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Around The World

Vision is the ability to see and photography is the art of capturing a sight within a picture.

Photographers have the creative capability to capture images from very unique perspectives, which allows them to control the perception of viewers. There are numerous factors that control the viewer's perception of a photograph such as the Dominant Impression, Reality Effect, Studium, Punctum, Frame, Pro Filmic Event, Rule Of Thirds, and Depth Of Field. These are all significant terms in photography and apply to majority of photographs. John Berger and Susan Sontag give their insight on photography in "*Understanding A Photograph*" and "*On Photography*" which both demonstrate aspects of photos that have significance. I have recently taken two photographs that are both of the Unisphere located in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. Although the subject of both photographs are the same, they are two completely different images. They both portray the unisphere in ways different and alike.

The two pictures that I had taken, "*Darkness On The Edge Of The Planet*" and "*Sunset Around The World*" both share a common studium and punctum. The common punctum in the images being the Unisphere and the common studium being the time of day. "*Darkness On The Edge Of The Planet*" was taken at night and "*Sunset Around The World*" was shot during the evening at the time of sunset. The time holds much significance in these two photos because "A photograph is useful when the chosen moment which it records contains a quantum of truth which is applicable, which is as revealing about what is absent from the photo as about what is present in it."(293-294) as John Berger mentions in "*Understanding A Photograph.*" The time of these two shots differentiates them and brings out contrasting aspects of each individual photo.

When I had shot "*Darkness On The Edge Of The Planet*" the ISO on my camera had to be higher due to the setting being much darker than it was during the shooting of "*Sunset Around The World*." The lighting of the two photos causes there to be different dominant impressions. "*Darkness On The Edge Of The Planet*" gives the impression of late night. The darkness is seen in the sky and the bright lights reflect strongly off of the Unisphere as there is no sunlight present. "*Sunset Around The World*" demonstrates a day coming to an end, leaving the impression of a sunset. As one can see there is organic and inorganic lighting present in this shot as the sun sets in the horizon and the night lights flash around the Unisphere. This goes to show the significance the time of a photograph has on the viewer's perception as Berger had mentioned.

"*Darkness On The Edge Of The Planet*" and "*Sunset Around The World*" both also have different reality effects. "*Darkness On The Edge Of The Planet*" is a realistic image because I shot it with a long lens and the picture has a straight frame, which means that the image was captured as the naked eye would see in reality. On the other hand "*Sunset Around The World*" has a unrealistic reality effect because I took the photo with a 180 degree fish eye lens and tilted the angle to create a unique perspective. As John Berger stated "A Photograph is a result of a photographer's decision that is worth recording, that this particular event, or this particular object has been seen." (292) And I specifically decided to capture the image with such specs to demonstrate a different view of the Unisphere.

Susan Sontag states "*A photography passes for incontrovertible proof that a given thing happened*"(531) which is a reason for why I took the photos of the Unisphere at different times. My main purpose was to demonstrate the passing of time and the effect that it has on a photograph. Time sheds light on certain aspects of a subject, in this case the Unisphere. During sunset certain details of the Unisphere are a lot more apparent and during the night time light seems to overpower a lot of the minute details that the Unisphere has.

I also played upon the angles of the images by taking shots of the Unisphere from different sides. “*Darkness On The Edge Of The Planet*” and “*Sunset Around The World*” both portray two different sides of the unisphere. I also only applied the rule of thirds to “*Sunset Around The World*” to not make it the center of all attention. This allows the viewer to see the surroundings such as the sky but also focus on the lighting reflecting on the Unisphere. The Unisphere being centered in “*Darkness On The Edge Of The Planet*” gravitates all the attention to the Unisphere itself.

Photography gives artists the creative capacity to portray the world in unique ways. Through the lens, photographers get to manipulate perception by capturing moments strategically. Berger and Sontag both elaborate on photography and demonstrate how certain principles are utilized. Dominant Impression, Reality Effect, Studium, Punctum, Frame, Pro Filmic Event, Rule Of Thirds, and Depth Of Field all have their part in photography and they are what gives photography so many dimensions. This being so the world around us can be viewed from numerous perspectives with the use of photography.

Works Cited

- Berger, John.** *"Understanding a Photograph."* Classic Essays On Photography 13th Edition, Ed. Alan
Sontag, Susan. *"On Photography"* New York: The Library of America, 2013. Print. Ed. Rieff, David