



Photography has the potential to suggest or connect with something more profound, for example - memories and time, presence and absence, our sense of place and being. Every photograph, whether intentional or not, provides a snapshot of time, presence / absence and place - and so can hugely influence memory of the viewers. When photographs are blurred or out of focus, worn, torn, faded or fragmented their capacity to evoke can be heightened further.

The vulnerable, mystical and transient nature of photographs is perhaps a reminder to us all of our own fragilities.

How, can photography help you explore personal themes such as memories, hopes, and fears - and how might your photographs be developed, manipulated and/or exhibited to emphasise your intentions?

- Have a look through an old family photo albums Perhaps there is an older family member who can help to explain some of the images. Take the opportunity to question them on their own recollections of the circumstances of particular images.
- How might you re-photograph these images in a novel way?
  - adjust the focus to emphasise distance (of time)
  - photograph close-up sections to draw attention to easily-overlooked details
  - photograph older (or younger) hands holding the image or objects that might connect / contrast with the era or subject
- Take a series of images of a significant place or a significant person in your life. Rather than a conventional image, how you might obscure your view to create something more mysterious, or dream-like.
  - create a hole (aperture) in an existing relevant photograph and shoot through this experimenting with focal points;
  - photograph through a clear sheet of plastic - experiment with creasing, crumpling or smearing vaseline or dripping water upon the surface and holding this in front of the lens.
- Create a display of your images in an unconventional location - one that may complement or contrast with your theme eg a low-cost, pop-up exhibition, something as simple as a few small prints pinned to a gate post. Alternatively, you might secretly insert your images into an old family album for future discovery.

# Ideas on Photography



It could be said that photography has two elements - science and art - and that photographs can be both factual and beautiful objects. This can be seen throughout the history of photography and are the tension still exists today.

Photographs are scientific creations. They give demonstrate high levels of accuracy. But photographs are also artificial. They are flattened versions of reality, reliant on chance. Throughout the history of photography, the rational uses of photography have existed alongside the artistic.

Keats argued, "the truthful and the beautiful aren't necessarily in opposition."

This exhibition presents the work of several artists who seek a version of the truth through an interest in the beautiful.

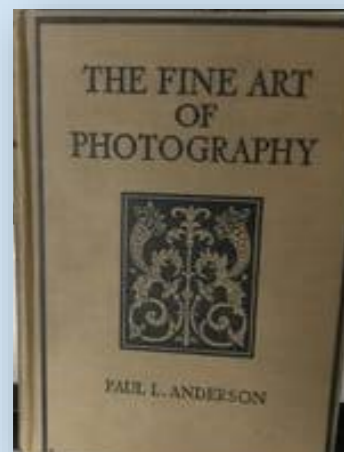
Are photographs works of art? Some writers think not, others disagree. Discuss.....

- What is a work of art? What properties does it have?
- How are works of art made?
- Are photographs as valuable as other artworks?
- Where do we expect to see works of art? Where do we expect to see photographs?
- How do you make and use photographs? Do you consider yourself an artist?
- Why might some photographers want to be considered as artists?

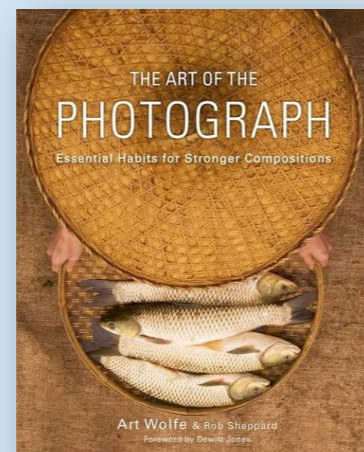
Our ideas about what constitutes a work of art have changed since the 'invention' of photography. Is photography now an accepted art form?



## A changing view of photography



Published 1919



Published 2014

Consider the two books, above. Only one has a photograph on its cover. Why might this be so, and what difference does it make? What do the covers tell us about how photography was viewed by critics through time?

Create your own alternative cover images. Carefully decide what would work best - photography, painting, illustration, collage or something else? What type of image, subject matter, composition etc. would best illustrate what you expect in the books.



## Time



Some photographers are very aware of 'time' as an element which contributes to a final photograph - the time afforded with a subject. Time gathering thoughts and insights from subjects can be particularly valuable..

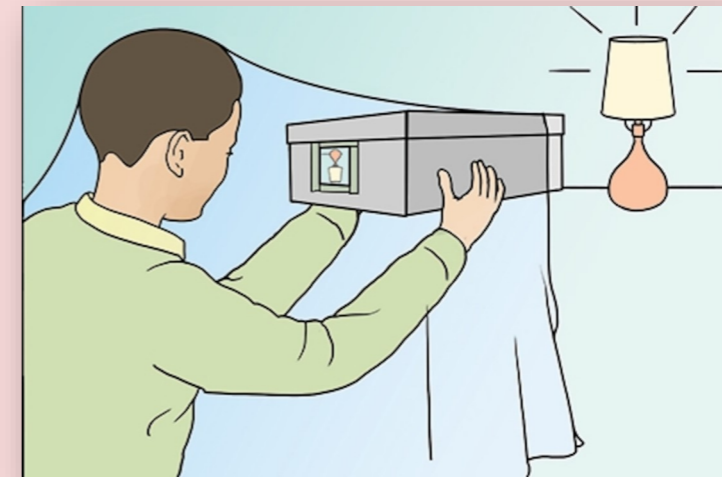
Take a series of portraits of an individual. This might be a family member, friend or perhaps someone you know less well. How can you deliberately slow down the process of taking a portrait to collaborate or connect with someone at a deeper level?

For example, you might ask them how or where they would like to be portrayed or informally document them while you chat. Or you could produce a sequence of images taken over a period of days, weeks or longer. Pay close attention to how a person - and your recordings of them - can change with familiarity and understanding.

## Some simple camera ideas to try



- Make a Camera Obscura. A camera obscura is a 'dark room' that can help to demonstrate how light behaves in a camera. You could convert a suitable room into a camera obscura. Tape large sheets of black plastic / card across the windows and cut a small hole in the centre. With suitable light outside of the window (and a lack of light inside) you are able to observe the exterior scene projected and inverted upon the opposite wall.



- Make a pinhole camera. The pinhole camera is an old intervention from early history of photography. A pinhole camera is a light-tight box with a tiny aperture (pinhole) at one end and a sheet of tracing paper (or something similar) at the other to enable real-time viewing of projected light and shadows.
- Make a Cyanotype (sometimes also called a sun print or shadow print). A cyanotype is a photographic process that produces a cyan-blue print. This is commonly achieved through placing objects upon a pre-prepared surface and exposing this to bright (sun)light. For an easy introduction it is possible to purchase pre-prepared solutions or ready-made paper.

