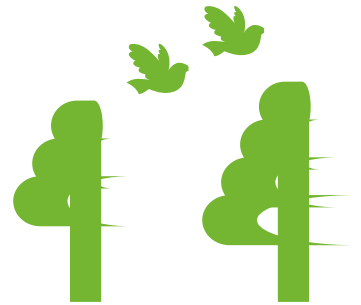


Photographic Composition



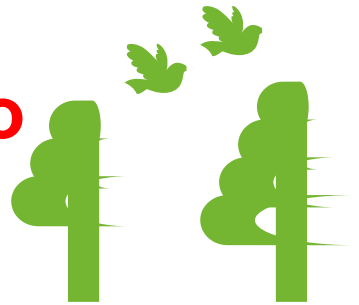
**Photography is more than crisp
images of some subject matter.**



The world is a play on a stage, and so is your picture.

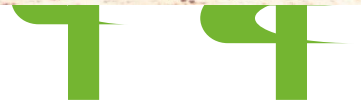
- Every picture is a play.
- The play takes place on a stage.
- It has a small number of main actors, usually just one.
- It has contributing actors:
 - ✓ should never diminish or distract from the main actor
 - ✓ shed extra light on main actor if possible

**The main actor must be plainly evident to
anybody who looks at your photo.**



Practice Composition as a Play

What is the main actor? What is subsidiary?



Photographic Composition:

Nine techniques to highlight the main actor. More time on more important or “harder” techniques. **Hint: None of them are rocket science!**

Everything can be done with (almost) any camera: iPhone, Galaxy, dSLR, or mirrorless.



Composition: Highlight with Proximity

The main actor get the most real estate.



Composition:

Avoid Ugly, Distracting Surroundings!

Training Images from Kodak ↓ →



Composition: Rule of Thirds 1

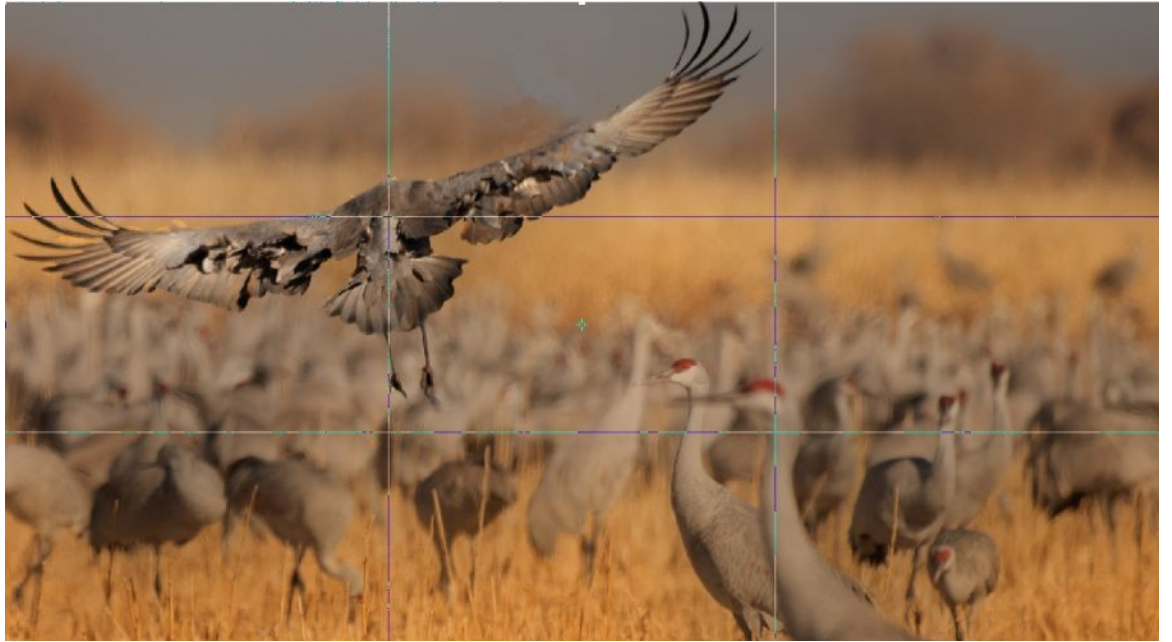
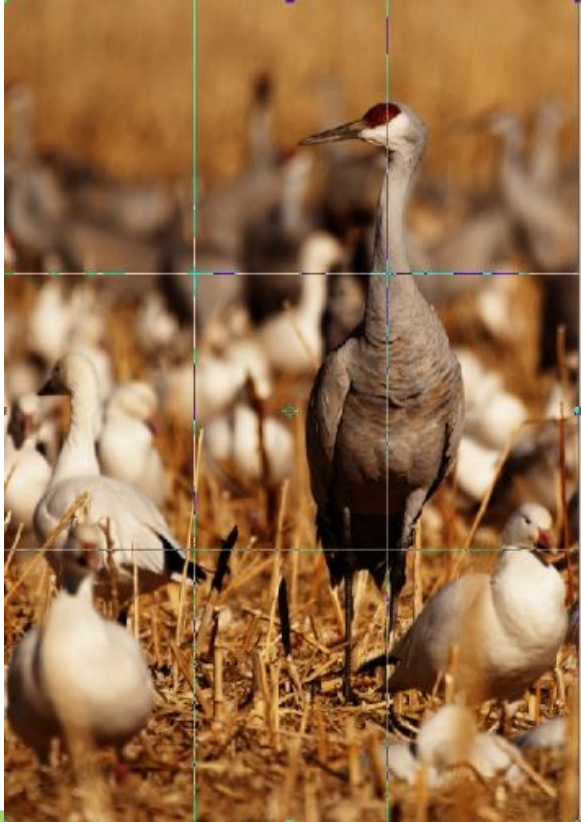
Main Actor location; direction; alignment

Temporary grid lines



Composition: Rule of Thirds 2

Note location and direction of Main Actor



Temporary grid lines



Composition: Bokeh (blur)

Highlighting with Background or Foreground



Return to bokeh later ...



Composition: Bokeh

A little bokeh or a lot?



Return to bokeh later ...

Composition:

Defining Main Actor with Action Effects

Stop action



Blurred movement



V
S

Return to action effects later ...



Composition:

Leading Viewers Eyes with Leading Lines

Is the main actor the line or the end point?

John Finney Photography

Iconic Monument Valley



Composition:

Defining Main Actor by Repeated Geometry



Thanks to Marc-Andre
Kelly Bernard for the
insight!



Composition: Negative Space

Highlighting the ***silhouette*** of the main actor

Using the background to paint the shape of the main actor(s)



Alissa Crandall
Photography →

← Photoworkout.com



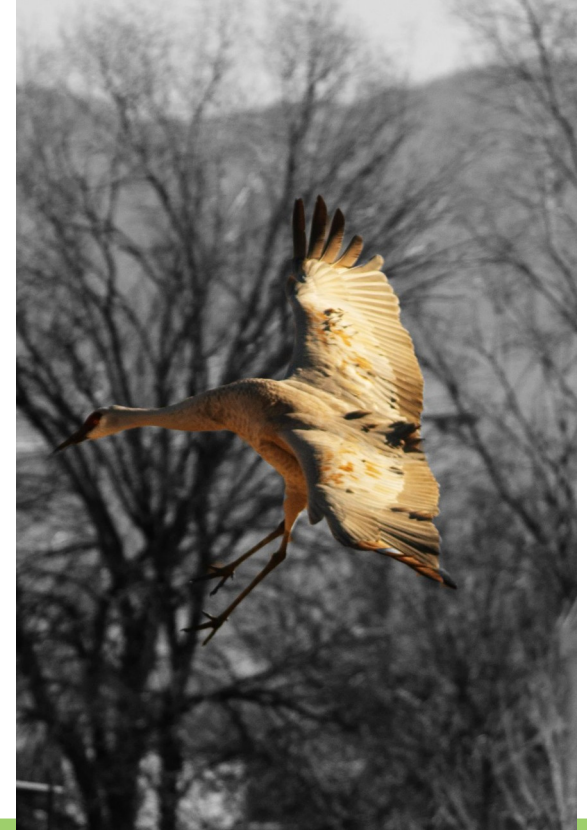
© Alissa Crandall Photography

Composition:

Highlighting Actor with Selective Color



**More than just a
camera. Likely
need image
software for this.**



Somewhat Harder Stuff: Roadmap

- **Highlighting using Bokeh (blur)**
 - Cell phone
 - dSLR / mirrorless
- **Highlighting using Action Effects**
 - Cell phone
 - dSLR / mirrorless



Composition: Highlighting with Bokeh

Using Software of a Cell Phone

Select “**portrait**” mode

Use slider to adjust *amount* of blur



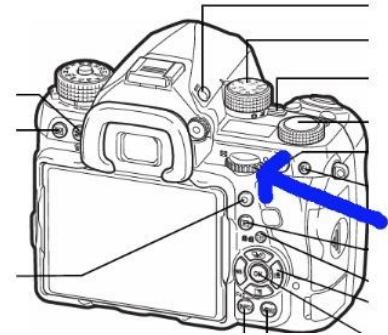
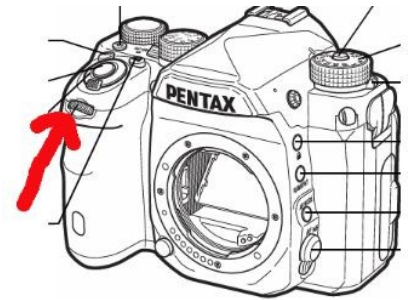
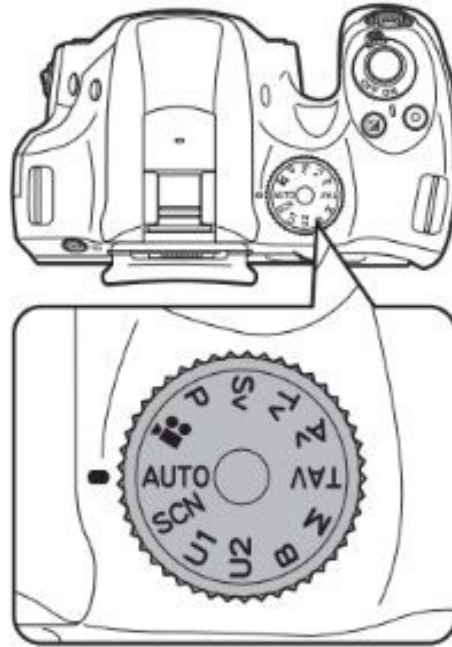
Composition: Highlighting with Bokeh

Using Optics of dSLR / Mirrorless

Turn mode dial to AV mode
(sometimes called A mode)

A little bokeh, a lot of bokeh: Use
roller knob to adjust amount of
bokeh.

**Footnote: Optical, not
software. Some cases may
require tripod, depending
on lighting.**



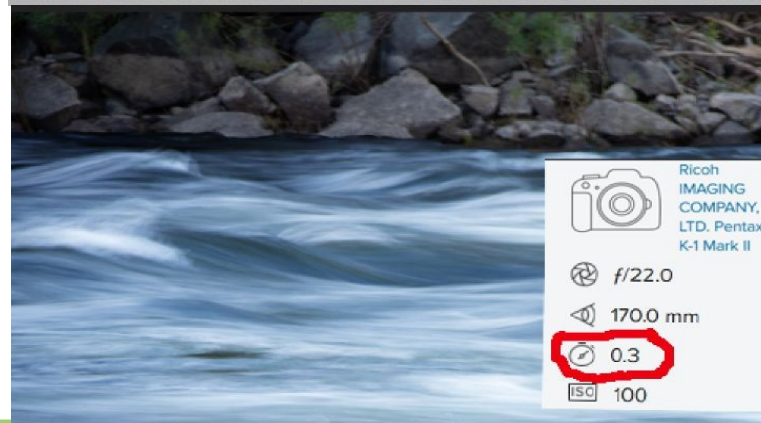
Composition with Action Effects:

Two Sides of the Same Coin: Shutter Speed

Stop action: fast shutter
(1/2000 sec) →



Blurred action: slow shutter
(3/10 sec) →



Slow shutter speeds require a tripod.



Composition with Action Effects:

iPhone and Samsung Galaxy

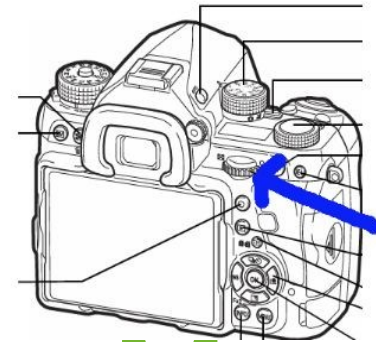
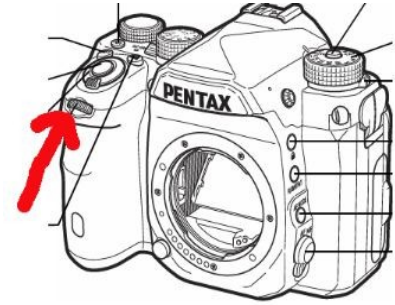
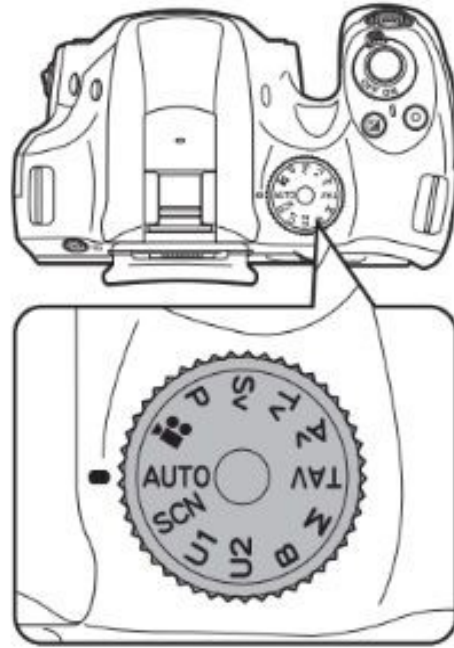
- Currently not natively supported on iPhone
 - Find 3rd party app
- *Recent* Galaxy (Android)
 - Three steps:
 - Pro Mode → Shutter speed → Use slider
 - Slow shutter speed → use tripod or similar



Composition with Action Effects:

Shutter Speed on dSLR / mirrorless: well supported

- Select TV mode on mode dial
- Use roller knob to adjust speed of shutter
- **Slow shutter speed → use tripod or similar**



Composition of Photos: End of Story

Define your experience of main actor(s) by using one or more in everypicture!

- Proximity, real estate occupied by main actor
- Avoid ugly, distracting backgrounds
- Rule of Thirds: Location, direction, alignment
- Bokeh for backgrounds or foregrounds
- Stop action / blurred movement
- Leading lines to what?
- Repeated geometry
- Negative space: Silhouette!
- Selective color



Don't forget!!!



Questions? lynneubank@yahoo.com

Composition of Photos: Practice Your Skills!

Join Ernie Nitka, Vicki Ottoson, and me!

