
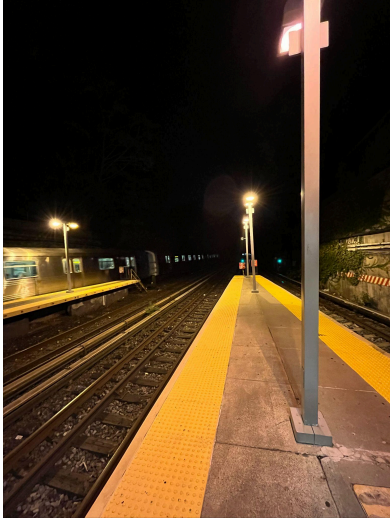



Kuksong Fuse
Essay 1: My Photo Essay
9/25/24
ENG 1121 - D536 (Professor Scanlan)

		
Natural Falls	Night Walk	Sky's Coastline

Spontaneous photography

Teju Cole mentions, “Beginning photographers are often tempted to reduce photography to rigid rules... But the reality is that there is usually a much more improvisatory and flexible mathematical order at play in a successful photograph” (2015). My interpretation is that photography is more of something done on the spot and isn’t something that can be forced even if you follow all the mathematical formulas. This is present in all of my photographs, since I took all my photographs at the spur of the moment when I thought they were aesthetic. The three photographs that I took “Natural Falls”, “Night Walk”, and “Sky’s Coastline” are all representative of my sense of aesthetics and their relation with color.

“Sky’s Coastline” was taken when I was going with my friends to Overpeck County Park in New Jersey as we were walking around the park after getting dinner together. We crossed a bridge after driving from dinner and continued to walk until we saw the beautiful view of the sun setting in the distance over the lake, and we all decided to document it with a photo along with a few more photos done in a series. Berger (2013) says, “A photograph is a result of the photographer’s decision that it is worth recording that this particular event or this particular object has been seen” (18). This is encapsulated in “Sky’s Coastline” as this was originally meant to be just getting food with my friend and driving out of state just to have a getaway and enjoy going somewhere new with my friends. This shows Berger’s idea of the photograph being used as a way to record the event and show that it has happened. The DOF (Depth of field) of the photo is meant to be very shallow with the majority of the focus being on the small patch of shrubbery at the bottom of the photo and keeping everything slightly blurred since the lighting was very dark since the sun has already set too far, but this helped a lot since it gave a dark silhouette of the entire background and the tree that was covering the sun. There is also a varying color scheme over the water and sky as it reflects the changing color from the sky into the water, and it all goes from a bright yellow color and then slowly darkens into an orange shade to a cool tone of blue and slowly gets darker as it transitions to the other side of the sun. This use of color adds a variation of color that seems to blend in and slowly transitions from a warm color to a cooler color, which is the reason I thought this photo should be recorded.

The second photo was taken when I was in Ithaca Falls with my family when we went to visit during the first week of school. I wanted to take a photo of the beautiful landscape since it is very rare that I get to see a waterfall, especially since there have been very few times that I have seen a waterfall in person. The rapid waters flow down the cliff and hit multiple different layers,

making the water have a more white-grayish hue. The overall photo has a dull color scheme that consists of gray and white colors from everything except the trees in the background, and they add to accentuate the photo by giving a sort of outline for everything in between the trees. Overall, this photo has a matching color scheme with very distinct colors of separation, and they serve to give contrast to the photo and a sense of form to the photograph.

The third image is taken from Newkirk Plaza train station near my neighborhood. I took this train when I was wandering around late at night with my friends and exploring the neighborhood. I chose this view because it was aesthetic and empty but filled in space at the same time. The dominant impression of this is the train, as it looks like it is coming out of the darkness. The reason why I titled this photograph “Night Walk” is because I usually walk around late at night with my friends and then take the train back home. Usually for me and my friends, taking the train at the end of the night signifies the end of my walk and going home to relax and rest for the next day. The overall composition of the photo was taken in a wider shot with a zoomed-out camera angle, so I could get a wider view of the surroundings, and it can capture the effects of the light in the photo. The lights also add a little contrast to this photo as it shows the difference between the light and the dark effects on the photo as the darkness of the background slowly creeps towards the foreground of the photo until the platform lights push them away and the darkness is enveloping the entirety of the background and middle ground with the light only covering the platform and its immediate surroundings. The photo was taken from a head-on view with the vantage point pointing towards the center of the dark horizon where the train is coming from as I wanted this to be the dominant impression of my photograph.

To summarize, there isn't just one set standard or formula to take photographs and have them be beautiful, as it is more flexible in its ability to portray a message. There are multiple

aspects or types of a photograph that can be different from one another and still have a sense of beauty in it. According to Berger, “What distinguishes one from the other is the degree to which the photograph explains the message, the degree to which the photograph makes the photographer's decision transparent and comprehensible.”(18). I resonate with this quote from Berger since the only way for a photograph to be understood by the viewer or observer is to make whatever you want to show easily understood since the viewer can not understand the exact thought going on inside the photograph. In addition, this idea of the photographer explaining their message adds to the idea of no set standard or rule for photography since the photograph is whatever the photographer chooses to show and doesn't need a rule of thirds or a golden ratio to get their message and personal sense of beauty to the viewer.

Word Count: 1075 words

References

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