



Harbour City Photography Club

Themes for the 2009/10 Print Competitions

Our motif for the three “themed” print competitions this year is “Enhancing the Illusion of Depth.” Your prints will be judged in part on your success in achieving this effect. The techniques to be used have a long history in the art world. The three individual themes are:

1. Chiaroscuro

Chiaroscuro refers to the modelling effect obtained by using a strong contrast between light and dark to enhance the illusion of depth in a painting or photograph. These images tend to be dark overall. In painting, this technique was introduced mainly by Caravaggio. Chiaroscuro originates from the Italian words meaning light (chiaro) and dark (scuro).

For inspiration, check out the Flickr Chiaroscuro Gallery at:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/chiaroscuro-gallery/>

2. Sfumato

Sfumato refers to the blurring or softening of sharp outlines (particularly in backgrounds) by subtle and gradual blending of one tone into another to give the illusion of depth through haziness (atmospheric perspective). It is a technique first used by Leonardo da Vinci. Sfumato stems from an Italian word meaning “smoky.”

Many examples can be found on the Flickr Atmospheric Perspective Gallery at:

http://www.flickr.com/groups/atmospheric_perspective/

3. Perspective

In the two-dimensional picture plane, perspective is the representation of depth or distance. You can create, increase or decrease an impression of the third dimension by the way you arrange elements within the image. The normal visual relationships can be changed or distorted by selection of the viewpoint and choice of the focal length of the camera lens. The renaissance painter Paolo Uccello was one of the first to exploit perspective relationships.

Examples on Flickr can be found at: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/perspectiveshot/>

John Butterworth, Print Competition Chairman, 10th June 2009