

**Your photograph should do two things:
it must please you and it must communicate your story to the
viewer. So how can we do this?**

Seize the moment.

Find a subject that captures your soul, visually explore it, concentrating on the aspects that you find the most compelling. Then try these steps to make your image become extraordinary.

Take a record shot and review your camera settings

I always take a record shot first, checking my histogram to verify that I have just the right amount of light reaching my sensor. If not, I adjust my settings - the exposure, the shutter speed, and the ISO according to the effect I want to achieve. I have an app on my i-phone called [Procamera](#) which gives me the same controls I have on my big camera. The histogram graph appears on my screen when I am about to take a picture. I can fix any problems before I shoot! You can see the graph here, at the top center of the image. This app works on androids too.



ABSORB THE MOMENT! Apply all your senses. Previsualize. Concentrate and analyze the components of the scene. Recognize the



potential of the design elements and explore their relationships. Internalize the sounds, the smells, the light, the contrasts, the rhythms. Distill. Eliminate the distractions in the scene until your muse is satisfied.



MOVE! Step to one side or the other or get closer or go farther way. These small variables may turn an ordinary composition into something sublime. You are the artist here.

MAKE YOUR TALENT AND YOUR TOOLS WORK FOR YOU! Use both the Elements and Principles of Design and the mechanical capabilities of your camera, to create your illusion.

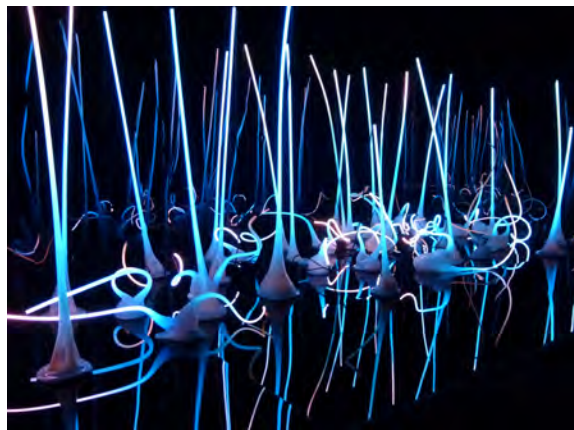
Whether the balance you will achieve is symmetrical or asymmetrical; the rhythms rapid or slow; the focal points dominant or not; the design elements - the textures, the colors - whether proportional, contrasting or not - are generated by the algorithms within your camera. How you use your camera to achieve these is the key to making a successful photograph.

TELL YOUR STORY - SIMPLY.



Explore ways to structure your image so that the important elements within it lead your eye through and around the composition - from front to back and side to side. Your story must be easy to read. Our submarine has reached maximum depth!

Repetition and variation of the lines, shapes and colors as in Chihuly's lighted glass sculptures set against a black background, is both extraordinary in its complexity and in its simplicity. Enjoy the triangles, the reflections, and explore the importance of the negative spaces.



Focal point(s) – Consider placing the primary focal point in an unexpected place in your composition

Placing the mountain off-center and high in the composition creates tension and adds interest.

The pile of chairs in the foreground repeats the form of the mountain

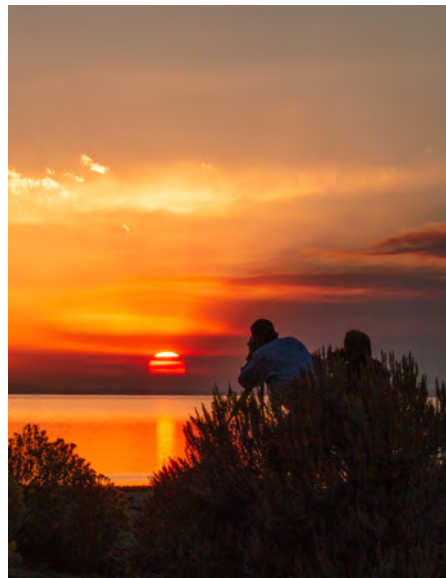


and directs your eye towards it.

Make sure that you do not have a port-a-potty or trash can or other object in the background and that you have selected the depth of field that best suits your subject so that whatever is in focus is important to your story.

Get close!

Frame your scenes with something in the foreground leading the viewer to believe they are standing right where you are - about to step into your fabulous scene. Consider the leading lines and the possibilities of silhouettes to assist you in framing your composition.



Changing your point of view to an unexpected angle. Get low, to shoot upwards. or go high. . and shoot down. Change it up!

Fill the frame with your subject. For live critters – man or beast - the eyes are the most important element, so get close and focus on those eyes.



Horizon - Place your horizon line either above or below the middle of your image.



A High Horizon – enhances the image content below the horizon – in this case the river. Diagonal lines lead your eye through the image. The stony shoreline in the foreground and river's edges lead you to the back of the scene and then return you to the foreground.

A Low Horizon – emphasizes the area above the horizon and in this picture, it gives power to the stormy Dutch sky.



Backgrounds - A properly handled background compliments the subject. It does not command attention.

Understanding depth of field helps!

This blurred background accentuates the subject. The shallow depth of



field (my lens is wide open low number f stop) so that the pretty leaves are sharply in focus and all else has disappeared. A higher f stop number (smaller opening) would have made all the details in the background visible, spoiling the image.

Avoid clutter

Eliminate any elements in the picture that take your eye away from the major elements that intrigue you. You can do this by selecting an



appropriate F stop, ISO and shutter speed to get the depth of field that suits the moment. A lower f stop number (larger opening) would have eliminated all but the hummer and his flower. In this image each element that is in focus becomes an additional focal point. There are so many things in focus we are lost in the details. What is the story here? The flower the hummingbird, the shrubbery?

Eliminate Milky skies by changing your angle of view or by cropping the image. This street scene in Brazil has a milky sky and ugly telephone lines. The adds nothing to the images and becomes an unintended focal point as it is so bright.



In the cropped version, the sky & telephone lines are gone. The man and the dog appear closer, making the scene more intimate. But please note the trash can in the background!!! The roadway's edges



(leading lines) converge on it, making the trash barrel my unintended primary focal point.

Create scale in your scene – add a human element

The skyline of Salt Lake at sunset, peopled by our photography group shows the vastness of Salt Lake in this panorama.



Consider using burst mode to capture a series of rapid-fire shots.

This works well for taking pictures of moving objects, pollinators, sports, and for taking posed “people” pictures too. You can go back and delete all but the best in the series.

Have fun! And enjoy the journey. A whole new world awaits you!

