

Riverside Community College
Photo 14 Lighting for Still-life's & Portraits
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Assignment 1: Still Life | Location

Due: Monday Feb 19th 2018

Images to turn in 11x17 print & jpeg the night before class

Image mode: Color

"Photography is a love affair with life."

Burk Uzzle

This assignment is to construct a **still-life** on location. The subject matter is totally up to you as the photographer. The items should relate to each other including the background and be a pleasing composition with **everything in sharp focus**. The background is as important as the objects in the still-life.

Your still-life should be cropped to **15in wide by 8in** tall @ 300ppi. To email save as a jpeg at quality 10, this will give you a jpeg around 1.8mb. **Email your still-life the night before class by 7pm.**

After you capture your image you will make a print on 11x17 paper. This assignment can be either black and white or color crop. Crop your image for maximum impact.

A still Life gives you a lot of creative control over your subject. You have time to set it up in a pleasing composition and plan for lighting, two very important aspects of this type of photography.

Still-Life Tips

Still-life photography is generally a small grouping of inanimate subjects. A classic in art, a Still Life gives you a lot of creative control over your subject. Learning to create a good still life can be useful to many different types of photography. Wedding, stock, and food stylists all rely on the ability to compose this type of shot.

Keep a few things in mind:

Composition: The rule of thirds is a good idea to keep in mind when you are arranging your subjects. Groups of three or other odd numbers are also pleasing to the eye. Try to arrange your objects in such a way that the eyes flows from one to another. It's also a good idea to have them

related to each other in some way that makes sense to the viewer or gives a visual story. Arrange and rearrange as many times as necessary. Experiment!

Lighting: Soft natural window light works, as well as stronger lights and shadows for a more dramatic effect. Consider your subject and decide what works best. Lighting is the single most important element of still-life photography. The way a photographer uses light for still-life will add mood, give context, provide interest, and ultimately, create a dynamic still life photograph. Lighting for still-life is not complicated, it can be simple or as complicated as you like.

1. Use a simple backdrop:

2. Make your lighting interesting:

3. Light directionally: Side light is always most effective for bringing out texture and creating dynamic variation between the highlights and shadows. Side light will enable you to give dimension and depth to your still life imagery regardless of subject matter.

4. Pay attention to your angles: Two things to think about when faced with a studio lighting scenario.

a) The position of the lights to your subject

b) The position of your subject to the camera. Side light will give dimension, but so also will the angle at which you take your shot [ie. side, above, below, etc.]. Don't be afraid to experiment and change up angles. A photo is most interesting when you give a new perspective to something that is ordinary.

5. Light for shape: We see life 3 dimensionally. For this reason, the most dynamic photographs are the ones in which the audience could walk into the scene, or reach out and touch the subject. Lighting for shape will be most emphasized by side light, when your highlights spread along the edge of your subject and add that 3rd dimension.

Whether or not commercial Still Life is an area you want to enter professionally, practicing in a still life context will give you a better understanding of directing light for maximum impact.

Below are three video's you might find helpful.

How to set up a still life | 17:28 | https://youtu.be/r_d5CQIX_y0

How to Create Good Photographic Composition | 4:39 | <https://youtu.be/tQXu5un3sl>

How to photograph FOOD! | 3:45 | <https://youtu.be/RCUKSr5w5Lg>