

# UNIT ONE: PHOTOGRAPHY

**Year 10 Visual Arts 2024 – Miss Sahid**

“What you have caught on film is captured forever... it remembers little things, long after you have forgotten everything.”

- Aaron Siskind



# WHAT ARE PHOTOGRAPHY CONVENTIONS?

In art making, a convention is like a rule or guideline that artists follow when creating their work. It's a way of doing things that artists commonly agree upon. For example, using certain colors to express emotions, drawing things in a certain perspective, or using symbols to represent ideas are all conventions in art. These agreed-upon techniques help artists communicate their messages and make their artwork more understandable to others. So, conventions are kind of like the "grammar" of art that artists use to express themselves and connect with their audience.



# TASK ONE: PHOTOGRAPHY CONVENTIONS

## Why are we learning this?

This task will help you to learn key terminology that refers to photographic practise. Each of the conventions could be considered as rules or guidelines for creating the perfect photo. These are also words that you will use in your senior years or art study.

## To do:

- In class you, will listen and take notes on the Photography Conventions.
- Title a page in your book Photography Conventions.
- Write down in your workbook a definition in your own words for each of the conventions. Leave a space next to your definition to add an image (Lesson 2)

**The goal of this activity is to be able to visually identify conventions using key terminology. This will help you with the following task where you will need to identify conventions in your artists work.**



# THE CONVENTIONS WE WILL BE COVERING:

Colour	Space	Depth of Field
Subject Matter	Focus	Rule of Thirds
Focal Point	Framing	Balance
Light Source	Texture	Dominance
Juxtaposition	Pattern and Order	

# COLOUR:



Which words would you use to describe the colour in the following photographs?

- Monochromatic
- Polychromatic
- Duotone
- Sepia
- Black and White



# SUBJECT MATTER:

Subject Matter refers to the object within your photograph.

For example if you were taking a portrait of a person, the person would be your subject.

More easily described as the “**thing**” in your photograph.

When selecting your own subject matter, think cleverly about the items you use and how people would read these items in your work; what would the subject matter represent? What are the big ideas behind this? (context, worldwide issues, historic and political events etc.)

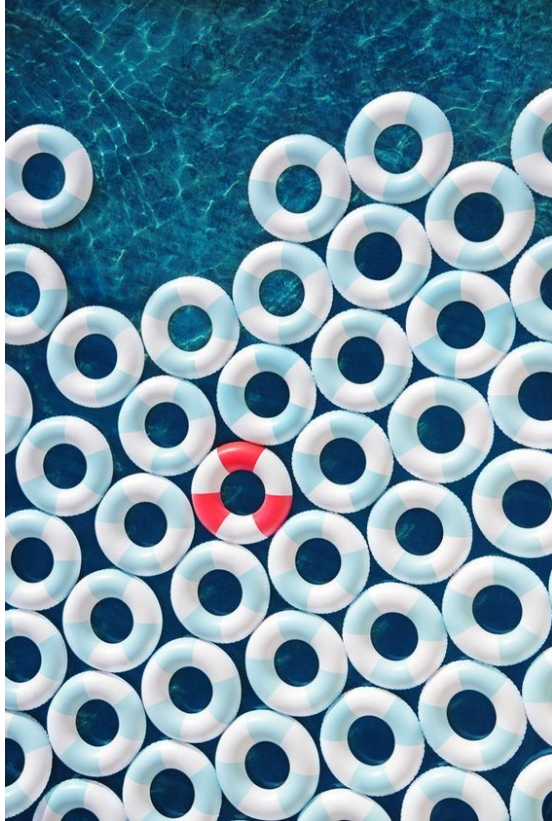
Name the different subject matter you can see in this photograph?

Do you have an idea as to what this work could represent?



Fiona Pardington

# FOCAL POINT:



Focal Point usually corresponds to your subject matter.

Your Focal Point is the object in a photograph with most interest. It is the object that your eye naturally focuses on first.

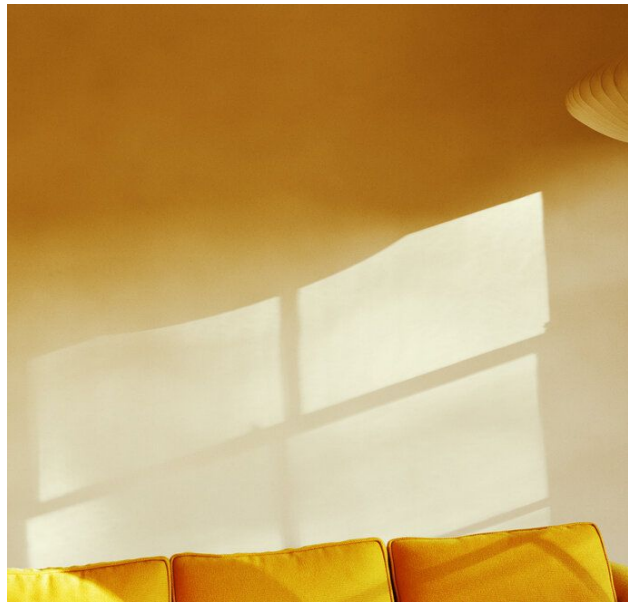
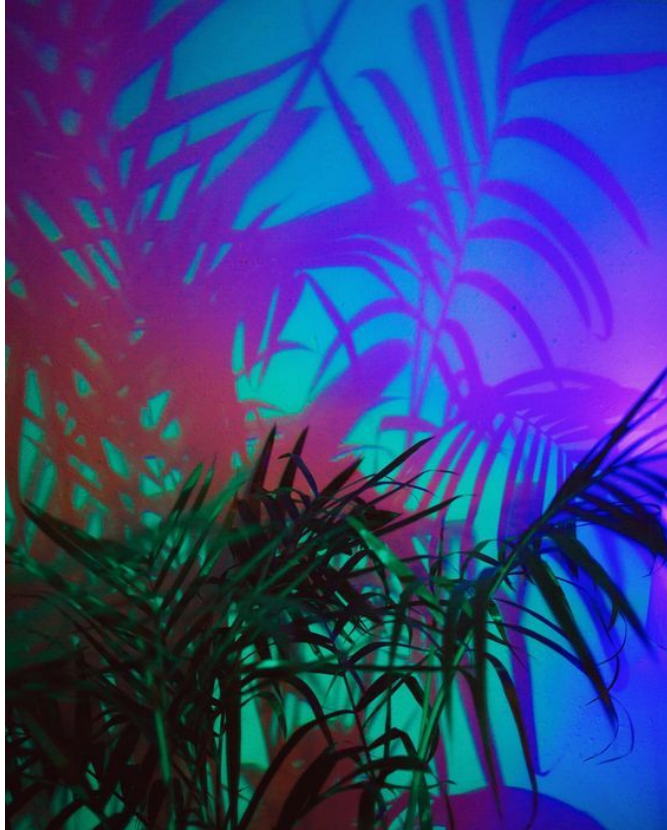
Think about what you want the audience to see first when you are taking your photos - this influences who the artwork is read.

Where does your eye 'land' on first in these photos?

What are some ways you could emphasise your focal point to your viewers?



# LIGHT SOURCE:



Your Light source refers to the direction in which light impacts your photoshoot.

- Sometimes may have one or multiple light sources.
- You may also have natural vs artificial light sources.

Use two words to describe each of the light sources in each of the images below.

What would you do to try and create these two different light effects?

What equipment would you need?

# JUXTAPOSITION:

Juxtaposition is used to describe the placement of opposing or contrasting objects, that together create new meaning.

Name opposing objects in these images and describe what you think the new meaning could be?

What was the old meaning and what has it now become?

What other ideas could you explore after this?

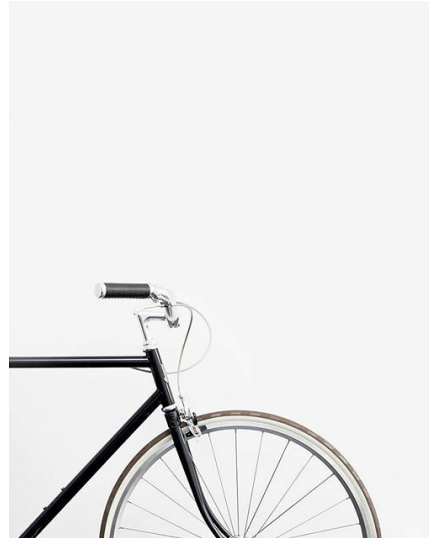
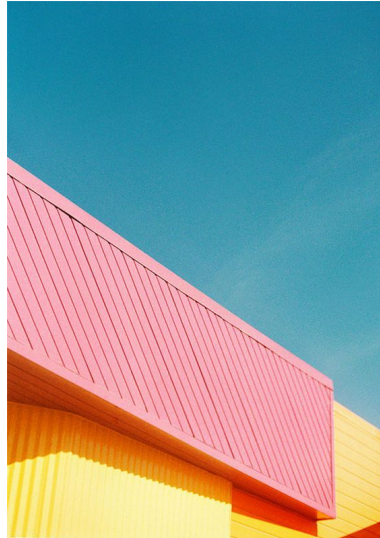


# SPACE:



Negative Space is the area in a picture that is not the subject or the space around/behind objects. Negative space allows 'breathing room' for the subject in the frame, emphasising focus.

Positive space refers to the main focus of a picture.



Here's a  
thought...

Do you think  
positive and  
negative space  
can co - exist?

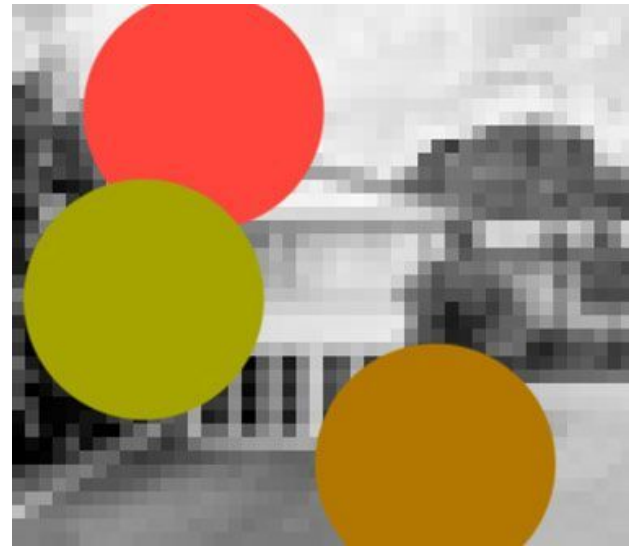


# FOCUS:

Audrey Flack



Ingrid Boberg



Focus is mostly associated with the sharpness of an image.

An image that is completely sharp is said to be in-focus.

An image that's completely blurry is said to be unfocused.

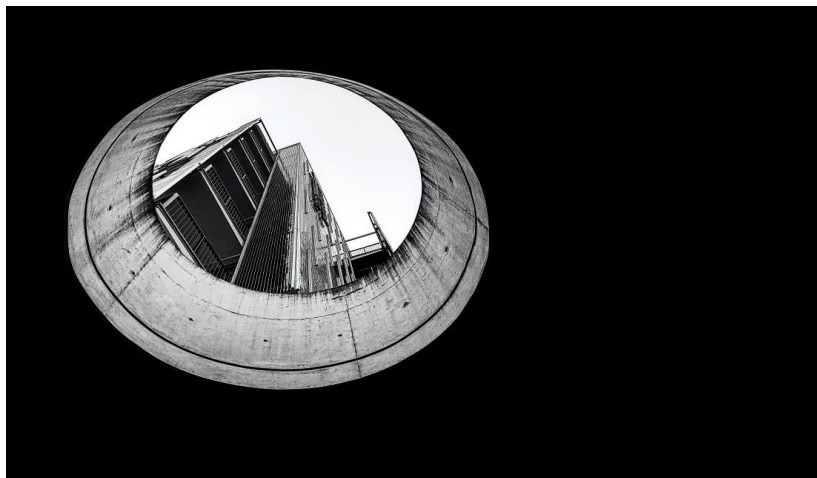
Uta Bath





# FRAMING:

Framing refers to using elements of a scene to create a frame within your frame. For example, you might shoot through a doorway, pulled back curtains, branches, fences, tunnels, or arches to highlight your subject.

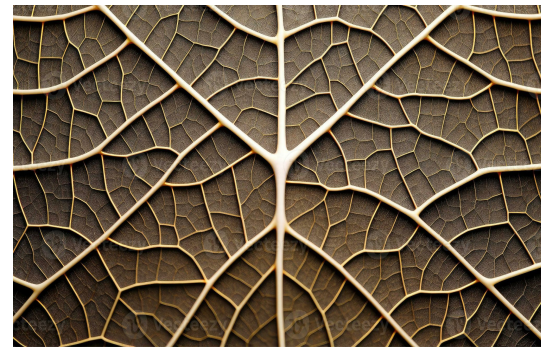


# TEXTURE:

Texture is the way we record the physical feel or touch of an object.

We can communicate texture visually in multiple ways using depth of field, focus and light as seen in these examples.

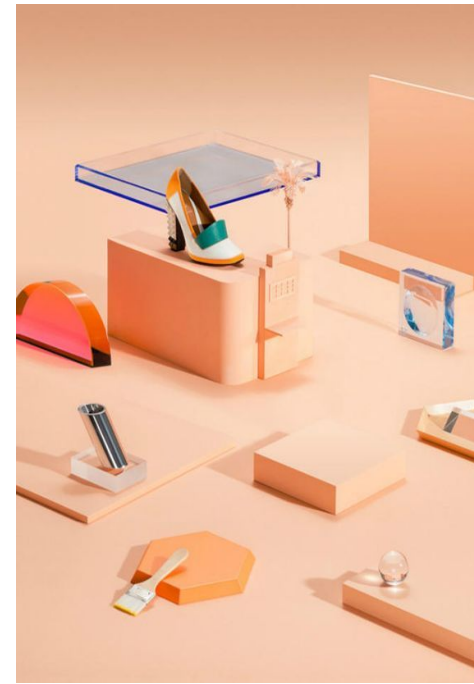
What type of Photography equipment do you think you might need to take photos like the ones on the right?





# PATTERN AND ORDER:

Pattern refers to the sequencing and repetition of items in an image, this can be found naturally in objects or manually created.

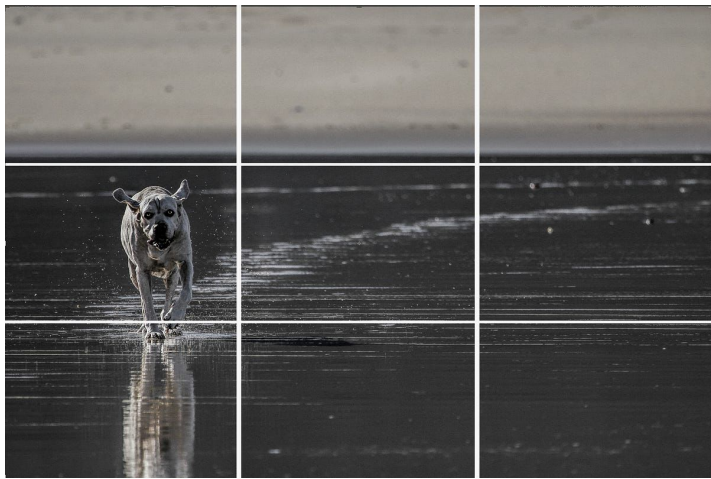
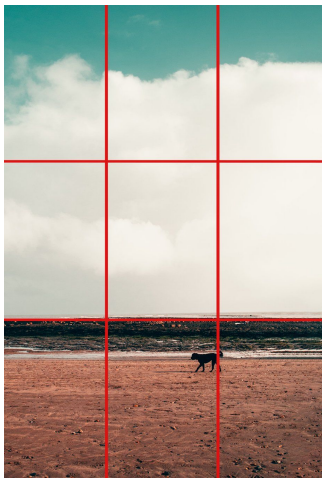


Similar to Pattern, Order refers to the deliberate arrangement or layout of objects. Order tends to appear less repetitive than a pattern, but still remains systematic.

# RULE OF THIRDS:

Rule of Thirds is a technique designed to help artists and photographers build drama and interest in a piece.

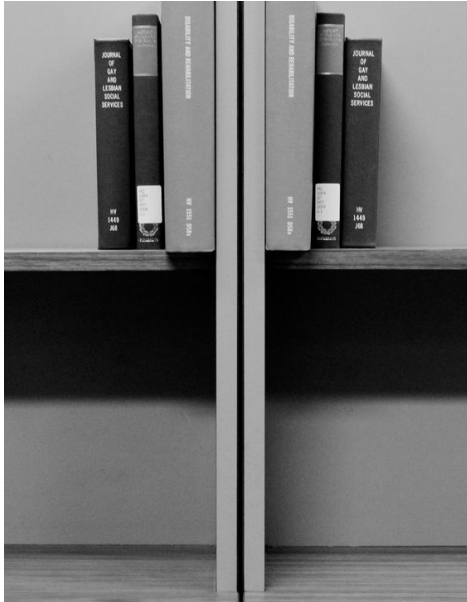
The rule states that an image should be divided into nine squares of equal size, with two horizontal lines intersecting two vertical lines. Objects are placed on impact points, the areas where intersecting lines cross over.



# BALANCE:

Balance in Art refers to the sense of distribution of perceived visual weights that offset one another.

There are two types of Balance you can use in your photography, Asymmetrical and Symmetrical Balance.





# DOMINANCE:

Dominance, (or Emphasis and Focal Point). Emphasis is created by visually reinforcing something we want the viewer to pay attention to.

Focal points are areas of interest the viewer's eyes skip to. The strongest focal point with the greatest visual weight is the dominant element of the work.

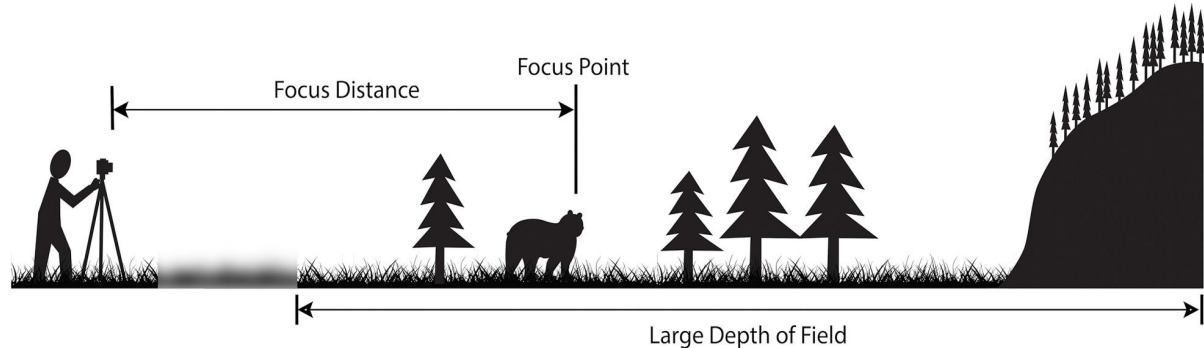
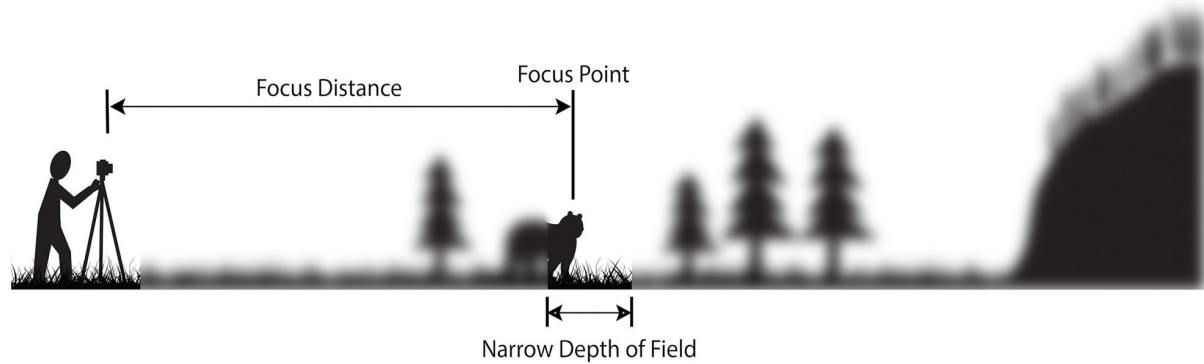


# DEPTH OF FIELD:

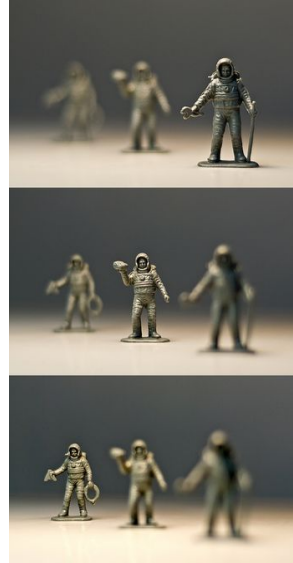
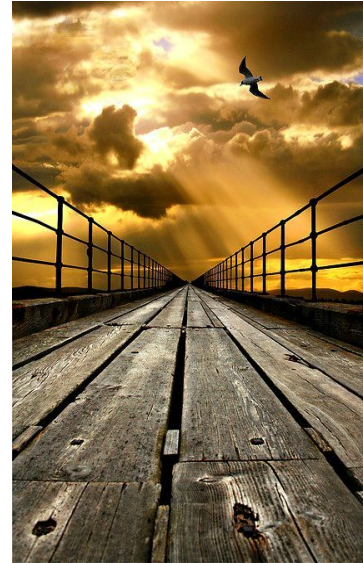
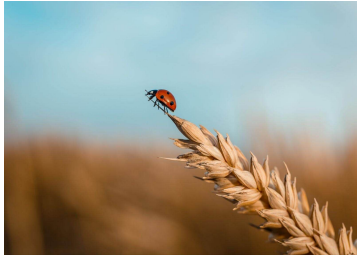
Depth of Field is the distance about the plane of focus where objects appear acceptably sharp in an image.

You can have a narrow depth of field, which typically doesn't show much range between a foreground, mid, and background. (fig i.)

Or, you can have a large depth of field which shows a great amount of detail over a large distance. (fig ii)



# DEPTH OF FIELD EXAMPLES:





# SCAVENGER HUNT!

Once you have written each of the convention definitions, get into groups of 2-3. In your group you must have a camera or a device to take photos.

Take a photo of the convention summary.

In your groups go and take a photo as an example of each Photographic Convention.

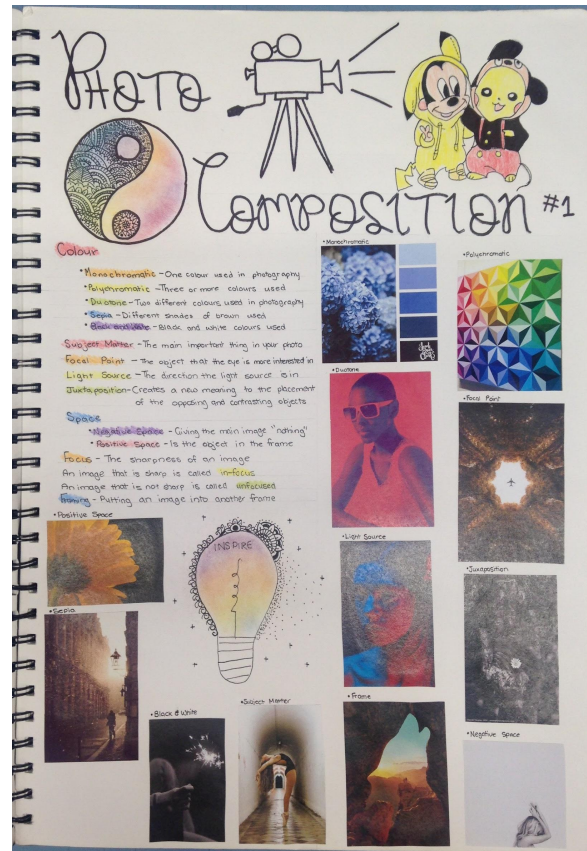
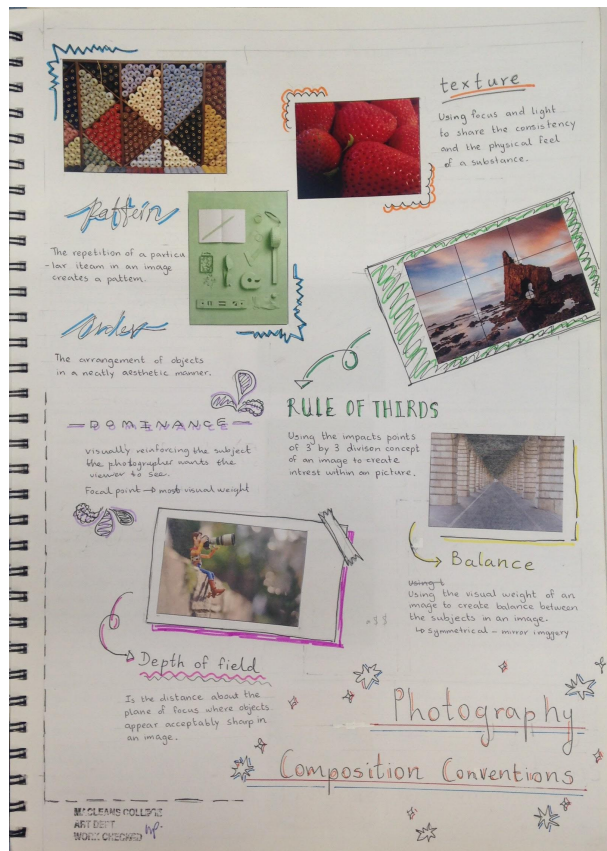
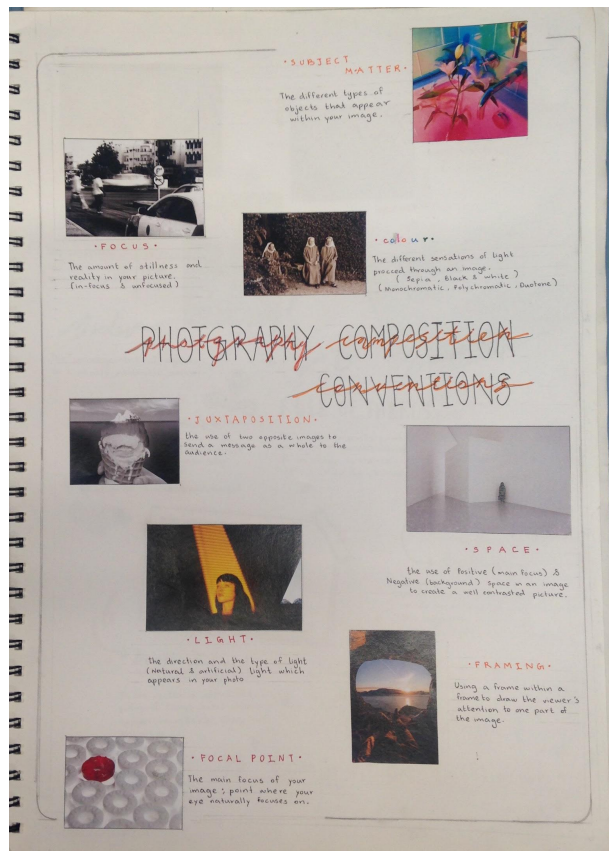
Each photo must have artistic merit (ie. look good! not a snap-shot). **First group back wins and gets a prize!**

Print your photos off as a Contact Sheet and glue in your books alongside your definitions.



Rule of thirds  
Balance  
Dominance  
Depth of Field  
Monochromatic  
Polychromatic  
Duotone  
Sepia  
Black and  
White  
Subject Matter  
Focal Point  
Light Source  
Juxtaposition  
Space  
Focus  
Framing  
Texture  
Pattern  
Order

# EXAMPLES OF STUDENT CONVENTION PAGES:





# MORE EXAMPLES:

## PHOTOGRAPHY CONVENTIONS

**COLOUR:** The use of colours in an image.

- Monochromatic: Use of 1 colour
- Polychromatic: Use of 2 or more colours
- Black & white
- Duotone: Use of only 2 colours
- Sepia: Reddish-brown colour



**SUBJECT MATTER:** The 'things' in your image.

**FOCAL POINT:** The main focus/object in the image (what your eye is drawn to)

**LIGHT SOURCE:** The direction in which the light affects the image. (Can be artificial or natural)

**JUXTAPOSITION:** The use of visually contrasting subjects in an image. (Sometimes to show a message)

**SPACE:** Use of positive & negative space to leave some room in an image.

**FOCUS:** Use of sharp and/or blurry parts of an image to focus on a certain subject.

**FRAMING:** Using parts of a photo to create a frame with your frame.



**TEXTURE:** To portray the physical touch/feel of a surface and/or an object.

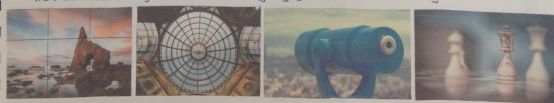
**PATTERN & ORDER:** Pattern is the repetition of items in an image, while <sup>order</sup> repetition is the deliberate arrangement of objects in an image.

**RULE OF THIRDS:** A technique that is used to build drama and/or interest in an image. The rule says that the image is to be split evenly into 9 squares, with 2 horizontal lines intersecting with 2 vertical lines. Objects are placed on these intersections, called 'impact points'.

**SYMMETRY & BALANCE:** Symmetry is when an image is split in the middle, and both halves are exactly the same. Balance is the <sup>near</sup> distribution of visual weights in an image.

**DOMINANCE:** Basically the focal point in an image, that is reinforced to get the attention.

**DEPTH OF FIELD:** The distance about the plane of focus where some objects appear sharper than others. There are narrow to large depths of field, showing varying amount of detail in an image.



## PHOTOGRAPHY Conventions

**COLOUR**

refers to the colours or amount of colours used in an image. Variations:

**POLYCHROMATIC**



**DUOTONE**



**MONOTONE**



**SEPIA**



**BLACK & WHITE**



**SUBJECT MATTER FOCUS**

the object/s within a photograph. The **FOCAL POINT** or sharpness of an image is the subject matter with the most interest.



**LIGHT SOURCE**

the source of light or direction in which light comes from in a photo.



**JUXTAPOSITION**

2 or more contrasting objects placed together to make new meaning



**SPACE**

**NEGATIVE SPACE** is the unused space in an image. **POSITIVE SPACE** is the focus.



**FRAMING**

using subject matter to create a frame within a frame.



**TEXTURE**

when the physical feel of an object is shown in an image.

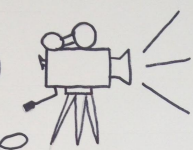


**PATTERN & ORDER**

**PATTERN** is the repetition of an object or shape. **ORDER** is the arrangement of subject matter.



PHOTO



COMPOSITION #2

**Texture** - Is the surface of an object using different shapes, tones and colour to bring life into the flat image.



**Pattern and Order**

- \* Pattern is the repetition of an item in an image
- \* Order is the arrangement of objects and tends to appear less repetitive



**Rule of Thirds** - To bring the image more drama and interest

**Balance** - Compositional technique in photography that juxtaposes image within a frame so that the objects are of equal weight when different parts of a photo command your attention equally, perfect balance is achieved.



**Symmetry** - When an image is the same on both sides when split in half



**Dominance** - When the image isn't the same on both sides when split in half



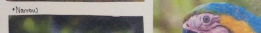
**Emphasis** - Draws attention and becomes the focal point in an image



**Depth of Field** - distance about the plane of focus where objects appear acceptably sharp in an image



**Narrow** - Doesn't show much range between foreground, mid and background



**Wide** - Shows a great amount of detail over a large distance



## TASK 2: ARTIST MODEL RESEARCH

You are to complete 2 x A4 pages of research on **Melissa Gamache**

Use the following questions for this Artist:

1. When and where was the artist born? When did they die?
2. What country did the artist come from? Where do they live now?
3. What type of artwork does the artist produce?
4. What objects does the artist generally use? What do you think these objects represent?
5. What is unique about this artist's work?
6. What do you like/dislike about the artist's work?
7. When conducting your own photoshoot, what equipment and subject matter could you use?
8. What photography conventions can you see in their work? - print 3 -5 images and draw arrows and label.

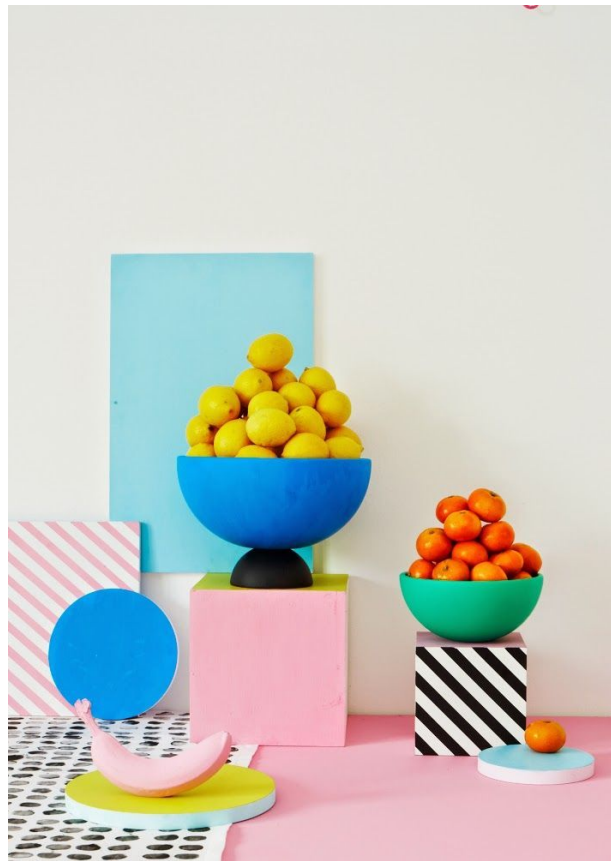
**Your presentation should be of a high standard!**





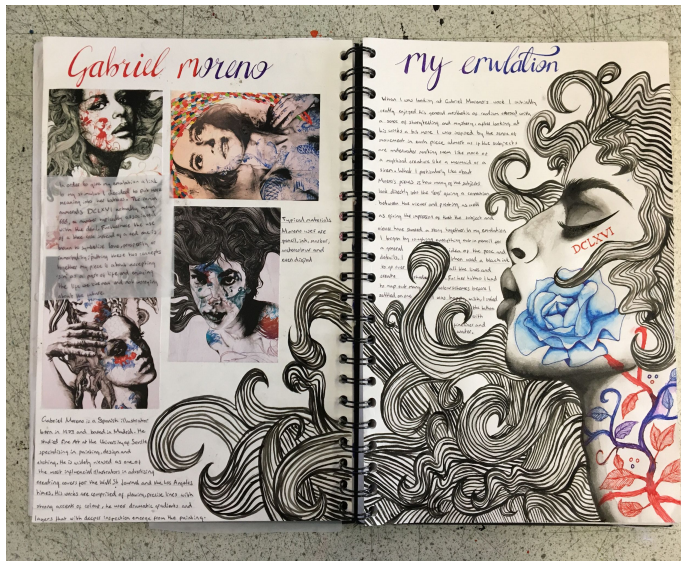
# MELISSA GAMACHE







## EXAMPLES OF RESEARCH PAGES:







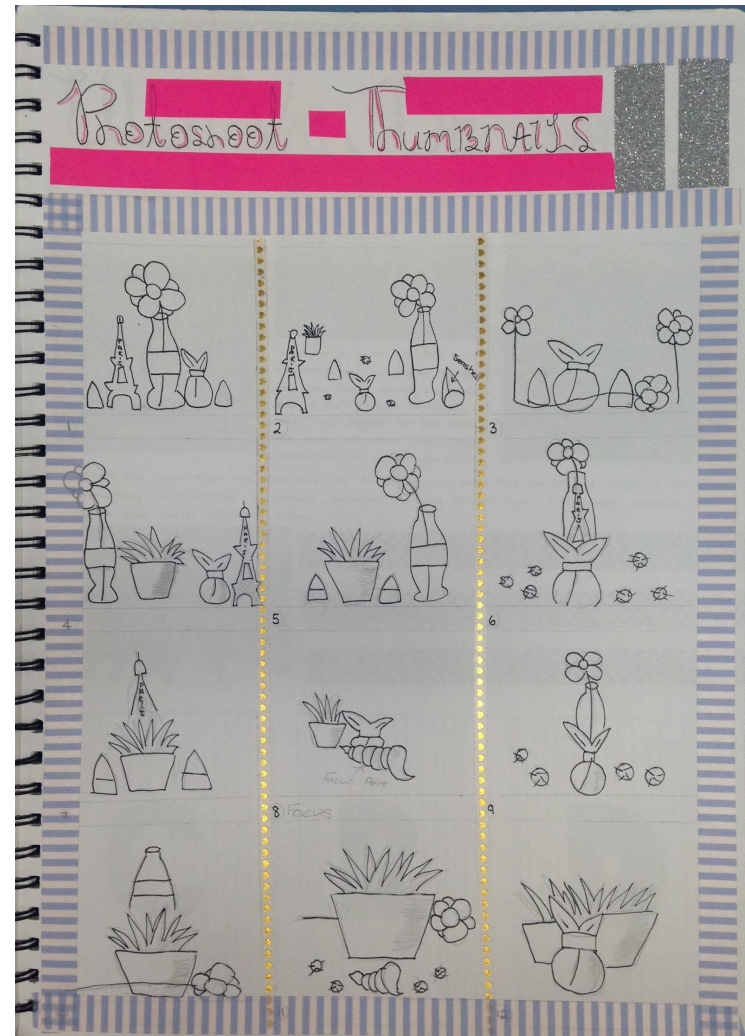


# TASK 3: PLAN YOUR PHOTOSHOOT

Why are we learning this? - The devil is in the detail when planning a photoshoot. For a shoot to run smoothly you need to plan and organise yourself so that your arrangements translate into amazing frames. The easiest part of a photoshoot is clicking the button, the most important part is your initiative and planning.

In your workbook create a 2x A4 pages planning your photoshoot. This must include:

- A Brainstorm of all objects your need to collect
- A list of all parameters that may help or hinder your shoot (the 'things' that will affect your photoshoot; ie light)
- Thumbnails sketches - Sketches of several frames for different still life setups. Think up close, low/high viewpoints; order/random placement.



# TASK 4: DOING YOUR PHOTOSHOOT

**Why are we learning this?** - Practical knowledge. Practical skills like conducting a photoshoot will help you to experiment with different angles and light. Use this as a hands on opportunity to problem solve photographic processes.

You will need to take about 20 minimum frames for your photoshoot. You can use the photobooth set up in your classroom, or make your own at home. You will want to try to recreate some frames in the style of your artist models. Remember: **Conventions!**

Once you have finished your shoot, it is best practice to save your photos to a USB! DO NOT save your photos to a Google doc as it is not compatible with photoshop which you will be using in following tasks.

Equipment that you will need:



# HOW TO MAKE A PHOTOBOOTH AT HOME:



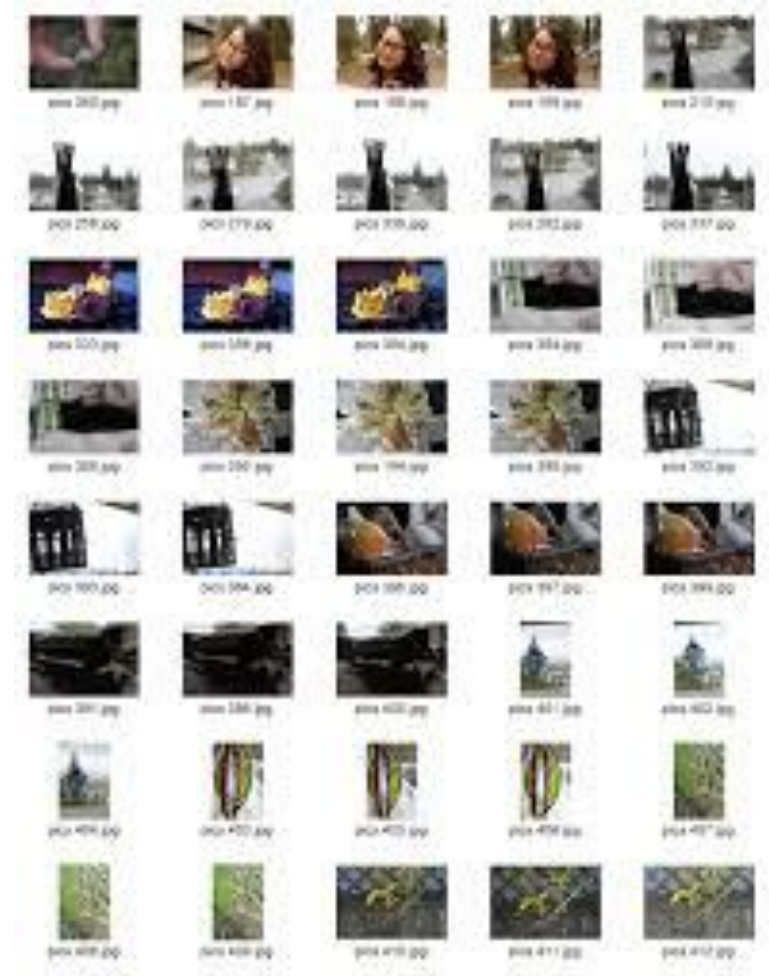
## TASK 5: PRINTING YOUR PHOTOSHOOT

Why are we learning this? - Learning to print a Contact Sheet will help you in your later years of art study, this is a process frequently used by Photography and Design students. Self Reflection is also important to critique your own work to better your own practice.

Print a Contact Sheet of your photoshoot you can follow instructions [here](#) or your teacher can show you.

Your contact sheet should look like this...

Glue your contact sheets into your work book and print an 1 x A4 photo of your favourite photograph. (We will be drawing from this photo in the next drawing tasks).



# TASK 6: REFLECTION ON YOUR PHOTOSHOOT

Answer the following questions about your photoshoot.

- What similarities do your photographs share with your artist models?
- What part of your photoshoot did you find difficult, and how did you overcome it?
- What photography conventions are most evident in your work?
- What would you do differently next time? What advice would you give others?





# TASK 7: EDITING IN PHOTOSHOP

How to open an image in Photoshop:  
(watch in mute, captions on - it's easier)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmAtpM7tsjw>

Lighting and colour adjustments:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogCG0jfIEMU>

Cropping and straightening:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnmMce2h3AY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0mBEgM9sFw>

How to save or export an image:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIH\\_ZGp4Mmk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIH_ZGp4Mmk)

