



Open
College
of the Arts

Formative feedback

Student name	Peter Walker	Student number	514508
Course/Unit	Expressing your vision	Assignment number	4
Type of tutorial	Written		

Overall Comments

Thanks for sending in your assignment. Looking back on your earlier assignments you can see that you are definitely progressing - deepening your photography. You are concentrating more on exploring your area of interest as opposed to snapping a variety of images based on practising techniques.

In early assignments you had quite a scatter gun approach to your subject matter with the main little focus on one theme. With the second assignment you improved by looking at a particular sort of topic using a particular approach - low camera position and wide angle view - you were still mainly focusing on practising this technique as opposed to showing your view about something that you felt strongly about. Now with this assignment you are concentrating on pursuing your own subject-based interest - colours in the streets at night. Great!

But don't lose sight of the need to pay attention to the basics of exposure and composition - in this assignment you have images that I feel while concentrating on the highlights for the colour you have neglected the shadow detail and the best composition/framing to compliment your interest in colour.

Assessment potential

I understand your aim is to go for the Photography Degree and that you plan to submit your work for assessment at the end of this course. From the work you have shown in this assignment, providing you commit yourself to the course, I believe you have the potential to pass at assessment. In order to meet all the assessment criteria, there are certain areas you will need to focus on, which I will outline in my feedback.

Feedback on assignment

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

Technical and Visual

Your images are interesting and it's good to see you focusing an interest on the quality and nature of light at dusk/evening. But You have neglected shadow detail - It's a balance and you need to have the shadows play a part in the composition. Your images tend to have minimal detail mostly clogged up shadows going predominantly to black.

For example look at image 6 - the figures are barely discernible and yet, by your own mention in the notes, you feel they play an important if secondary part. With such a wide brightness range it's difficult to get 'the right exposure setting' and you may want to think about HDR techniques to better capture the extremes - multiple exposures that concentrate on highlights and shadows in turn these can then be combined in photoshop to better render both highlights and shadow in post production. I'll include an edited version that lifts the shadows to show you what I mean.

Take care over details. I like image 5 very much it's all about geometric shapes and lines as well as colour - But look at the verticals. You may want to straighten them as the image is so much about horizontal and vertical lines and shapes. I'm not saying that you must straighten them to improve the image just consider it, be aware of the issue and make your own decision. It's this attention to detail that will pay dividends.

Similarly with composition and framing - the left hand third of the image - is this important? It's mostly lost in shapeless shadow. I suggest that you could have changed orientation from landscape to portrait, shifted slightly right and included more of the tower on the right with its coloured lights showing through the windows. It's about training your eyes to recognise and decide what is important to include or exclude to illustrate your theme. When you come across a scene consider alternatives, take several images that concentrate on different aspects of composition and or exposure.

Quality of outcome

You have a good set of images that focus on the theme of colour in an interesting way using street lights at night. There are some almost duplicates that I question whether both are necessary - Image 1 and 3. Sometimes you still get distracted - in image 4 the old man looking at the ipad. The old contrasted with the new is fine but first it's getting away from the focus on colour (yes there is the blue light but there are distractions in the frame - the figure on the left) Also the ipad is barely seen and the man is in deep blocked up shadow. If you were wanting to concentrate on this then a shift to portrait orientation and focus on the man may have been a better option. You could use di Corcia's technique of setting up the scene - pose, lighting - the man's face etc - as he did in hustlers and then taking the image. Now I realise that this in this instance may well have been impractical but it's what needs to be considered.

Creativity

As indicated you are concentrating on developing your own voice which is good to see. Keep this up and take time to consider alternatives. You have done well in deciding where to set the colour balance in postproduction. Remember that using the eye dropper will affect the whole of the frame. You could also consider using the adjustment brush with colour settings to brush in colour balance and saturation to different parts of the image. For example in Image 3 the tarmac road in the foreground could be 'cooled down'. There are other alternatives and it's up to you to experiment and decide what best illustrates your interest in colour in this set.

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

You need to be thinking and using the course work to think more expansively about topics to help you improve your creativity - use the suggestions in the course work more - researching and noting down thoughts. For example in exercise 4.5 you have done OK with your treatment of the orange. But did you research into Bill Brant's work - his influence from surrealism? What about Haas? you show no sign of being influenced by this.

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

As I have mentioned above and in comments on earlier assignments this is a weak point for you. You do need to demonstrate much more reflection both on your own work and on your research into other photographers.

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

Yes you reflect on the work but it is still quite superficial and concerned with technical detail which to some extent is un-necessary. Rather than reflecting on each image you would do well to expand your thinking and reference to the general theme of colour and light and how you have approached it, what you aimed to achieve and an analysis of the results.

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

I've mentioned diCorcia - go back and look at his approach to Hustlers in terms of setting up the scene before actually taking the shot - how could you incorporate this?

Pointers for the next assignment / assessment

- Take the opportunity to build on the suggestions in the exercises - use them research into the photographers mentioned
- Think less literally about the topic
- Use this next assignment to really push your imagination - leave the technical in the background

Tutor name	Simon Barber
Date	24 January 2016
Next assignment due	11 March 2016