DP LAB- Focus

The camera sees more than the eye. --- Edward Weston
The length of a shot, the angle, the framing, the central focus

LENGTH the distance between the photographer and the object being photographed. The length of a shot tells a story --- it gives us a scene or a detail. Move it or zoom it or try it both ways! Take a picture to represent one of the items below:

1) <u>**EXTREME LONG SHOT (1)-**</u> Back off! What is the longest shot you can take on campus? Off campus? Experiment- This can be taken from as much as a quarter of a mile away, and is generally used as a scene-setting, establishing shot. There will be very little detail visible in the shot, it's meant to give a general impression rather than specific information.

2) <u>**LONG SHOT (2) -**</u> Experiment in making a "life" size image --- or FULL SHOT showing the entire human body, with the head near the top of the frame and the feet near the bottom. While the focus is on subject, plenty of background detail still emerges.

3) <u>**MEDIUM SHOT (3)-**</u> Contains a figure from the knees/waist up. Variations on this include the TWO SHOT (containing two figures from the waist up) and the THREE SHOT (contains 3 figures...). Any more than three figures and the shot tends to become a long shot. Experiment with a "Grandma's teeth" shot- three people, two closer together and one removed. Keep them all in focus. EX. [x   xx] and try one person closer to the camera and in focus EX. [xx   X] Consider perspective --- a big giant crushing a tiny man, a person holding up a building, etc.

4) <u>**CLOSE-UP (4)-**</u> This shows very little background, and concentrates on either a face, or a specific detail. Everything else is just a blur in the background. It shows the importance of things, be it words written on paper, or the expression on someone's face. The close-up takes us into the mind of our subject. In reality, we only let people that we really trust get THAT close to our face - mothers, children and lovers, usually - so a close up of a face is a very intimate shot. Get close to your subject, including only a little bit of background.

5) <u>**EXTREME CLOSE-UP (5)-**</u> As its name suggests, an extreme version of the close up, generally magnifying beyond what the human eye would experience in reality. An extreme close-up of a face, for instance, would show only the mouth or eyes, with no background detail whatsoever. Experiment on how close you can get to an object or the human face and keep it in focus.

ANGLES The vantage point between the camera and the object being photographed gives emotional information to an audience, and guides their judgment about the character or object in shot.

1) <u>**The Bird's-Eye view (6)-**</u> This shows a scene from directly overhead, a very unnatural and strange angle. Familiar objects viewed from this angle might seem totally unrecognizable at first (umbrellas or hats in a crowd). This shot does, however, put the audience in a godlike position, looking down on the action. People can be made to look insignificant, ant-like, part of a wider scheme of things. Climb somewhere high (but SAFE) and experiment.

2) <u>**High Angle (7)-**</u> Not so extreme as a bird's eye view adds an increased vulnerability to an object below. The camera is elevated above the action. High angles make the object photographed seem smaller, and less significant (or scary). Experiment with making images from above --- Get high (but always say no to drugs!). Experiment with distortion EX. the size of a head vs feet.

3) <u>**Eye Level (8)-**</u> A fairly neutral shot; a direct approach, the camera is positioned as though it is a human actually observing a scene, so that subject heads are on a level with the focus. The camera will be placed approximately five to six feet from the ground. Experiment with different eye levels, including a peer, a child and an animal.

4) **Low Angle (45* vs direct)(9)-** Low angles help give a sense of confusion to a viewer. This shot of increase height and power can also make the viewer feel uneasy. The background of a low angle shot will tend to be just sky or ceiling, the lack of detail about the setting adding to the disorientation of the viewer. The added height of the object may make it inspire fear and insecurity in the viewer. Get down (don't dance, or threaten a bank manager, just get your camera low to the ground). Experiment with low direct and low 45* angles. Make a photo looking straight up at a person or a building.

5) **Oblique/Canted or Dutch Angle (10)**- Sometimes the camera is tilted (ie is not placed horizontal to floor level), to suggest imbalance, transition and instability (very popular in horror movies). Make a Dutch Angled photograph --- play with the horizon line, angles and levels. Make a Dutch angle from high and one from low.

THE FRAME provides the composition area around the subject.

1) (11) Have a look around to see what's around the main focal point. Usually something fairly insignificant like a wall, some ivy, a patch of flowers, a fallen log, some rocks --- something that could be used to fill a bit of the foreground. Move to include interest. Move in close. Move yourself so that you can clearly see your main subject, but can also get in close to some of those foreground details. When you do, aim to get that particular detail at the edge of the frame only. Remember, its job is to draw the eye into the main subject of the photo, it's not meant to be the main subject itself. Now try out different foreground interests at the sides of your frame --- an overhanging branch, part of a wall or rock and include these elements into the foreground of your image. Make a photo taking into account the entire frame --- consider ways to support and frame your subject.

THE FOCUS provides the message from the photographer to the viewer. Where is the viewer directed to look? What is in focus? How is the focus supported (leading lines, shallow depth of field, color, etc).

1) **FOREGROUND (12)**- Make a photo with only the foreground in focus --- get close, zoom, FOCUS!
2) **BACKGROUND (13)**- The background can offer information, color and distraction. Keeping in mind the information in foreground, now make an interesting image where the background is in focus and the foreground is not.
3) **GET IT ALL IN (14)**- Back up and get it all in focus.
4) **DIRECT THE FOCUS (15)**- Using a person's gaze or leading lines, direct the viewer to where you want them to focus.

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ASSIGNMENTS
WoW- Disheartened/Encouraged [Flickr Group]

DUE DATE: January 29th