

Seeking Light and Shadow

When you capture the world around you with a camera, you begin to literally see the pieces that "catch your eye." When you push yourself to see the little things, the different angles, the textures, the colors, how a moment invites you to feel, patterns emerge. Perhaps you already know what you are drawn to when you stand behind your lens. Maybe you have been using your camera exclusively for family photos until now. Wherever you are as a photographer, this section is a little push to see your world with your eyes wide open, to see the nuances of a moment, of your life.

PHOTOGRAPHY EXCURSION: ON THE GROUND

We begin with an exercise to push you to see your world from a new angle.

TASK: Put your camera on the ground to capture the world from an ant's view. You can also lean down toward the ground to snap a photo, but don't point your camera toward the ground; instead, face the lens toward the horizon. Consider using your timer and becoming a part of the photograph.

NOTES: If you don't want to get your camera dirty, bring a towel or some other prop to put under your camera to protect it. I often take photos from the ground while visiting water. I am careful, but a rogue wave has been known to surprise me, so be aware of how you might need to protect your camera in your chosen location.

EXAMPLE: The following photos capture places in my world that I love to visit, from an angle I would not see if I was walking with my eyes simply facing forward. Putting the camera on the ground gives me a view that somehow captures the feelings of these places I love.

PHOTO BY LIZ LAMOREUX

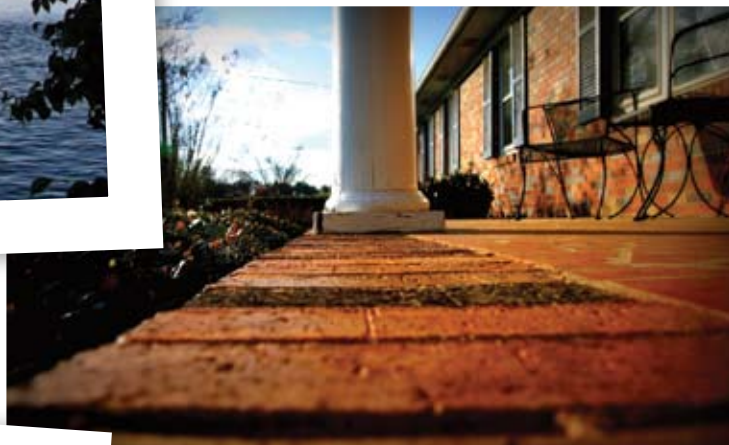


For the last few years, I have been taking a series of “from the ground” photos when I visit the water. This one was taken on the Oregon Coast at that special time before sunset when the light dances. I put the camera right on the ground and clicked.



I had a free afternoon while attending Squam Art Workshops in New Hampshire. After spending time reflecting on my journey of finding my way to feeling more grounded in my life, I captured this photo to express the joy I feel when I find my feet firmly beneath me.

PHOTOS BY LIZ LAMOREUX



This photo captures a unique view of the front porch of my grandparents' home. I boosted the color with a digital photo processing program and added a slight frame of black to enhance the photo's focus.



The trees of the Pacific Northwest seem so wise as they stand tall and surround us. At Point Defiance Park in my town, I found myself face-to-face with this one and decided to capture an angle I don't usually see while also taking a self-portrait with my camera's timer.

Even though almost sixty years separates our ages, my great-aunt and I spend many afternoons together chatting and laughing. She teaches me about gardening, and every time we visit, we walk into her backyard so she can show me what she has been up to. This photo of her yard was taken during one of these backyard excursions.



Let's begin to look more closely and examine the colors, senses, feel and views of your world. We will examine these things by pushing ourselves to not just look at "what you see in your home" but instead to turn this idea on its head into something like "seek the sounds of your evening."

To illustrate this, I asked two of my favorite photographers to answer some questions through photographs about how they seek the nuances, the textures, the sounds of where they are on their journey.

Contributing artist Susannah Conway answers the question, "What nourishes you?" in the following Polaroid photographs.

As you look at Susannah's photos, think about how her photographs answer this question in a richer way than a list of words might. (In this case the words would be: her bed, words, journaling, lunch with friends, nature, photography.) As I look at these photos, I want to step into them. The surfaces, patterns, smells, light and insights into Susannah's world pull the viewer right in.

Tools for the Journey: Photos in an Instant

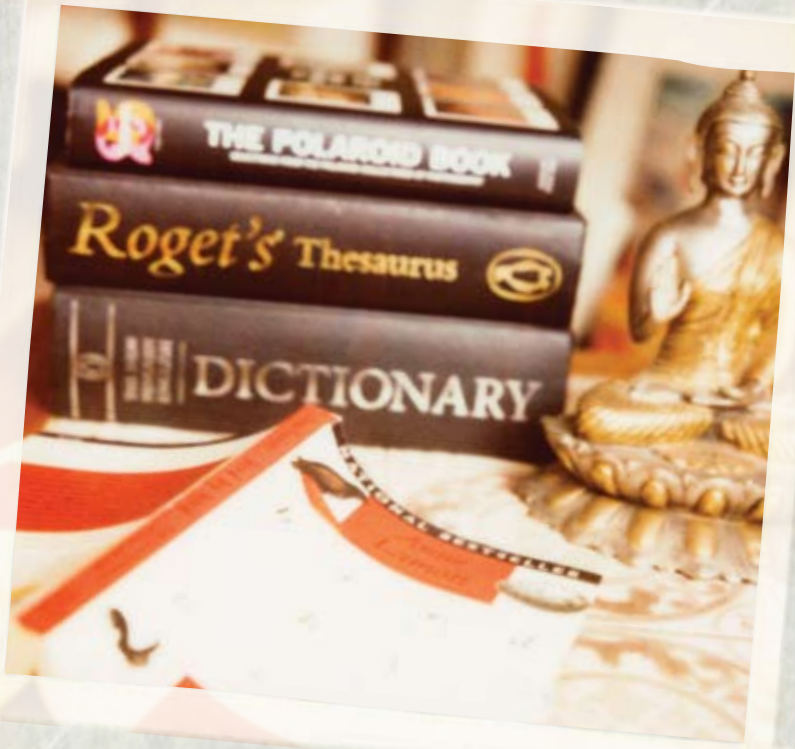
During the past few years, the artistic online community appears to be in the midst of a fascination with instant photos. From Polaroids to Fuji Instax cameras, photographers and bloggers are enjoying the vintage feel of instant film. With this medium, you experience instant gratification as the film develops before your eyes. I have several artist friends who enjoy using instant cameras because they find it easy to add the photos directly to art journals and other creative projects. Although at the time of this writing, Polaroid has stopped making instant film, in 2010, The Impossible Project began producing instant film to use with Polaroid cameras.



PHOTOS BY SUSANNAH CONWAY

Her answers to the question: What nourishes you?





PHOTOS BY SUSANNAH CONWAY



Her answers to the question: What nourishes you?