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### Shades of Fog

Photography is an art form in which the individual is able to express all their hidden desires, secrets, joys, and sense of beliefs. Photography has been around for nearly 70 years and still, till this day, the debates of photography being considered a true art form still exist. In *Understanding a Photograph* John Berger says, "The very principle of photography is that the resulting image is not unique, but on the contrary infinitely reproducible." (291) While Berger states whether or not photography can be considered a unique form of art, I believe that what makes a photo so unique is the person behind the lens; In this essay I will discuss the Studium of the Photos, secondly, Frame chosen for both photos, and finally, I will also elaborate the choices I made in the overall outcome of the photos, as to why I wanted to achieve a certain look by using certain camera filters. The photos that I will be comparing are named "Fulton Fog" and "Vibrations"

In the first Photo the studium shows a bright but foggy day in the city of New York. As the eye shifts from right to left, the first building the eye will notice the CHAS signage on 214 Broadway, as you might already know, that CHAS is the signage for Chase Bank. Directly in front of the bank is the tree from St. Paul's Trinity Church, only thing dividing the church from the Chase Bank is the traffic lights and two separate flags, the American flag alongside the flag of England, giving the two landmarks their own territory to claim. Behind the tree, you will find a cluster of four building one hiding behind the other. The building with the bigger horizontal lines that seems to be the second tallest is the New York State Department of Health Building, the one

behind it slightly poking out is 7 World Trade Center, the one directly across from that is 3 World Trade Center, in front of 3 World Trade is the center of the photo One World Trade Center. One world Trade Center stands tall and lean hiding behind no buildings, standing on its own. The two diagonal lines that split the center of One World Trade Center that eventually intercept at the top can only remind me of a women's silhouette wearing a split dress; as you gaze from the bottom to the top you realize everything fades. The fading is the fog in the picture; at first the fog is very transparent to where you can still see the windows within the fog; eventually the fog thickens, masking the top of the tower as you reach the top. More than 1,776 feet disguised as a fading memory soon to vanish like a dream. The little spears in front of the Freedom Tower is the entrance of the World Trade Memorial. In front of the memorial there stands 195 Broadway were you immediately notice the eight perfect right angle beams circling the building. Each beam dividing one floor after the other all supporting two sets of window panes on each floor, you are able to visibly see the lower sets of windows. As your eye gradually move upwards those very small windows began to fade. Shape by shape, line by line. You can also see on the second floor that there are what seem to be five little banners dividing the smaller windows panes from the larger ones on top. When noticing those banner it gave me the dominate impression that, that building was built in the early 1900's. It gave me a feeling of the Great Depression Era, only that floor out of the 29 story building has those banners. And finally, the right angle cut off in the photo is the Fulton Street Center train station.

In the Photo "Vibrations" the studium is similar to that of "Fulton Fog" many of the same buildings, but a few left out. The Photo is captured in the evening time on the same day as "Fulton Fog" was captured. The shadows in the photo give a unique balance of color that does not make the viewer feel too overwhelming of lights. One the left side you will notice a dark

dense shadows casting upon the Fulton Station. You can also notice that the fog has clear up much more than it was in the morning when I took the first photo. You are able to see how tall the Freedom Tower truly is from a greater distance; you can see that it is taller than 195 Broadway on the left of the photo. In the first photo is the questionable as to which building is taller. In front of that building is the Fulton Center train station that illuminates a purple glow that ricochet around its perimeter the building, from 195 Broadway as well as the one across from it. The building across from it is the Chase Bank where you can see the arch of a figure 2 on the side marking the address 214 Broadway and lastly, in front of the Chase Bank is the same tree from St. Paul's Trinity Church and the spears from the World Trade Center memorial.

In "Fulton Fog" I choose to use the square Frame on my iPhone, I knew that I wanted to have a landscape feel to the photo as well as give it an architectural aspect. With the Square Frame it cuts off the majority of the top layer of the photo and extends the wide angle view. I personally feel that the Square Frame gives it a more polish look than the standard would give. The second photo "Vibrations" Although I love the Square Frame, I was fascinated with on how I immediately felt pulled into the photo and directed my attention on the four main buildings in the photo, the camera created this narrow tunnel vision that leads you straight to the Freedom Tower. Both Frames helps creates different mood that is conveyed through the photo. "Fulton Fog" gives the mood of calmness with the Black and white filter along with the fog. In "Vibrations" It gives the feeling of happiness, some viewers might enjoy the lights that are present in the photo, others may appreciate that the photo is not too overwhelming with light.

"Photographs bear witness to a human choice being exercised in a given situation" (292) states John Burger. In both photographs it was a conscious choice of mine to determine the Frame work that I felt best conveyed. For "Fulton Fog" I intended to give it a more architectural

feeling by getting closer to the building enough that the viewer can see the precise detailing of each building. For “Vibrations” I intended to keep the Standard Frame because I enjoyed the narrow direction of the photo that mainly focuses on four main buildings instead of seven. Throughout the process of each detail of the photos, it was my free will of choice that leads me to the overall outcome of the photos. I made the decision of the placement as to where I wanted to capture the photo; I decided the filters that I thought could well enhanced the beauty of the element of fog. “Fulton Fog” was decided to be a documentary photo that when I looked at it, it can remind me of a photo that would resemble a picture in an architectural magazine. I wanted the viewer to appreciate the building for themselves so I decided to filter the photo Black and White. In “Vibrations” I decided that I wanted to enhance the purple colors in the photos so I used the color filter Chrome on my iPhone. I was important to me to enhance the color because the color plays a very import element in the photo; it is not only in the Fulton Center train station, but it’s contagious glow bounces off from all four building and eventually the sky of the photo is divided into colors of purple, blacks and a hint of light brown.. At the moment I took the photo, you can see the antenna on the Freedom Tower is also purple; giving off this condense purple beam shining from the top of the tower with the help of the fog.

While comparing these two photos I am able to see although they may be similar, they still possess a unique features about them. “One learns to read photography as one learns to read footprints” says John Berger, (293). There is no right way to read a photograph, as well as there is no right way the viewer can interpret my true intention of all choices that I have made in either photographs. Just as foot print may look similar to another, no two footprints are ever the same, and no two photos are either. To replicate the photos, one will have to go through great lengths to get the same outcome. Others of course can stand in the same spot as the photographer; some

might even wait for a foggy day to attempt to take the same photo; some can even study the exact timing of colors in the train station that coincides with the antenna of the Tower, but there is a slim chance that they will be able to get all three element in one moment, in one shot, in one frame.

(1,605 Words)

Work Cite

Berger, John. "Understanding a Photograph." *Classic Essays on Photography*

13<sup>th</sup> Edition. By Alan Trachtenberg. 1980

New Haven: Leete's Island Books

Pages 291-293