

## **Memories, Moons, and Imagination**

Zoom presentation by Eddie Soloway

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Notes by Jim Strutz

Two overarching themes of Eddie's photographic philosophy is 1) magic of the moment (not unlike the Decisive Moment idea by Henri Cartier-Bresson), and 2) essence of the place. To that end, he discussed the elements of each in ideas of Memories, Moons, and Imagination.

Eddie presented in two parts separated by a short break: the first part generally addressed the theme Memories, Moons and Imagination, and the second part discussed some technical elements of his process for creating images.

Memories are triggered by sensory experiences, which contribute to our essence perceptions of what surrounds us, or a scene that is presented before us. How do sounds, smells, shapes, colors, etc. make us feel about a place? What thoughts are brought to mind?

"Moons" is a metaphor for the duration of our life experiences, as in we might live for 1000 moon cycles if we're lucky (in to our 80s).

Seeing new things is not limited to new places. Children see new things all the time because the duration of their life experiences - number of moon cycles - is relatively short. We adults can see new things all around us if we open ourselves to it.

Rachel Carson described imagination as a sense of wonder that lasts for a lifetime.

Extending imagination to experimentation gives rise to the idea "I wonder what happens if I try...". How do children see the world?

Commentary: My take on this part of his presentation is for us to look at things around us through the lens of a child, full of curiosity and imagination and unobstructed by our adult life's influences. Memories can manifest from our sensory perceptions.

Break

Eddie discussed, with examples, celebrating light, focus, and movement.

### **Celebrate Light**

There are many kinds of light: harsh, overcast, soft, bounced, reflected, backlight, sidelight, fog, rain and snow light, storm light, sweet afternoon light, twilight. Side light shows texture and details. Overcast light allows for slower shutter speeds. Fog covers up details and gives a vibe of contemplation or solitude. Backlighting can introduce introduce lens flare even if you use a lens hood. Lens flare may be further reduced by shielding the light from the front of the lens with a hand or an opaque object. Moon light can be almost as bright as sunlight. Light itself can be a source of movement.

There is no bad light contrary to common belief. You can always find ways to photograph in any kind of light. For example, in harsh light one can photograph through waves or water (from the shady side of the water), through translucent things, or in shadows.

Eddie showed lots of photographic examples of light experiments (mostly natural light but some artificial light as well), particularly with bounced or reflected light and colors in water or in bokeh.

Be a student of light. Take examples from how the great artists of the Renaissance used light in their paintings, particularly how dark transitions to light. Think Rembrandt.

Eddie doesn't chase light, rather, he is pulled to opportunities of light.

### **Celebrate Focus**

There are three degrees of focus: object or portion of frame 1) in focus, 2) out of focus but recognizable, and 3) out of focus but unrecognizable.

There are three decisions of focus: 1) everything in focus, 2) one thing in focus, and 3) everything out of focus.

Together, the decision on what, and the degree to which, to focus influences how we can draw attention toward and away from parts of the frame.

Learn how to see from the perspective of a lens (focal distance, aperture, focus).

Photographic convention is always to have one element of the image in focus, but Eddie tell us it's okay to bend the rules.

### **Celebrate Movement**

Multiple exposures can give a sense of movement.

Shutter speed is paramount to capturing movement in photographs: fast shutter speeds stop movement, slow shutter speeds show movement.

Intentional Camera Movement (ICM) can be used to show movement.

There are three reasons to show movement: 1) life moves, 2) show essence with less information, and 3) borrow light/color/reflection. My comments. Many things in our world move so it makes sense to capture that movement in photographs. Showing essence with less information and borrowing light or color or reflections from nearby objects applies to both focus and movement as abstractions in imagery that can be used for artistic effect. Eddie seems to do this quite a lot.

It's helpful to previsualize movement and gesture in subjects and how that might be captured by photography.

Eddie gave various **bits of advice**, or tips, throughout his lecture. Most were in context of what he was talking about at the time but others seemed more general. Here are the more general ones.

Experiment and practice always. "Practice, practice, practice".

Leave missing or vague parts of an image to be completed by a viewer's imagination. This idea is complicit in essence. He called it "filling in the blanks".

Photo opportunities shouldn't be expected. My comment: this seems like an aspect of how a photographer operates as some are planners and some are opportunists. Some do a little bit of both. Eddie strikes me as less of a planner and more of a thoughtful opportunist.

Sometimes cameras expose things that the eye doesn't see. The context for this was during the movement part of his presentation when a slow shutter speed in one of his images revealed colors that couldn't be otherwise seen.

Use the preview button on the camera to see how the aperture setting will effect the depth of field. Eddie finds this really useful.

Eddie's websites are: [www.EddieSoloway.com](http://www.EddieSoloway.com) and [www.anaturaleye.com](http://www.anaturaleye.com).