1

Action sheet A
Can you read photos?

LOOK AT BOTH PICTURES!
WHAT COMES TO YOUR MIND FIRST?

JUSTIFY YOUR STATEMENTS BY DESCRIBING WHAT YOU SEE!

HOW IS THE EFFECT OF BOTH PICTURES DIFFERENT?

IMAGE 1

Borderland, From the Desert of Pharan series, 2011-2016 Image courtesy of the artist, ATHR and GALLERIA CONTINUA, San Gimignano / Beijing / Les Moulins / Habana. © Ahmed Mater

IMAGE 2

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Information sheet
Photo comparison

WHAT CAN BE FOUND IN THE PICTURES?

Picture 1 is almost symmetrical: The human and the clock tower are almost in line with each other in the middle of the picture. Picture 2, on the other hand, shows a man turned to the right on the left. Next to it rises the clock tower, which shows its façade in the evening sun. The sun, with its warm rays, is the only source of light and wraps the picture in orange tones. In contrast, the night scene in picture 1 is lit with a glaring white spotlight.

Both persons stand on an elevation. In picture 1, the camera is at the same height as the person. In picture 2, however, the camera seems to be further down. The outline of the dark foreground is very clear, but the building in the background blurs slightly. In picture 1, all areas are in focus and the strong light emphasizes the centre of the picture.

WHAT DO THE IMAGES THEREBY CONVEY?

Both images utilise the same circumstances: An individual, visible by outline, stands in front of the Masjid al-Haram, the great mosque in Mecca. Both images encourage putting oneself into the position of this individual. Image 2 radiates a positive feeling through the warm colours of the setting sun and its smooth transitions from golden yellow to greyish-blue. The Abraj al-Bait, the towers next to the great mosque, are illuminated by the sunset light behind the praying individual. This individual stands on firm ground and the ascending ground portrays a development.

Image 1, on the other hand, appears somewhat uncomfortable: The cold-white floodlights determine the atmosphere. A chaotic-looking construction site spreads behind the outline of this individual. The Masjid al-Haram is hardly visible.

In summary, Image 2 focuses on praying and as such on spirituality at the most sacred location of Islam. Image 2 contrasts this: By using a perspective showing how the place between the construction site and the huge towers almost disappears. The theme of this image subsequently poses the question: What actually happens to Mecca? What is the direction of development of the city surrounding the Kaaba?

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Info Sheet
Photographers

Borderland, From the Desert of Pharan series, 2011-2016 Image courtesy of the artist, ATHR and GALLERIA CONTINUA, San Gimignano / Beijing / Les Moulins / Habana. © Ahmed Mater

AHMED MATER (IMAGE 1)

Ahmed Mater al-Ziad Aseeri was born in 1979 in Abha in the south west of Saudi Arabia. He is a practising physician and began to express himself artistically in the mid-1990s. The series of works in question is a long-term photographic study of Mecca. Ahmed Mater repeatedly returns to vantage points in the sacred city and surrounding area from where he sketches the architectural development. The designation The Desert of Pharan refers to the name used in the Old Testament for the area surrounding Mecca. The artist portrays the changes in the city, which, in addition to the approximately one million inhabitants, welcomes several millions of pilgrims every year. Urban development is hereby the primary focus: For whom are the hotels and magnificent buildings right next to the Masjid al-Haram actually intended? How will the holy district transform when the construction site around it becomes significantly bigger? And what will happen to the role of Mecca as a spiritual centre?

© Photo: Abd. Halim Hadi / Shutterstock.com

IMAGE 2

This is an image taken from a photo database. It is also used as commercial photography by travel agencies.

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Info sheet
How does photography work?
Part 1
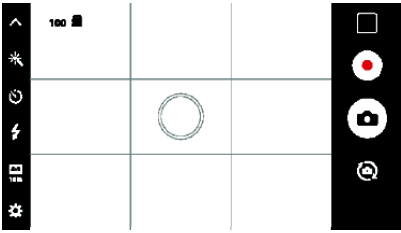
© Photo: Hi-Vector / Shutterstock.com

BEAR IN MIND THAT

- Attitudes and emotions are expressed through creative elements
- A good photograph establishes a communication between the photographer and the viewer
- What is significant about a photograph - what is insignificant?
- What does the photographer want to express and achieve by taking this photo?

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BILD FEHLT

GEOMETRY

Image composition using the two-thirds rule (for this purpose, a line grid can be set on the camera)

Lines and dots in a motif are particularly suitable for guiding the viewers gaze and modifying the impact of the image

- Horizontal lines: smooth, rigid, horizon line, near and far
- Vertical lines: divide the image, stop the glance
- Diagonal oblique lines: dynamic, movement within the image

Generate suspense by

- Large-Small-Contrast
- Image-dominating dots
- View guidance by using lines

© Photo: ollirg / Shutterstock.com

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Info sheet
How does photography work?
Part 2

© All photographs: Shutterstock.com © left photos: exopixel
© right photo: Targa56l

PERSPECTIVE

Aerial perspective: photographed from above, looking down at the motif, photographer in position of power, distance to the motif, better overview

Normal perspective: at eye level, photographer and motif on a par

Frog perspective: photographed from below, motif looks larger, more sublime and threatening, viewer in subordinate position

© Photo: patronestaff / Shutterstock.com

LIGHT

- Separates significant from insignificant, emphasises the motif
- Bright dots in a dark image gain significance
- The motif appears different depending on where the light comes from

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COLOUR

Concentration on a few colours = serenity in the image
Colours can have signal colour effects
Contrasts can be highlighted by means of colours

Colours can invoke moods and emotions

- Hot-Cold-Contrast
- Warm colours: for example, red, orange, yellow, pink, purple
- Cold colours: for example, blue, green, turquoise

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Info sheet
How does photography work?
Part 3

SHARPNESS

- Not everything in a photo has to be sharp!
- A photo can become confusing if everything is sharp
- The point of sharpness determines the focal point of the photo
- The foreground and background of a photo can be separated by using different levels of sharpness
- In order not to distract from the key focus, a blurred background is selected for portraits

© All photographs: Shutterstock.com
© Top photo: Boumen Japet
© Centre photo: Photonell_DD2017
© Bottom photo: Tracy Burroughs Brown

PHOTO SECTION

What information should the photo contain; which information should be omitted?

In principle: rather leave out something, which could distract from the motif and rather zoom in! (Macro and zoom function)

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BILD FEHLT

© Photo: G. Avenarius

MOVEMENT

Long exposure time: moving objects appear to be out of focus, the longer the exposure, the greater the blur

Long exposure time + follow the motif: moving objects are sharp, the background appears blurry

Short exposure time: the right point in time

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Source: Mozgiel, Darius: Methodenheft. Methodische Handreichung für medienpädagogische und jugendkulturelle Projekte gegen Islamismus und religiösen Extremismus e.V. (Technique booklet. Methodical assistance for media educational and youth cultural projects against Islamism and religious extremism e.V.), Reutlingen, Germany 2012

© Photo: G. Avenarius

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Action sheet B
Can you determine the effect of your picture yourself?
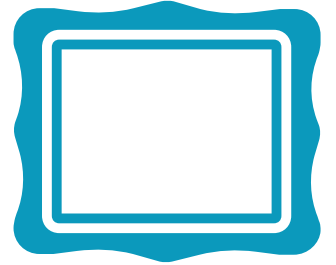
You can now personally implement the aforementioned image composition techniques!

The objects or furniture in the room can simply be taken as motifs - or you can take portrait shots of each other.

Use the Info sheet: How does photography work, which illustrates the key elements of the photo composition, as guidance!

OUR DECISION

WHAT?

THE MOTIF YOU CHOOSE TO PHOTOGRAPH

_____

_____

THE MESSAGE YOU WISH TO CONVEY

_____

_____

_____

HOW?

IT IS UP TO YOU, WHETHER YOU INITIALLY SELECT A MOTIF AND THEN PHOTOGRAPH IT IN A SPECIAL WAY - OR WHETHER YOU WISH TO EXPRESS AN EMOTION AND CHOOSE A MOTIF FOR THIS PURPOSE!

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Action sheet C
Off to a photo safari

Now we are off to a photo safari! This is a voyage of discovery through your surroundings where you can find your own motifs.

THE FOLLOWING RULES SHALL BE AGREED BY ALL SMALL TEAMS:

Everyone shoots at least _____ motifs. At least _____ different perspectives shall be used. At least _____ motifs shall be in black and white. At least _____

THESE MOTIFS ARE SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR SAFARI. DISCUSS THE AFOREMENTIONED MOTIFS IN YOUR SMALL TEAM, CONSIDER WHICH PLACES ARE APPROPRIATE AND HOW YOU WISH TO COMPOSE YOUR SHOTS.

- *A religious place*
- *A place of yearning*
- *A status symbol*
- *A place of exclusion*
- *A place of welcoming*
- *A place where you like to be*
- *A place where you are reluctant to be*
- *A beautiful place*
- *An ugly place*
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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