

# 11. Basics of Photography

## Synopsis

This module provides an overview of the basics of photography..

## Lectures

- 11.1 Cameras
- 11.2 Aperture
- 11.3 Shutter Speed
- 11.4 Light
- 11.5 Composition
- 11.6 Creative Exercises

## 11.5 Composition

### Composition

Another key understanding in being able to create good photographs is composition. Composition refers to the arrangement of elements that make up the picture. A visual image, before it becomes some identifiable object or face or figure, is just a set of patches of colour or patches of black and white and grays. It is the arrangement of these patches and the harmonious relationship between them that creates an interesting composition. The angle at which you place the camera, what you choose to include and what you choose to exclude from the frame, decide the composition.

Very often it is possible to exclude a distracting element in the frame, simply by changing the point of view slightly. It is therefore not unusual to find a photographer peering through the lens from several different angles, twisting into funny angles, in the act of taking a picture. Bending down can change the height of the camera. For instance while photographing children, it is very effective to sit down so that the picture is composed from the eye level of a child.

Using the foreground, recognizing tones and shapes, lighting for shape and form, effective use of shadows, textures, choosing an unusual angle are some of the techniques used by photographers to create an effective composition.



Fig. 11.5.01a



Fig. 11.5.01b



Fig. 11.5.01c

Three different compositions of flowers floating on water,

#### Assignment 5

#### **Exploring Composition**

Composition holds the key to a good photograph and yet there are no strict rules that govern good composition. Aiming for simplicity and avoiding clutter helps avoiding confusion about what you wanted to photograph – and very often it is these additional elements that are NOT the subject, that play an equally important role in

composition. Good composition therefore requires you to be sensitive to the 'negative' spaces in the image. Achieving a balance in the manner in which the pictorial space is created by the masses of blacks, grays and whites helps in a pleasing composition. Understanding how lines and shapes play a vital role in energizing the visual space is necessary for creating compositions that are interesting. Horizontals tend to make an image passive or 'restful'; while diagonals impart certain dynamism to the image. Using objects in the foreground as framing devices can break the 'rectangularity' of the image.

Create several images to explore composition. Choose three of your best pictures and upload the to a photo site that enables you to get a feedback.