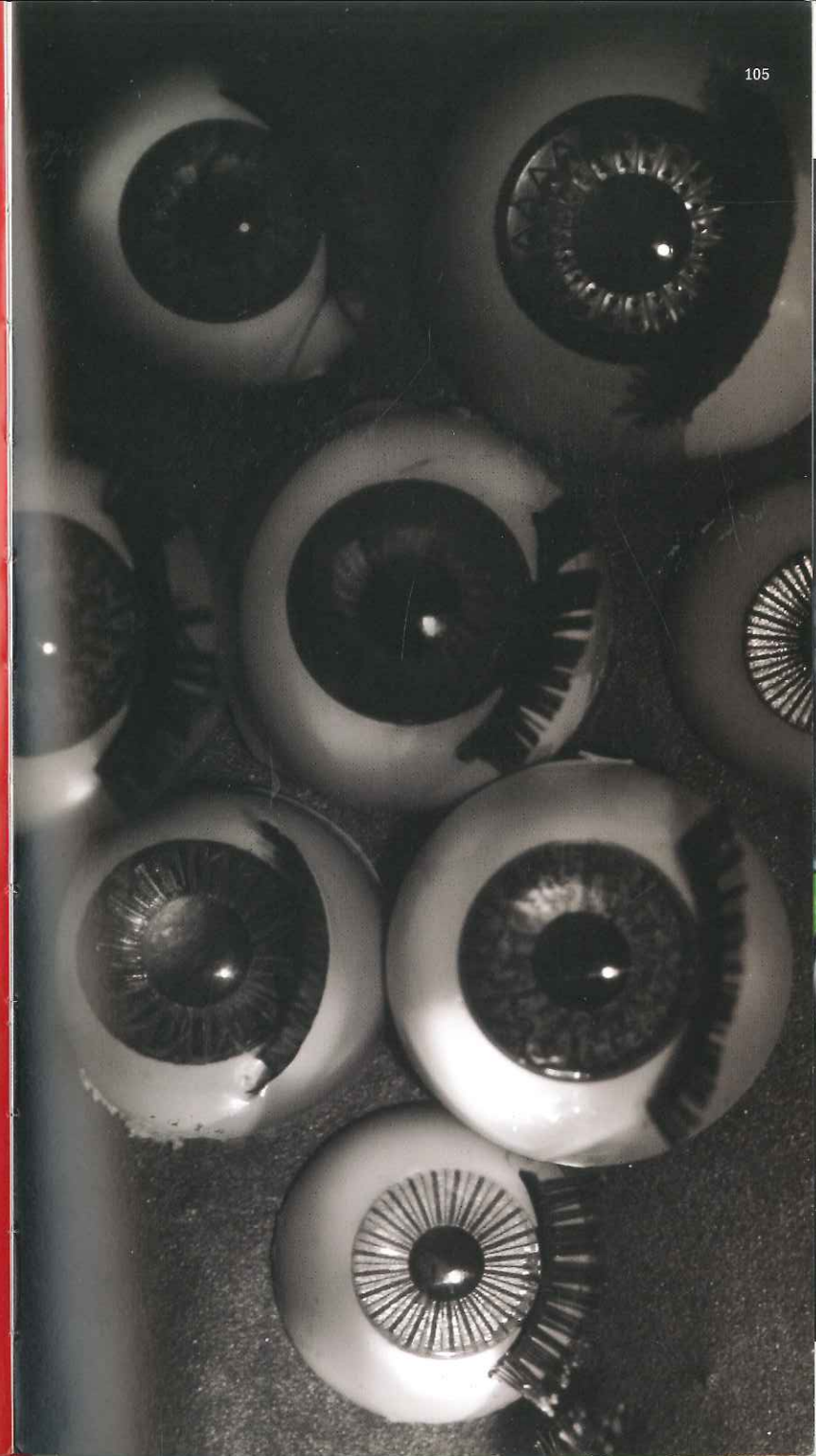


## ATTRACTING ATTENTION

People are drawn to images that contain content that they find informative or intriguing on a personal level. There are also certain categories of visual themes that can be applied to images (regardless of the subject matter involved)—themes that can augment or override the “default preferences” of a broad spectrum of viewers by invoking aesthetic, emotional or curiosity-based connections. This chapter focuses on four such categories of attention-getters: color; repetition; visual texture; and the perception of depth. Keep your eyes and mind open to other eye-grabbing visual themes as well: Ask yourself, *What is it about certain images that invariably catch MY attention? What styles of presentation are impossible for ME to ignore?* Take note of these preferences and seek image opportunities that emphasize them—in doing so, you are likely to capture photographs that connect with others who have tastes and interests in common with yours.



Color informs, influences, attracts and compels through countless visual and emotional channels. It is a basic human instinct to take notice of (and often-times, *react to*) colors.

Color can soothe, irritate, calm and invigorate. Color can infuse an image with passion, tranquility, hyper-realism or a sense of the surreal.

Look for—or create—scenes where the main subject is surrounded by colors that enforce its thematic energy, whether joyous, contemplative, active or sedate.

Bright morning light brings out the intense hues in both the sky and the facade of this colorful turn-of-the-last-century building.

If you know a bit of color theory, then you may recognize that the palette in this image is built around two pairs of complementary hues: blue + orange, and red + green—harmonious pairings that are easy on the eyes.

*The hues in this photo were quite vibrant, directly from the camera. Still, I made minor enhancements using Photoshop's LEVELS and HUE AND SATURATION controls to put a bit more color-kick in the final image. SEE PAGES 332 AND 336 FOR MORE ABOUT THESE IMAGE-ENHANCING CONTROLS.*



Color: *Seek it out, soak it in, and capture it in its most flattering light.*

If you are unsure about concepts surrounding the effects and uses of color, learn about them in the same way you would any art-related subject: study and observe. *Read about color, ask photographers and artists for advice and take note of how color appears in real life and how it is used in all kinds of visual expression.*



Early morning and late evening sunlight intensifies color significantly. *The hues in the bark of these colorful madrona trees were at full volume when I came upon them during an early-morning walk.*

SEE **TIME OF DAY**,  
PAGE 172.

Color for color's sake—great color-capturing photo-opportunities can often be found right under your nose—don't miss them! SEE **EVERYDAY OBJECTS AND EVERYDAY SCENES**, PAGES 198-201.

Photoshop's **LEVELS** and **HUE AND SATURATION** controls were used to give this shot a complete color makeover. *The final image was blurred slightly to further enhance the surreal quality of its vibrant presentation.*



It's the digital era: Take advantage!

This photo was imported into Photoshop where all of its colors were desaturated (converted to grays using HUE AND SATURATION controls), except for the green of the speeding car. The effect is eye-catching and gives the car clear visual dominance within the image. SEE PAGE 338 FOR A STEP-BY-STEP DEMONSTRATION OF HOW THIS IMAGE WAS CREATED.

*This was a lucky shot (and a good example of old-fashioned opportunism meeting new-fangled technology to achieve an eye-catching result). I was taking pictures of the Victorian-era building in the background when this beautiful 1970s 'Cuda pulled up at the light across the street. When the car drove past I followed it with my camera and snapped this portrait. The resulting image looked good except that the building in the background happened to be an intense blue that fought for attention with the green of the car. Not wanting to waste an otherwise successful shot, I imported the image into Photoshop and began exploring alternatives...*



Use your computer to explore both color and monochromatic enhancements for your photos. If you use Photoshop, it's usually best to keep your camera in full-color mode while shooting. That way, you can take advantage of Photoshop's many options when it comes time to convert your images to black and white. Furthermore, this software offers a number of ways of adding subtle tints to images once their overall color has been removed. (The image on the opposite page was removed, converted to grayscale and then given a warm tint using Photoshop.) SEE GRAYSCALE ALTERNATIVES, PAGE 340; AND TINTING, PAGE 342.



Here, translucent kelp fronds combine with pebbles underneath to create an intriguing visual texture. I felt that a monochromatic presentation was best for this shot since the colors in the original (left) seemed to draw attention away from the image's textural strengths. SEE VISUAL TEXTURE, PAGE 118.



Verbally, people sometimes repeat themselves to attract attention, emphasize a point, or to irritate others. Visual repetition can be used to achieve these very same results.

Most people take a second look when they come across instances where objects are repeated in an intriguing or unlikely manner. Such occurrences appeal to our curious nature by begging questions like: *What's going on here?* and *Who did this?* and, simply, *Why?*

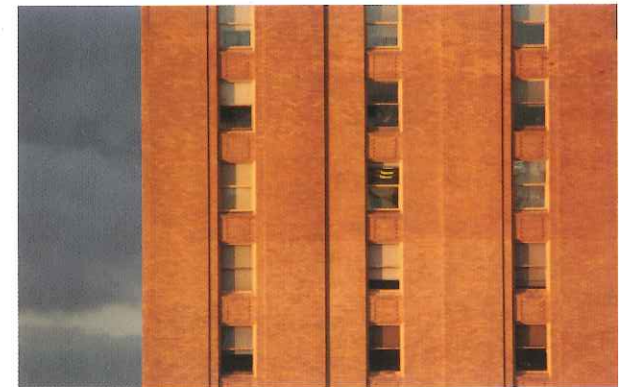
Thematically speaking, repetition can be incorporated into images to convey qualities of conformity, accord and harmony.

An image of a single doll's eye would not have the same mildly disturbing effect as an entire gathering of them. Surprising instances of repetition attract notice and arouse curiosity.

Instant visual harmony is a happy by-product of repeated objects. All that was needed to capture this agreeable composition was a camera and an effective vantage point.

Repetition can be disorderly, as in this example, or orderly, as in the following.

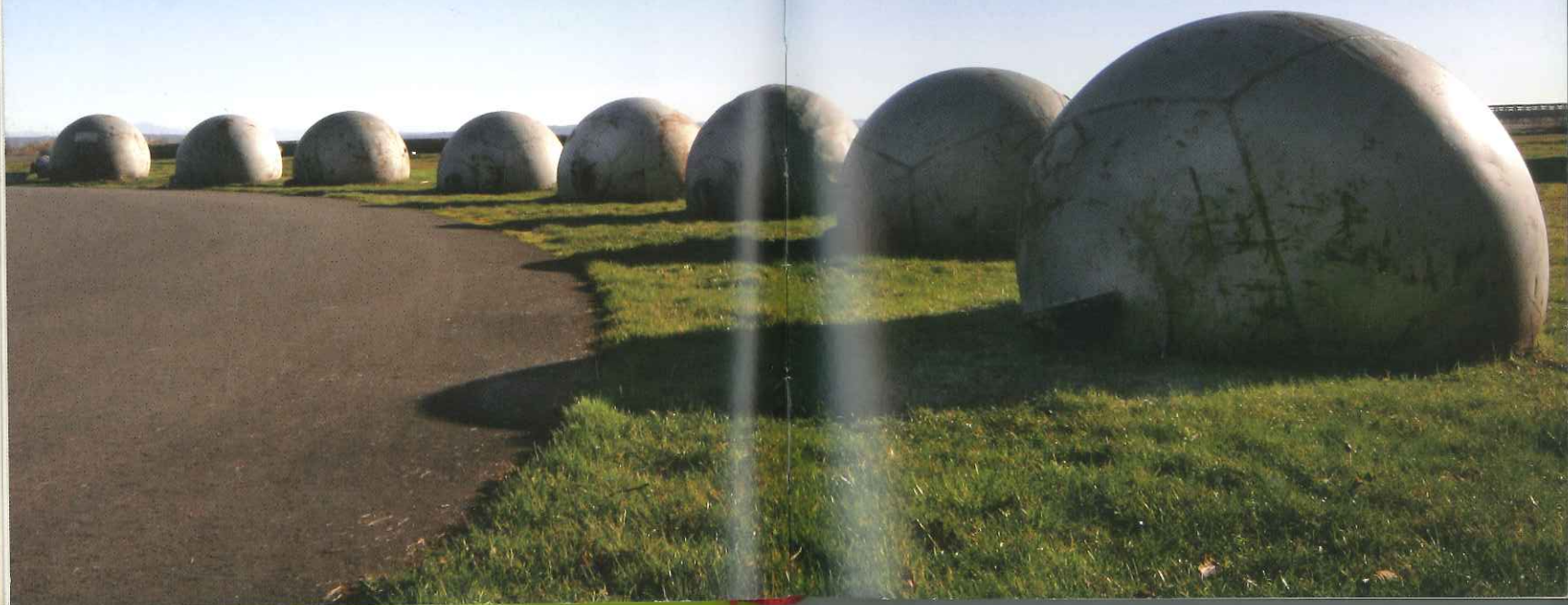
A slice of (urban) life. The duplicated windows in this tight cropping of a downtown apartment infuse this image with a look of static conformity.



An orderly arrangement of unusual objects = an intriguing image.

Large metal buoys from an earlier era are now used as parking barricades at a seaside park in northwest Washington. Mysterious, half buried and systematically arranged, they have an almost Stonehenge-like presence.

*The sun never rose more than a few degrees above the horizon on this cold January day (note the frost in the shadow of the foremost buoy). It was worth enduring numb fingers and frigid ears in exchange for many hours of sunset-like conditions that provided deep blue sky overhead and dramatic shadows all around. It was an extremely productive day of shooting—in addition to this spread, the following pages each contain at least one image taken on this day: 75, 83, 84, 101, 107, 111, 177, 247, 281, 309 and 325. When the conditions are in your favor, don't stop taking pictures unless you really, really have to!*



Visual texture can be made up of anything that densely fills all or part of an image. Visual texture usually has no center of attention.

Keep your eyes open to these three kinds of visual texture:

*Harmoniously organized*—a close-up shot of a canvas bag's weave, for example.

*Harmoniously disorganized*—such as the blades of grass in a lawn.

*Purely chaotic*—a rubbish heap, a pile of laundry, certain people's closets...

Visual texture can be featured as a stand-alone image. It can also be used as a backdrop for other elements.

*You are probably already adept at keeping your eyes open for photogenic people, places and things. Are you also keeping an eye out for visual textures, instances of repetition and striking combinations of color?*

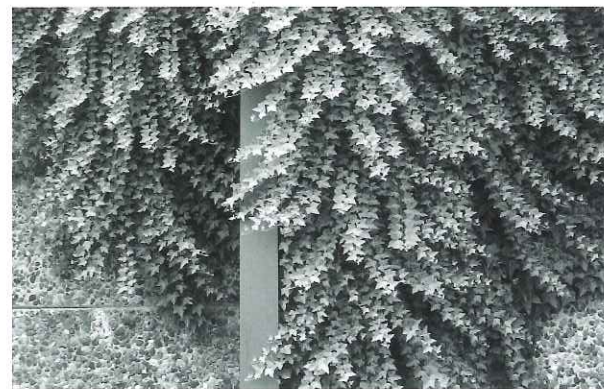
The fissured surface of a burnt log: endlessly varied and entirely harmonious. SEE **CLOSE-UP**, PAGE 26.

Repetition so dense it becomes visual texture. SEE **REPETITION**, PAGE 114.

*This colorful and ever-evolving mass of discarded bicycle frames sits outside a secondhand bike store near my home.*

*It is an endless source of intriguing photo opportunities.*

Here, the plain surface of an intervening beam contrasts nicely with the intense visual texture of the ivy and stonework that surround it. Contrast between plain and textured areas of a scene can emphasize the presence of both.





First, a bit of art history: Around 1300 A.D., Giotto di Bondone re-introduced the concept of depth-perception to the mainstream world of art (it seems that the ancient Greeks and Romans had a handle on portraying depth in two dimensions, but somehow their techniques were lost for a few centuries before being revived by Giotto). Conveyances of distance and depth have been employed by artists of two-dimensional media ever since to attract notice to an image, draw a viewer's attention into a composition and add notes of realism.

*Take advantage of the intriguing visual and thematic effects that a three-dimensional feel can lend to an image. Consider points of view that amplify the perception of depth whenever you sense that such a presentation could enhance an image's impact.*

A rope in the foreground ascends toward the ship's bow (and carries the viewer's eye into image with it). ▶ ◻

Just as in real life, things in an image that appear to be headed toward the viewer are hard to ignore. ◻ ▶

A striking impression of depth is captured by aiming the camera from just above the surface of a game board. The low vantage point also brings dramatic contrasts of near vs. far and big vs. small to the static subject matter. ▶

The pathway leading into the distance seems to invite the viewer to come along... ▶ ◻

A set of lines (etched into the concrete platform of a train station platform) carries strong connotations of travel and movement. ◻ ▶



During a beach-side walk, I came across this lone sandal sitting on a large rock. To me, it looked forlorn under the low-hanging clouds; I didn't know whether to feel more sorry for the young person who lost it or for the sandal itself. In any case, I wanted to take a picture of the scene that featured the sandal prominently while hinting at its uncertain future. Eventually, I settled on this low vantage point since it gives the sandal clear visual dominance within the composition; it also grants a large portion of the image's remaining territory to the ominous clouds overhead and adds conveyances of the future through the diminishing perspective of the overall shot.





Your digital camera builds its images from individual squares of color called pixels.



### Pixels and print.

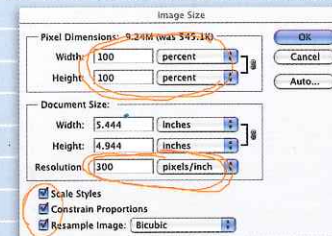
The number of pixels your particular camera packs into an image is revealed by its megapixel rating. The higher the rating, the more detail your pictures will have and the larger you will be able to print them at high quality. Use this table to give you a general idea of how large you can print your full-frame images given the megapixel rating of your camera.

Mega pixels	High-quality print size (300 ppi)
2.0	4" x 5"
3.2 & 4.0	5" x 7"
5.0	6" x 9"
6.3 & 8.0	8" x 10"
11.1	9" x 14"

The math used to figure out the precise print size for a given megapixel size can be intimidating. If you feel like taking it on, you'll find this info posted within several photo-related Internet sites. A web search for "pixels and print size" will yield a number of results.

On the other hand, you can skip the math and let Photoshop do your image size vs. print size calculations by following this procedure:

- Open the image in Photoshop at its default resolution. Select IMAGE SIZE from the menu.
- Input the numbers circled below. Note that the HEIGHT and WIDTH numbers for your image will depend on the size of your original.



- Click OK. The image will now be at its maximum high quality print size (300 dpi).

### Pixels and electronic display.

Onscreen, images can be electronically displayed at high quality at a mere 72 dpi. If you are e-mailing an image to a person who has a dial-up connection, it's best to keep the dimensions of your 72 dpi image below 640 x 480 pixels to avoid excessive download times. If your recipient has a high-speed connection (DSL, cable, etc.), you may be able to send full-size images at 72 dpi and higher, though some Internet service providers (ISPs) place limits on the size of files that they will allow.