



Formative feedback

Student name	Simon Chirgwin	Student number	512973
Course/Unit	Photography 2: Context & Narrative: Assignment 4:	Assignment number	PH4CN-4
Type of tutorial	written feedback and e-mails.		

Overall Comments

Really well written descriptions and then interpretation of Cartier Bresson's *Alicante, Valencia Spain, 1933*. The contextualisation with reference to surrealism (Luis Buñuel, Salvador Dalí, Un Chien Andalou) is well formed. In addition, the exploration of form and content which gives rise to these contextual meanings is well researched. Looking at gesture, formal signs as well as the ambiguity (gender) of the subject and the way the 'returned gaze' questions these assumptions and comments upon the 'voyeur' viewer / photographer is well grounded.

You might want to further define your key terms in a little more detail before the interpretation (such as decisive moment and 'direct address' gaze (briefly) before you begin to explore these ideas in the write up. In addition, some mention of the 'critique' of this formal framework, would be useful as a counterpoint - thinking specifically of Paul Graham's self-reflexive images and Nick Waplington and 'The Everyday' representation without these formal devices.

This is a quite comprehensive review and a nice discursive style (yet still retaining a critical analysis). Not that much to add as it was discussed in length in our last hang out and supported with 'pre-feedback' on the idea in the last assignment feedback (page 2)

Feedback on assignment and supporting work

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

- I'd probably take out the reface to the Leica being expensive. I understand where you're coming from but in the 1930s before mass produced SLRs and their popularity (and affordability) in the 1960s the rangefinder was the normal camera for the emerging photojournalists. It was the tool as there was no other in existence (Speed Graphic 5 x 4 plate cameras previously - in the Weegee mode).
- By all means just a couple of sentences outlining the historical place of the small Leica (and later the Contax which Capa used) will contextualise the work historically - remember this was a period when the first small cameras were being used which freed the photographer from bulky equipment so its relevant . BBC 'Genius of Photography' series outlines this development quite critically. With reface to Rodchenko etc (you can source this as you know).
- When you mention 'Decisive moment' I would define it briefly in a sentence or so before moving on to the significance of *Gare St Lazare* in his development. Even use the quote (Harvard Referenced):

"Photography is the simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance of an event as well as of a precise organisation of forms which give that event its proper expression."

Emphasise its about *form* (geometry, tone, line, focus) integrating with *content* (symbolic person leaping into the unknown) but the original title 'Images a La Sauvette' (on the fly) was suggesting something in opposition to the obsessive compositional geometry that we have come to know as the decisive moment.

In addition, mention the contemporary critique of this over-formalisation (with the development of aftermath and 'the banal' notion in photography). See Shinkle and David Company 'late photography'.

- Define the 'direct address' and this exchange of glances before you move into Barthes. This section could do with a little more expansive detail. As this is the formal mechanics that brings forth the sense of unease of the voyeur and ultimately gives this impression (as you say at the end) leaving the viewer unsettled.

- Include the images which you compare with. As I did I think in your last feedback. Include the Luis Buñuel, Salvador Dalí, Un Chien Andalou, 1929 (see PH4CN-3)

Learning Logs or Blogs/Critical essays

Context

- Could make a blog about this idea of Key wording images (although possible not to be included in this write up on 'Reading Pictures'). See Alamy and Photoshelter guides to keywords to 'market' images to the front of search engines in the digital age. In Bresson's days (and in my early days) it was simply the 'blag' of people like Capa to interest the editors in the image by summing them up over the phone.
- Advice for keywording:
- <http://www.alamy.com/blog/alamykeywording>
- <http://blog.photoshelter.com/2008/06/keywording-your-stock-photos-1/>

Notes from Google Hangouts conversation 27 January 2017 (4.20 pm):

- Put the images in your write up that you refer to (captioned and referenced). Such as Un Chien Andalou and
- In the section on Rhetoric of the Image: here you could expand more on the decisive moment and its critique (Paul Graham, Nick Waplinton, The Sean O'Hagen this may be simple a few lines summarising such as 'the integration of form and content to give significance to an image in such geometrical forms was questioned later by such practitioners as Paul Graham.

Your Notes on Google Hangouts conversation:

Lose the speculation about the what happened to the people in the picture ("Whether or not the three people...do still wonder.") and sum up Barthes - Rhetoric of the Image instead - moving onto the use of the codes (questioning the decisive moment form /content/cliche.)

- see p23 (2016 edition) photo codes - Bate

Sean O hagen; Paul Graham -(humanist; possible reaction to WW2) that Cartier Bresson was doing post war.

More illustrations (un chien?)

Genius of Photography and Photo-journalism/street

HCB's early more frenetic (out of focus/ motion blurring) more interesting than the later work

Good descriptive writing/adoption of Barrett's method

Analogue Leicas/Hasselbads v their digital progeny

Next assignment - Italianicity; string bags v carrier bags; still life as a genre; Brecht & the A-Effekt; Orkney

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

I already mentioned these references (relating to direct address and constructed ideas of 'street photography' (for next assignment below) but here they are again:

'Visual Stance' - Gaze and Glance and 'Direct Address'

The subject looking straight into the lens is a form of confrontation with the viewer. Making us aware that we are looking at a photographer taking a picture. Insider of a privileged 'window on the world': http://www.dshed.net/digitised/reveal/resources/the_gaze_begs_part1.html

Philip Lorca Di Corcia Using 'types' and 'staging' to question the assumptions of documentary. Particularly his 'street photography' which has little or no engagement with the subject whatsoever. See:

<http://www.hepworthwakefield.org/whatson/dicorcia/>

Some recency to the critique of the decisive moment (as I understand it your choice of this particular image was principally because it was his early work before he became 'geometrically obsessed') See in Sean O'Hagan's Guardian article as well as the Photographers he mentioned such as Robert Frank and William Egglestone: <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/dec/23/henri-cartier-bresson-the-decisive-moment-reissued-photography>

Exploring the relationship between **photographs, time** and **memory** with Henri Cartier-Bresson, Nick Waplington and others: <http://www.photopedagogy.com/the-indecisive-moment.html>

Further to our conversations. Not necessarily space to include 'The Banal' as a subject matter and them in photography but something you might touch upon or use in future analysis (enclosed):

Shinkle, Eugenie (2004) Boredom, repetition, inertia: contemporary photography and the aesthetics of the banal. *Mosaic: a journal for the interdisciplinary study of literature*, 37 (4).

Pointers for the next assignment

- Perhaps you could use this research to make a constructed photograph (drawing from previous assignments). See the readings above on Philip Lorca di Corcia "People represent things. There not personal"
- Or, consider going back to an earlier project to construct it more using devices.
- If you intend to look at still lives as a construction - include some research on 'vanitas' and other codes and conventions.

Tutor name	Garry Clarkson FHEA
Date	27 January 2017
Next assignment due	22 February 2017