

Welcome to the Stanley Museum of Art!

Before we can start discussion, let's first take a second to look at one work of art (as a class or in small groups) for 40 seconds, and gather some observations.

Discussion questions:

For single works at a time:

1. What do you see in this photograph?
2. Who or what is the subject matter?

The way a photograph looks/what a photographer chooses to emphasize can affect the way we react to the photograph (whether we like it or not, the emotional tone of the work) and our interpretation of the subject matter. **Describe how the photographer uses the following in the photo:**

- a. Light/Shadow – What is highlighted? What is obscured?
 - b. Scale – Does anything look bigger or smaller than you would expect?
 - c. Framing – What is included in the composition? What is cut off or not shown?
 - d. Vantage Point – Where was the photographer located to take this picture?
 - e. Time – Does this seem to capture a fleeting moment or an extended one?
 - f. Emphasis – What area of the photograph grabs your attention? How does it do that?
 - g. How do they use the formal qualities of the composition (the qualities that you examined above) to make a statement?
3. What do you think could be the artist's intent in creating this photograph?

4. Does this relate to what you've been discussing in class? In what way?
5. For figural works, consider the idea of *the gaze* in this photograph through the following questions:
 - a. Who are we looking at? Are they looking back at us, or somewhere else?
 - b. How are we seeing them? From what perspective?
 - c. Do the subject(s) have agency?
 - d. What is the role of the photographer?

For multiple works or end of class discussion:

1. What is the first photograph that caught your eye? What about it stood out to you?
2. What photograph challenges you the most? What about it is confusing, unnerving, or off-putting? How did the photographer draw that emotion or feeling from you (cropping, lighting, subject matter, etc.)?
3. What questions do you have about the photographs – subject matter, technique, etc.?
4. How did these artists create a unique artistic voice?
5. What surprised you about the photographs?
6. What have you seen today that made you think about your work in a new way? *Or* what would you like to try in your photos?