. Great composition is something that immediately separates the amateurs from the pros and enthusiasts. How you place various objects in the photographic frame determines the composition and works tremendously toward creating a feeling greater than what the object would convey in the real world. Composition is one of the most important elements of the craft of photography, and it is a skill that can be taught and honed through extensive exercise and persistent practice.

### Focus the Viewer's Attention



To raise the quality of your photos you must make sure that the main subject is of heightened interest and is effectively positioned in the frame to draw the viewer's eye exactly to where you want it, and emphasize that subject. This can be done in a variety

of creative, artistic and symbolic ways. Size, color, shape and how the object contrasts with the rest of the elements in the image (foreground, middle ground and background) are ways to isolate and direct attention to the subject.

### Balance, Layout, Arrangement



The layout of your images influences how visually effective or stimulating your photos will be. When composing your photo, seek a balance in the color, the lighting, and object placement within the frame's constricting rectangle. When we talk about "balance" in a photograph, we mean a composition that has arranged the visual elements in such a way as to be pleasing to the eye. We've all seen group photos (of friends and family) in which the subjects are stuck in the center of the frame with no apparent design other than to fit everyone in the frame, and without regard to effectively filling the frame either. This typical shot lacks interesting composition in the layout, and there's probably way too much empty space above their heads as well. You seek to achieve interesting composition and perspective by being creative with where and how you physically position the camera, such that the composition has a unique perspective, or view of the world. For example, if you put the camera at the level of the floor when your pet or baby approaches the camera, that photo has a much more interesting composition and perspective than if the camera were held at full height while looking down at the pet or baby. Like many art concepts, perspective and composition is either instinctual, or it can be developed through practice and study.

### Use Contrast



Contrast -- in lighting -- is another way to add dimension to an image. Lighting contrast is the difference between the lightest light and the darkest dark in a photograph. Manipulating this element, works wonders to extend the depth, the three-dimensional quality of a photograph - one of the great feats and benchmarks for your photographs. You can also use contrast in shape & size to affect the intricacy of your photos; contrasting geometry inherently creates that dramatic tension that we were talking about earlier. You feel like there is more to “the story”. The photo of the Eiffel Tower above employs contrast in lighting and size to increase the effectiveness of this photo. The man in silhouette appears to be nearly as tall as the Eiffel Tower, and the complex pattern of the Eiffel Tower (more pronounced in silhouette) seems to be etched into the pulsating red sunset sky. Imagine how lackluster this image would be if it was taken at noon.