

**PHOTO**  
**ELYSEE**  
**THE STUDIO**

**EN**

**THE ITINERARY OF AN IMAGE**

**OBSERVATION  
COMPOSITION  
COMPOSITION – POSE  
FRAMING  
EDITING  
PRINTING**

**Welcome to The Studio, an interactive learning space to explore alone, with friends or with family!**

**Photographers use reality as the basis for their work and make choices that aim to communicate their esthetic preferences, their project, and the messages they wish to convey. Before taking a picture, photographers choose the subject, the composition and the framing. After being saved on the camera, an image can still be retouched, cropped and printed in different formats.**

**Each step of the *Itinerary of an Image* allows you to discover the techniques that will help you to better scrutinize, analyze and take a photograph.**

# OBSERVATION



Ella Maillart, *Jour de foire à Weichang, dans l'ancienne province de Jehol, découverte de la lanterne magique*, 1934 © Succession Ella Maillart et Photo Elysée, Lausanne

Everything starts with the eye. Photographers study their surroundings and spot something that catches their attention: a landscape, a person, a detail, a moment. Their camera makes it possible for them to keep track of this observation.

Through the observation of the environment, daily situations, people and their attitudes, photographers develop a sensitivity - a particular style - that differentiates them from the others. Some, attracted by the observation of human beings, prefer to concentrate on documentary photography, street photography or portraits. Others prefer images in which humans are not the main subject of the composition: landscapes, architectural photographs and even still lifes.

Obviously, photographers can also explore several genres and vary their production throughout their career.

What about you? What is it that tickles your imagination?

Back home:

Take a good look at your surroundings. There is so much to see! Let yourself be inspired and take a picture of:

- A landscape
- A street
- A person
- A still life, that is to say, a composition whose focus may be flowers, objects, food, something inanimate. It's up to you!

What did you choose to photograph?

# COMPOSITION



Anonyme, *François Olivier et deux femmes*, 1907-1948, © Photo Elysée

The composition of a photograph is the organization of all its elements: the position of the subjects, the chosen angle of view, the dominant colors, or patterns. A well thought-out composition helps the viewer to read the image and to decipher it: What is the main subject of the photograph? What is its message?

Designing the composition of your photographs is not all that complicated. Here are some technical tips that you can follow!

- 1 First of all, choose your subject.
- 2 Then, think about the position of the subject. Here are some ideas:
  - Is it in the foreground? Does it take up a lot of space in the photograph?
  - Is it in the center of the photograph? Or on the side?

Do you want to photograph it vertically or horizontally?

Back home:

Play around with scale and perspective. Ask someone you know to pose for you; then add an object in front of the camera lens. To harmonize the background, the person you are photographing and the chosen object, you will have to position your camera well, maybe ask the subject to move, or change the object if its shape or colors do not suit your composition.

# COMPOSITION – POSE



Davina Feinberg, *Pink Backdrop*, Study #10, 2005 © Davina Feinberg

Photographers compose the photograph by choosing the position of the characters and the arrangement of all the objects as well as the setting desired for the photograph. When we pose, we control our gestures and attitude so that we are ready to be photographed.

In a photography studio, we can find everything necessary to take a portrait: tripods, flashes, reflectors, etc. Moreover, in a professional studio, we often have access to backgrounds, sets and costumes to create the atmosphere of our photograph so that we can shine in front of the camera!

**Back home:**

Take a portrait of someone you know. Choose the background of your photograph: do you prefer a one-color background, for example, a white wall, or do you want your subject to be surrounded by decorative elements? If you have several subjects, do you want them all to be on the same plane or on different planes? Suggest costumes and/or props to your model(s), and add the scenery you want to complete the setting.

Remember that when you make a portrait, the way the light hits the subject's face will influence how it is perceived.

- Think about the desired effect. For example: Does the light illuminate the face completely or only partially?
- How many light sources do you need to achieve the desired effect? Do you need several light sources?
- Does the light come from above, below, from the side, from behind? Position your light sources as desired.

# FRAMING



Suzi Pilet, *Fleurs de Champ*, © Fonds Suzi Pilet, ADSP/Photo Elysée, Lausanne

Framing allows the photographer to draw the line between what appears in a photograph and what does not. Photographers obtain different effects according to the framing used, which depends on the orientation of the camera, horizontal or vertical, and the choice of the type of framing, from the closest to the widest.

A horizontal and wide framing reveals the area around the subject and incorporates it into a larger context. Vertical framing is used to photograph subjects where the focus is on the vertical dimension. Square framing directs us to the center of the image. Very close framing of a subject, for example, a close-up portrait, accentuates a feeling of intimacy.

To look at a photograph is also to wonder what is outside of the field of vision, that is to say, beyond the photograph and, therefore, what the photographer wanted or not wanted to show. This is an essential question that can help you to analyze an image. Everything that is shown in a photograph is the result of a choice that the photographer has made. By experimenting with framing, you can create surprising effects!

Back home:

To work on your framing, change your perspective!

- Photograph an object. Now take a close-up of the same object. What detail do you want to emphasize?
- Lie down on the floor, and photograph something from that position. It changes your picture, doesn't it? This type of framing is called low-angle and can be used to magnify your subject.

Cut your subject in half. Leave part of the subject out of your picture: what effect did you achieve?

# EDITING



Philippe Herbert, *Suites Moldaves*, 2011 © Philippe Herbert

Editing is the act of choosing from the many photographs taken. Photographers select the images that best fit their expectations and the message they want to convey.

They can then organize a photographic series, a succession of several images that form a coherent whole. When you sort your photographs, think about the result you want to achieve with your selection. What do you want to say with your photographs? How many images do you need to do this?

Back home:

Make a photographic series of your choice:

- 1 **Focus on the technique:** choose a subject that is well lit by natural light. Throughout the day, take photographs that highlight the changes in light depending on the position of the sun: a photograph taken at noon is very different from one taken at sunset! When editing, keep the photographs that best show these changes in light.
- 2 **Focus on the story itself:** create a photo essay on the daily life of a person of your choice. Which photographs best illustrate his or her life? What moments of his or her day do you want to highlight? Look at the photographs you have taken and select the ones that are most relevant to your story.

# PRINTING



Agnès Geoffray, *Intervalle*, 2018 © Agnès Geoffray

Photographic printing is the action of making a paper print from an image recorded on a light-sensitive medium.

This support can be a film (analog photography) or a digital sensor (digital photography). At this stage, photographers still have a lot of creative leeway: different techniques can be applied to the print or the printing process, impacting the final result. In particular, the size of the chosen format can vary from a few centimeters to several meters.

**Back home:**

We don't often print photographs anymore! However, it is a good way to preserve them and to give a boost to our creativity. Choose three photographs with three different subjects, print them and make a collage.

**Taking it a step further: conserving your digital photographs**

The flashcards that carry the images taken with our cameras and smartphones are not designed to conserve data.

That's why it is advisable to apply this simple process:

- 1 Copy the images taken to a storage directory explicitly labeled to identify the subject of the images.
- 2 Ideally, take a few minutes to delete botched images, duplicates, etc. Deleting them avoids spending unnecessary energy.
- 3 Rename files to make them easier to use. Limit yourself to a simple format including:
  - [date format YYYYMMDD]
  - [keyword that describes what it is]
  - [3-digit counter]

**Example:**  
20211027\_InaugurationMusée\_001.jpg

**The Itinerary of an Image** shows us the many elements we can consider when creating an image. Experimenting with these parameters allows us to have fun with the infinite possibilities that photography offers us. Give your creativity free rein!

## IMPRESSUM

**Design and production**  
Département Publics et médiation culturelle Photo Elysée  
Sophie Ferloni  
Stéphanie Jacot-Descombes  
Chloé Andrieu  
Aneffel Kadik  
Rachele Riani

**Scenography**  
Studio Adrien Gardère

**Multimedia**  
On Situ

**Graphic design**  
Gavillet&Cie

**Translation**  
Gail Wagman

**Wallpaper printing**  
Makro Art AG

**Printed by**  
Genoud Arts graphiques

**Photo Elysée, Cantonal Museum for Photography, is a Museum of the Canton of Vaud managed by the Foundation Plateforme 10.**



**Global partner**



PARMIGIANI  
REGGIO EMILIA

**With the support of**



PHOTO  
ELYSEE  
CERCLE



**Main partner -  
construction Photo Elysée**



FONDATION  
LEENAARDS

**ELYSEE.CH**