Seeing Beyond the Subject

Session 1

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Introduction

What Is a Successful Image?

Successful Image = **Impactful Image**

Evokes an emotion

or

Promotes an action

or

Informs the viewer
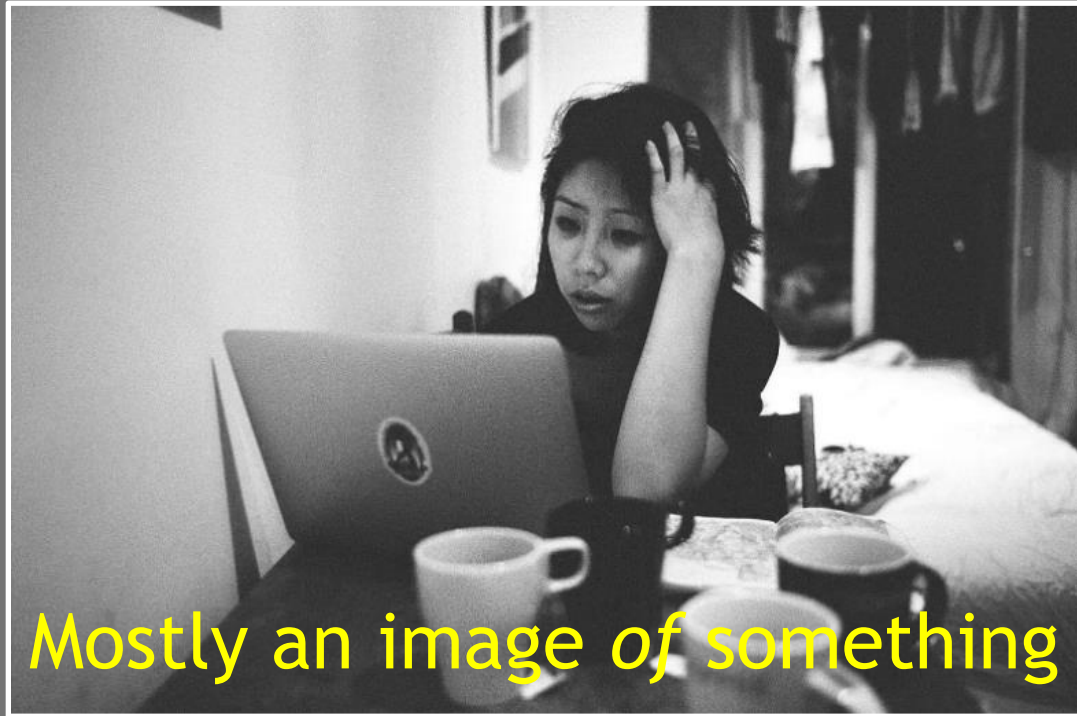
An image about something

How We Are "Seduced" by a Subject

- Subject has personal meaning for us

Nigel Waters

How We Are "Seduced" by a Subject

- Subject has personal meaning for us

Mostly an image *of* something

Eric Kim

Personal image *about* something

John Simpson

How We Are "Seduced" by a Subject

- An "exotic" (or just unfamiliar) location

Seduced by the "Maine-ness" of the two subjects
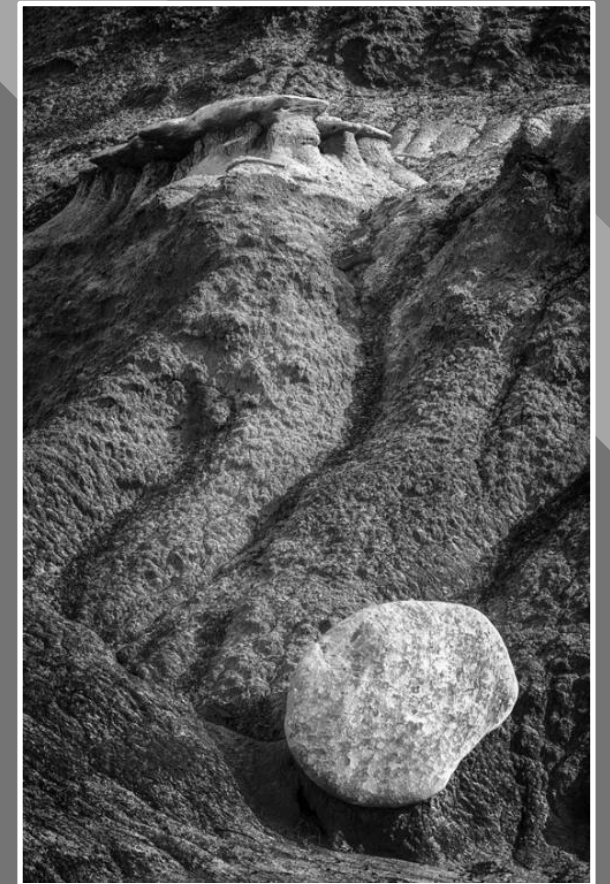
How We Are "Seduced" by a Subject

- A *place* is not necessarily a *subject*

Brooks Jensen

How We Are "Seduced" by a Subject

- Hooked by a technique or tool (HDR and focus stacking in these examples)

How We Are "Seduced" by a Subject

- Overconfidence in our ability to see the "best view"

Seduced by the "Maine-ness"
of the scene

Unadjusted RAW Files

Course Goals

1. Recognize that a successful image is more than an appealing subject

2. Identify strategies during and after capture to help ensure a successful image

This then: to photograph a rock, have it look like a rock, but be more than a rock.
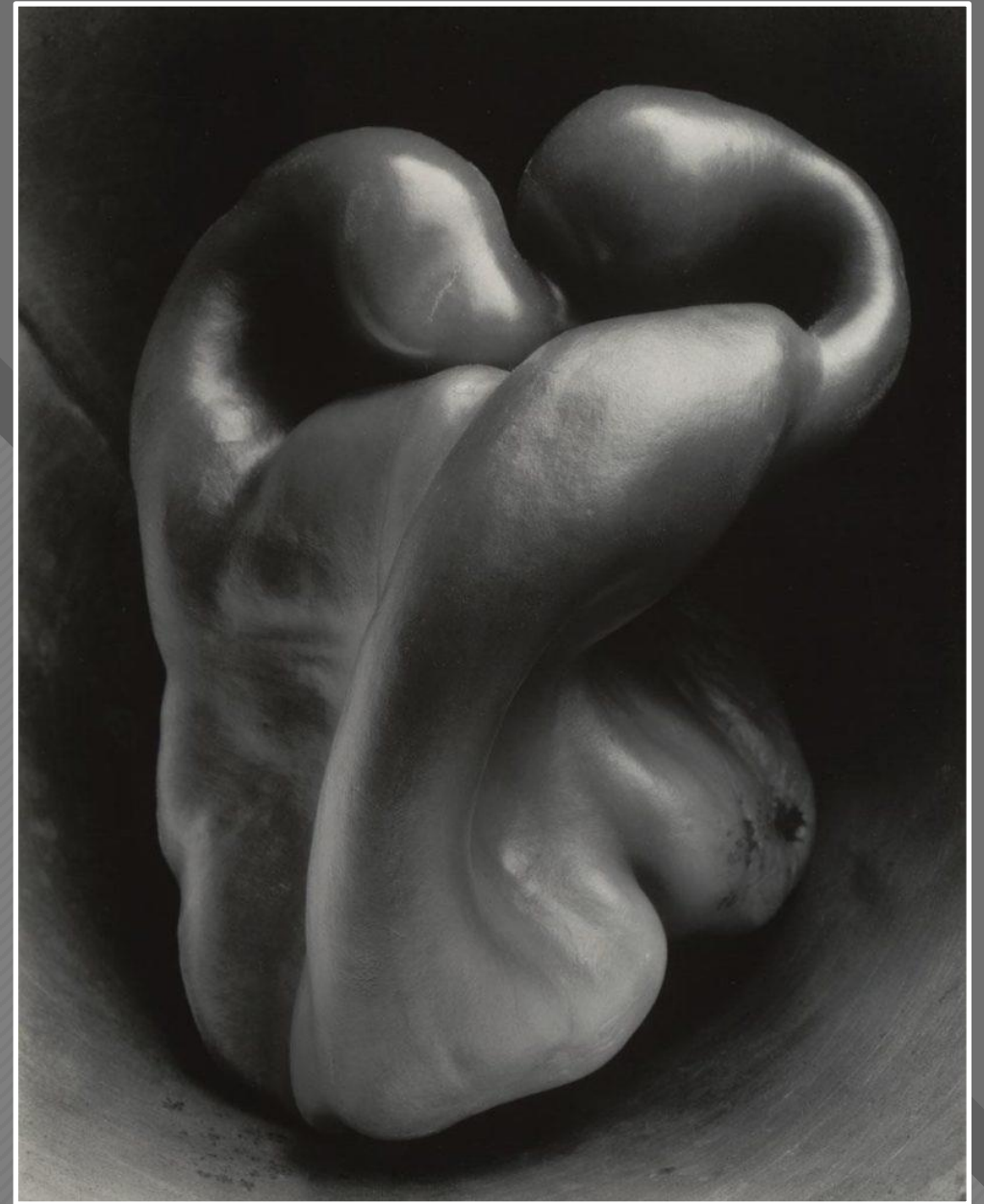
- Edward Weston, "The Daybooks of Edward Weston"

Edward Weston

"

It is a classic, completely satisfying—a pepper—but more than a pepper; abstract, in that it is completely outside subject matter."

- Edward Weston, "The Daybooks of Edward Weston"

Pepper #30 (1930)   Edward Weston

Getting Past the Seduction of the Subject

Getting Past the Seduction of the Subject

- Engage your vision for the final image
  "Go past the obvious, toward meaning"

- Use structure and design elements to guide the viewer
  "Give the viewer clues about your message"

- Re-frame and simplify the image
  "Pinpoint the target"

- Make the image your own, especially with light and shadow
  "Add your special sauce"

Technique One: Envisioning Your Final Image

"

The best photographs aren't a product of how you use a camera, but of how you think."

- David DuChemin

David DuChemin
Varanasi, India, 2018

Looking for: "Mother Cow and Calf Relationship"

Unadjusted RAW File

Looking for: "Mother Cow and Calf Relationship"

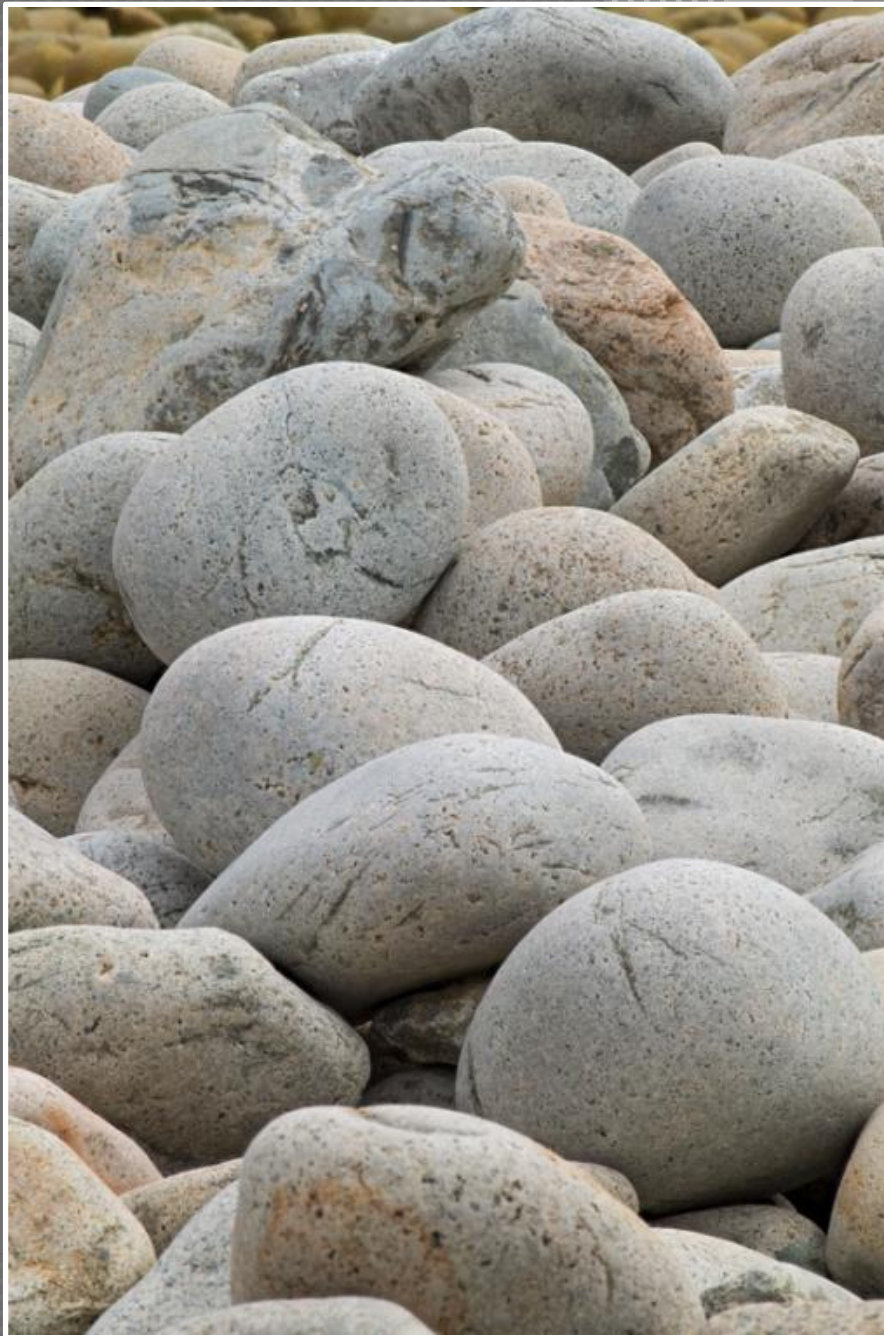Unadjusted RAW File

Looking for: "Mother Cow and Calf Relationship"

Unadjusted RAW File

Looking for: "Mother Cow and Calf Relationship"

Final Photoshop File
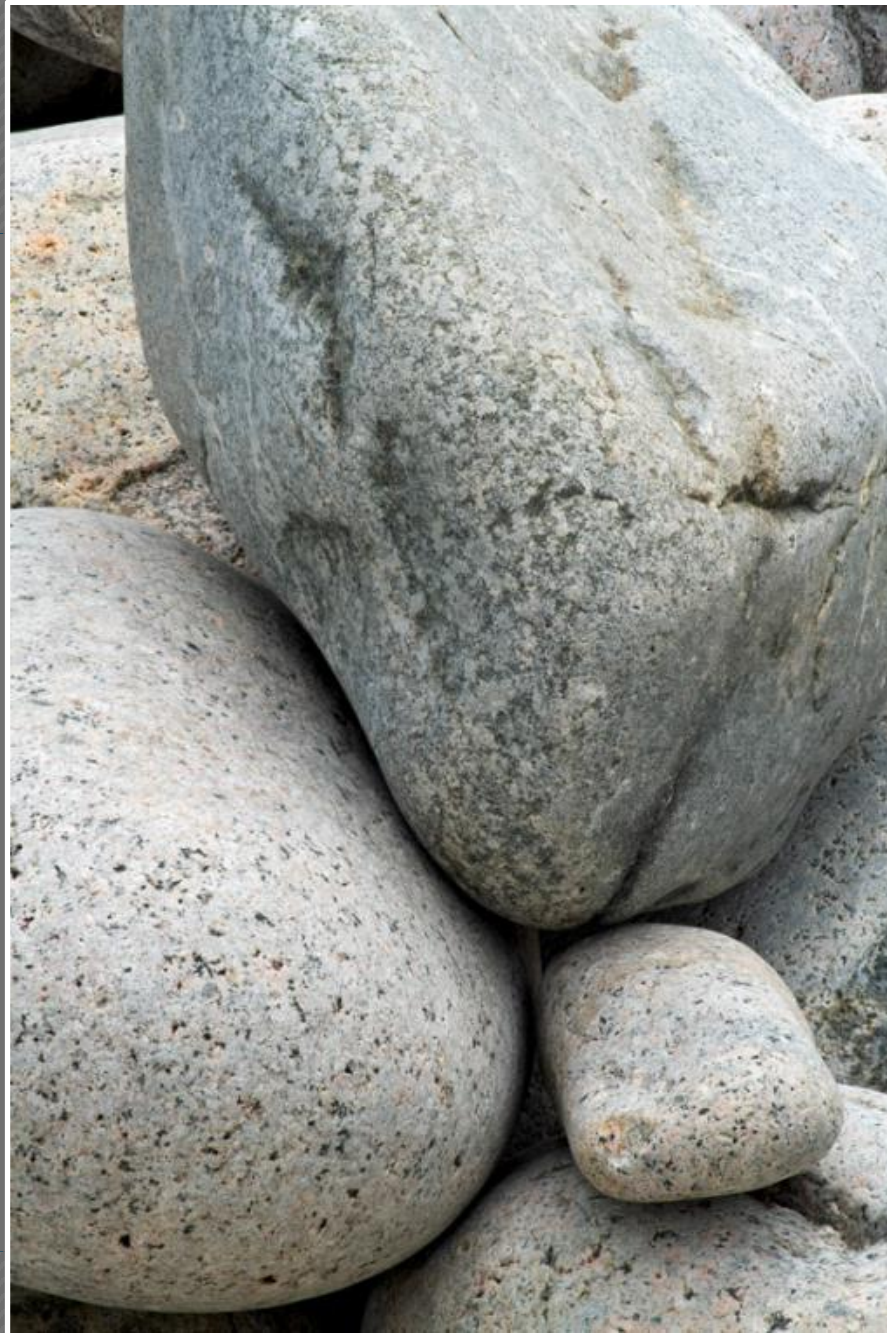
Looking for: "Rocky Beach Textures"

Unadjusted RAW File

Looking for: "Rocky Beach Textures"

Unadjusted RAW File

Looking for: "Rocky Beach Textures"

Unadjusted RAW File

Looking for: "Rocky Beach Textures"

Unadjusted RAW File

" Rather than glimpses of the superficial beauty of the land, I wish instead for my work to speak to a deep familiarity with my subjects, revealing something of my reverence for them and the roles they play in my life. The things I photograph are not just attractive models to me; they are also temples and sanctuaries and multi-dimensional characters in my own story..."

- Guy Tal

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Softness

Guy Tal

Unadjusted RAW File

Unedited RAW File

Final Photoshop File

Prompts for Envisioning Your Final Photo

1. What's the intent of your image? What are you after? (both in general and more specifically)

2. Are you telling a story? Showing relationships? Explaining a situation?

3. Are you trying to capture a mood or an emotion?

4. Are you trying to make a statement about the subject? Are you expressing your feelings about it? Trying to convince the viewer about something?

Photographic Decisions About Your Subject

- Camera orientation (horizontal or vertical)?

- Wide shot (to include context) or tight framing?

- For subjects in motion, stop-action or blurred?

- Include foreground element(s)?

- Shallow or deep depth of field?

- What point of view or angle of view?

- Light direction, color, quality (sharp or diffuse)?

- Use a natural framing device?

Getting Past the Seduction of the Subject

- Engage your vision for the final image ⬅ **Tonight**
- Use structure and design elements to guide the viewer
- Re-frame and simplify the image
- Make the image your own, especially with light and shadow

Next Session

Assignment for Session 2: Practice Envisioning

FIND a subject that interests you, and make an initial image

REFINE your vision for the subject, going beyond your initial vision

CAPTURE your final, envisioned image for comparison with the initial image

SUBMIT the initial and final versions

Assignment for Session 2: Practice Envisioning

WHAT TO DO: Submit 2 JPEG photos; 1st is your initial view of the subject; 2nd is a final or
at least a more refined vision of the subject

FORMAT: 1920 x 1280 – competition size

HOW: Email to me (awhiteside2744@tx.rr.com)

BY WHEN: At least a few days prior to Session 2, March 15 (the sooner, the better)

THEN WHAT: Be prepared to *very briefly* describe what your thought process was to go
beyond your initial view of the subject

Thank You