

Introduction to PERCEPTION & INTERPRETATION



Aim/Goal:

This lesson is intended to introduce students to the area of fine art and conceptual photography in both traditional and digital classrooms. Students will discuss the roles both the photographer and the viewer play in fine art and the relationship between the two. They will be asked to create a visual response to a common question inspired by a famous quote from Dorothea Lange: forcing them to think about their own sense of sight. Students will be required to respond to the prompt: If you were to be stricken blind tomorrow, what would be the lasting image that you would want to remember/take with you? The class will discuss how different photographic techniques can be used to create different moods and convey different messages to someone looking at a photograph. For the photography students, this will be their first project where they are asked to consider how their audience will interpret their photograph when looking their artwork.

Standards:

- **25.A.1d:** Identify the elements of line, shape, space, color, and texture; the principles of repetition and pattern; and the expressive qualities of mood, emotion and pictorial representation.
- **25.A.3e:** Analyze how the elements and principles can be organized to convey meaning through a variety of media and technology.
- **25.A.5:** Analyze and evaluate student and professional works for how aesthetic qualities are used to convey intent, expressive ideas, and/or meaning.
- **26.A.2f:** Understand the artistic processes of printmaking, weaving, photography, and sculpture.

Objectives:

- Students will:
 - Be able to define and review the meaning of perception and interpretation and how it relates to fine art.
 - Be able to describe the role and responsibilities of an artist and their audience when looking at creating and viewing fine art.
 - Be able to discuss how different photographic techniques are used to convey different moods or attitudes within a photograph.
 - Be able to apply their knowledge of photographic techniques to create their own photograph portraying something important to them.

Materials:

- Intro to Perception/Interpretation PowerPoint
- Student Daily Journal for project process
- 35mm camera & ISO 100 black/white film (or digital camera and card reader for digital class)
- 11"x14" resin-coated photographic paper (for traditional class)

Vocabulary:

- Perception: a way of regarding or understanding something; intuitive understanding or insight.
- Interpretation: a mental representation of the meaning or significance of something.
- Dorothea Lange: United States photographer remembered for her portraits of rural workers during the Depression (1895-1965).
- Perspective: a particular attitude toward or way of regarding something; a point of view.
- High-key lighting: lighting that results in more light areas than shadows; subjects are seen in middle grays and highlights, with little contrast.
- Low-key lighting: illumination that creates strong contrast between light and dark areas of the shot, with deep shadows and little fill light.
- Proximity: nearness in space.
- Conceptual Art: art in which the idea presented by the artist takes precedence over traditional aesthetic and material concerns, a finished product.

Procedure

1. Presentation of Introduction to Perception/Interpretation project.
 - a. Will introduce and discuss the role of conceptual photography.
 - b. Discuss the concept of perception and interpretation and how it relates to an artist and a viewer.
 - i. How people can interpret like-situations differently, and how perceptions can change because of the way they are influenced.
 - c. Discuss how photographers can manipulate how viewers interpret the meaning of their photographs using different techniques:
 - i. Altering direction of lighting, using high versus low-key lighting, using different angles and perspectives with the camera, etc.
 - d. Teacher will discuss the image prompt for the project. Students will produce one 11"x14" print for a class critique answering the question, "If you were to be stricken blind tomorrow, what would be the lasting image that you would want to remember/take with you?"
 - i. How will an image read to a viewer?
 - ii. How does the way the photograph was shot/created compliment the content of the photograph?

2. Teacher will explain that because this assignment is based on perception and interpretation of the viewer to our artwork, they must keep their content of their photograph a secret from their peers as much as possible. Doing so will help them receive more of a cold-read in the class critique from their audience.
3. Teacher will discuss that students will be keeping a daily log of their creative process to help them work through some of their challenges that may arise. Their journals will be kept with the teacher to insure that they are kept in secrecy.

Closing

- Students will finish the day working on their previously assigned projects and work on brainstorming ideas for their project.
- Teacher will pass out the student's daily journals and ask that they all place their name on their packet. Teacher will collect their packets and place them with their class materials for students to find the following day.

Assessment Strategies

Students will submit their daily journal packet for daily participation points with their final photograph. For the student's artwork, they will be assessed according to their standard rubric for completing photographic projects.