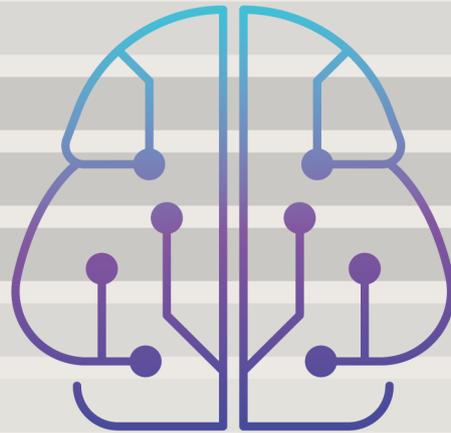


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CHAPTER 8

THE INFLUENCE OF EDWARD WESTON IN STILL LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

Norhaslinda Binti Shafie

8.0 Abstract

Presently, our environments fill with thousands of images. Images are dominant to human communication and can view from a variety of forms and styles. Thus, this writing is to produce an overview of the influence of still life elements by Edward Weston helped revolutionize photography so that it became a key component of modern art. This review conducted using qualitative research where the documenting process is involved in visual research analysis. The structure observations were made to identify the general style used by Edward Weston in producing the artwork. This survey concluded that her artwork related to the photo used by a realistic photograph with organic shapes and modern wonders prompted the audience to reconsider objects that looked familiar and form new relationships with them.

Keywords: Still Life, Photography, Edward Weston.

8.1 Introduction

The present, the development of trendiness has raised photography. Photography is a universal language. It exists in a variety the form and styles. It contains meaning, feeling, and emotion and brings out the message to convey. Therefore, photography is an inspiration for our daily life. According to Mustafa Halabi (2015), photography includes many aspects such as community, science, manufacturing, economics, and the arts. The capability of photography could is everywhere, applicable to everyone, and difficult to forget.

The term still life can be defined as an inanimate object. According to Kevin Best (2012), still life photography describes any object to be examined using the camera to get the shape, color, appearance, and texture. Picture of still life can be designed or taken in the studio than outside the studio. Most photographers are not interested in producing still life photo. This is because they think that inanimate objects will be boring. However, without realizing it, the elements are still life as a major contributor in the field of photography. Still life photography requires photographers to take pictures rather than just taking pictures only. According to Li Juan (2019), still life photography requires the photographer to process objects in attractive shapes to make an effect on the subject. Thus, there is a privilege in still life pictures because the photographer who controls the situation during the filming session is done. Also, the photographer needs to understand the object. This is because some objects require certain concepts such as abstract concepts. Sometimes props or by-products play an important role because they can give an effect on still life photographs to look more attractive. The strength of a still life image lies in the composition such as size, shape, color, lighting, appearance, and texture of the object. Besides, the photographer must have felt about the object so that the photograph produced can attract the audience. The purpose and technique of a photographer can also influence the still life elements.

8.2 Artist Influence

When looking at artists whose photographic technique I admire, Edward Weston artworks and according to Nancy Newhall (2015), Edward Weston is a master of still life photography. He explored the photographic techniques of still life photography. He used his large-format 8x10 inch view camera to capture manipulation of light to highlight shape, texture and, a form that helped bring photography out of the shadow of painting and stand on its own as a credible art form. He produced famous and iconic images of Pepper No. 30. It is these images that have captured my attention. His artworks influence me to explore Weston's photographic technique and style in my photograph.

My work links to Edward Weston because I have been drive by the desire to make perfect photography expressing the natural world's power to create mysteriously beautiful forms. I have explored a similar idea with Edward Weston. I try to manipulation light to highlight the shape, texture, and form of the object. The 'pepper' has been select as Edward Weston artwork titled Pepper No. 30. I think Edward Weston worked from a simple piece and try to photograph in a deep understanding and focus on the quality of an object.

8.3 Methodology

The Important part of this study is to identify the technique implement by Edward Weston. He used a large-format camera. So, he deals with a narrow depth of field and allows shooting close to his subject. The photographic technique used for Pepper No.30 (Figure 1) was custom f/240 aperture and, it took 4-6 hours to exposure. Then, place the pepper in a tin funnel combined with the sun movement over that length of time. He creates the light across the pepper, Angus Lee (2021). The structure observation and analysis for still life photography by Edward Weston conducted by manipulation of light to highlight shape, texture, and form helped bring photography out of the shadow of painting and stand on its own as a credible art form, shown in (Figure 1).

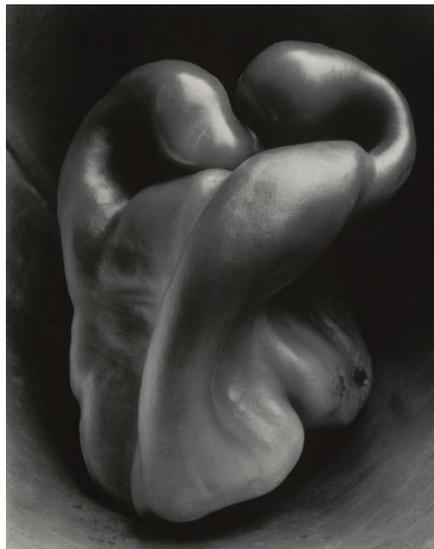


Figure 23: Edward Weston, Pepper No.30, 1930

8.4 Studio Research And Analysis

Still life photography is a genre of photography used for the depiction of the inanimate subject matter. This genre gives the photographer more freedom in the arrangement of design elements within a composition compared to other photographs genres. Thus, it allows photographers who have creative minds to produce simple subject matter. The imagination of a photographer is needed to digest an idea besides the use of studio lighting equipment about still life photography and shaping it into a work of creative and aesthetic.

Light is the main ingredient in the photograph. Therefore, my image for this writing was to use artificial lights at f/16 to f/22 using 30-second exposure and, a tripod was essential as I need to ensure the camera was steady. Similarly, I choose white carrots as a subject similar to Edward Weston. The images were capture using a Nikon D70s camera. To get the final photograph as Edward Weston has done, I need a bit of post-production. The processed through Adobe Photoshop using Alien Skin Exposure 2 to copy the look of the Agfa film used by Edward Weston.

8.5 Artist Statement

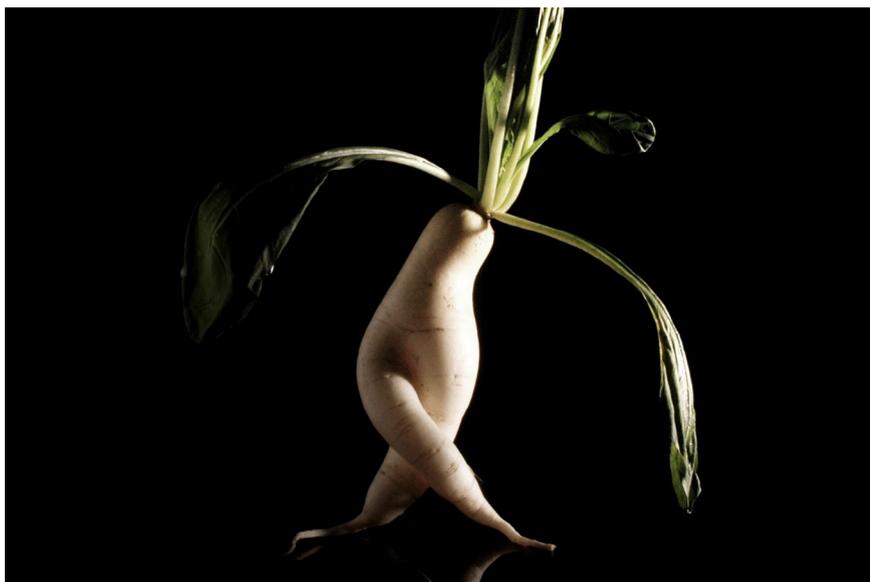


Figure 23: Norhaslinda Shafie, Bellerina, 2019

Edward Henry Weston has been called ‘one of the most innovative and influential American photographers’ and ‘one of the masters of 20th-century photography. As an artist who uses photography media, I am of the view that photography is a medium that can make an impact on visual communication. It can be a tool in facing certain feelings through the image produced by recording what I have seen. The focus of this artwork is the qualities of an object. Unlike other forms of photography, still life offers a subject that can be controlled, particularly in the studio. Lighting, camera, lenses, and focus are chosen to help me find the beauty of an object.

My experimentation with photography is a ballerina. In this artwork, the object that I experiment with is a white carrot. The shape from the use of white carrot is a metaphor associated with the title 'Ballerina'. In this work, it requires appreciation and imagination of the eye to interpret the vision of the ballerina. In the translation of this work, I use the elements of art such as shape, form, and the use of dramatic light values to give a visual impact on artwork. The production of shape from the object portrays the characteristics of femininity as a complement to the storytelling of this ballerina's work.

8.6 Conclusion

Based on the observation made, it can be concluded that to give an object a beautiful visual, a still life photographer requires strong ideas and attention to details. Still life photography can amplify the qualities of a particular object in surprising ways and extraordinary view. It is agreed that direct or simple objects can attract the attention of viewers and appreciate the aesthetic value. Because of that, the photographer must have a deeper understanding and new relationships with the things that surround us to unlock an emotion to an object.

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