

MEMORY / VINTAGE

TIME

Creating a sense of **SPACE** in a photograph constructs an environment in which your viewers can spend time. Once you have this, you have the potential to present evidence of past events in this location. Or the possibility of future events can be hinted at. Or even the absence of time, aka timelessness, can be the point. In this way nothingness can be something. [re: Zen Philosophy]

In all of these instances we are using **TIME** as the main variable. Most of the photos up to now have been in present time, but time stretches in both directions. Time in the past resides in our memory. Future time is in our dreams and is a product of our imagination. Timelessness can be a strong emotional state if one feels suspended in it.

The term **VINTAGE** refers to the past. The Vintage Effect in photography is becoming very popular with Smartphone and Lomography photographers. But first we must understand the meaning of the word vintage. Some definitions of the word Vintage include:

- representing the high quality of a past time; classic: e.g. vintage movies.
- of, imitating, or being a style or fashion of the past; retro: e.g. vintage clothing.
- old-fashioned or obsolete.
- too old to be considered modern, but not old enough to be considered antique.

MEMORY

The word **VINTAGE** has both good and bad connotations, but since this all has to do with images from the past, it all has to do with **MEMORY**. When organizing the content in your photos you have to think about how we remember things, places, events, people, etc.

It is also said that we only remember the good sides of things. Then maybe vintage implies some kind of positive emotional attitude. But there are also nightmares – bad memories. You could follow this course of thought as well.

For example, I had a student who went back to the sites where significant and usually traumatic things happened in her life. She shot self-portraits at those locations. You never knew what the exact story was, but the feelings were strong. Another student went back to her high school steps and superimposed a current self-portrait over a shot her friends had taken before they graduated. Each photograph was made translucent (by lowering the opacity of each image) so neither really seemed 'real'.

Another way to create translucent people is to shoot with a long shutter speed and have the subject person move slowly through the frame, or stand still for half the exposure time and then quickly move out. There are smart phone apps available can control your shutter speed to make long exposures possible.

LEGACY

In the photographic world, **VINTAGE** is often used to refer to photographs shot on film that are usually at least 20 years old so the prints are now fading and the colors have shifted. Another variation of the vintage look is the Instant Film look a.k.a. Polaroid. These prints also have their own peculiar color balance and the color of these prints shifts through time in a different direction from that of conventional film. Yet another variation is a technique known as cross-processing. This is when positive color film (for slides) is developed in the chemicals for negative film (for prints), or vice versa. This creates

unusual color shifts that are somewhat unpredictable. Other photographers have found old film that has been damaged and have made prints from these negatives. I had a student who would boil her film and then freeze it, producing a 'damaged' or broken look. This gets into the territory of 'marks made from process', aka intuitive, or improvisational, or unintentional, all of which are part of another conversation that we will get back to...

The key point in all of these examples is that the colors are not "normal". There is a precedent in the amount and direction of the color shifting because all this came from chemical film processes. In digital photography we often try to emulate chemical processes. After all, this is our legacy. This is where the vocabulary of photography comes from. Digital technology now gives us the power to push things a little bit further and in directions that were not previously possible. But you have to be careful. If you push things just enough you get really interesting looking photographs because they are within the realm of believability. If you push things too far you get photos that just look weird or worse, fake, aka unbelievable.

VINTAGE / RETRO

We return to the question: What is the vintage look and, more importantly, **why** would one want to use it? If you answered, "Because it looks cool", then you are missing the point. Vintage refers to photographs that look old. What are the attributes of old photographs other than the technical described above? The colors are faded, the edges are bent, the saturation is reduced, the details are unclear, and so on. How do these attributes line up with potential content? The **FORM** of any piece must reflect or support the **CONTENT**. If you are making photos that deal with the past, then you should have a specific memory or type of memory of a kind of situation in mind when shooting. If you are making photographs about faded memories where the details are less clear, and the feeling has gotten softer and fuzzier, then maybe the vintage style supports this content.

You should go through the list of fx that are attainable with various Smartphone apps and experiment with them to see what visual modifications they produce. When you have some of that under your belt, stop and think about what photographic content would be best expressed using these appearances. Then make those photographs. And you may not be able to just walk around and wait for the world to hand you photographs. You may have to make them happen. This is where the photographer moves from being a 'gatherer' to being a 'hunter', aka a person who makes photographs happen. [ref: [Intuitive vs. Directed Shooting](#)]

Remember to share your experiments with your classmates. Please let the class know early if you find any other apps that work well. People are encouraged to find new ways of doing things that are different from what is prescribed. These people will get better grades. Share any discoveries and how you have used these tools by posting entries to the **SMARTPHONE RECIPES** blog site.

note: be sure to avoid the obvious photo clichés, e.g. the expressive hands of old people, aka pictures of your parents or grandparents, the gnarled roots of mighty trees, old things such as old trucks and classic cars, etc... Don't just take pictures of old things - this has to be done through Ambience and Feel.

VINTAGE/ RETRO fx APPS

There are so many apps available and each has sometimes thousands of fx and presets possible. It is very easy to see that this is where things get out of hand. It is impossible to write a tutorial on this. In order to give you a head start however, here are some lists of the fx available with several very good Camera Apps: SnapSeed (by NIK), Photo fx (by Tiffen), and Vignette. Each app has a tutorial section built into it and a web site to accompany it. You should run through those first, and then start playing.

APPS of Choice:

SnapSeed (Apple + Android)

By Nik Software, Inc., respected maker of computer photo filter fx software
home site: <https://support.google.com/snapseed/>
for instructions, video tutorials, etc.

- Black & White: neutral, contrast, bright, dark, film, darkened sky
- Vintage:
- Drama:
- Grunge:
- Center Focus:
- Tilt-Sift:
- Retroflex:
- Frames:

note: This app retains the full resolution of the camera and does not reduce file size!

Photo fx (Apple)

by Tiffen, Inc., respected maker of optical camera filters.
home site: <http://www.tiffensoftware.com/products/iphone-ipad-apps/photo-vex>
and there is a tutorial page in a drop-down menu
<http://www.tiffensoftware.com/tutorials/photo-fx-tutorials>

In Photo fx, you can choose from 76 filters containing 878 presets organized in 8 different filter groups.

Some of the filters in their respective categories are:

- Film Lab: Bleach Bypass, Cross Processing, Faux Film, Grain, Three Strip, Two Strip
- Diffusion: Black Diffusion, Black Pro-Mist, Bronze Glimmer-Glass, Center Spot, Cool Pro-Mist, Diffusion, Glimmer Glass, Gold Diffusion/FX, HDTV/FX
- Grads/Tints: 812 Warming, Color Spot, Color-Grad, Dual Grad, Mono Tint, ND-Grad, Nude/FX, Old Photo, Strip Grad
- Image: Black & White, Fluorescent, Haze, Levels, Sharpen, Sky, Temperature
- More: Close-Up Lens, Depth of Field, Vignette, Wide Angle Lens

note: This app retains the full resolution of the camera and does not reduce file size!

Vignette (Android)

Vignette is also a full-featured camera application, featuring digital zoom, time-lapse, self-timer and more. It has more than 70 customizable filters and 50 frames useable in any combination to create many photo effects.

Examples: <http://vignette.neilandtheresa.co.uk/filter-examples>

- Retro/Vintage styles
- LOMO/Diana/Holga toy camera styles
- Instant camera styles
- Cross-process, duotone, charcoal, tilt-shift and much more
- Photo-booth and double-exposure

- New: Touch to focus
- New: Share your personalized saved effects with other Vignette users
- Take pictures at your camera's full resolution, even with effect (paid version only)
- Use the flash and front-facing cameras on most devices
- Self-timer, time-lapse and steady-shot modes
- Digital 10× zoom
- New: 21× optical zoom on Samsung Galaxy Camera EK-GC100
- Store location data in pictures (geotag)
- Use the volume rocker as a shutter button
- Edit imported photos
- On-screen controls for exposure, zoom, flash and switching camera
- Launch from the lock screen in Android 4.0+
- Remote shutter with Bluetooth remote, wired headset or Sony Ericsson LiveView
- Time- and date-stamp pictures with adjustable size, color and format
- Rule-of-thirds and golden ratio composition guides
- Optimized for taking pictures underwater
- Share pictures via third-party apps

note: The paid version of this app retains the full resolution of the camera and does not reduce file size!

Some other possibilities:

Vintage Camera: (has only 1 camera, 20 effect presets, no post-processing one saved, saves at 1280 x 1280.)

Retro Camera Plus: has 6 cameras, but saves at only 512 square

XnViewFx: a reasonable number of fx, including retro, color and texture, etc.. Allows saving presets. Saves at full resolution.

Photo Toaster: reasonable collection of modifiers but no radical style or retro fx. Good for subtle, tasteful photos. Saves at full resolution.

Camera 360 Ultimate: also has a reasonable collection of adjustments, fx, and borders. Saves at full resolution.

Additional Tips

You have to keep track of what you're doing. It is easy to start working intuitively until you get just the look you want. Then you realize that you have no idea how you made it.

Knowing how to repeat your process and create similar looking photographs to create a set of related shots is part of the craftsmanship that we are seeking. Eventually you need to know how to duplicate specific looks so you can build a 'personal visual vocabulary', that uses a 'visual toolbox' that is specific to you. This is what the **PHOTO RECIPES** are all about - knowing how to do what we want to do, knowing how to repeat it, and then sharing this knowledge with others.

Some apps keep track of what you've done and allow us to save those fx actions as a **PRESET**. If you have that ability, you can apply the same effect to other photographs to retain consistency within a series of shots. It is preferable, however, to vary each shot even slightly to have variation and project the feel of being hand-made into the photographic work. You can then create a recipe from these presets.