

Can You See Like An Artist?

Composition: The Fine Art of Seeing

March 14, 2021

What did we study last month?

- ▶ Flower Photography with Carlos Hernandez
- ▶ Homework: Up to four images of soft focus flowers and/or different backgrounds you have photographed with flowers

Today we will look at:

- ▶ Different techniques to help you see more compelling and artistic images
- ▶ Can you learn how to capture more creative images?

Pop Art
Andy Warhol-
1928-87



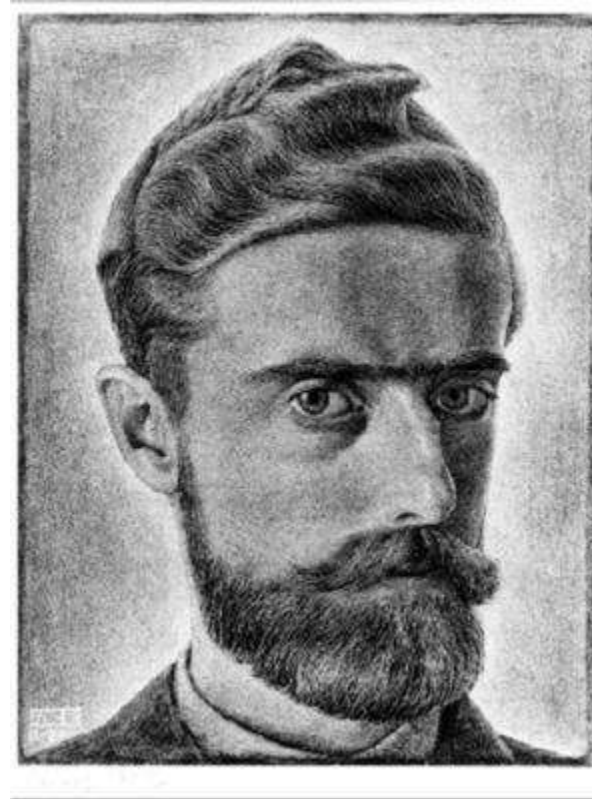
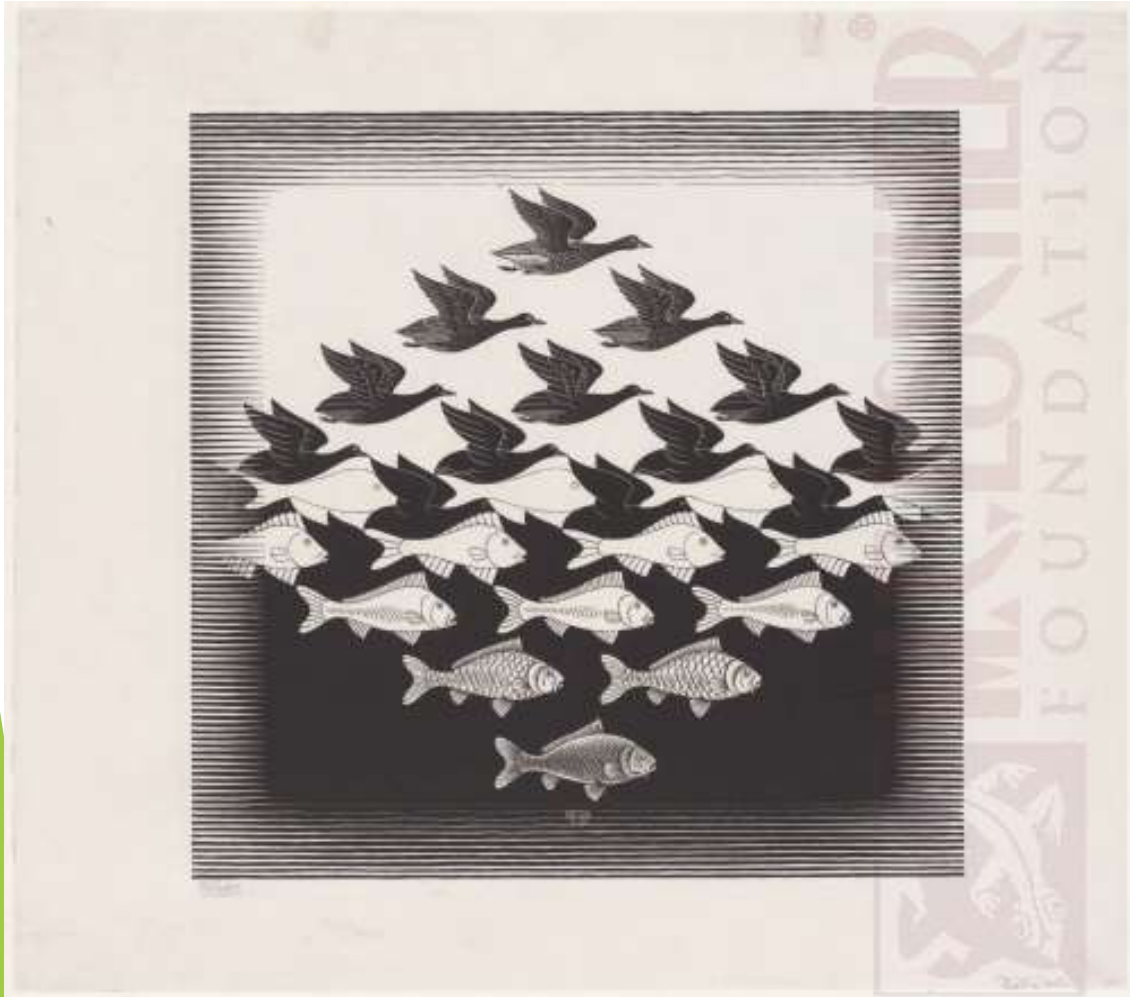
Brief history of Pop Art

- ▶ Pop Art emerged in the mid-1950s in England and realized its fullest potential in New York in the 1960s, where it shared, with Minimalism, the attentions of the art world. The gulf between “high art” and “low art” was eroding.
- ▶ There is an argument about whether Warhol was a genius or a con artist extraordinaire.
- ▶ No one can doubt Warhol’s genius and obvious creativity! Maybe he can inspire us as we think about our own creativity and where it is going! We can learn to see like an artist!

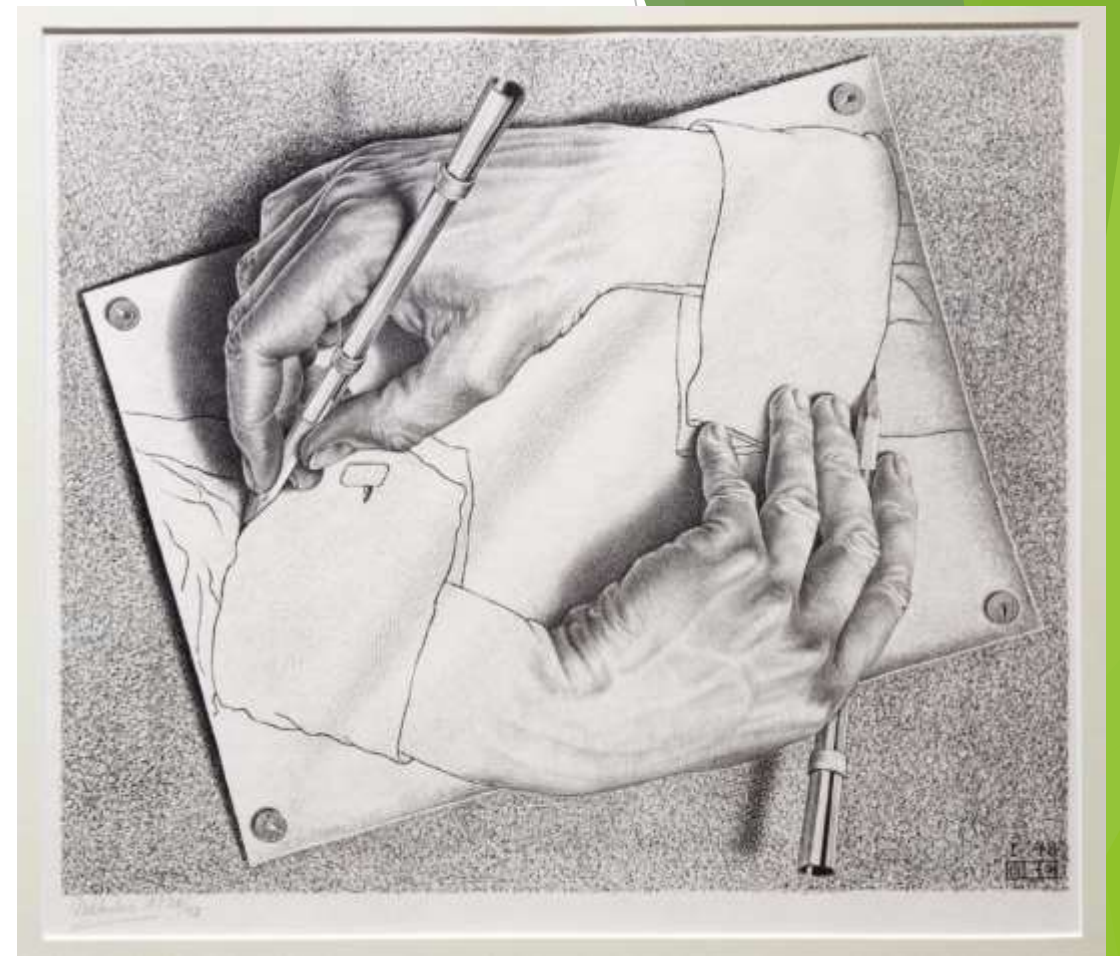
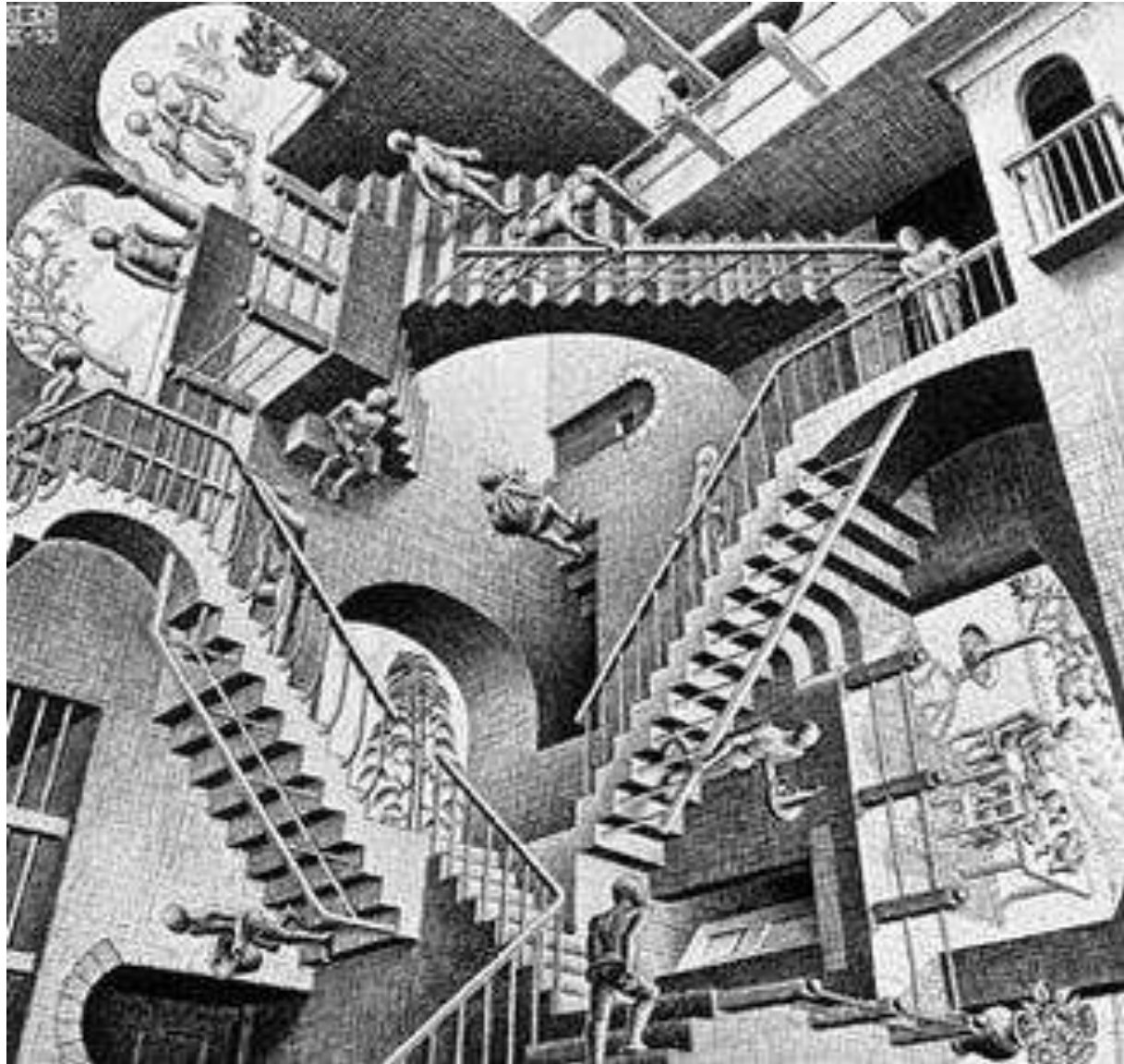


Famous painting and self-portrait

M.C. Escher (1898-1972) The Netherlands



Escher's Work



Can you see like an artist?

- ▶ Being an artist is totally and completely about the mindset you inhabit when you are out shooting, and what you create from this state.
- ▶ It's about looking at the world in a way that is different from how we usually see it. It is ridding ourselves of the habits to accomplish and tick things off our "To Do" list.
- ▶ It's about immersing ourselves, our senses, our beings in this beautiful, wild, chaotic and amazing world.
- ▶ Learn to see things differently, and then you will begin to see different things.

1. Ignore everyone around you. Forget what other people might think of your work.

- ▶ “There is only you and your camera. The limitations in your photography are in yourself, for what we see is what we are”—Ernst Haas

2. Know that we aren't seeing the world as it really is!

- ▶ “Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others”—Jonathan Swift
- ▶ If we are seeing such a small selection of what's available, then it is highly unlikely we are all seeing similar things!
- ▶ We can create something new if we only open up our awareness.
- ▶ This explains why we can all stand in front of the same scene and take different photographs.

3. Take your time to really observe the world around you.

- ▶ Sometimes people find a subject they like, shoot it, and move on way too quickly.
- ▶ That matches our modern life because we are driven by results. We have a mental list to check off in all aspects of our life.
- ▶ Try to live in the present when you are with your camera. Be in the present moment and with the subject you are facing.
- ▶ Take your time. Watch the light.
- ▶ Watch the shadows. Feel the atmosphere and how it is or isn't changing.
- ▶ The more you observe your subject the more it will reveal different qualities to you. You will notice more.

4. It's all about the light

- ▶ “I am forever chasing light. Light turns the ordinary into the magical”-Trent Parke
- ▶ Light is always changing. Each day brings us something different and each part of the day has different qualities.
- ▶ Interesting light can make our images much more compelling.
- ▶ “Embrace light. Admire it. Love it. But above all, know light. Know it for all you are worth, and you will know the key to photography.”—George Eastman

5. Photography is all about feeling.

- ▶ When we see an image we really love, it's rarely only because it's nice to look at.
- ▶ Beyond the composition, there is the element that is more elusive and hard to capture: emotion.
- ▶ It's not just seeing, it's feeling. When a subject stirs emotion in us-joy, love, fear- it will transfer into our image.
- ▶ When the viewer sees that image, we want that emotion to be evoked in them, too.

6. Be in Awe.

- ▶ What makes your heart burst with excitement and makes you want to grab your camera and go?
- ▶ The woods? Birds? People? Sunrise or sunset? City skylines? Architecture? Find something that stirs your soul.

7. Stop Thinking!

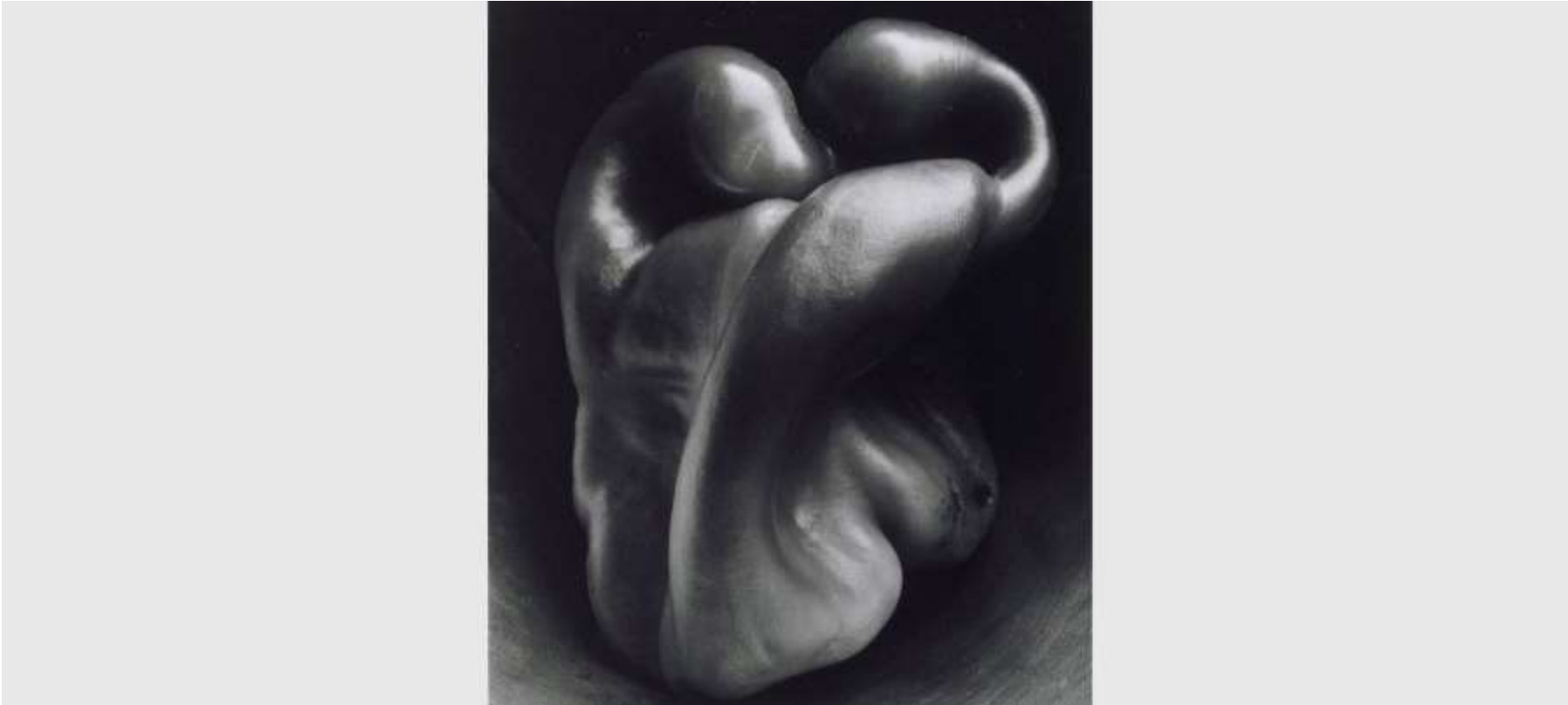
- ▶ Thinking is the enemy of creativity. (not sure) Once you have made the choices of when and what to shoot, then you can let yourself go.
- ▶ Being an artist is losing yourself and becoming part of this magical and amazing world.

8. Use Minimalism to improve your images.

- ▶ You might be falling into compositional patterns. You'll take the same type of photo over and over again. You may not even realize it.
- ▶ Minimalism involves using lots of negative space, while also positioning your subject toward the edges of the frame.
- ▶ For instance, you could take one object and place it at the bottom or top of the frame, while leaving the rest of the scene primarily white or black.

9. Look at the work of good photographers and famous artists for inspiration.

- ▶ If practice makes perfect, then why bother? It is hard to know what perfect would mean if you haven't ever seen it.
- ▶ Ask yourself, “What makes this work so special? What makes it so artistic?”



Edward Weston 1886-1958

Edward Henry Weston was a 20th-century American photographer. He has been called "one of the most innovative and influential American photographers..." and "one of the masters of 20th century photography."

Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) What would life be if we had no courage to attempt anything?”



10. Set limitations to Achieve More Creativity

- ▶ Set limitations regarding your project, like photograph only fruit as a topic.
- ▶ Use only one focal length. Choose a prime lens or a zoom lens, for example.
- ▶ Project limitations: ride the bus which causes limitations of location, light, and subjects.
- ▶ Always shoot at the same time of day.
- ▶ Shoot only black and white, infrared, etc.
- ▶ Try a new technique, i.e., ICM (intentional camera movement) or lensball
- ▶ Revisit the same place several times to see different things

Homework for April 11, 2021

- ▶ Select at least one of the 10 ideas to pursue this month as you are out capturing images.
- ▶ Turn in four of your favorite creative photos to share with the group in April.