

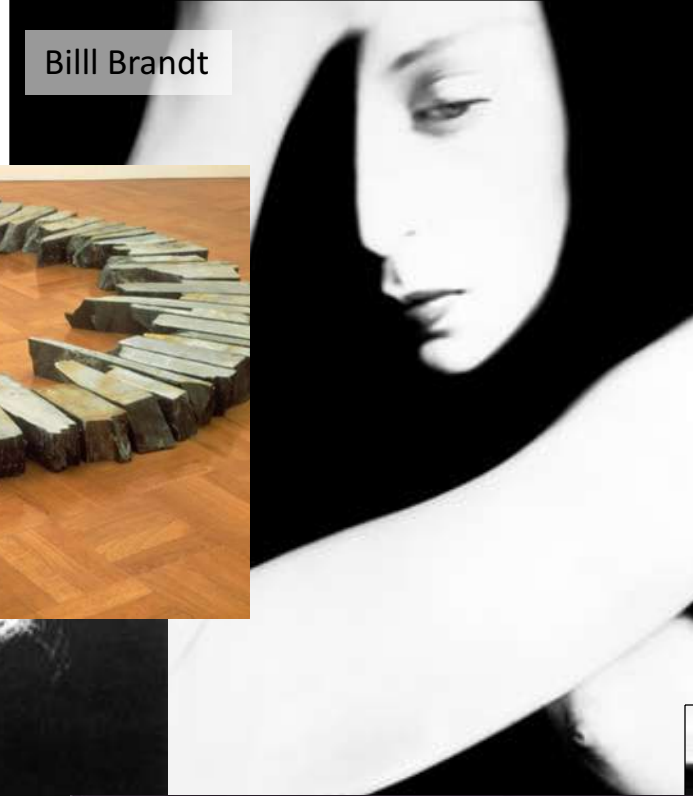
THE FORMAL ELEMENTS

THE FORMAL ELEMENTS

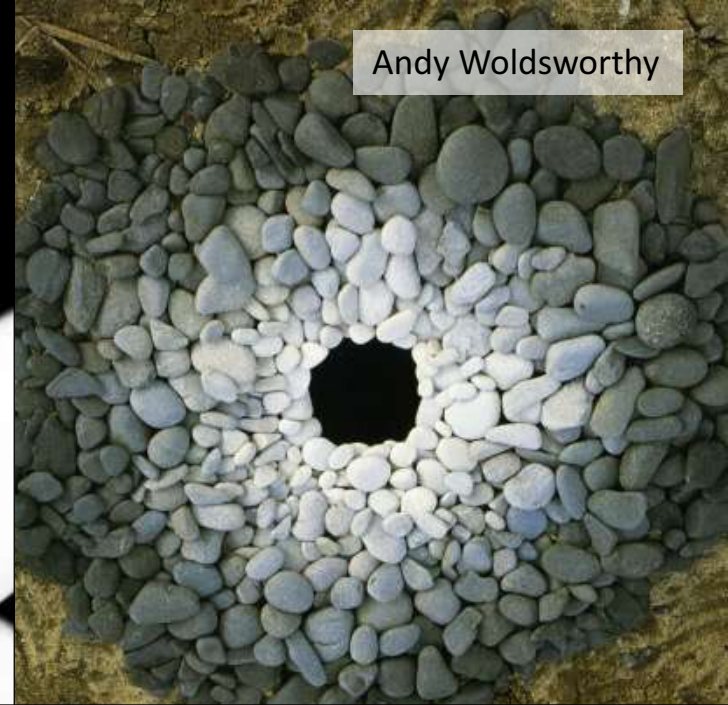
- Shape outline
- Tone *light* / **dark**
- Texture *rough* / **smooth**
- Line *curved* / straight
- Form **thick** / thin
- Pattern repetition
- Colour
- Composition division of frame

Shape

Bill Brandt



Andy Woldsworthy



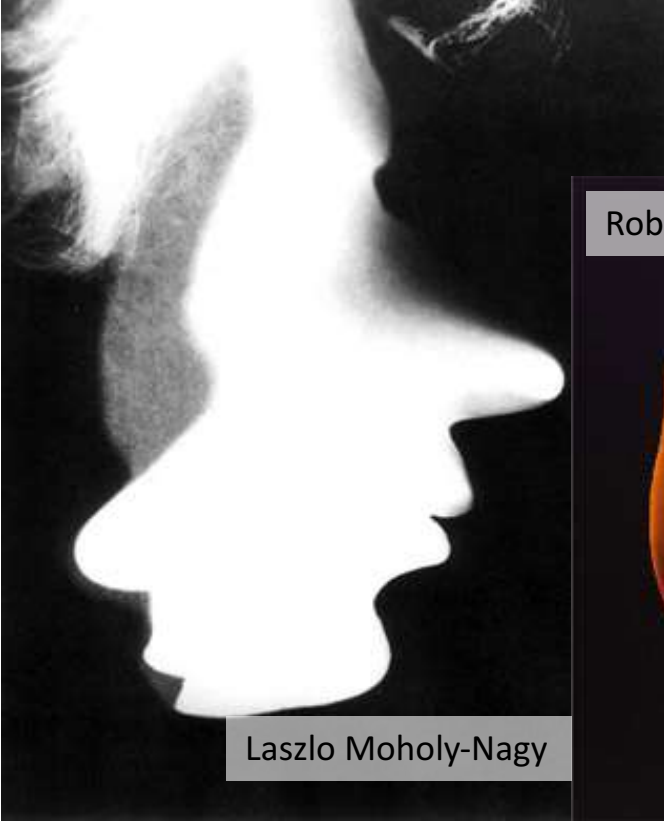
Richard Long



Robert Mapplethorpe



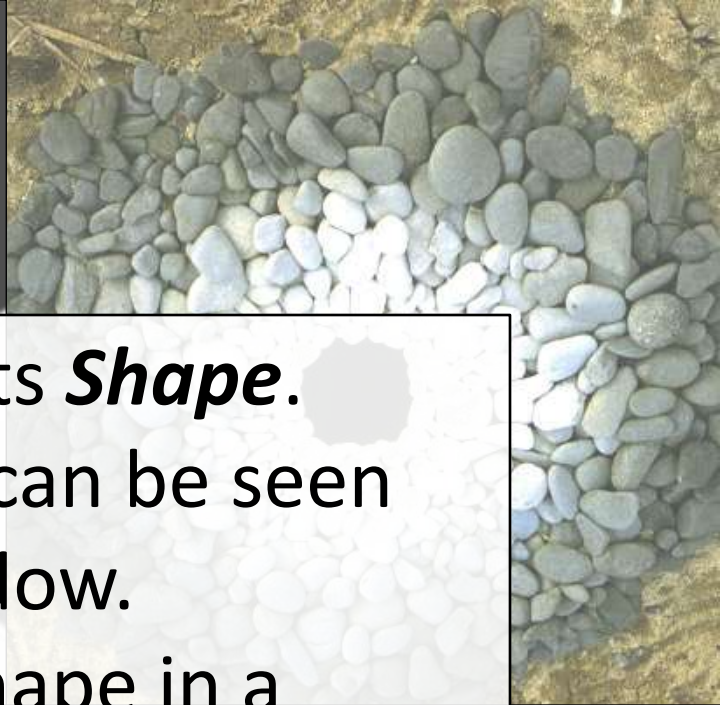
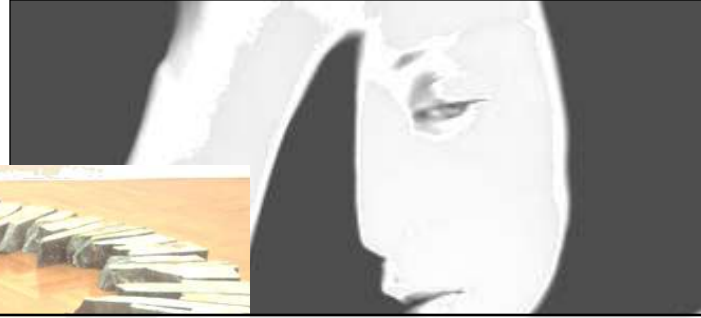
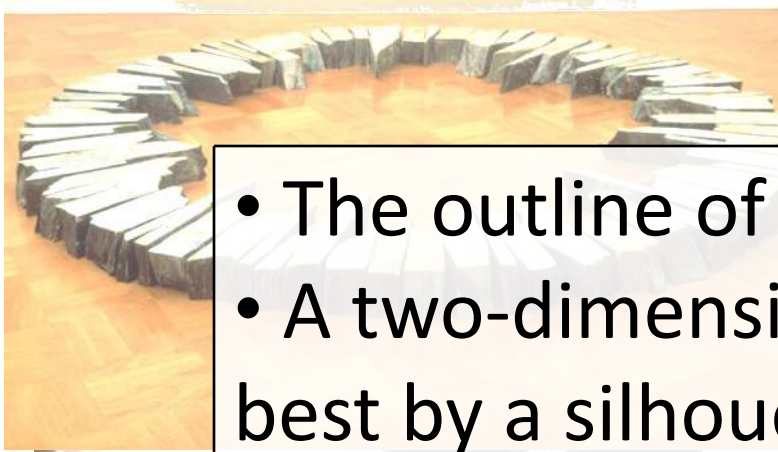
Laszlo Moholy-Nagy



Edward Weston



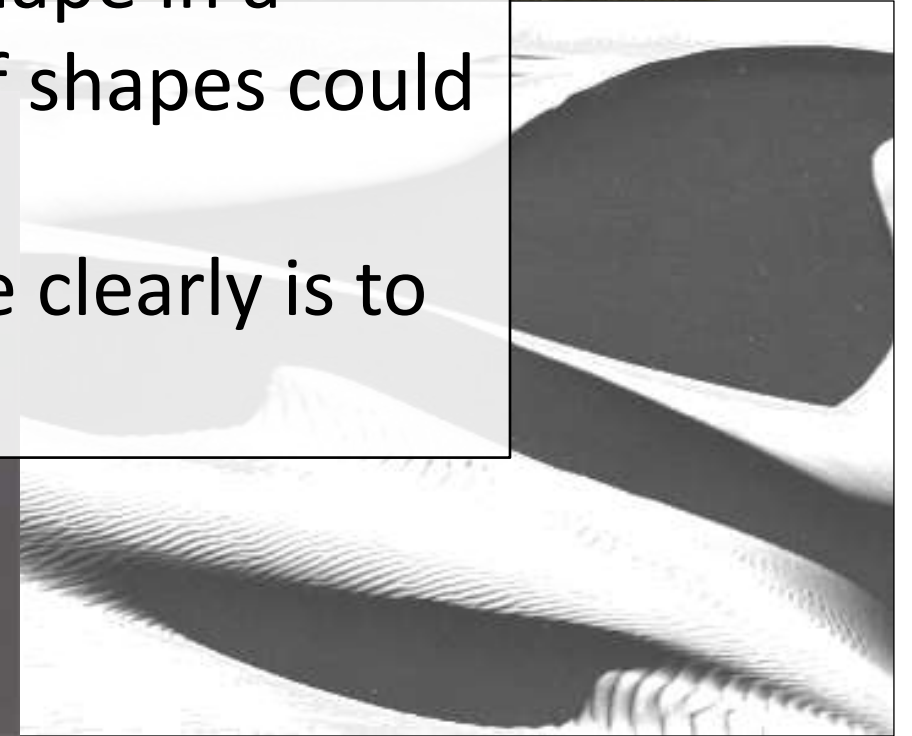
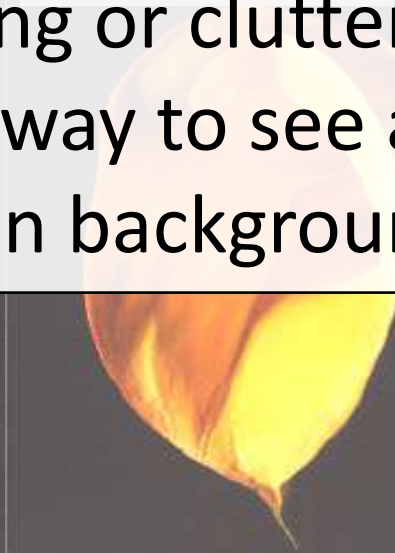
Shape



- The outline of an object is its ***Shape***.
- A two-dimensional outline can be seen best by a silhouette or a shadow.
- It is best to have a strong shape in a photograph otherwise lots of shapes could be confusing or cluttered.
- The best way to see a shape clearly is to have a plain background.



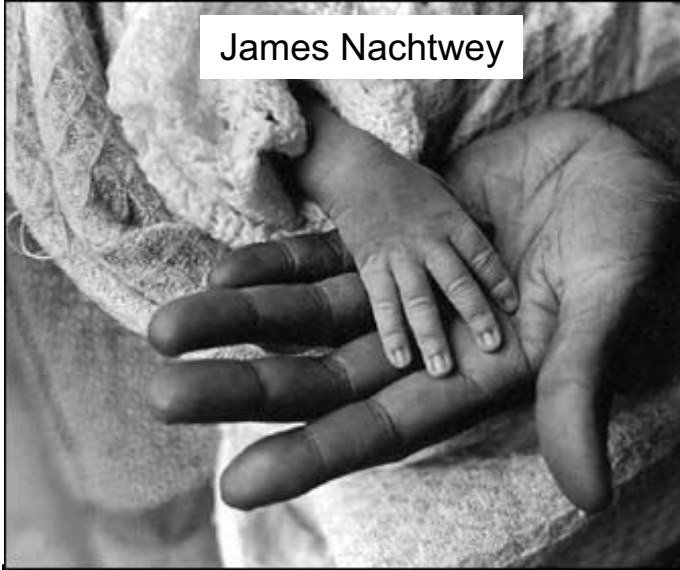
Robert Mapplethorpe



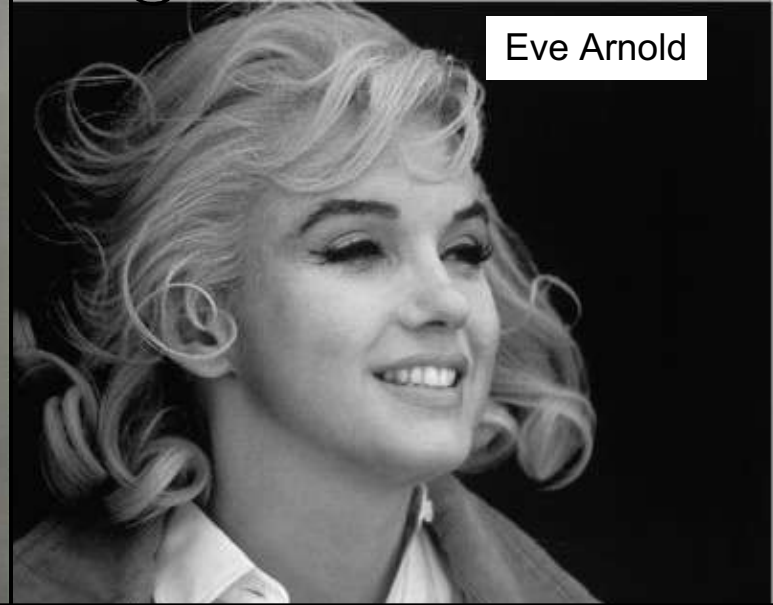
Tone

light / **dark**

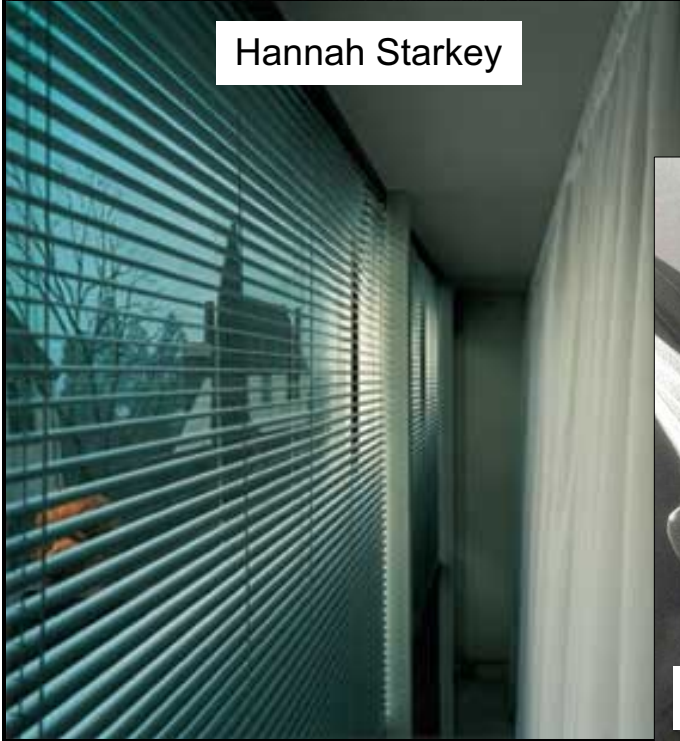
James Nachtwey



Eve Arnold



Hannah Starkey



Robert Mapplethorpe



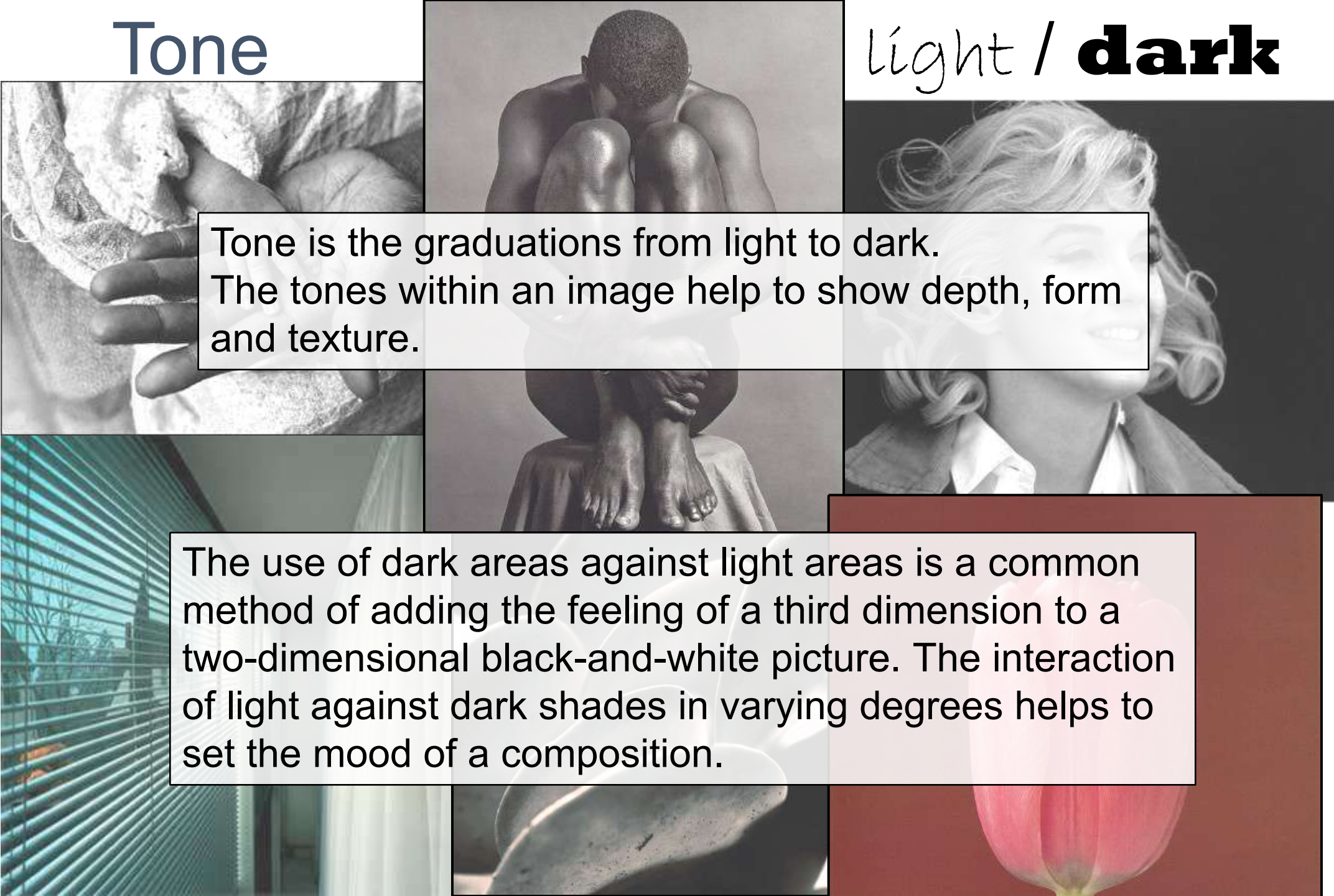
Imogen Cunningham

Robert Mapplethorpe



Tone

light / **dark**



Tone is the graduations from light to dark.
The tones within an image help to show depth, form
and texture.

The use of dark areas against light areas is a common
method of adding the feeling of a third dimension to a
two-dimensional black-and-white picture. The interaction
of light against dark shades in varying degrees helps to
set the mood of a composition.

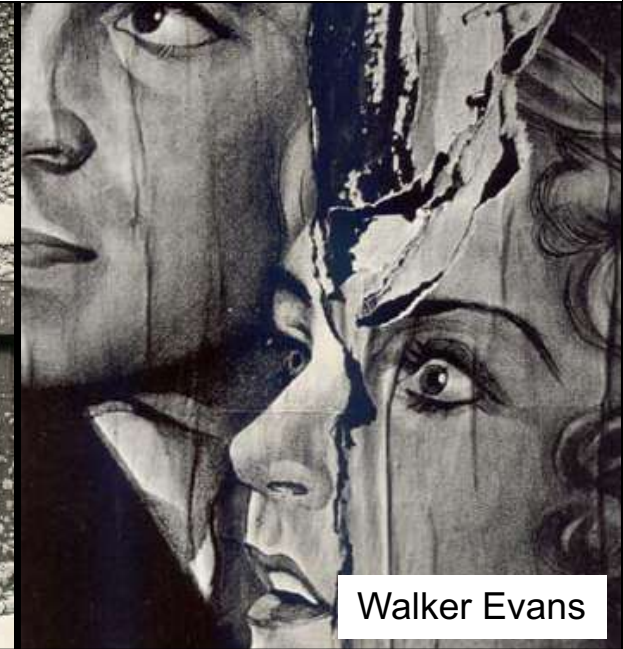
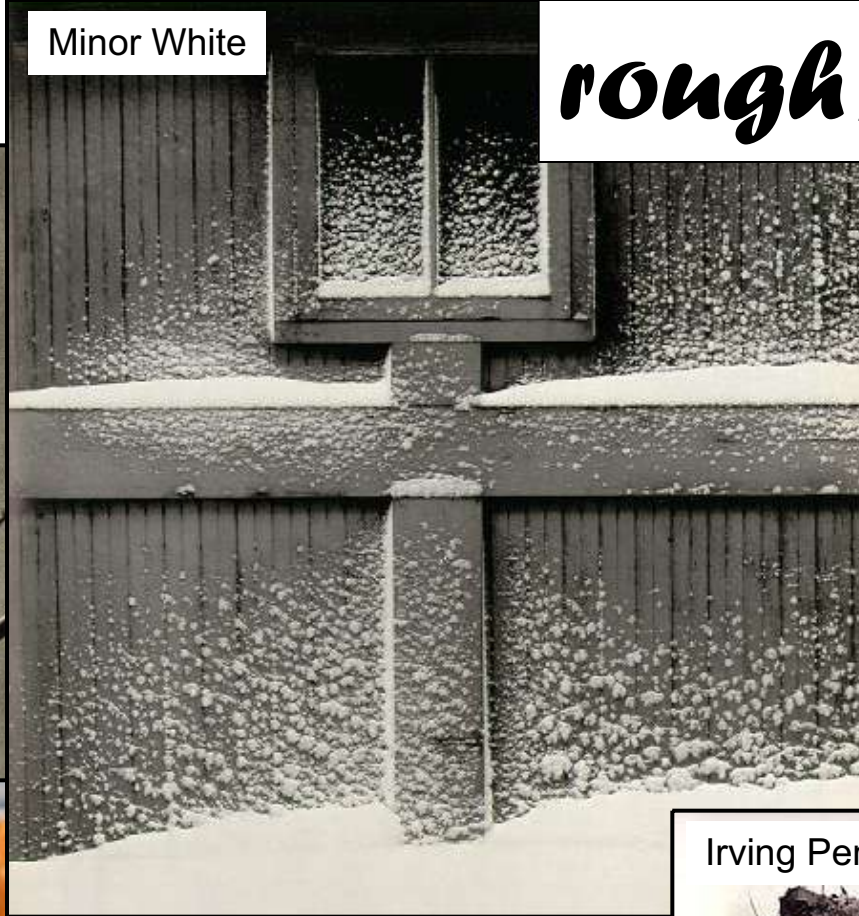
Texture

Minor White

rough/ **smooth**



Karl Blossfeldt



Walker Evans



Martin Parr

Irving Penn



Texture

rough / **smooth**

Texture is the surface quality that can be seen and felt. Textures can be rough or smooth, soft or hard. Textures are often implied. Texture helps to emphasise the features and details in a photograph.

Texture can be used to give realism and character to a picture and may in itself be the subject of a photograph. It usually takes just a little different lighting or a slight change in camera position to improve the rendering of texture in a picture.



Line

Andy Goldsworthy

curved / straight

Fay Godwin



Henri Cartier-Bresson

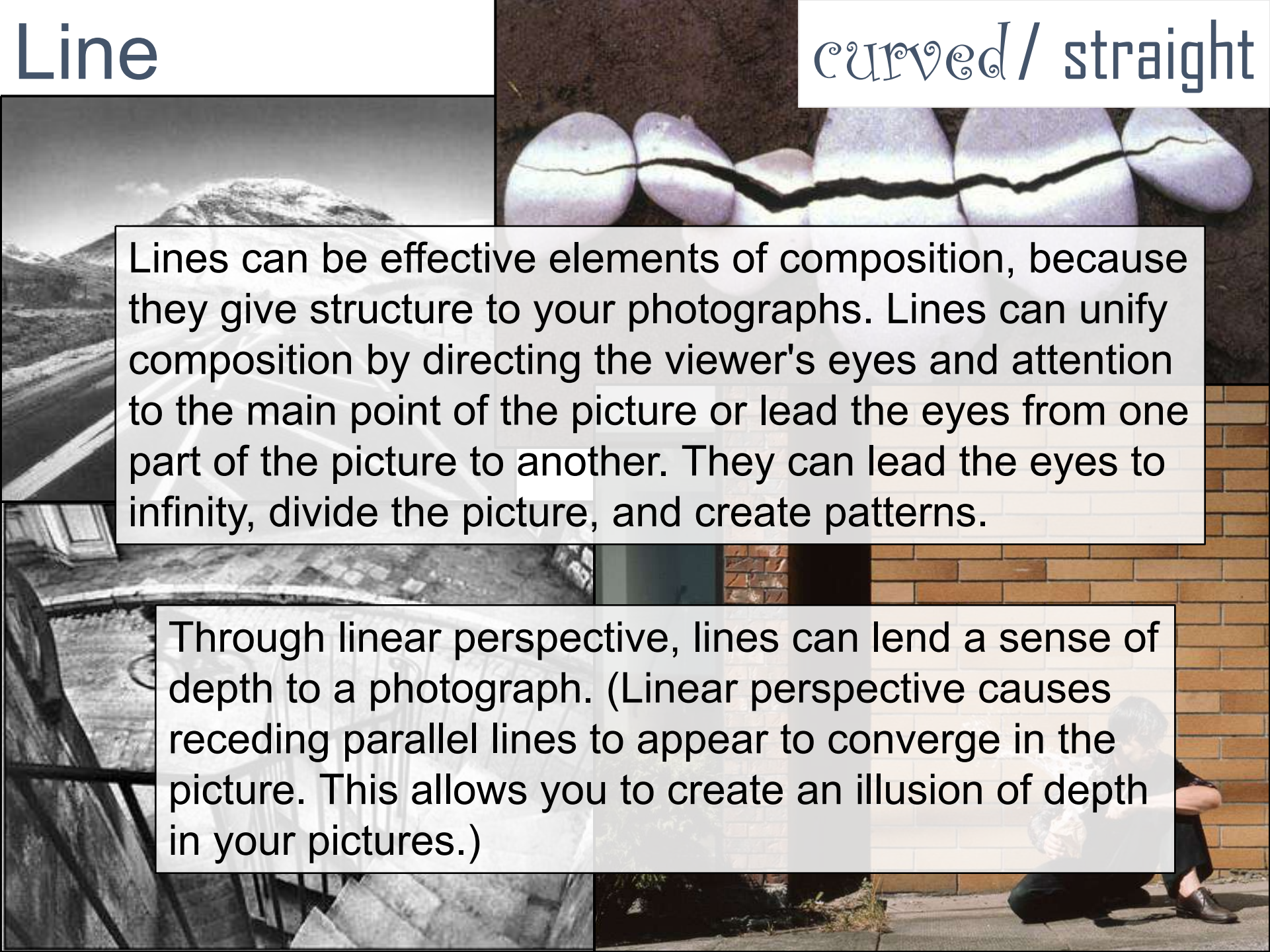


Jeff Wall



Line

curved / straight



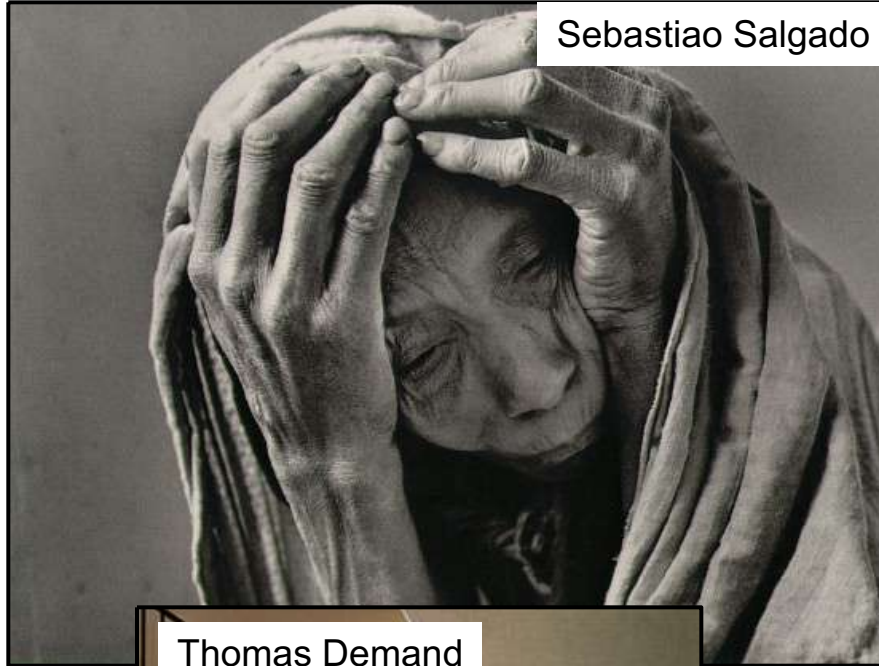
Lines can be effective elements of composition, because they give structure to your photographs. Lines can unify composition by directing the viewer's eyes and attention to the main point of the picture or lead the eyes from one part of the picture to another. They can lead the eyes to infinity, divide the picture, and create patterns.

Through linear perspective, lines can lend a sense of depth to a photograph. (Linear perspective causes receding parallel lines to appear to converge in the picture. This allows you to create an illusion of depth in your pictures.)

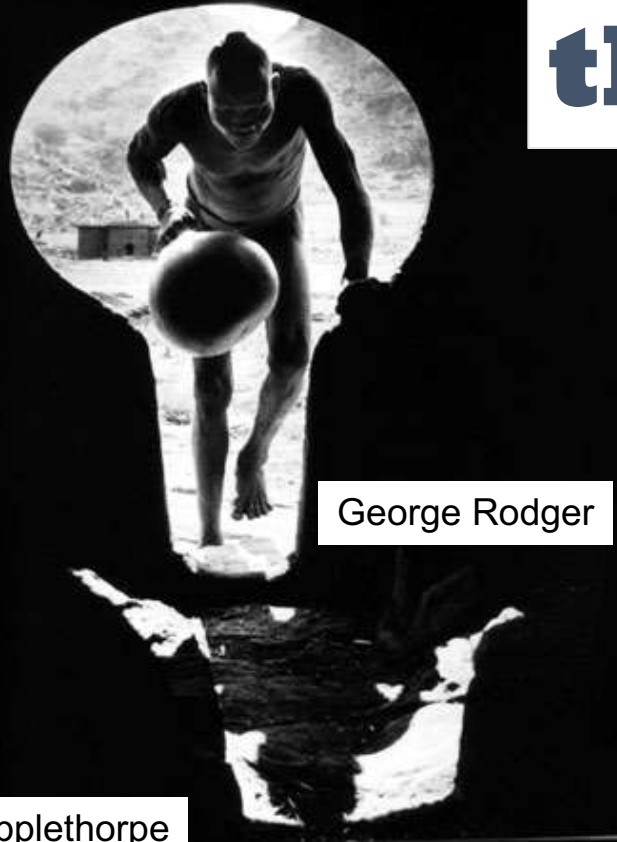
Form

thick/thin

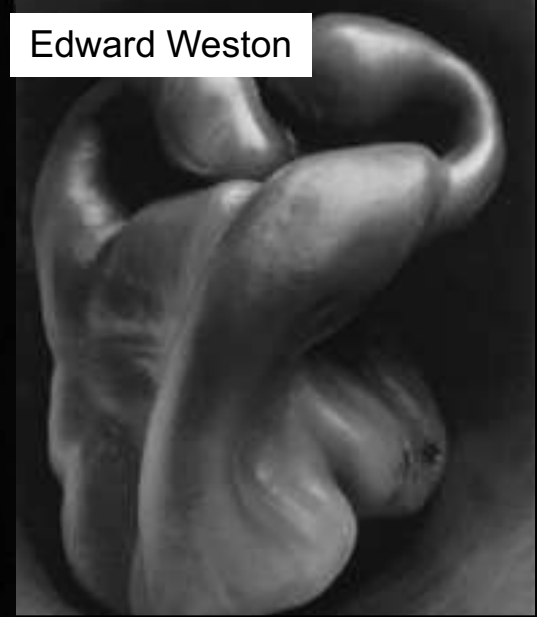
Sebastiao Salgado



George Rodger



Edward Weston



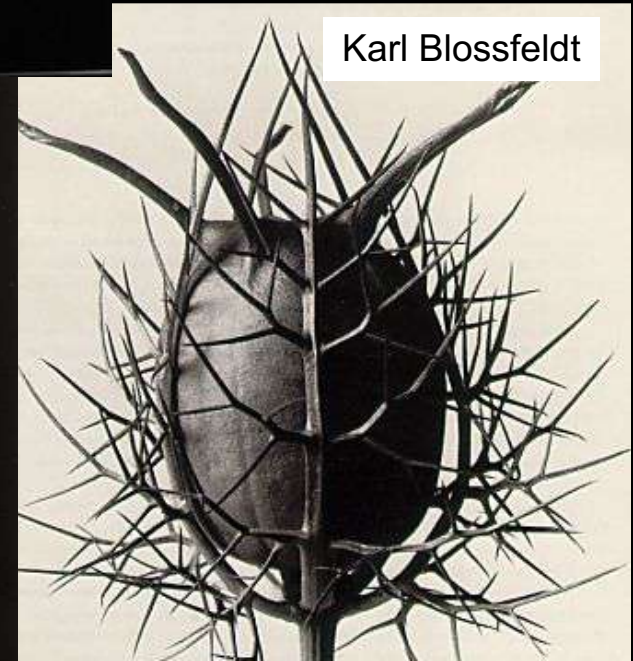
Thomas Demand



Robert Mapplethorpe



Karl Blossfeldt



Form

thick/thin

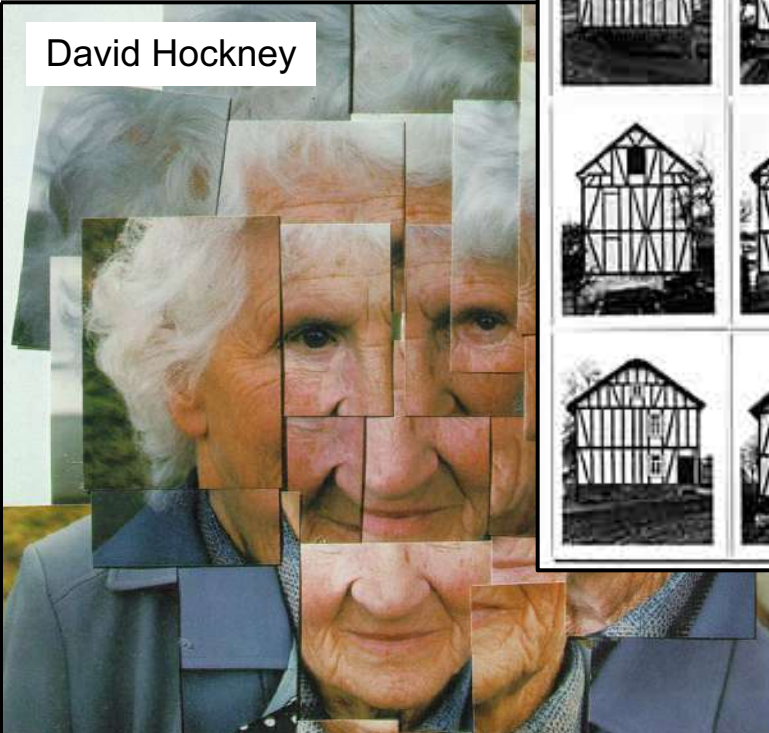


Form is the three-dimensional equivalent of shape. Even though shape is only two-dimensional, with the proper application of lighting and tonal range, you can bring out form and give your subjects a three-dimensional quality.

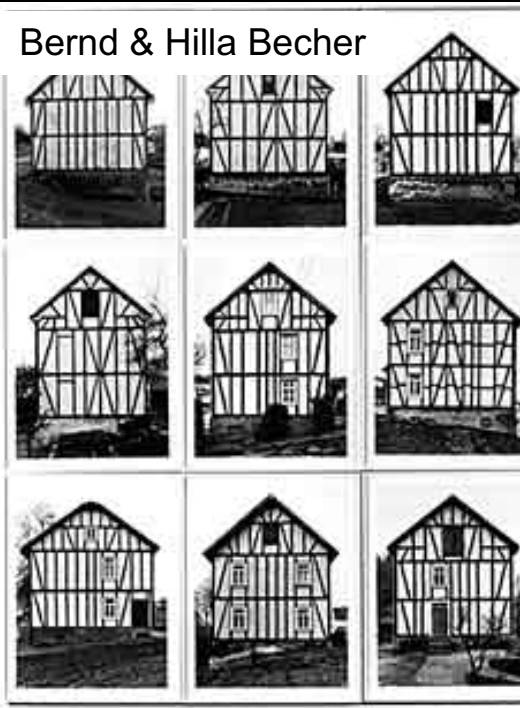


Pattern

David Hockney



Bernd & Hilla Becher



Andy Warhol



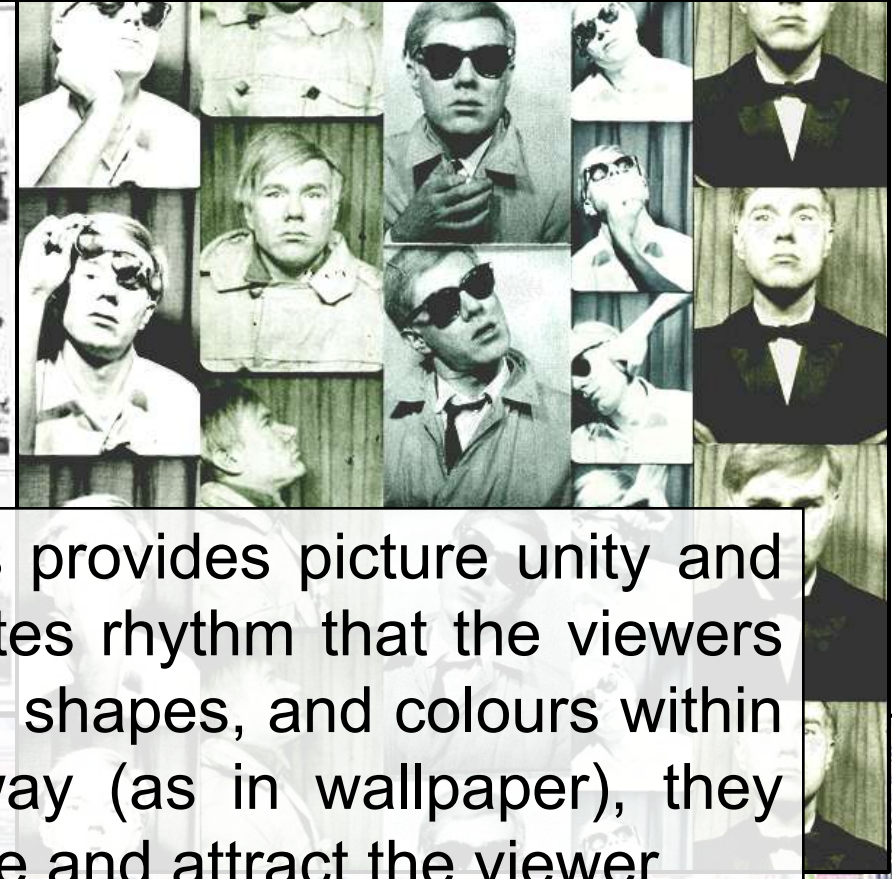
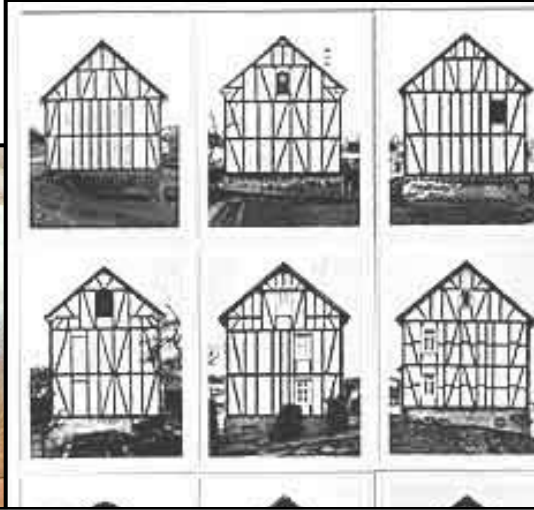
Christian Boltanski



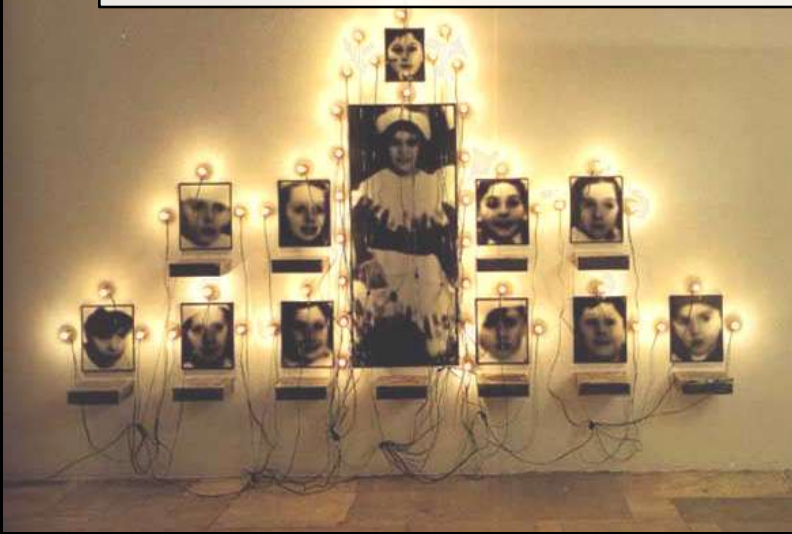
Andreas Gursky



Pattern



Patterns and repeating elements provides picture unity and structure. Pattern repetition creates rhythm that the viewers eyes enjoy following. When lines, shapes, and colours within a picture occur in an orderly way (as in wallpaper), they create patterns that often enhance and attract the viewer.

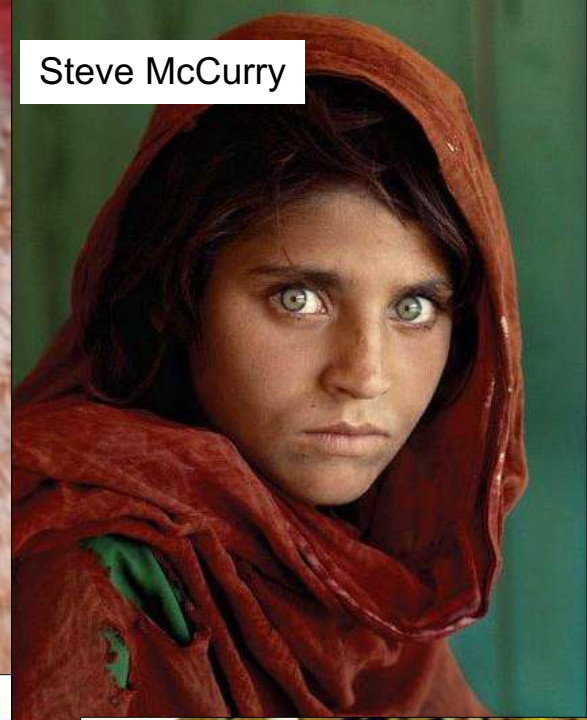


Colour

Martin Parr



Steve McCurry



Catherine Yass



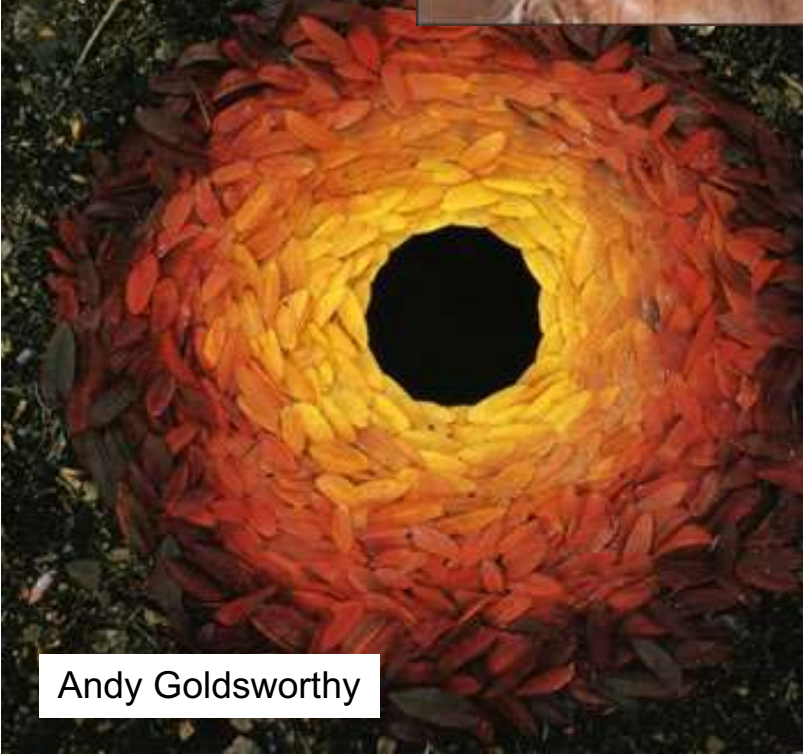
Nick Knight



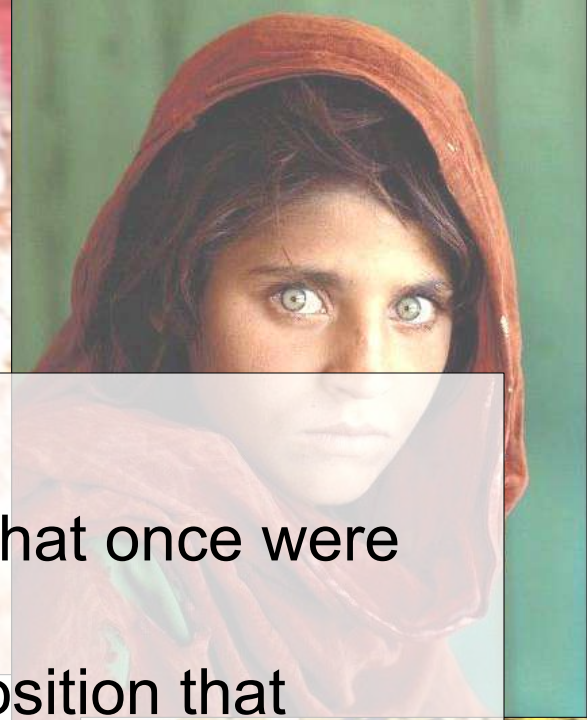
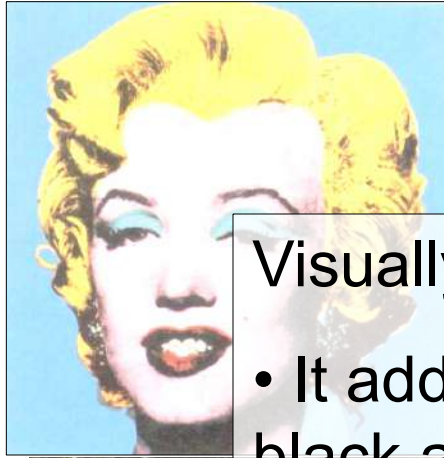
Stephen Shore



Andy Goldsworthy

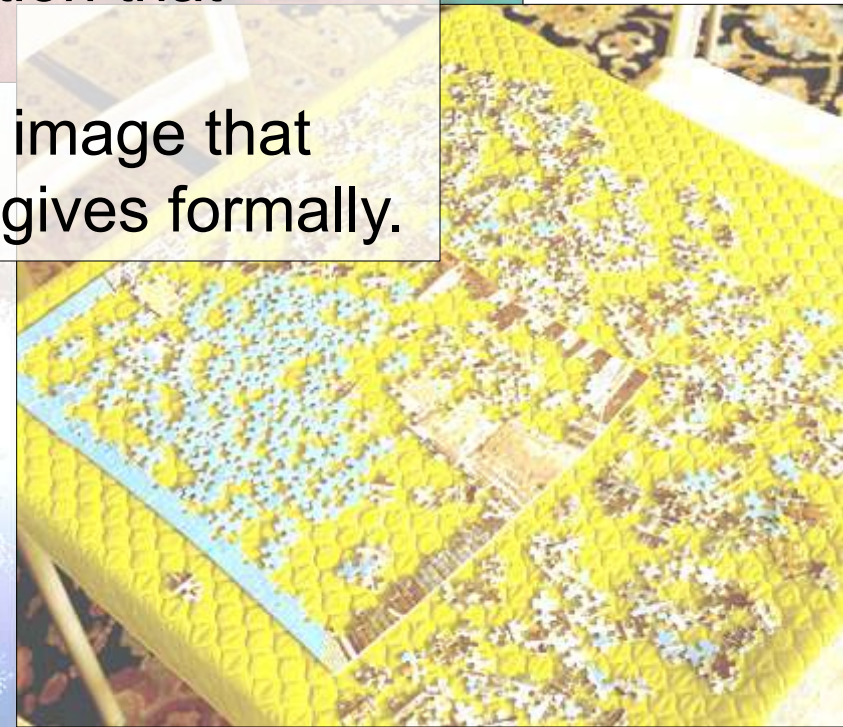
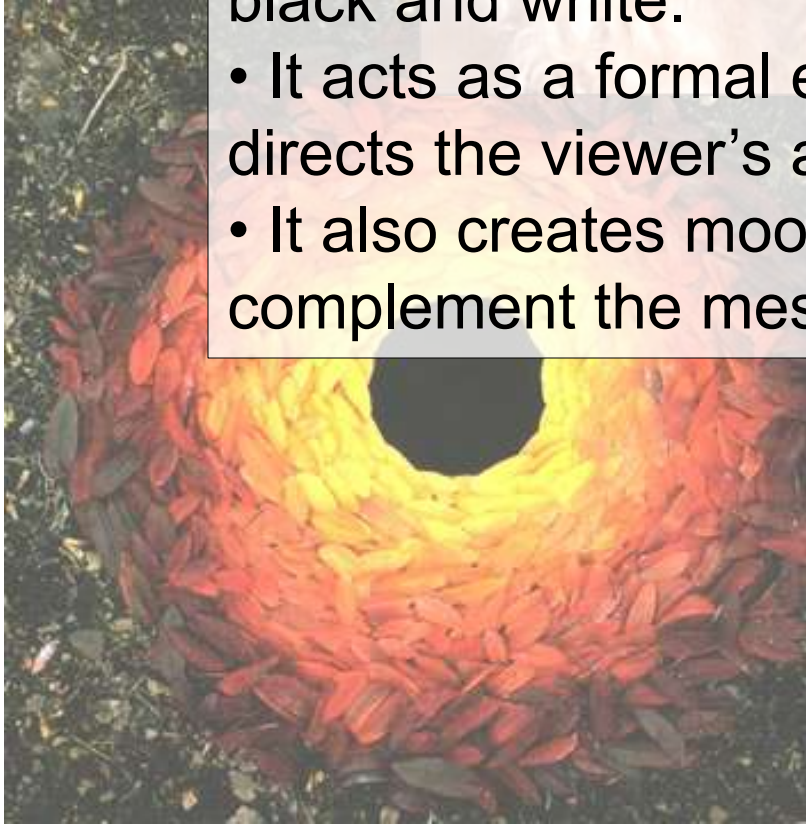


Colour



Visually, colour does three things:

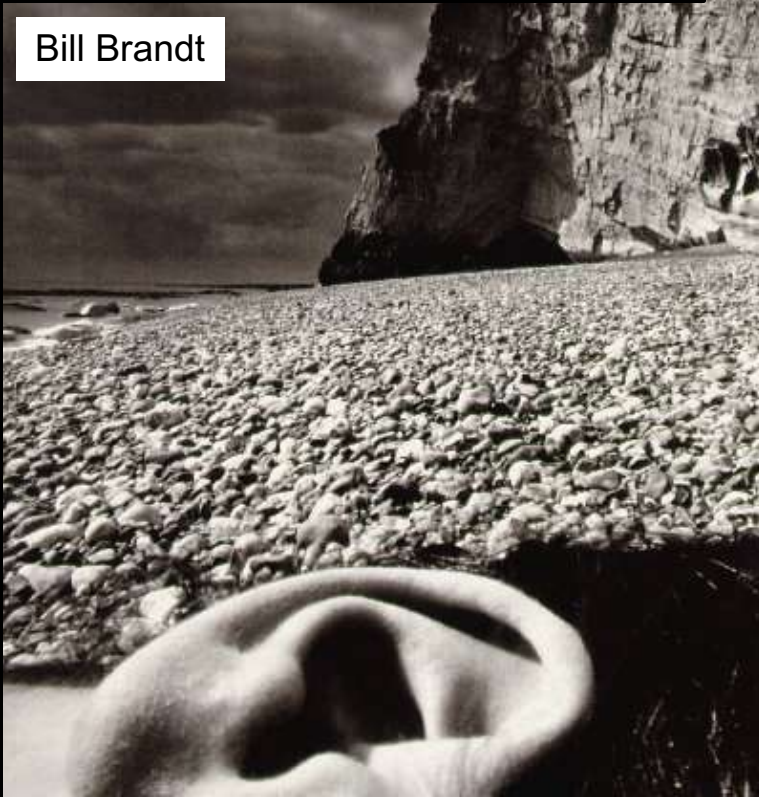
- It adds another dimension to images that once were black and white.
- It acts as a formal element in a composition that directs the viewer's attention.
- It also creates moods and feelings in an image that complement the message that the image gives formally.



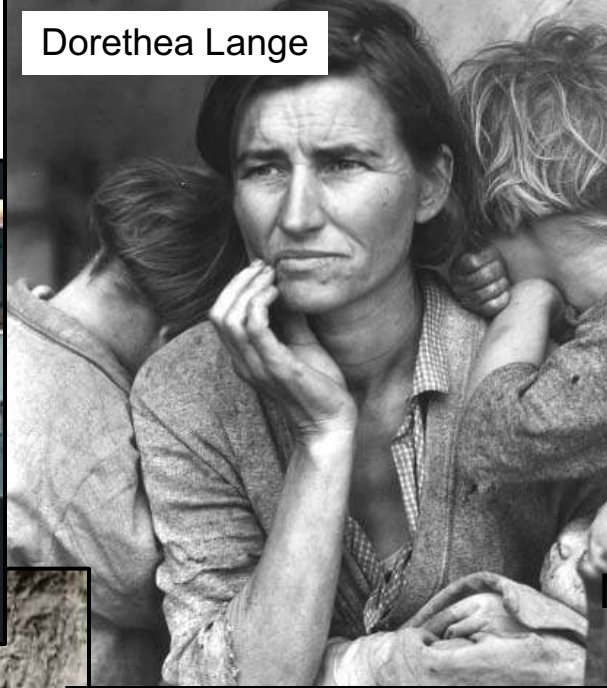
Composition



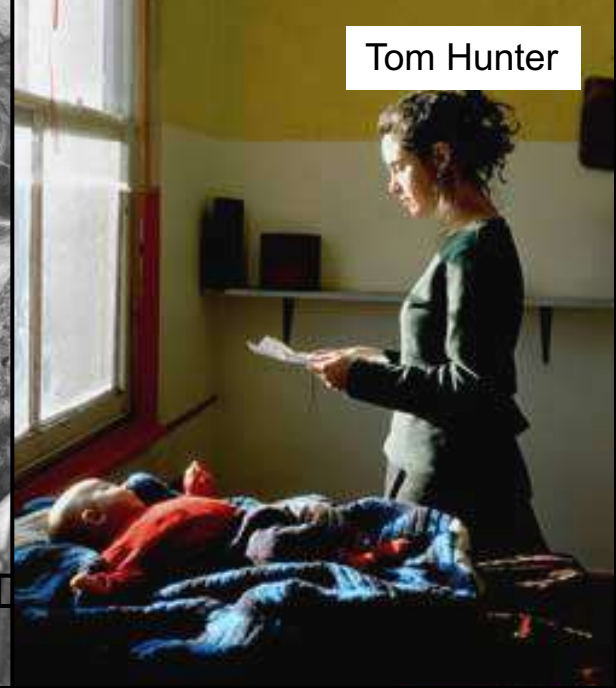
Thomas Demand



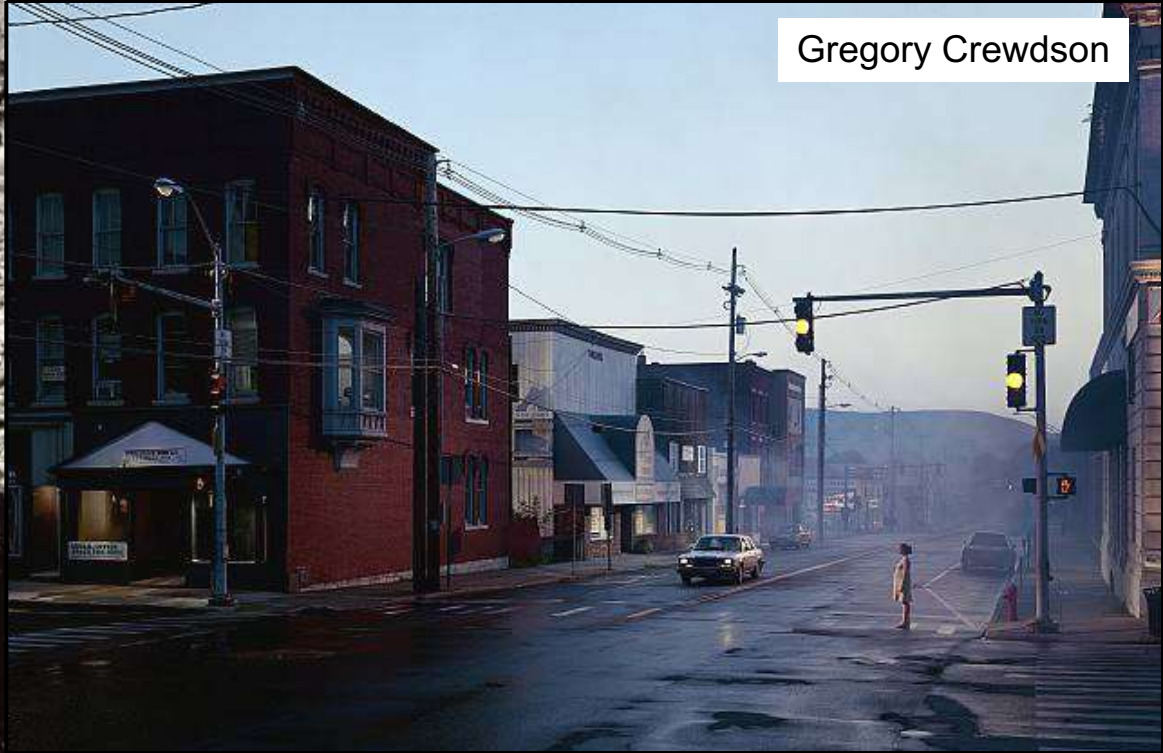
Bill Brandt



Dorethea Lange

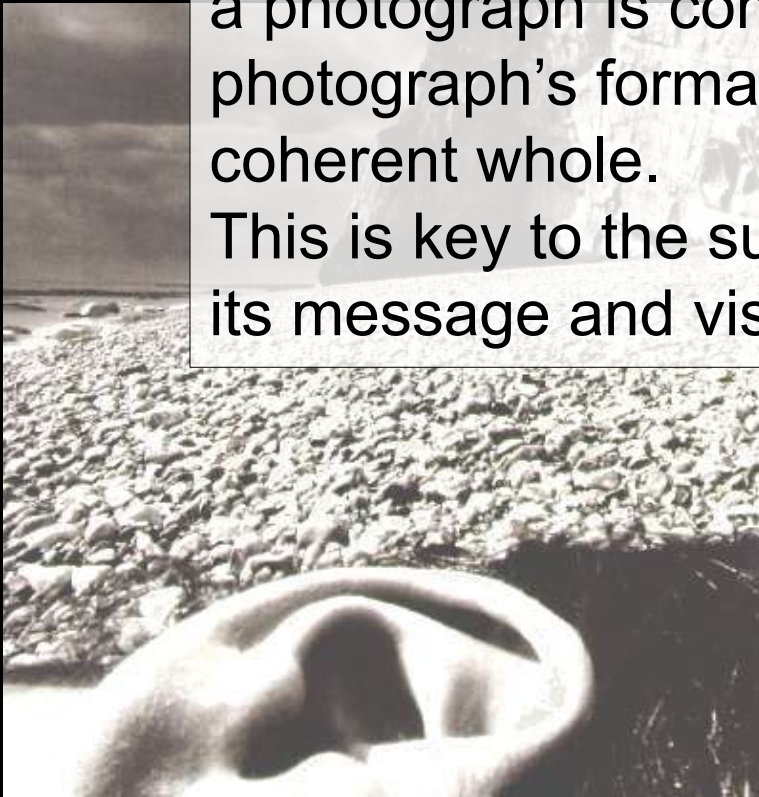


Tom Hunter



Gregory Crewdson

Composition



One of the most important components of photography is its *composition*. The composition is the way in which a photograph is composed and the way in which the photograph's formal elements work together to form a coherent whole. This is key to the success of a work of art in conveying its message and visually "hanging together."

Framing: Make sure you get close enough to your subject matter and use your viewfinder to carefully frame and select what you want to photograph.



Martin Parr



Hannah Starkey



Guy Bourdin



Man Ray

Natural Apertures: Sometimes called a frame within a frame.
This is where part of the composition is used to frame and enhance the subject.



Lee Miller



Caroline Shuttle



James Nachtwey



Steve McCurry



Marc Riboud

Angle of View: Using a variety of angles can enhance perspective and the 3D quality of your subject.



André Kertész



Thomas Demand



André Kertész



Josef Koudelka

Perspective: This can enhance the three dimensional depth within an image.
Perspective can also be used to direct the viewers eye through the image.



Stephen Shore



Fay Godwin



Catherine Yass

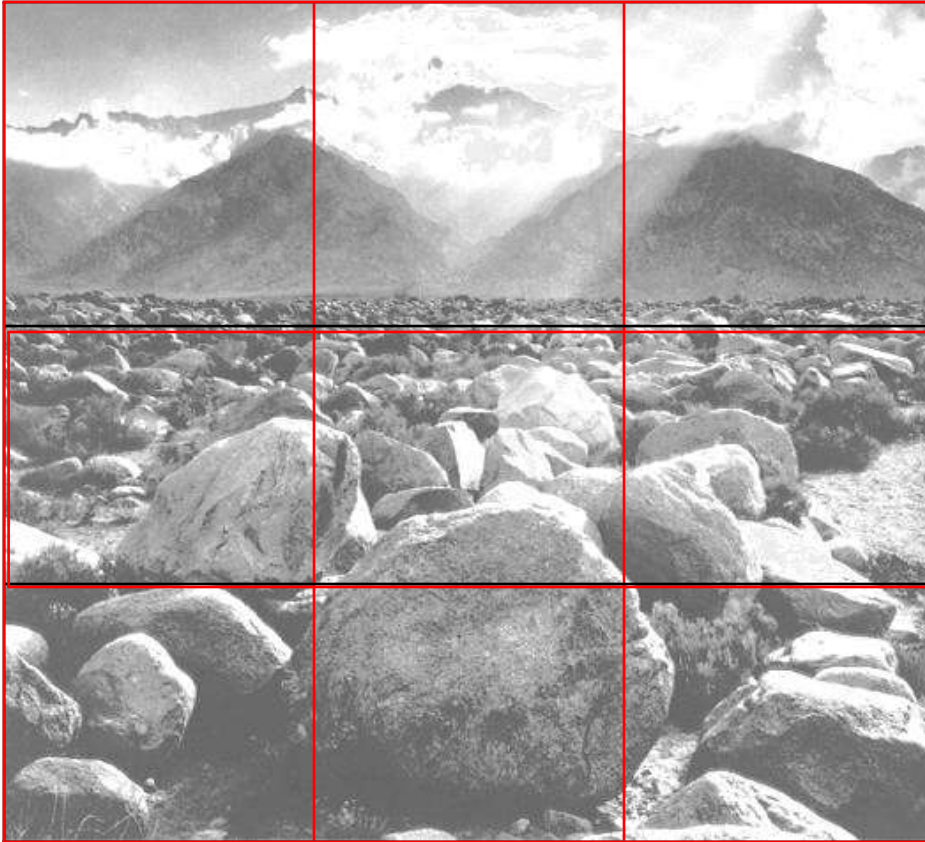


Lewis Hine

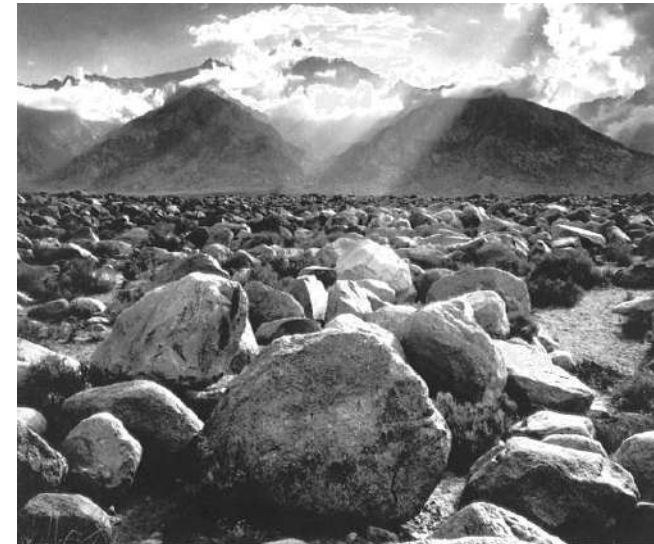


Joel Sternfeld

Rule of Thirds: Is all about composition and making the image look visually aesthetic and interesting. All you need to do is divide the cameras viewfinder into nine equal sections so an imaginary grid is formed.



- This theory has been used extensively in art especially in painting.
- It has been said to express the secrets of *visual harmony*, this *adds balance* and interest to the photograph.



Ansel Adams

Reflections: Using water, windows, mirrors or any sort of reflective surface can change an image into a work of art. The wonderful thing about using reflections when taking photos is that they can completely alter the image.



Daniel Kukla



Qui Yuhia



Naoya Hatakeyama



Liza Dracup



Sean Lenz and Kristoffer Abildgaard

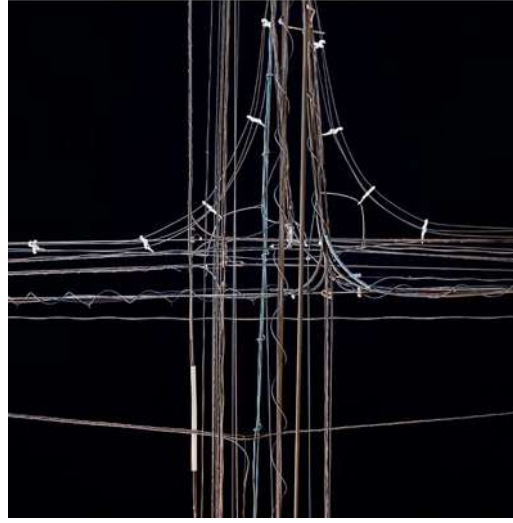


Adam Fuss

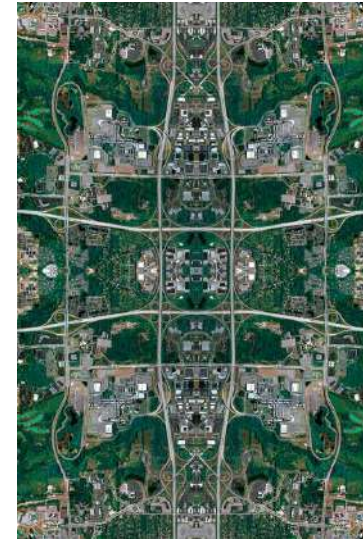
Symmetry: This can enhance the three dimensional depth within an image.
Perspective can also be used to direct the viewers eye through the image.



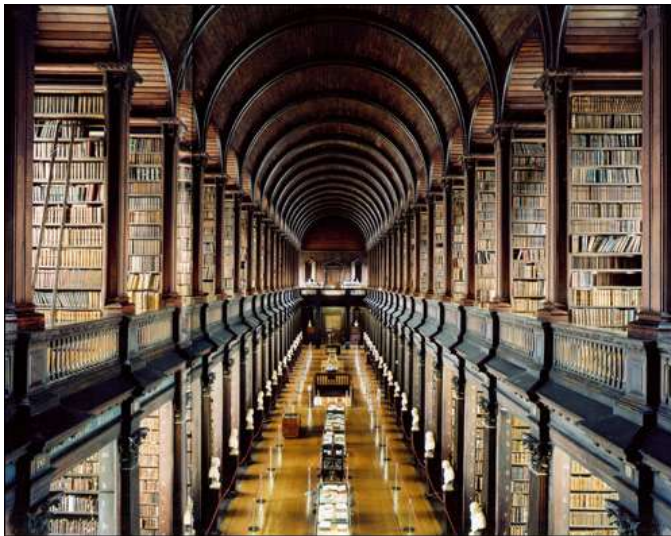
Adrian Tyler



Andreas Gefeller



David Thomas Smith



Candida Höfer



Brend Hilla Becher



Mattia Moggetti

Contrast: Is the difference in subject tones from white-to-gray-to-black or from the lightest tone to the darkest tone. In black-and-white photography, contrast is considered either *high*, *normal*, or *low*. A high-contrast scene or photograph consists primarily of white and black with few or no middle gray tones.



James Nachtwey



Robert Frank



Brassäi



Brassäi



George Rodger



Imogen Cunningham



Andreas Feininger



Bill Brandt

Wide Angle: One of the most interesting features of wide-angle lens is "*the capability to stretch perspective*". When you look through a wide-angle lens, it seems that *the distance between objects has extended*. The wider the lens i.e. 24mm the more distortion.



Fisheye Examples



Bill Brandt



Caroline Shuttle



Gregory Crewdson

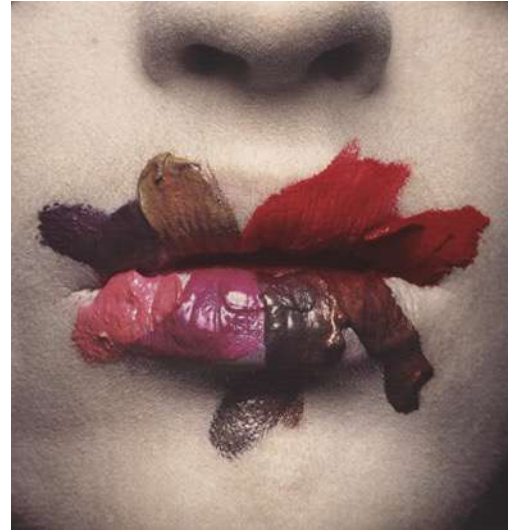


Caroline Shuttle

Close-up: Macro photography is close-up photography. The image projected on the film plane or digital sensor is close to the same size as the subject.



John Coplans



Irving Penn



Bahman Jalali



Keith Arnatt



Peter Keetman



David Levinthal