

Physical Point of View Assignment

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Description

With the camera, we translate the living, moving, three-dimensional world into small, flat, two-dimensional photographs. Every picture, from the portrait on a driver's license to a war photograph in a newspaper, describes a particular point of view. Some points of view are more interesting than others. The acts of deciding where to stand, what to frame, and when to press the shutter button on your camera define the point of view that will be described in the picture.

We see the world from about 3 feet to 6 feet off the ground. Most images we make and see are made within that normal range of human vision. In this project you are going to make pictures from extreme points of view—ways of seeing that fall outside our normal ways of looking at the world.

Requirements

Shoot one roll of film for this assignment. Make a contact sheet and at least three finished prints for review.

You are welcome to shoot more rolls of film if you wish. You get credit for all serious work you do.

Notes

Don't make pictures from a normal, "human" point of view! Here are some possible points-of-view to get you started:

- Extreme angles
- Looking down
- Looking through things
- Reflective surfaces
- Bird's-eye view
- Worm's-eye view
- Looking in

It's not enough to just make random pictures at weird angles. Choose subjects that are interesting and dramatic. The key is to make pictures that are expressive and well composed.

Quote to Consider

"Photography is a system of visual editing. At bottom, it is a matter of surrounding with a frame a portion of one's cone of vision, while standing in the right place at the right time. Like chess, or writing, it is a matter of choosing from among given possibilities, but in the case of photography the number of possibilities is not finite but infinite."

—John Szarkowski