

Joseph pennell is photography among the fine arts essay

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In a word, the photographer is the bold independent who has broken loose from tradition and asserted his individuality, not by the cultivation of his hand and his brain and his eye, that these three unruly members may work together to produce the harmony the artist almost despairs of; no, by sticking his head into a black box, and at the crucial moment letting a machine do everything for him.

He sees what he likes, for he has been taught what to like by reading books upon painting, which he does not understand, and which nothing for him; he prepares his camera; he focusses it, or knocks it out of focus; he puts in his glassplate or his film. And who does the work?

While reading an article, I come up with idea that the world truly replays the history. It is a well-known story of rejection and disapproval of latest trends which go against established custom. For Joseph Pennell, it was very hard to accept the new form of art. He diminishes the importance of photography as the art of no specific value. To tell the truth, I could understand his feelings and his sarcastic tone while mentioning that even pedestrians can embark on the path of genuine art without any troubles, as his paintings represent precise composition of human being, time, and world. Moreover, he believes that photographers do not need to have some remarkable skills and devote life to find harmony with their own selves. Camera will do everything for them. Honestly, I felt that he was totally against mechanical intervention, because everybody could master how to press the button, but the most crucial is that “ the agent is human, not mechanical.” We could only imagine how he would react if he was born in 21st century.

Alfred Stieglitz “ The Hand Camera – Its Present Importance” 1897

Every Tom, Dick and Harry could, without trouble, learn how to get something or other on a sensitive plate, and this is what the public wanted – no work and lots of fun. Thanks to the efforts of these persons hand camera and bad work became synonymous.

The one quality absolutely necessary for success in hand camera work is Patience.

The hand camera has come to stay –its importance is acknowledged.

Edward Weston “ Daybooks” 1923-1930

My excitement was absolute aesthetic response to form. I was thrilled!–here was every sensuous curve of the “ human form divine” but minus imperfections.

I get a greater joy from finding things in Nature, already composed, than I do from my finest personal arrangement.

I want the stark beauty that a lens can so exactly render, presented without interference of “ artistic effect.”

I want to be able –and am most of time–to make one or two tests, and then the final print, as I would have it.

Personal diaries of famous artists always interest me a lot. They respond to the world in a different way which might intrigue, bring joy, scare, disgust, or just turn your existence upside down. Edward Weston describes his perspective on the forms of different origins. He makes us think that we should not create the image by ourselves. Moreover, he is enthralled with the idea that photographer is not a medium of the art. On the contrary, he

directly experiences the beauty which should be shared and saved. As far as I understood, the beauty is in the objects we usually neglect from our daily usage, and mainly we could find it in the Nature. Not only does he mention about the importance of aesthetic sense for photographer, but he also explains the importance of sensible photos. I am inclined to think that he wanted to show how valuable every photo is, and every picture should convey the meaning and be unique.

Henri Cartier-Bresson “ The Decisive Moment” 1952

In a photograph, composition is the result of a simultaneous coalition, the organic coordination of elements seen by the eye.

Inside movement there is one moment at which the elements in motion are in balance. Photography must seize upon this moment and hold immobile the equilibrium of it.

Composition must be one of our constant preoccupations, but at the moment of shooting it can stem only from our intuition, for we are out to capture the fugitive moment, and all the interrelations involved are on the move.

Henri Cartier-Bresson is one of the most prominent figures in the photography. For many, he serves as an example of fresh view on the composition and art itself. Artists from all over the world are trying to follow in his footsteps. Some succeeds, but some are doomed to be left behind. The main reason of their failure is that they look at the world through the eyes Cartier-Bresson, but not their own. They want to find the same balance and harmony. Unfortunately, they could not understand that we see the world differently. Even the same picture could be represented in myriad ways. The

author recommends listening to your inner power while catching moments with your eyes. He states that the main tools of photographers are their eyes. However, I could not totally agree with him. There is constellation of blind photographers that can represent story of the world much better than others. For example, one might be impressed with the works of Gerardo Nigenda, Brendon Borellini, or Pete Eckert. Consequently, to capture the well-balanced moment, one should feel what really matters for his own soul.