



Composing Strong Pictures

or...

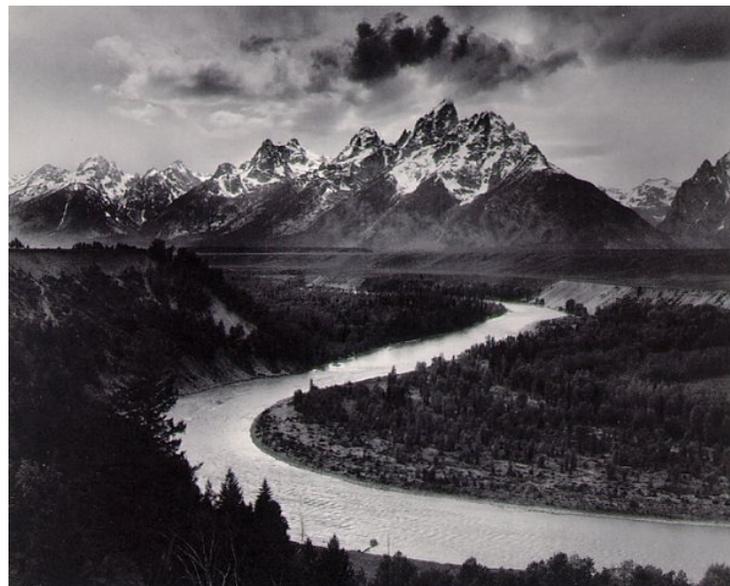
What should we look for in the viewfinder?

Lines Communicate Feeling

- Vertical lines: **strength**
- Horizontal lines: **steady and secure**
- Diagonal lines: **motion, action**
- Curved lines: **peace**

What Makes a Photo Strong?

- Something that commands *attention* or conveys a *feeling* to the audience
- Or something *interesting* for the eye to follow or *find*
 - diagonal lines
 - repetitive elements
 - contrasts in color or texture or lines or form
 - plus lots more...



Line

Repetitive Elements



Repetitive Elements

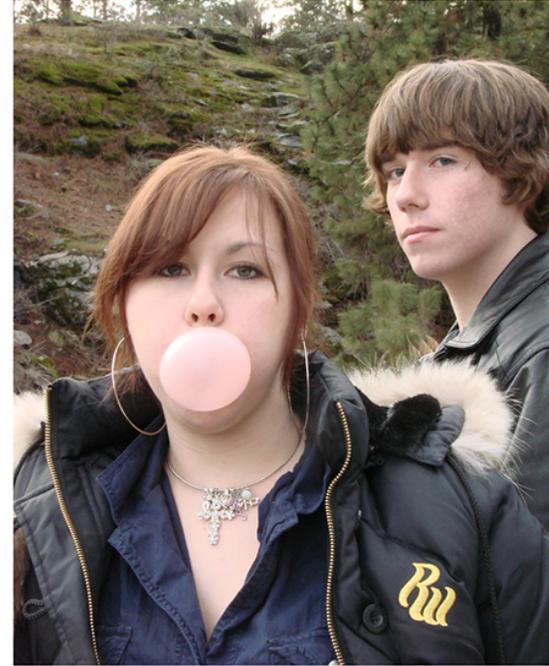


A Strong Photo?



- No distractions
 - (Supporting elements are ok, even desirable)
- Some sort of visual balance *or* tension
- Relaxed, natural people

Natural People



Good Strategies



- Have a *center of focus/attention* in every picture, something for the eye to start with or find.
- Look for something that *grabs attention*, communicates an *idea*, shares an *experience*.
- Look for something that *conveys a strong feeling* – joy, sadness, compassion.





Finding Photo Ideas



- On a shoot, think of an *adjective* that would describe the *essence* of the event or experience, and then find the elements, the details that communicate it.

Example: People enjoy the good music at a wedding.

Adjectives: loud, fun, rhythmic, entertaining

How can you represent the *music*?

More Strategies



- Move closer and *fill the frame*.
- Get people to *relax* and get their mind off the camera. “So what do you like to do?”
- Keep coming back to the same spot with *different light*, especially dawn and dusk.
- Do a series of shots with different *exposures* and later pick the best one.
- With digital cameras, take *lots of images*!

Finding Photo Ideas



Example: People enjoy the good music at a wedding.

Adjectives: *loud, fun, rhythmic, entertaining, moving*

How can you represent the *music*?

- Get an instrument in the scene with a smile.
- Show more than one person doing the same step. (visual rhythm)
- Applause.



