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Workshop1: Looking and Seeing

Activity No 1:

Looking we do not look directly at the world
 we see what we are looking for

Cupping hands exercise – cup your hands over your eyes (without pressing on them) so that no light enters. Hold this until the pin prick flashes of light disappear and you are seeing pure black, pure darkness. Then release your hands and you will find that your sight has improved...there is a greater clarity to edges and colour seems more saturated.

Has the world changed just because you temporarily stopped looking at it?

Your senses are interpreted by your brain and it is this organ which looks at the world.

Activity No 2

Seeing seeing is selective
 we select that which we have seen before

We see that which we have recognised before and this can mean that we respond positively to the familiar, in other words our past experiences are vital to what we see. Alternatively we can respond negatively to the new and to the unfamiliar.

We see a familiar face in a crowd; we recognise a voice that is known to us. This familiarity can mean that we stop seeing it all. Take something familiar – a photograph or image that you like and do the following:

- Look at it close up
- Look at it upside down
- Take a small detail in the background and study it.
- If a person is in the image what do you imagine they are thinking?

It is important to look at an object from all angles and this helps us to form new experiences. And these new experiences changes the way we see things.

Activity No 3:

Follow your own likes

liking is an emotional response
emotions connect us to other human beings

Don't try and take a good photograph, after all who is to say what good is, since this is as subject to fashion as are clothes.

When you follow your likes you are following your emotions and photography is one way of capturing these emotions...of things that are personal to you and your way of seeing. We can do this by:

- Reveal the beauty of something – others may not find it so but this should not concern you as it is what **you** find beautiful that matters as it is **you** who are taking the photograph
- Pick on a human theme – the karate photographs look at capture the spiritual aspects as well as the beauty of movement

Take one thing you value and consider why it is of value to you – what is the emotion you feel? Take photographs of this emotion

An important note: Snapshots are a natural response to what we find interesting the very speed or spontaneity of snapshots is often why they capture emotion better than a studio portrait. Do not dismiss your photographs by calling them snapshots; a snapshot is arguably the essence of the photographic medium.

Now go take photographs - nothing improves more than practice!

Future workshops will look at:

Creative Techniques which make the most of what a camera has to offer

A positive approach to image evaluation

Snapshots: Speed and Spontaneity

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