

Lebanon Camera Club



2021 Assigned Subjects:

January: Locks

February: Broken

March: Shadow

April: Old Houses

May: Clouds

June: Historic Lebanon Valley Sites

September: Craggy

October: Fences

November: Scenic

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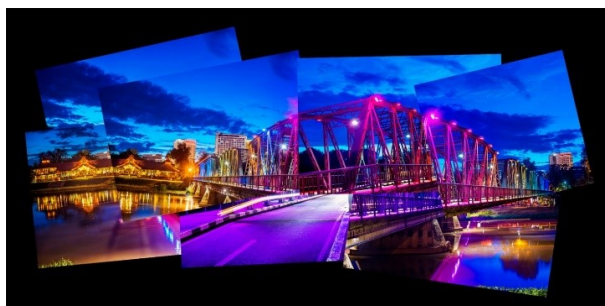
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News

- January Meeting: Tuesday, 1/5/21 6:30 pm
- Program: Digital Image Editing Workshop, Part 1" by Keith Kotay
- Online Digital Competition

Photography Educational Series—How to Create a Photo Montage

A Photomontage is the process and the result of making a composite photograph by cutting, gluing, rearranging and overlapping two or more photographs into a new image. Sometimes the resulting composite image is photographed so that the final image may appear as a seamless physical print. What's different about Photomontages is they are not supposed to represent a single perspective in a single instant. By changing your camera position and spreading out the process of making the photos, a cubist style becomes possible.



Here's a series of steps to take to produce Photomontages. There are no rules. If you want to try something new, follow these steps as guidelines to create your own cubist-styled photography.

What's involved in making a Photomontage?

1. Choose your subject carefully - Have a raw concept in mind. What is your photomontage going to be about? It's more than just the subject you choose. When you are starting out, it is easier to use static subjects. Any movement in the scene adds complexity and difficulty. Can you re-visit and photograph your subject again if you need to? Getting all the photos you need does not always happen in one session. It is convenient if you can return to your subject and fill in any gaps.

Try to find a subject you can move around and photograph from different angles. Nothing too small. Small subjects can be very challenging. For the Photomontage of the old Iron Bridge in Chiang Mai, photographs were taken from the left side, in the middle, and then from the right side.



“Photography is the only language that can be understood everywhere.”

– Bruno Barbey

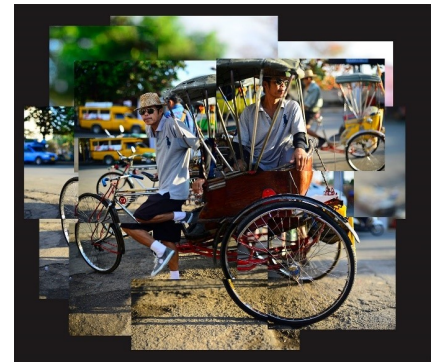


Photo Montage cont'd.

2. Decide how big you want your Photomontage to be - The iron bridge example is made up of only seven individual photos. You can make a montage with just a few photos or with hundreds or thousands. There is no limit. Looking at your scene, choose a focal length to use. I generally keep to one. Zooming or changing lenses can bring about confusing results.

Avoid using a wide-angle lens. Distortion at the edges of the photos can make it harder to compile them well. Base your lens choice on the dimensions you want your finished montage to be. This can be tricky when you are first starting out, but it's helpful to consider at this stage of the process.

Having a baseline of six or seven photos with a height of five photos, you end up with around 40-50 photos in your final montage. Choose a focal length that gives you the number of photos across the horizontal axis that you want. Having too many or too few photos to work with can be quite complicated. The Iron Bridge montage took ages to compile to make it look right because I was working with so few images.



3. Create a base series of photographs - Take more than you think you need. This is most important. Don't go crazy taking loads of images that are all very similar. Change each composition slightly.

Always work in manual mode, so the exposure remains constant unless you choose to adjust it. You can use the first set of photos as the base of your Photomontage. It's good to have a foundation of images to reference once you start compiling your montage. For these first photos, try to build a selection of images that, when put together, make a fairly normal looking representation of your subject.

Aim to have some overlap in every photo. About 30% is the minimal amount. Being methodical as you make the photos can help to ensure you capture everything you need. Follow a grid pattern. Start at the bottom left corner and make a series of overlapping images as you move your camera across to where you want the bottom right corner to be. Count the number of photos you are taking.

Point your camera a little higher, including some of the last photos you made. Now work your way back across to the left, taking roughly the same number of photos. Follow this pattern as you continue to cover the whole area you want to include in your Photomontage. Look for strong lines running through your montage. These help make a more cohesive image when you are putting it all together.

4. Begin adding alternative perspectives - Now that you have a fairly standard collection of photos, change your perspective. Move to your left or right. Crouch down or get up higher. You may be surprised at how much a slight change in your perspective alters the look of your montage once you start to compile it. Move a few times, each time photographing the whole scene again or just the most significant parts of it.

Cont'd

Photo Montage cont'd.

When working with movement in your subject, it may be best to stay in one position to make all your photos. You can rely on the changes in your subject for a cubist effect. Keep looking for the strong lines as you or your subject moves.

5. Take more photos - Once you think you have taken enough photos, take some more. There's nothing more frustrating when you're compiling your montage than finding gaps you have no photos to fill. Don't be in a rush. Take a careful look over the area of your composition and take more photos around the edges and the most important parts of your main subject. These are the two areas you can have the most significant problems with.

Compiling your photos

1. Get organized - Managing your photos well can save you getting in a mess further



along in this process. Import all your images into one folder. Go through and pick out your strongest images - ones that stand out to you. Naturally, you'll have lots of photos that won't be worth looking at on their own, but among them should be some key images. Put these into a separate folder and label it 'Group 1' or something useful to you.

Next, you need to choose the bulk of the photos you want to use. Think about the images you want to go around the edges. Which ones are for the main body of your photomontage? These are likely the first photos you took. Place these into another folder and label it 'Group 2' or something useful to you. Drop the remaining images into a third folder and label it.

2. Save as and resize all your images - Save all your photos as jpeg files with a resolution of 300ppi. At this resolution, they are a little large but will be the same size when you get them printed later.

What dimensions do you want your finished photomontage to be? Think about how many photos you made along the horizontal axis. Calculate how wide each one should be, so they fit within the finished size you want your montage. If you want a montage one meter wide (3.3 feet) and have taken seven photos across the horizontal, make each photo 14 centimeters wide (5.5 inches.) This gives you a starting point.

3. Prepare a clear canvas - In Photoshop or your preferred software, make a new canvas. Make the ppi resolution 300 to match your image files. Make the size a little larger than you want your finished Photomontage to be.

4. Import your photos - Photoshop allows you to import a series of images to a single working file, so they retain their original file names. Do this with the three folders of resized images you've made. Arrange them in the layers.

5. Lay out your photos - Right now you probably have all the layers stacked so you can only see the top photo. Turn off the visibility of the Group 1 and Group 3 folders. Select all the layers in the Group 2 folder and drag all the photos to one corner of your canvas. Now select only the top layer and drag and drop it roughly in the position you want it. Do the same with each layer. Don't worry at all about positioning anything precisely at this stage. Every-



"Photography can light up darkness...and expose ignorance."
- Lewis Hine



Photo Montage cont'd.

thing from here is likely to be shuffled around a number of times.

Once you've added all the photos in Group 2 and have them laid out, repeat this process with images in Group 1. Then from Group 3, but only if you really need them. Drag photos up and down in the layers panel hierarchy to place them above or below other photos on the canvas. As you add more photos, you should start noticing the relationship between the images. Keep nudging and tweaking all the layers until you are satisfied they're all in the best position.

6. Turn unused layers off - You may now have many layers visible with lots of overlapping. Begin to turn layers off for images you may not want to include in your finished montage. Don't delete them at this stage, just turn their visibility off. Now you'll see fewer photos on your canvas, and it'll be easier to arrange the images you have visible.



At this stage, you may be seeing some gaps in your montage. This is where the images in Group 3 may be useful if you haven't added them already. You can always duplicate similar layers and drag the copied layer to fill the space. If this does not work, you may need to go back and take some more photos. Once you are happy with the way your montage looks, go ahead and delete all the layers you have turned off.

Aim to build cohesion in your composition. Too much fragmentation can make your montage difficult for people to view. Follow strong lines in your montage to help keep the flow. Don't worry about ragged edges. Montages do not have to fit a regular shape. However the edges of your montage are formed, make sure they enhance the overall image.

Tweaking individual photos may sometimes improve the overall look of your montage. When you have the images laid out, take a step back and consider your composition. Are there individual images which are too dark or too bright? Do some contain colors that don't fit well? How would the whole montage look in black and white?

Printing and Constructing Photomontages

1. Have your photos printed - Importing the photos using the method outlined will mean each of your layers has retained the original file name. Now it's time to go back to the folders with the photos you resized and collect up all of them that made it into your final composition. Copy them into a new folder and have them printed.
2. Buy a board - You'll need a sturdy piece of board to mount your photos on, such as foam core board as it's strong but lightweight. It also does not warp. If you use cardboard it can buckle easily once you get many layers of photos stuck down. Whatever you choose to use, make sure that it will be big enough to compile all your photos on.
3. Prepare to adhere your photos - Double-sided adhesive paper is the cleanest and easiest... it's like a huge roll of double-sided tape. Pasting the photos up with glue is possible, but you



Photo Montage cont'd.

need to be extremely careful you don't get glue places you don't want it. Before you begin sticking the prints down, use a black marker pen to blacken the edges of each print.

4. Lay out your prints - Open your montage file on your computer and turn off all the layers except the bottom one. Find the print of this image and position it on your board. Turn on the next layer and repeat the process of laying out your photos.

Prints will get knocked and move around during this process. Don't be concerned, because as the montage takes shape the positions of prints will change. You may begin to see different relationships between the prints you may not have noticed on your computer monitor. You can use masking tape to help keep the prints in position. Take care when you remove the tape that it does not damage your print.

Remain relaxed and fluid during this part of the process. Don't stress if you cannot manage to line all the photos up as precisely as you lined up the layers in Photoshop. Take a few steps back, or get up above the table you are working on. This will help you see the overall look of your composition. Do this a few times during your layout stage.

5. Stick it all down - You can spend forever tweaking the positioning of the prints, but eventually, you will want to stick them all down. Start with a corner there's a print with no others overlapping it. Position it carefully in relation to the edge of the board and stick it down. Begin to work your way from this point, sticking down only prints that do not overlap above any other print. Whenever a print has another layer underneath, the bottom one must be stuck down first.

If you make a mistake, just consider alternatives to remedy the situation. You might have to get another print or two made so you can cover up the problem area. Other times you will be able to rearrange the way you stick the prints down and still make it look good. Work slowly and carefully, trying as much as possible not to let the prints move around. Any fast movement or clumsiness at this stage can mean you have to start over.



Conclusion

Once your photomontage is all adhered, you will notice a big difference. It's much more dimensional than it appears on your computer monitor or as it would be printed on a single sheet of paper.

The overlapping layers and any unconformities that happen during paste-up give a montage some depth and texture. These will not bother you once you realize they actually add to the look and feel of these artworks.

Source: <https://digital-photography-school.com/photomontages-part-1-taking-your-photos/> and <https://digital-photography-school.com/photomontages-part-2-compiling-photomontage-photos/> and <https://digital-photography-school.com/photomontages-part-3-printing-and-constructing-photomontages/>



Photo Contests

- **Rennen Photography 2020 Contest**
<https://photocontest-guru.com>
- **Great American Photo Contest Monthly Baby Photo**
www.greatamericanphotocontest.com

Various Photo Contests (Many Different Topics)

- <https://www.photocontestinsider.com/>
- <http://www.voubs.com>
- [Www.viewbug.com/photo-contests](http://www.viewbug.com/photo-contests)
- [Www.photocrowd.com/photo-competition](http://www.photocrowd.com/photo-competition)
- <https://www.outdoorphotographer.com/photo-contests/>
- <http://www.photocrowd.com>
- www.life-framer.com/
- <https://www.fanartreview.com>

Landscape and Nature Forum Photography Challenge—monthly theme and critique: https://www.facebook.com/groups/creativeraw/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=March%20Photo%20Challenge%3A%20Color%20in%20Nature&utm_campaign=Facebook%20Group%20Contest

[utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=March%20Photo%20Challenge%3A%20Color%20in%20Nature&utm_campaign=Facebook%20Group%20Contest](https://www.facebook.com/groups/creativeraw/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=March%20Photo%20Challenge%3A%20Color%20in%20Nature&utm_campaign=Facebook%20Group%20Contest)

Photo Opportunities

Cancelled this year, Mummers Day Parade, Philadelphia
<https://www.phlvisitorcenter.com/Mummers>

January 9-12 Pennsylvania Farm Show
www.farmshow.state.pa.us

January 18-23 PA Auto Show (virtual)
<https://www.autoshowharrisburg.com/>

- Frozen Waterfalls at Ricketts Glenn and other state parks

Photo Editing Feature of the Month-Vignetting

Vignetting::

- In photography and optics, vignetting is a reduction of an image's brightness or saturation toward the periphery compared to the image center. The word vignette, from the same root as vine, originally referred to a decorative border in a book.
- produce (a photograph) in the style of a vignette by softening or shading away the edges of the subject.



What is a vignette—<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKSrsBVtPEQ>

Vignette explained in more detail (Lightroom): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OoczWiNsg>

And more using Photoshop: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5ltpMQ8I4>

Random Idea of the Month-Digital Picture Frames

5 Things to Consider When Buying a Digital Picture Frame: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xU6jrWs_Y4s

5 digital photo frames compared: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3BjRUDLWss>

Alternatives to buying a digital picture frame: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Shs3S4TOMMo>



Workshops and Tours

Apogee Photo Magazine

For more information log on to
http://www.apogeephoto.com/photography_workshops.shtml

Wildlife and Nature Travel

www.wildlifeandnaturetravel.com

Art Wolfe Photography Workshops

www.artwolfeworkshops.com

Don Smith Photography

www.donsmithphotography.com

Brenda Tharp

www.brendatharp.com/

M&M Photo Tours

<http://www.mmphototours.com/>

Arizona Highway Photo Workshops

<http://www.friendsofhighways.com/>

John Shaw 2-Day Nature & Digital Photography Seminar

<http://www.photosafaris.com/>

Jack Graham Photography

<http://jackgrahamphoto.com/>

Rocky Mountain Reflections

www.rockymtnrefl.com/photographyworkshops.html

Slonina Photography—Explore Wild America

<http://www.sphotography.com>

Darwin Wiggett Tours & Workshops

<http://oopoomoo.com/workshopsandtours/>

Outdoor Photo Workshops

<http://www.outdoorphotoworkshops.com>

Photo Workshop Adventures

www.photoworkshopadventures.com

Michael Francis Photo Shoots

www.michaelfrancisphoto.com

Osprey Photo Workshops & Tours

www.ospreyphoto.com

Tom Dwyer Tours & Workshops

www.tomdwyerphoto.com

Horizon Photography Workshops

www.horizonworkshops.com

Below is a link of online pdf files from
past monthly meeting presentations:

[http://www.lebanoncameraclub.org/
newsletters](http://www.lebanoncameraclub.org/newsletters)

2020 Officers

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sypher1@comcast.net

Meetings are the first Tuesday of each month!

If you would like to do a program on anything digital related or know someone who would, please let us know.

Or

If you have something of interest for our members, please email them to the Newsletter Editor, Connie at lebanoncamera@gmail.com.

**MONTHLY
MEETING**
Be Connected. Be Heard. Be Informed.

Everyone is invited to attend our regular monthly meetings.

Unless otherwise noted we meet the first Tuesday at 6:30PM in St. Stephen's Christian Fellowship Church, 1100 Hunter Chase Lane, Lebanon PA.

Directions: From Rt 72 N of Lebanon where N 12th St becomes Jonestown Road at the McDonalds, follow Jonestown Road north past the Turkey Hill. Jonestown

Road will become Sandhill Road. Keep on Sandhill road until it branches to the left into Grace Avenue. Church is on the left 3/10 of a mile from the split *before* you pass Youth for Christ and Fisher Bus..

The club is a member of the Photographic Society of American (PSA).

Cancellation or last minute changes of events will normally be sent to members via email and broadcast on radio station WLBR, AM 1270.

Only members may enter competitions. Dues are \$25 per year and include the newsletter and monthly meeting minutes.

Digital Competition entries are due at least one day prior to the scheduled competition.

Competition Committee will keep winning Print entries for the end of year competition unless the member requests return of entries before then. In that case, the member would be responsible for re-submitting them for the end of year competition.

Products and services of interest to photographers are presented as a service without review or endorsement.

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Dates and times of events may change. Please check local listings.