

PHMD 201 - Photography I: View Camera, Fall 2013
Writing Prompt No. 6

After using a view camera for a semester, what is the single most significant thing (if anything) you will take with you when you leave this class? Has using this tool had a lasting impact on you as a photographer and how?

“The most significant thing I have taken away from using a view camera is the concept of purposely setting up the shot before taking the picture. Having a limited amount of film available made me cautious and deliberate when taking pictures. Also, because of the physical weight of the camera, I made sure to know where I would set up the shot before I set up the camera.

As a lasting impact, I have a greater inclination to correctly meter the scene before taking a photograph. Making correct exposures, plus calculating equivalent exposures, took time and effort to get accurate which determined that I had to understand the entire process before beginning. Using a view camera adds to the confidence of the photographer.”

“I really enjoyed using the view camera this semester. I was unsure at first, but now I'm considering getting my own. I think the most significant thing that I will take away is remembering to slow down. I liked that I had to consider every shot before I took it. I had become so numb to pointing and shooting that slowing down and considering the shot greatly improved my work. I think that in the long run the confidence and trust for a meter that this camera has taught me will greatly benefit my work.”

“After taking this class, it's hard for me to want to take photos with anything but the view camera. I don't want to use my DSLR to shoot anymore because I'm realizing how easy it would be. I like how much work goes into every photo and it makes me so much happier to show off my photos if I know all the hard work that I put into them. I'm always wanting to set up scenes now so I can capture them with the view camera.

I think this will definitely change my photography because I'll want to spend more time on each photo. Future photo shoots may take longer but I'll know that it's worth it because of how much work I'm putting into my images.”

“What I'm taking from this semester is an appreciation of film photography now. I've taken a 35 mm film class, but it wasn't half as hard as the view camera process. I've grown to love film photography, and I've stopped appreciating digital photography as much. Film really brings out the contrast in the photos as well as giving the photos a genuine graininess. The view camera has really slowed down my process as a photographer, making me really pick and choose what's in my photos.

The most important thing I've taken from this semester is the idea that my personal style is developing. I'm really loving black and white film photography.”

“The single most important skill the viewfinder has taught me is the time that one should put in to making an image. With our generation being the first to be primarily focused in the digital world, we are so used to being able to snap thousands of pictures without any thought at all. With film, every picture matters and you want to at least attempt to create a quality image with every shot. Transferring this mindset even to digital photography can only help the creative process and enhance the quality of work that is created.

After using a view camera this past semester it helped me slow down and really consider every aspect of the photo I was taking. It really made me realize the time and effort that goes into making a good photo. I actually ended up liking the quality of some of my photos so much that I can defiantly see myself continuing to use a view camera along with my DSLR and film camera.

One thing I will definitely take away, is if you are willing to put in the time and the care, it will always reflect itself in your work.”

“After taking this class I have learned a lot about photography and myself. The most important thing I learned from this class is that photography takes time. From using the view camera I learned the mechanics of photography and how to do certain things. I have slowed down my photography a lot. I now take a lot more time when I am using my digital camera. Each exposure is for a purpose now. Even though carrying around the camera got really annoying at some points, I learned a lot. I like the photos I took with the view camera better beacuse I put more effort into them. There is a certain process that comes with view camera work and I like it. The process has become a big part of my life but not in a bad way. Sometimes process can harm an artists work but not i this case. I love shooting and then developing days later because when the images come out I feel successful.

I learned a lot about myself also. From this class I learned that I like to create photos not find them. Creating scenes for a series of work has become a passion. From that, I learned that I love photobooks. This class has led me in a new and different direction with my photography.”

“After using the view finder this semester, it is really difficult to narrow out a most significant thing rather than multiple things I will take from this semester. For starters, the view finder really slows you down in multiple ways. I consider this a good thing. For example, the camera (and limited film) really makes you value an image and how much work you put into it. It helps you look a little closer, stare a little longer, and be consumed within your subject matter to make an image that would give it justice. It also helps the photographer get to know the camera in an intimate, personal way. An all manual camera makes a photographer appreciate and value the action of making pictures. It has made me appreciate photography and see it as a fine art more so than I ever had before.

Using this camera has honestly changed the way I see both the world and photography entirely. Its amazing how mechanical object can change so much about the way you look at the world around you. Using the view finder has also left me with a less appreciation of digital photography. I'm not quite sure if this is a good thing or not, but, on the other hand it has greatened my appreciation for film. I have always had a passion for film but the view finder has made me realize that it is my true calling.

I think this class is fantastic and I hope the program still offers it to upcoming students. As mentioned before it has changed me personally in many ways and my photography has significantly improved, and will continue to improve through out my photographic career.”

“After using a view camera this entire semester, it was definitely a pain, but I learned a lot from the experience. It taught me how to have more of a control on what exactly I want to focus on, aperture scale, use of light, etc. I think that I will take all of that information with me when I go and make photographs on my own. If I want a shallow or great depth of field, I'll know what to do on my DSLR manually because the controls on the view camera taught me that as opposed to having our DSLRs do it for us automatically.”

“After a semester of shooting with the large format view camera I have gained a new respect for photographers that work with this type of camera. What I will take away from this experience is care and patience. The view camera has a set of principles that don't apply to a DSLR (for the most part). It was frustrating to understand how to work this camera at first but now that I have shot with it for a semester I don't want to shoot with any other type of camera. The quality of photographs that this camera produces does not compare to any of the cameras or photo processes I've used in the past. Using this camera taught me to take the time and be as precise as possible when shooting. I'm very thankful that I got the opportunity to work with such a foreign camera to anything I've used before.”

“After using the view camera for a semester, one thing I will take with me is that photography is made beautiful when produced with a large format camera. From the straight lines to the precise hard edges (depth of field/detail) this camera provides. As much as I would love to own a view camera and make images from this everyday...it is just too expensive. I have been raised on digital photography, but there is one thing that digital can't do (listed above). One thing I wish we could have done was try color film.”

“Scheimpflug has definitely been the biggest aspect of the view camera to leave a lasting impression on me. After studying how a camera works, eyeballs intrigue me as they are just cameras, (light receptors.) It'd be truly interesting if we could train our eyes to bend and use scheimpflug. Just a thought. I'm interested in how the view camera can manipulate the focal plane.”