

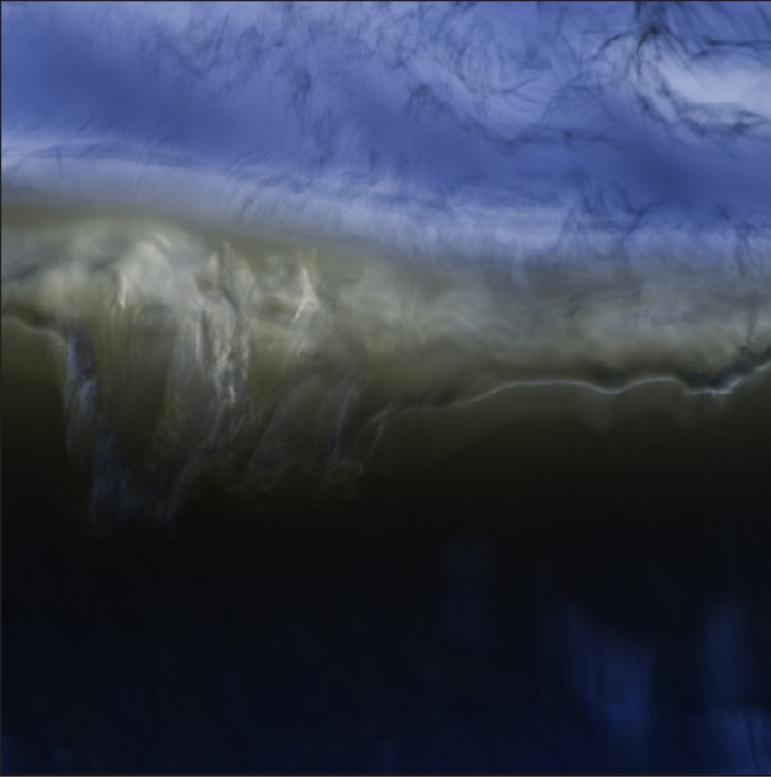
the  
visual language

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of **ABSTRACT**  
Photography

*“Abstraction is inherent in the photographic medium and through abstraction the photographer exercises choices that carry photography beyond record-realism to the expression of his or her personal viewpoint”.....*

*- Barbara Morgan*

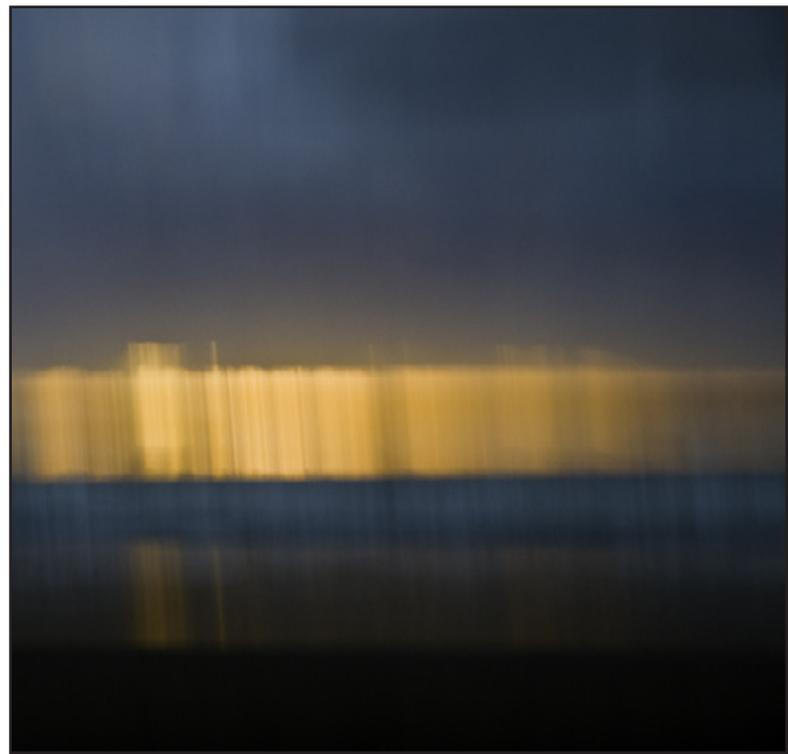


At first you may only look at the colours in the subject you are photographing and try to emphasize those that are vibrant, or find colour combinations that work together. Having a basic understanding of colour theory and the way colours interact with each other will help you to make the best possible use of them in your images.

Then you may start looking at the symbolic power of colours and how they make us feel. For example, blue has a calming effect. It can be associated with sadness (feeling blue), but also with freshness. Black represents fear and sadness but also power and elegance. Every colour has its own negative and positive connotations. The way we notice them depends on culture and individual experiences.

Lines and simple shapes also have a huge impact on how the image is going to be perceived. We use lines and simple shapes every day. Road signs are a very good example of this. In the same way, you can use lines and simple shapes to communicate your messages. Think about what kind of lines will express the emotional character of calm, strong, explosive or fragile. Use the direction, thickness, and relationship between lines.

As with colour, simple shapes also have some symbolic power. A square is associated with resting and stability, a triangle - with change and progression. A circle imparts inclusion and infinity.



The great power of abstract photography lies in its ambiguity. It opens your mind to a brand new visual experience, stimulates your imagination, and forces you to look at the world around you differently and more carefully.

Unlike other types of photography, abstract images can be created almost anywhere. Everywhere we go we are surrounded with colour, textures and patterns. Finding interesting compositions can be challenging at first, but with a little bit of practice and persistence you will see abstract images in the ordinary and familiar things around you.

Because of the great amount of imagination and creativity involved in its process, abstract photography can also be an excellent exercise for photographers interested in other fields of photography helping to improve their proficiency in general. It is especially helpful in building skills in attention to detail, appreciation of colour and finding textures.

There are really no guidelines for creating good abstract images. The main goal of abstract photography is to use the visual language of colour and form to evoke mood or emotion. So the first question you should ask yourself before you press a shutter release is, "How do I feel about this and why?" As with any other languages visual language has its own grammar and vocabulary. The more you practice the more fluent you become.

As you can see, visual language is a tool that employs the power of symbols and association. When mastered, visual language enables you to communicate way beyond just simple shapes and colours, and it also helps you to appreciate art in general.



## **Tips to remember:**

Give yourself freedom and don't worry about the rules.  
Enjoy the creative process in which nothing is wrong.  
Discover that there is infinitely more than just straight photography.  
Above all have fun.