

The Warmth of Light

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Coffee Shop Notes

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To view the images discussed here, go to:

<http://www.thetactilemind.com/TTMWeekly/cassidy.html>

The careful attention to composition, using black and white contrast with a balance of greyscale in Clare Cassidy's photographic work entails us to observe her subjects clearly and comfortably. "Clearly" refers to how she intends for us to notice first the textures of the subjects and how their quality is enhanced in light, thus conveying a sense of warmth.

When she looks through a camera, Clare focuses on elements that unify her subject and contains them within a frame that does not allow us to view directly the source of light, but rather, the result of light upon her subjects. She uses a variety of compositional approaches, such as the 1/3-2/3 rule of asymmetry, or fields of light within dark areas. Her photographs succeed in capturing tones, as well. Another compositional strength in her photography is the careful attention to line and shape in how they contribute to the picture as a whole.

As a psychology major at RIT, Clare minored in photography. Her photographic inclinations began in junior high when Clare would often snap pictures of her friends and compile them in creative collages. Her experience with school televising and family camcorders also honed her sense of light and framing. A background in graphic arts through high school courses familiarized her with negative developing and printing process, as well as contributing to her compositional skills, e. g. yearbook layout work.

When asked about her work, Clare says that she is fascinated by how light performs, especially in black and white photographs, the medium she prefers to work with when focusing on photography as a fine art. In black and white, forms appear vivid and Clare's manipulation of her SLR camera in manual mode enables her to capture the finest nuances of light refraction off objects. Within the stark black and white contrast of her work ["Warm Car" and "Woods"] we nonetheless get the feeling of fuzziness, from either the faux sheepskin cover on the steering wheel or from the multitude of leaves in the forest scene.

Clare's other photographic interests include portraiture and collage, as well as experimenting with various uses of light and tone. In addition to photography, Clare has also ventured in making short movies and videos.

Summer Woods: The alternation of white and black lines in the foreground continue into the background, drawing our gaze across the pond to the trees which whose trunks and leaves filter the strong summer sun into a place of quiet reflection. Note especially the tree trunk in the upper right corner--it is actually a straight trunk but the strong light coming from that angle has created an optical illusion where form appears to break down into small bits.

Warm Car: The upwards curve of the steering wheel is emphasized by the similar shapes of the steering crossbar and the dashboard, holding our attention to the texture of the faux fur on the steering wheel.

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