Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

What Caught My Eye, How and Why

Maurice Amiel · Thursday, April 11th, 2019

"Seeing is the important thing".

—Callahan as quoted in Sarah Greenough, "Harry Callahan – photographs"

"It (photography) is the complex, continuous and spontaneous interaction of observation, comprehension, imagination and intention."

—Stephen Shore in his "The nature of photography. A primer".

What Caught My Eye …

My photography is about making an image of a part of the world that caught my eye at a given moment; it involves the above-mentioned interactions, all together summed up in the **act** of seeing "photographically": framing, setting depth of field and focus, choosing light and color tone, etc.

… How?

Someone described photography as the *ordering on a plane surface of shadow patterns revealing shapes, textures and reflected colors.*

That is **how** the existing world becomes visible to the human eye, and how these patterns merge in the eye of the photographer and on the film or digital sensor.

For example, the feature image of my very first camera standing on the edge of a ray of sun light, the reflection of which lights up the camera front and gives its various parts their distinctive and thereby recognizable shape, as revealed by shadow patterns … *While the background is left completely black as symbol of the lightproof "black box" container of the film.*

… Why?

Well, because I "wanted" the image of the "thing" camera to "represent" the "act" of photographing,

The following is another example of these physical and mental processes.

Screened urban landscape under setting sun

The image below is of the large window of an art gallery that has been screen-curtained in order for the sunlight not to interfere with interior lighting of the exhibited works.

In doing so the screen-curtain produces an image of the exterior world connecting one to it, as it separates us from it … all the while, and paradoxically so, adding a very large naturally produced image to the exhibition.

Imagine the window as a camera lens opening, the screen-curtain as a lens filter, the gallery as a black-box and the photographer inside it as agent who then uses a camera to record the seen image.

I could not resist recording that paradox as illustration of the physical and mental processes of photography.

screened image of urban landscape

End note

I will endeavor to submit further posts on the matter as I cull my large collection of images for other pertinent examples of the **how** and **why** of **what** has **caught my eye!**

I am indebted to Harry Callahan and to Stephen Shore, both precious photographic references and articulate photographic thinkers.

Greenough, Sarah: "HARRY CALLAHAN", National Gallery of Arts, Washington, D.C. , 1996 – 2001

Shore, Stephen" "Leçon de photographie", Phaidon, 2007

Credit all photographs to Maurice Amiel

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