



JACK GRAHAM PHOTOGRAPHY

Minimalism in Photography

Jackgrahamphoto.com

“Making the simple complicated is commonplace;

Making the complicated simple,.... awesomely simple,....
that's creativity”

Charles Mingus







Why are minimalistic forms becoming so popular in art?

- We live in a very complicated world. It is getting very hard to find a quiet space anymore.
- Technology has become overwhelming, and communication is instant. We text and share phone screens in nano-seconds. We can now tell a computer to write a paper on anything , and it will do it for us.

What's Left ?

Many artists and all who appreciate art, either consciously or subconsciously are seeking an escape from today's world and to rebel against the way most of us live today by going beyond the accepted boundaries.

Art, in all forms can serve as a conduit to do so

Minimalism in Photography





SUBJECT vs STORY



The
Subject is
Only Part
of the
Story



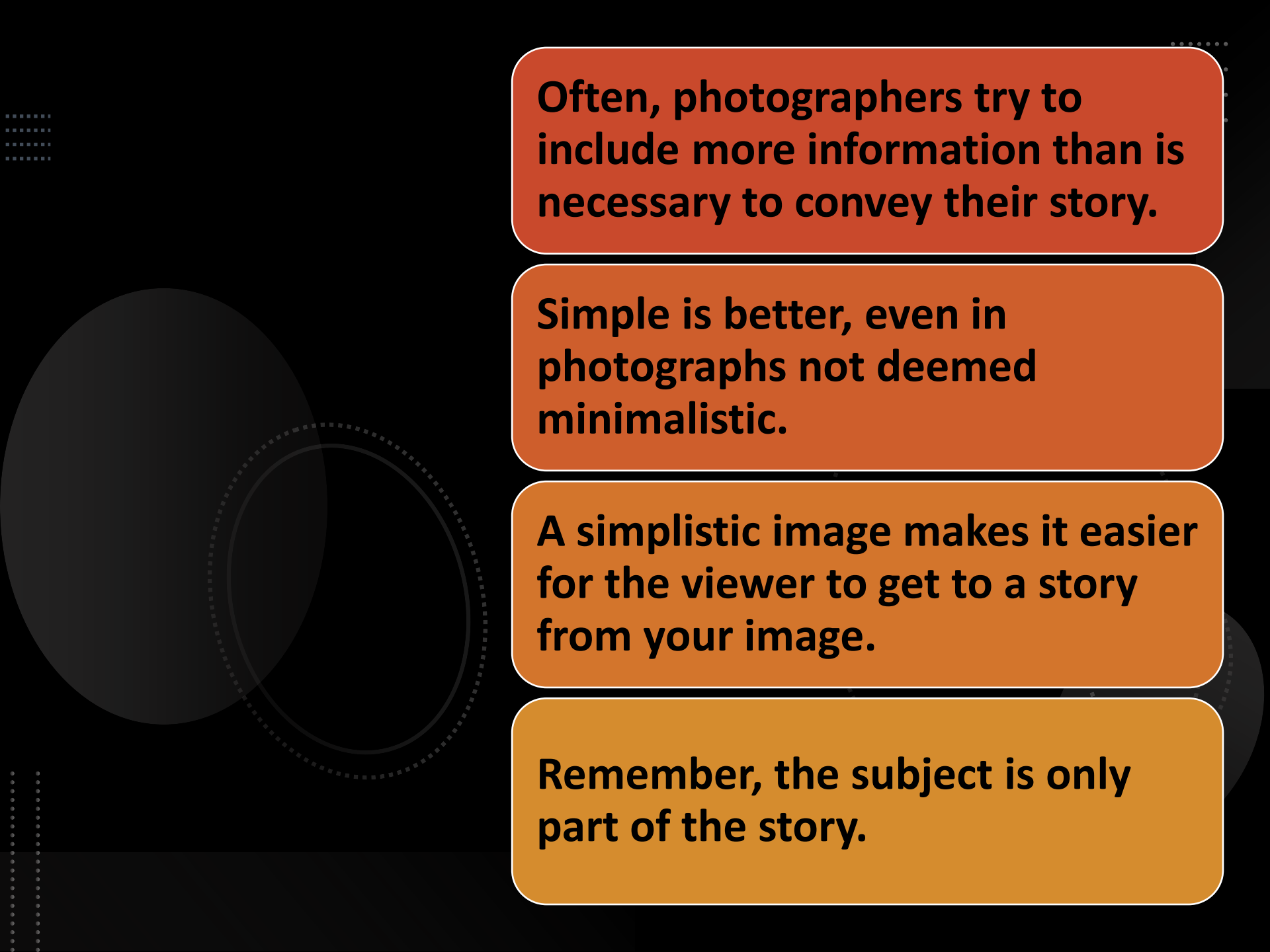
What is the most important part of your image?

It's typically NOT the subject, ...

it's YOUR story...

what you are saying in your photograph.





Often, photographers try to include more information than is necessary to convey their story.

Simple is better, even in photographs not deemed minimalistic.

A simplistic image makes it easier for the viewer to get to a story from your image.

Remember, the subject is only part of the story.



Always take a “**VISUAL INVENTORY**” before pressing that shutter button !

How Do We Define Minimalistic Photography?

Simplicity is the basic concept of Minimalistic photography

- 1) Eliminating what is unnecessary

The use of negative space



2) Successful images tend to be uncluttered, include clean lines, and use only the essentials to create your story for your viewer



In our daily lives we see a cluttered world, inundated with visual stimuli everywhere. ↑ ↓



When we see a minimalistic image, we react because it is quite different from what we see in our daily lives.





These types of images offer a hiatus from the complexity that we see in everyday life.





STRONG COMPOSITION

This is essential really for every image as well in creating impactful minimalistic images. It is important to deliberately use balance, shapes, lines and even color to bring the viewer into the image.

Purposeful use of shapes and lines are part of this concept.



Negative Space

Simplicity

Focal Point

NEGATIVE SPACE

Negative space is the empty space that surrounds the subject. Remember that space without information allows the viewer to realize depth in an image





The use of a vast empty sky, body of water or other areas that do not bring attention to the subject are what we call negative spaces.



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- Utilize clean lines, simple shapes, and minimalistic backgrounds to create a clear and uncluttered composition.





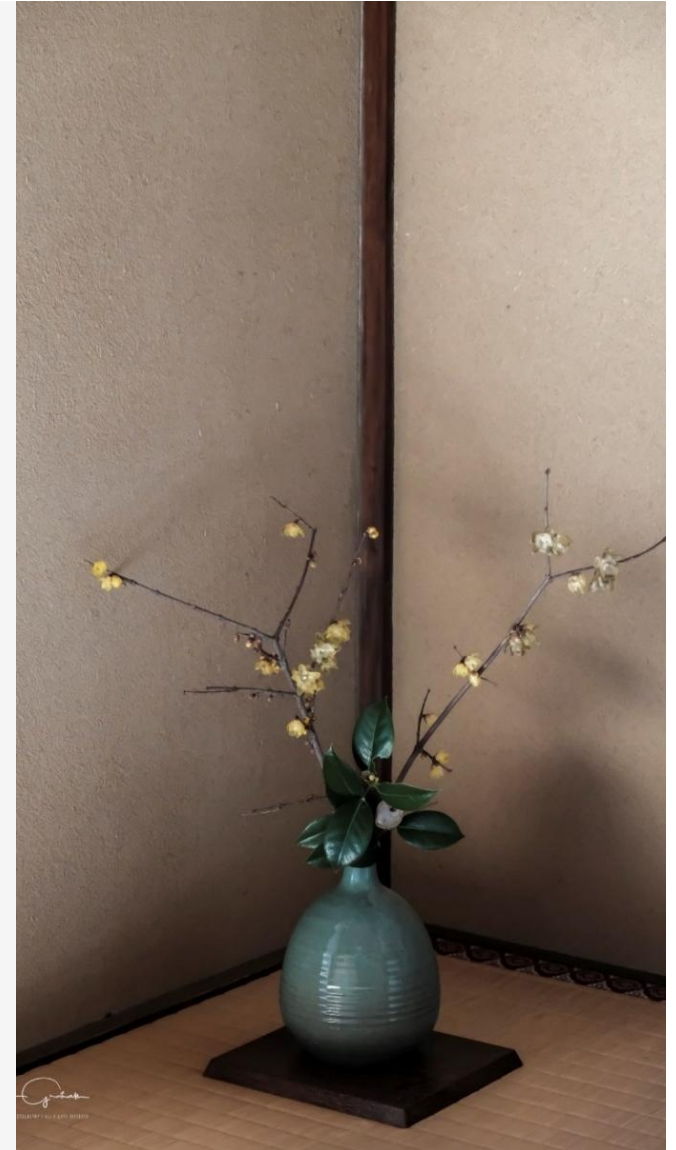


Remove any unnecessary elements that don't contribute to the overall message or aesthetic of the photograph.

Stick to the bare minimum.



Pay attention to the positioning of your subject and ensure that it stands out from the rest of the scene.





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- Making these elements flow in a balanced way creates part of what goes into a strong minimalistic image and allows the viewer to easily realize a compelling photograph.









SIMPLICITY

Of all the following elements, simplicity is the most important.

To make an image simple, it is about eliminating distractions and using your subject to tell the story in an extremely basic way.

Using only one or two elements is a great way to develop a minimalist photograph.

It is important to deliver a clear subject out in front of the viewer that will facilitate attention, without distraction



When an image is overtly simple, it releases a sense of calmness and expands the viewer's mind, creating interest.

Time and space allow the viewer to speculate and increase their imagination resulting in holding the viewers' attention.





FOCAL POINT

The focal point is the point where the subject is placed and where you, the artist, want your viewer to concentrate.

Using simplicity and compositional technique as already discussed along with a strong focal point is especially important.

The “Rule of Thirds” is rooted in art going back centuries and has merit and often is successful in rendering strong images.



- However, it doesn't always work.

- In minimalistic photography this rule is often unnecessary.

- Having a subject in an area we are not used to seeing adds to the intrigue

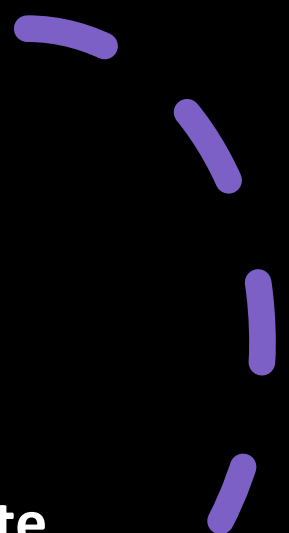








COMPONENTS

- **Sense of Scale**
 - **Color or Black and White**
 - **Experiment with Texture.**
 - **Look for Interesting Patterns**
 - **Pay Attention to Directional Lines**
 - **Look for a Striking Composition**
- 



Sense of Scale





Color or Black and White

COLOR

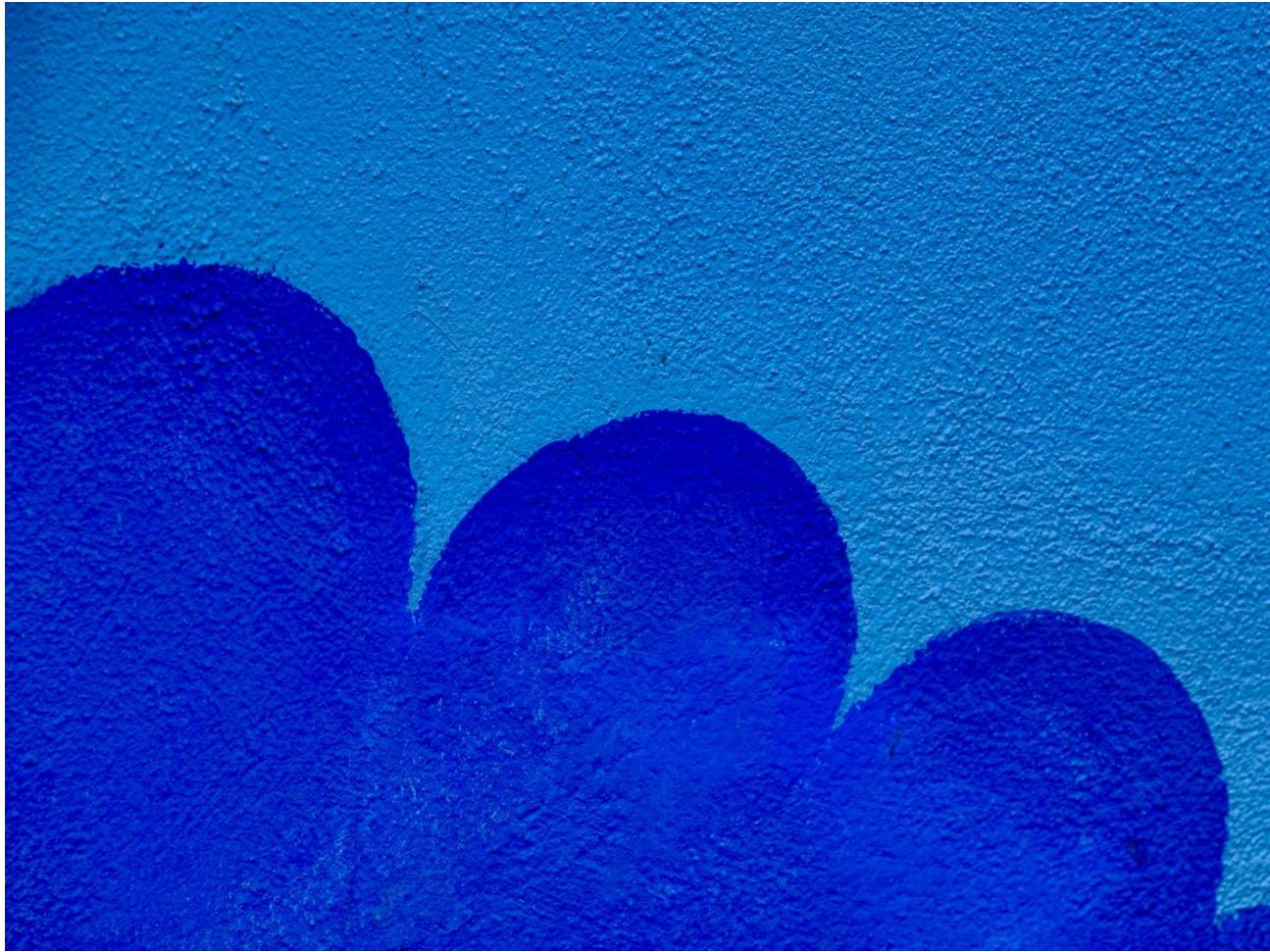
- Overabundance of color in a minimalistic image sends the same message to the viewer as clutter and distractions do.
- Keeping images simple when it comes to color is an effective way to convey a simple but strong story.



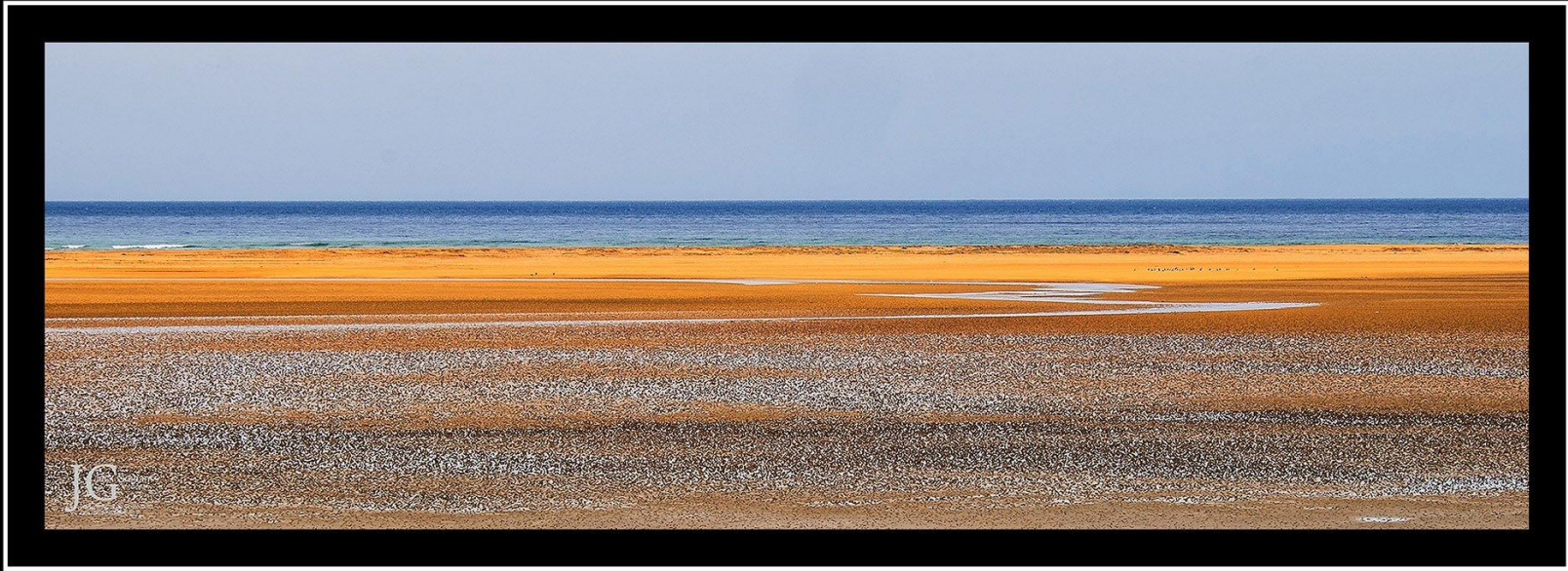




- Choose a **single bold color** as the main focus of your composition. This can create a powerful visual impact and draw the viewer's attention.
- Experiment with **contrasting colors** to add visual interest and create a sense of balance in your minimalist images.
- Utilize color to **create a mood** or evoke emotions in your photographs. For example, cool blues might convey a sense of calmness, while warm oranges can evoke feelings of warmth and vibrancy.







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BLACK and WHITE, or non-color images

- Color can distract from any image if used improperly.
- In minimalistic photography black and white or monochrome imagery can make an image even more minimalistic















Even having an image in color, but with drastically reduced color can bring the viewer into a different world and make for a successful image









Experiment with Texture







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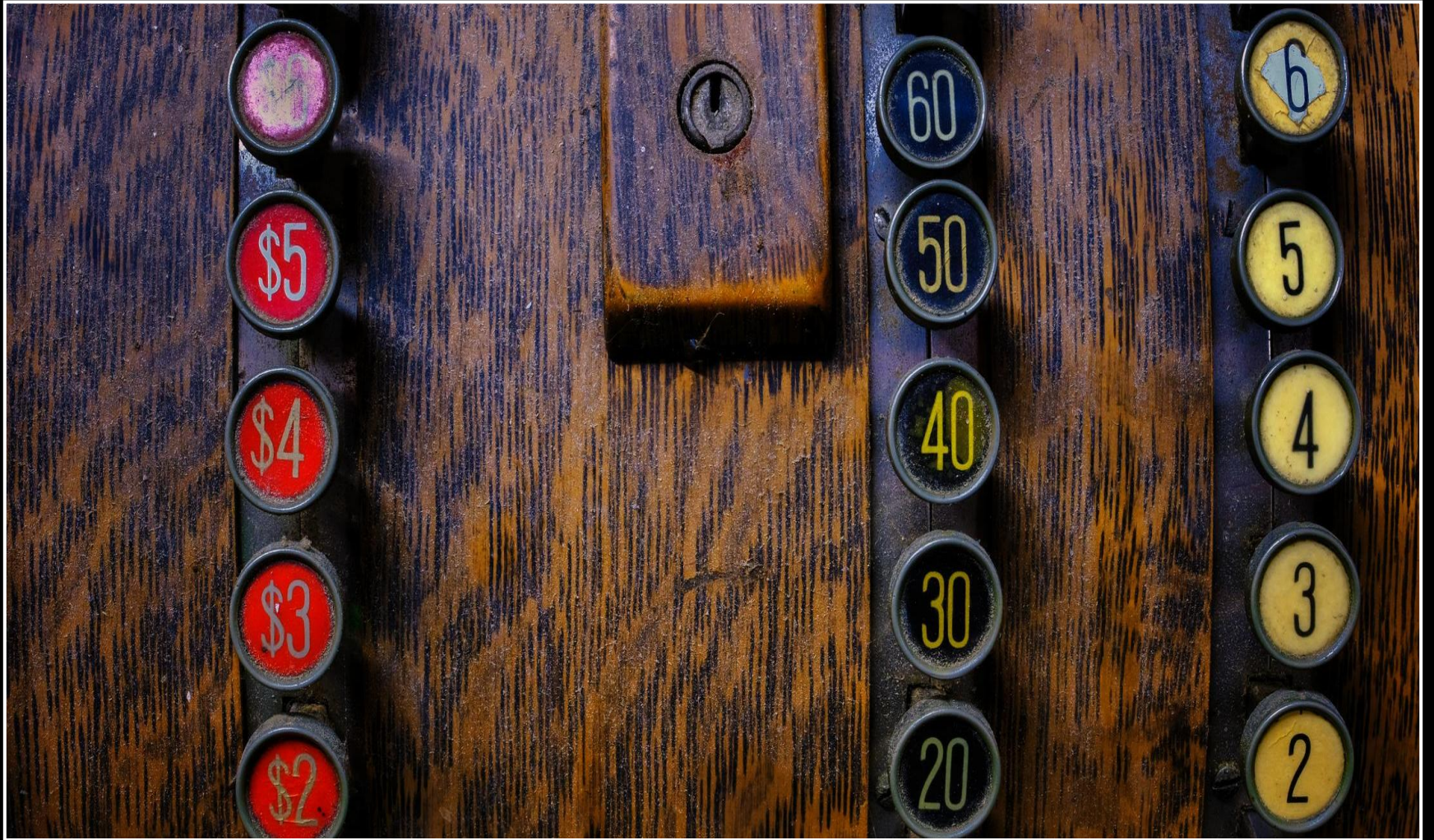


Look for
Interesting
Patterns









Pay Attention to Directional Lines



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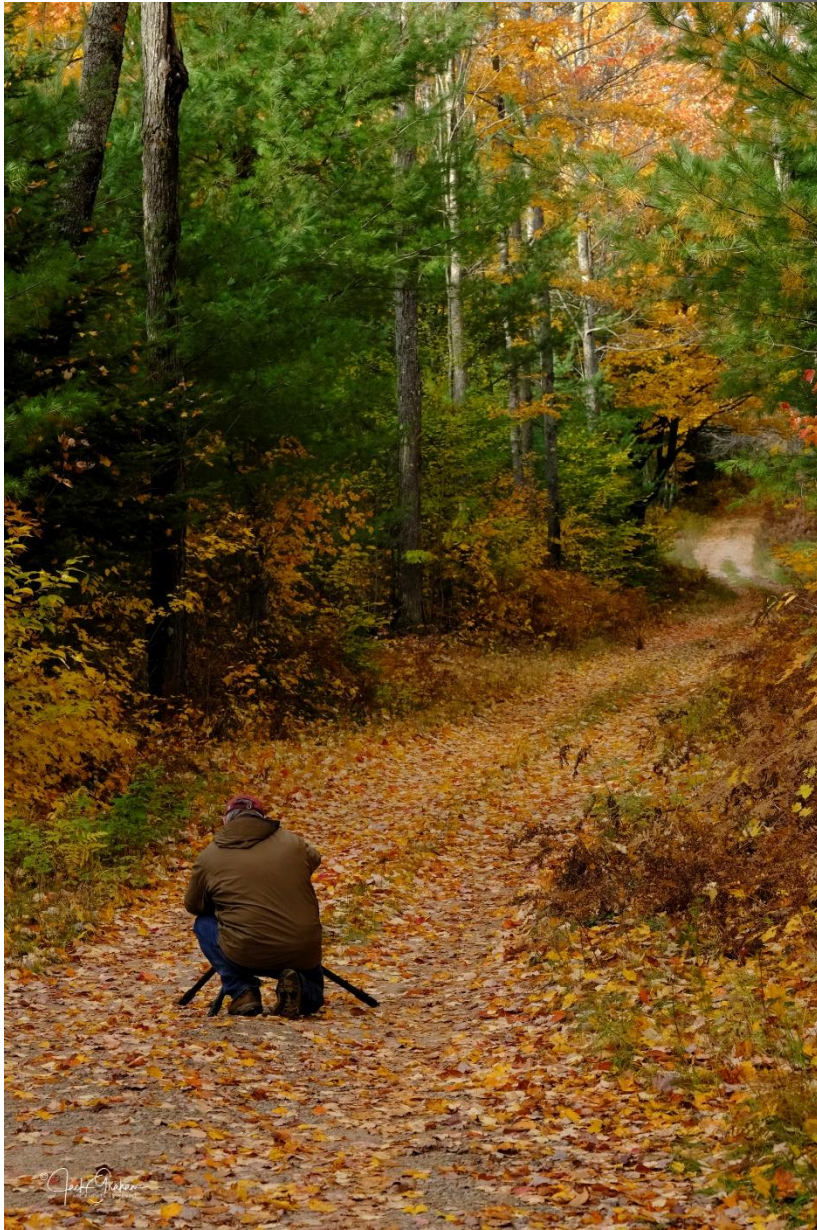
Look for a
Striking
Composition











Rules are
less
important in
minimalistic
photography.

LET'S SUM IT
ALL UP !!!

The ART of Minimalism

What must be done in typical photography is even more important in minimalistic photography.

Making successful minimalistic images may seem easy as the photographer is eliminating much of what goes into a typical image.

It is not.

Successful minimalistic photographs require even more thought and preparation before the shutter is depressed

SLOW DOWN

Even before taking your camera out of the bag, intently observe the location and what may be interesting to you, the photographer.

Methodically look around, take a visual inventory of the area.

Not only do you seek out interest but look for distractions and things that can be added to a photograph.

If there is nothing, move on.

Know when NOT to photograph.

MAKE DECISIONS

Here is where you decide if there is a story
you want to tell



THE SUBJECT of the IMAGE SHOULD BE INSTANTLY OBVIOUS

- You must have a strong subject, with character, that the entire image revolves around.
- 2) Define AND isolate the subject
- 3) Perhaps the subject and its location will allow the view to ask a question

Ask yourself:

- a) Is there an interesting subject?
- b) Is the light good?
- c) Are you sure?
- d) Where do I want to position myself, walk around before deciding (important!)
- e) Aperture and Shutter speed?
- f) Color or non-color?
- g) Perspective?
- h) Lens Choice?
- i) Exposure?
- j) More!



ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

Look around more and determine if there are distractions that will diminish your story. Remember to walk around, get low to the ground or higher and determine what's right for you. Most times where you initially stand isn't the best perspective



NEGATIVE SPACE

NEGATIVE SPACE is not just empty space, it's an essential part of the composition

It allows the subject to have some breathing room.

In music, the space, the silence is what make the music pleasing, without the silence it would constantly noise.



Negative Space should allow the subject to be primary.

PRE-VISUALIZE the FINAL IMAGE

Think about what you want the image to look like and the story you are trying to tell. This is about how you will process this image and how you want the final image to look, after everything is completed.

These decisions can affect lens choice and exposure settings and more. These determinations affect the final story.



EXPERIMENT

Having multiple choices when it comes to focal length, perspective, exposure, etc., allows you to determine which image works better for you and conveys your story.







Observation

Observation is key. It is through careful observation that we can capture the essence of a subject and present it in a way that resonates with the viewer.

Whether a serene landscape, or an abstract composition, observation allows us to see beauty in the ordinary and transform it into something extraordinary.

It involves truly seeing it. Taking the time to study details, colors, textures, and the interplay of light and shadow can make all the difference in creating a compelling image.

By experimenting with different vantage points and framing techniques, we can create images that are visually dynamic and tell a story.

**Remember,
minimalistic
photography is
not easy.**

It takes even more
introspection and
cognitive processes
than a non-
minimalistic image.

Like everything else,
practice is essential.





And
remember...

.....

.....



A few things
that **always**
work...





LIGHT and DARKNESS



COLOR, LOW CONTRAST



EASY on SATURATION (or b&w)



ELEMENTS WITH LOW VISIBILITY



EASY on the EYE



IMAGES SO SIMPLE THEY ARE AMAZING



LET AN IMAGE ALLOW THE VIEWER TO DREAM, IMAGIN and SEE BEYOND



**PHOTOGRAPHY NEEDS
TO HAVE
PHOTOGRAPHERS WHO
CREATE THEIR OWN
STYLE, NO MATTER THE
CURRENT TRENDS**

**DARE TO CREATE WHAT
YOU REALLY FEEL**



LET YOURSELF GO! HAVE FUN !

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Thank you for coming !

