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# **Perceive**

## **For visual perception**

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**A visual thinking workshop**

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## Workshop aims

This visual thinking workshop will teach students to observe with heightened clarity, in order to form more complex relations between what they see and what they know.

Through facilitated, collaborative discussions, students will engage in shared visual thinking exercises to interpret, negotiate and make meaning from visual images. They will explore the theory, principles and approaches to the analysis, pre-visualisation, production, modification and post-visualisation of the artistic photographic image.

Through solo assignments, students will then be challenged to synthesise their findings with a variety of analytical and creative observation tools and processes to better interpret perceptual clues and determine aesthetic outcomes with both creative insight and expression.

Students will progress through four stages of increasing complexity in regards to the technical, contextual, visual and conceptual considerations involved in both analysing the visual images of others, and applying critical and creative

visual thinking techniques and processes to exploring artistic visual design obstacles.

Dealing primarily with communicating pictorial and aesthetic intent through photography, students will explore the structural and psychological language of the photographic image. This unique insight and analysis of both the formal details and visual systems present in the creative process will result in a clearer understanding of how to more accurately read, interpret and convey meaning, intent and aesthetics through visual thinking.

## Delivery methods and strategies

This six hour blended workshop will be delivered via Zoom, through four 90 minute online sessions, scheduled weekly. Aesthetics, methodology and technique discussions will be explored and developed throughout the online sessions, with students required to undertake applied analysis tasks in their own time between each session.

Focusing on both the aesthetic and technical decision-making process, emphasis will be placed on incorporating analytical approaches to problem solving within the creative photographic workflow.

Investigating specialist and exploratory pre and post-production techniques and approaches within the context of creative photography, students will develop a more refined understanding of advanced, specialist creative workflows and the tools and techniques that enhance them.

It is an expectation that students will develop a regular engagement with critical thinking and analysis skills outside of class time.

## Workshop fees

For individuals and small groups, Perceive costs 575 AUD per student for a group size ranging from 1-5 students.

Workshop fees are to be paid in full prior to the commencement of the first session.

To convert the total amount to your local currency, [please check here](#).

For custom group sizes or organisational enquiries, please [contact me](#).

## Workshop outline

Investigating a variety of exploratory and conventional pictorial approaches and techniques, this workshop examines the systems of visual perception that motivate and inform both contemporary and traditional photography.

Students will explore advanced creative and technical sign systems present in both the pre and post-visualisation workflows of analogue and digital photography as it relates to a variety of photographic styles and aesthetics. Students will analyse both structural and conceptual input and output variances that affect the meaning and intent of the final image. Critical evaluation, interpretation and adjustment are expected in every stage of image conceptualisation, analysis and capture.

On completion of this course, students will be expected to have gained the insight to become aesthetic and analytical innovators in their field, while refining their ability to selectively analyse, evaluate and explore sophisticated solutions to complex obstacles within the creative process.

## Stage I

### OVERVIEW

During this stage, students will learn discrete information related to visual thinking through collaborative discussions and solo or group tasks relating to creative photography. To proceed to the next level, students will need to demonstrate an ability to bridge foundational connections between these separate topics.



### EXERCISE STRATEGIES

Through collaborative visual thinking exercises, students will:

- Investigate, discuss and analyse the following photographic attributes: light, focus, time, motion, vantage point, point of view, framing and cropping
- Develop foundational observational skills, begin to recognise and categorise subject content, learn to language describe processes of perception and establish a shared photographic vocabulary

- Utilise sense, memory and personal associations to make concrete observations about photographic images, constructing personal narratives via photography's unique engine of visualisation.

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#### ASSIGNMENT STRATEGIES

Through solo visual thinking assignments, students will focus on developing a more thorough understanding of the personal associations they use to interpret what they look at, and create meaning from what they see.

Through these assignments, students will:

- Develop a thorough understanding of point of view, investigating the impact of observing familiar settings from non-traditional perspectives
- Examine the concept of photographic point of view, encouraging students to move around the subject matter and create photographs that express a variety of discrete perspectives
- Explore the impact selective editing has on a sequence of photographs.

## Stage 2

### OVERVIEW

During this stage, students will develop an interest in determining what the photograph is and how it is made by building and refining definitions to formal composition, technique and aesthetics. They will begin to view the photograph as more than a simple snapshot, appreciating the thought and craft required to create an image. They will formulate their own unique ideas about photographic art, what it is, how it communicates, and what its value or impact is. As students become more familiar with technique and process, they will develop a natural curiosity about art history, intentions and working methods.



### EXERCISE STRATEGIES

Through collaborative visual thinking exercises, students will:

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- Investigate attributes of photographic composition: shape, line, angle, colour and tone, pattern, depth, and composition
- Build upon foundational observation skills by developing both their technical knowledge and establishing an understanding of the different decisions photographers make, and analysing the impact these decisions can make on interpretation, while refining their visual and photographic vocabulary
- Develop a framework for analysing photographic works of art, using the most logical and accessible tools: their own perceptions, their knowledge of the natural world and the values of their social, moral and conventional ecologies.

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### ASSIGNMENT STRATEGIES

Through solo visual thinking assignments, students will focus on developing a deeper interest in what the photograph is, and how it is made, by building and refining definitions to formal composition, technique and aesthetics.

Through these assignments, students will compare and contrast:

- How cameras shape our views visually and psychologically, and how photographers have experimented with these approaches practically
- The exploration of immediate and familiar locales via new perspectives

- The role of photographs in subverting our pre-conceived ideas and assumptions in regards to how we perceive presented spaces
- Investigations into both modernist and contemporary photographic responses to things and their surfaces
- How surface textures of the real world, in particular objects, can be analysed through photography
- How photographs themselves have a surface - a material reality - and how this surface can be interrogated.

## Stage 3

### OVERVIEW

During this stage, learners begin to make several connections between discrete topics, and are encouraged to begin looking for the meta-connections between them, alongside their cohesive significance. Students will begin to place photographic artworks into the context of history and culture, further assembling and connecting their knowledge of formal composition, techniques and aesthetics, learning to safely interpret artworks by favouring systematic contextualisation over the personal and emotional. Students will be able to comfortably clarify what a photograph is saying, connecting their initial personal and emotional interpretations to their formal contextual understanding, calling attention to the subjectivity of artistic interpretation.

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### EXERCISE STRATEGIES

Through collaborative visual thinking exercises, students will:

- Investigate the elements of photographic content: subject, background, foreground, people, story, mood and feeling and symbol and metaphor
- Further refine developed observational skills by exploring the context and intended use of photographs and relating context to both subject and meaning by investigating what the photograph is saying
- Adopt the analytical and critical stance of the art historian, decoding the photographic work with their library of facts and figures, explaining and rationalising the works meaning through correct categorisation.

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#### ASSIGNMENT STRATEGIES

Through solo visual thinking assignments, students will begin to explore the broader contextual considerations of street photography to discover stories hidden within photographs, alongside the latent intentions and motivations that help shape our perception.

Through these assignments, students will explore:

- How artists and photographers have utilised the camera's ability to make accurate records of particular visual phenomena to systematically document and visually classify aspects of the world
- Why the camera, and photography by extension, is particularly well suited to the creation of typologies

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- The relationship between photographs and reality, through artists who have questioned the documentary tradition of photography
- How photographs are selections of existing realities rather than discrete, unique inventions; how they are abstractions shaped by technology; how their relationship to reality is more or less contingent; and how their meaning is influenced by their context.

## Stage 4

### OVERVIEW

During this stage, learners will begin to appreciate the significance of all of the discrete parts of information learned in relation to the whole. Learners will understand how the underlying meanings of photographic works, and what the work symbolises, slowly and organically emerge through engagement with the work. Each new encounter with a photographic work will present an exciting chance for new comparisons, insights and experiences. Knowing that the photographs identity and value are subject to reinterpretations, learners will begin to see these as processes constantly in flux and subject to chance and change.

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### EXERCISE STRATEGIES

Through collaborative visual thinking exercises, students will:

- Investigate the characteristics of photographic aesthetics and intention: style, genre and artists intention and purpose
- Refine their ability to explore and uncover meaning in photographic works, combining formal, technical and aesthetic knowledge with subjective reactions, and relate meaning to creative choices and larger, universal issues
- Deepen comprehension of how personal experience, stylistic and formal analysis, the knowledge of technique and the impact of context all shape meaning
- Explore personal encounters with photographic works, allowing the meaning of the work to naturalistically unfold, appreciating the subtleties of the formal visual elements present in the frame, allowing feeling and intuition to direct their own unique pathway to uncovering the underlying meanings of the work.
- Investigate the creation and interpretation of photographic memory, discussing what the image shows, means and influences
- Reflect on images and analyse and comprehend them in regards to their visual, technical, contextual and conceptual elements
- Become recreative viewers willing to suspend disbelief through the establishment of a long history of viewing and reflecting on photographic works of art. Students will begin to combine personal contemplation with views that broadly encompass universal concerns, allowing them to comprehend the complete ecology of an image.

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### ASSIGNMENT STRATEGIES

Through solo visual thinking assignments, students will begin to connect your understanding of the visual, technical and contextual elements of street photography to develop a more meaningful interpretation of photography as a form of art.

Through these assignments, students will compare and contrast:

- Traditional and experimental investigations into the relationship between photographs, time and memory, and the manner in which these enquiries have impacted our own perception of space and the conventions of realism, linear perspective and optics
- Explorations into ways in which we can rethink our relationship to photographic moments of the documentary tradition
- Exploratory investigations into abstraction, as opposed to naturalistic representations of subjects, have shaped the development of new visual languages and how these codes have altered our understanding of looking and seeing.
- How visual images, images and text and picture sequences tell stories through visual archeology.

## Weekly tasks

### OVERVIEW

Students will be expected to develop a regular engagement with applied image analysis outside of class time, via a range of ongoing practical tasks that will iterate on findings and insights uncovered week to week.



### TASK STRATEGIES

Through solo practical photographic tasks outside of class time, students will:

- Learn to analyse a photography by evaluating their first impressions toward: composition, photographic attributes, content, style and genre, meaning and final impressions
- Develop an ongoing investigation into the impact of visual images on learners daily lives, analysing thematic connections between them, refining their ability to explore overt formal and discreet symbolic meaning, and clarifying their emotional and aesthetic responses to the works

- Explore a range of photographic techniques: blur, panning, focus, sequencing, depth of field, point of view, light and shadow, frames, shapes and lines, details and silhouettes, alongside how they impact their own and others perceptions of varying photographic topics and themes
- Use drawing to explore the elements of framing and composition and encourage imaginative explorations of what might exist beyond the picture frame.

## Contact me

Perceive is a completely tailored learning program, built upon a fluid, modular learning framework. It is facilitated from start to finish to address your unique needs.

If you would like to learn how to utilise creative visual thinking methods, approaches and strategies to observe with heightened clarity in order to better understand and engage with the world around you, I can be contacted via any of the means listed below.

Email: [mail@msethJones.com](mailto:mail@msethJones.com)