

Compositional Elements to Look for in a Photo

It is important to consider different compositional elements when choosing the subject of your photo to ensure a quality image. This tutorial addresses three of the most common elements for taking great photos: repetition, contrast, and framing.

Repetition

A relatively simple concept of composition is repetition. Look for recurring shapes, patterns, lines or subject matter. Proper arrangement of these elements creates pleasing imagery.

Repetition is seen in the police officers' hats here.



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Repetition happens here with the circular lights and the rectangular batteries.



Repetition is seen not only in the chestnuts but also in the water droplets and in the wood grain texture.



Repetition is seen here in the vertical lines of the posts, the horizontal lines of the railings and in the circles of the wheels of the bicycles.



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The window of the HARPA Concert Hall in Iceland have a pleasing repetition to them.

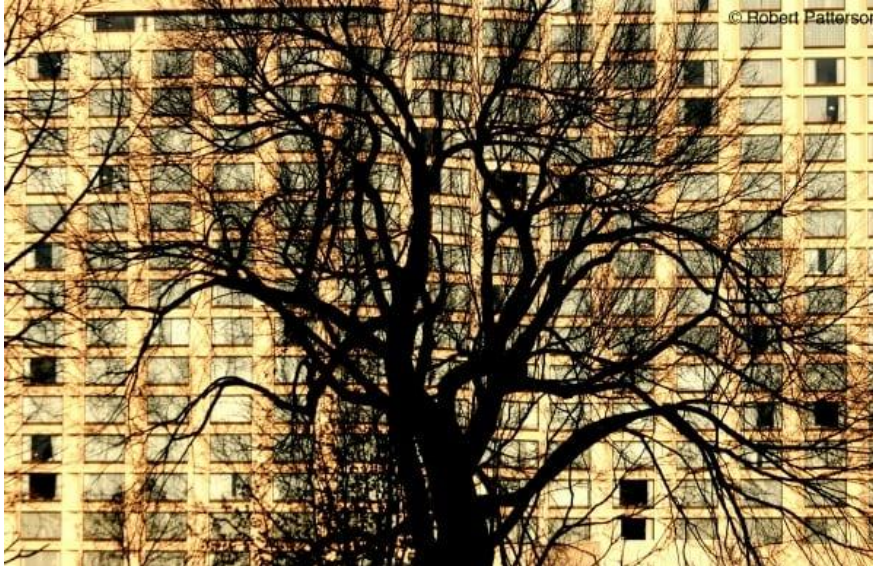


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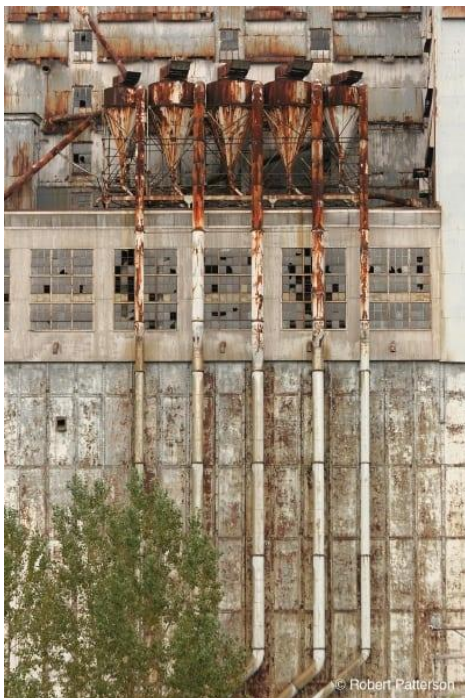
Contrast

Combine elements that contrast each other. Sometimes the effect is simply visually pleasing while other times it can be used to make a statement. Industrial imagery when combined with natural organic elements can make a strong environmental statement for example.

In an image with strong straight lines try to include contrasting elements that curve or are circular.



Strong industrial imagery contrasts with the natural organic elements almost as though nature is reclaiming the concrete and iron of the structure behind it.



Framing

Use elements in the foreground to frame the picture. A tree bough or a hedge work well but anything in the foreground can work.

