

An abstract photograph of a multi-bladed propeller or fan. The blades are illuminated with various colors: blue, green, yellow, and orange. The central hub is dark, and the background is black. The lighting creates a sense of depth and movement.

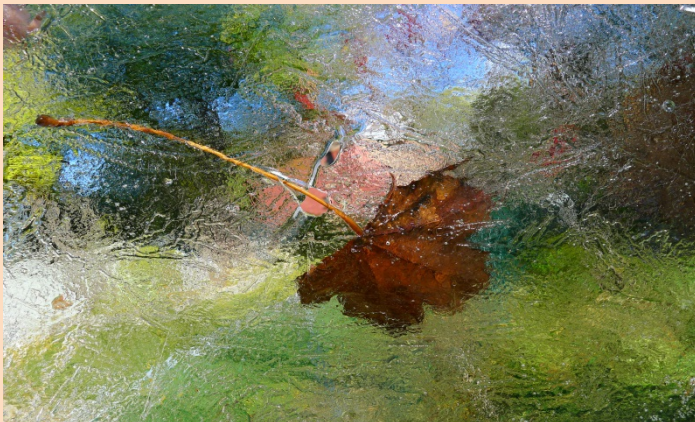
Abstract Photography

by Robert Laing

All images taken by author

ABSTRACT art or photography seeks to break away from Traditional representation of physical objects. It explores the relationships of form and colours where as Traditional art represents the world in recognizable images. It often creates an atmosphere or feeling.

dictionary.com



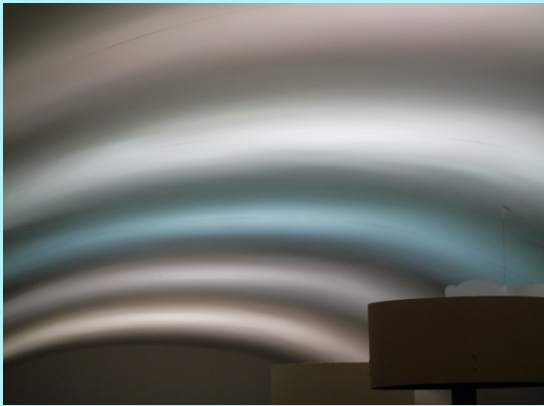
“ To understand abstraction you have to let go of perceived notions and take things as they appear.”



Kathleen Grace

There are two main ways of making an Abstract photo:

1. In camera:

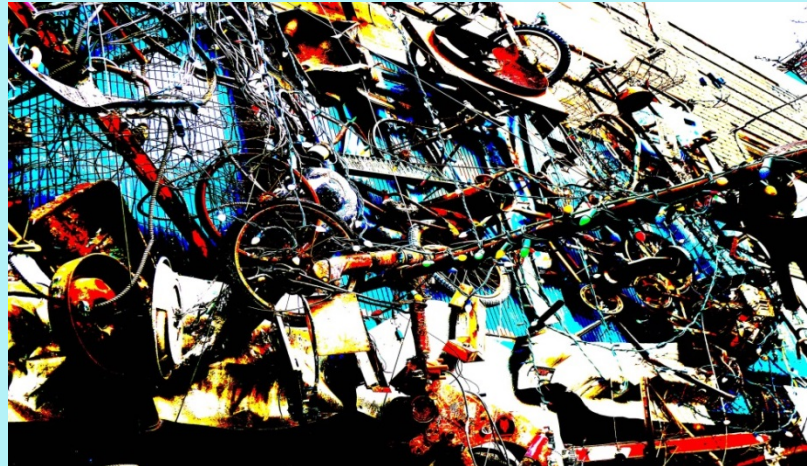


A. Look and see

B. Through objects

C. Intentional Distortion

2. Post Production



In Camera: Look and see

A.1. Close up of every day objects



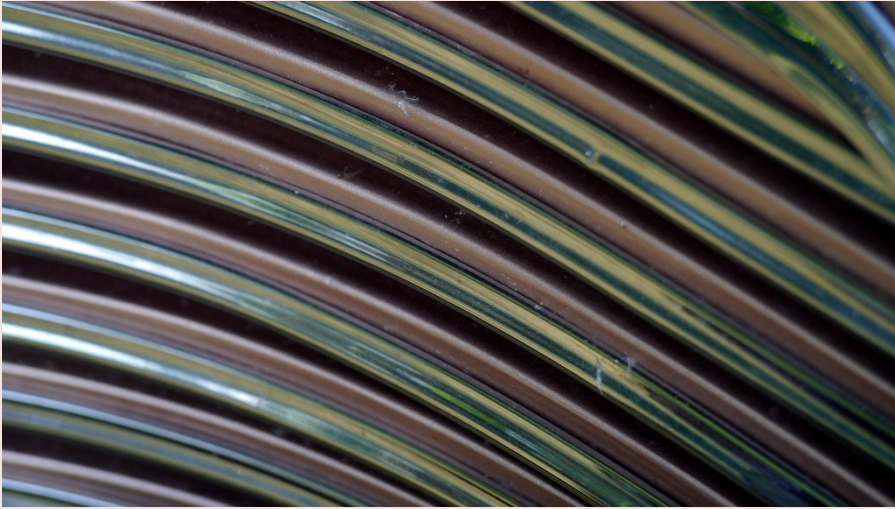
The subject of the photo is based on what you see: colour, shape, lines, texture etc. It is not grounded in visual perception but in imagination.

In Camera: Look and see

A.2. Patterns and Shapes

Abstract is often typically concerned with geometric shapes. The size and character of these shapes, their relationship to each other as well as the colours used become the defining motif of abstraction.





In Camera: Look and see

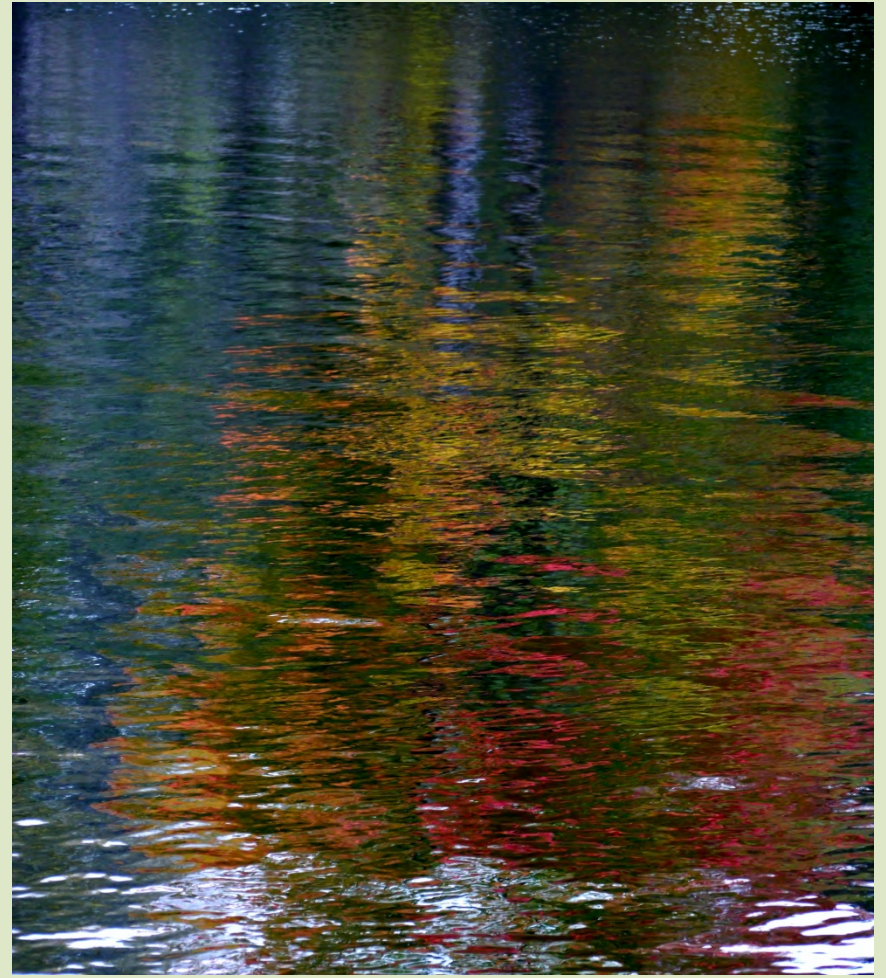
A.3. Stripes, contours



“ Abstract is all about creating unique images from ordinary subjects. The final image is not normally a literal representation of the subject, but instead just the essence of it.

By stripping away the context, you can present the subject with totally new meaning.” Kate Wesson





In Camera: Look and see

A.4. Reflections

A photograph of a snowy landscape. The ground is covered in white snow. In the foreground, there is a white plastic bag. In the middle ground, there are two large, brown, textured objects, possibly pieces of wood or bark, partially covered in snow. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The overall scene is brightly lit, creating a high-contrast, abstract image.

**Abstract images are all
round you. Once you know
what to look for you'll see
every day objects
in a totally new light.**

**The freedom and creativity that you get from
Abstract photography can be really liberating.”**

Kate Wesson Sept. 12/14

In Camera: Through an opaque lens or object

B.1. Frosted glass



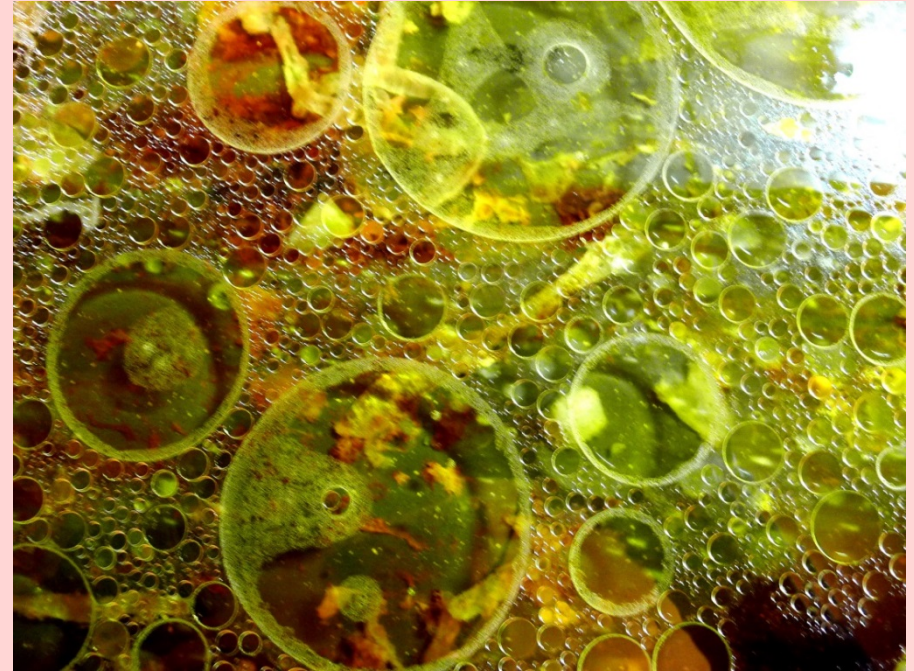


**In Camera: Through
an opaque lens or
object**

B.2. Coloured glass

In Camera: Through an opaque lens or object

B.3. Cellophane, plastic bag, oil, fog etc.



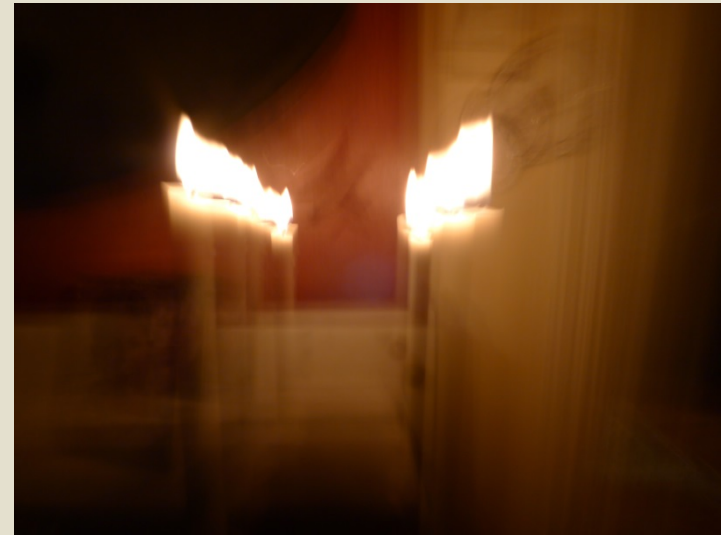


In Camera: Through an opaque lens or object

**B.4. A sheet of thin ICE or whatever suits
your imagination. Be creative!**

In Camera: Intentional Distortion

C.1. Zoom Burst – move lens in/out



In Camera: Intentional Distortion

C.2. Rotate or move camera up and down



Intentional Distortion

C.3. Intentional unfocused

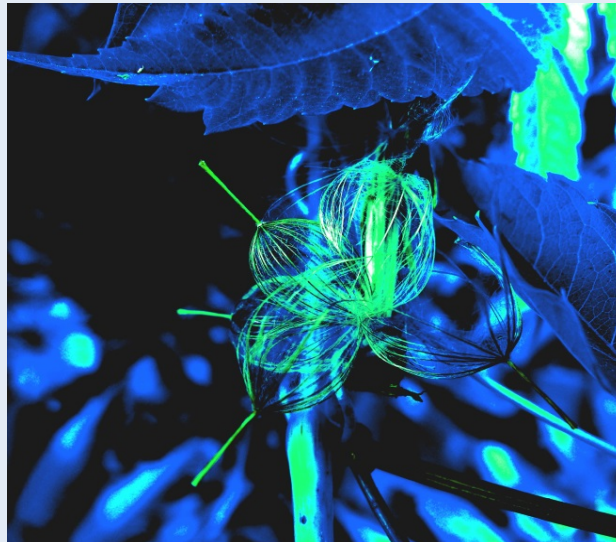


**Abstract art explores form and colours.
It creates an atmosphere of feeling.**



2.Post Production

There are many programs that can be used to generate an abstract photo.

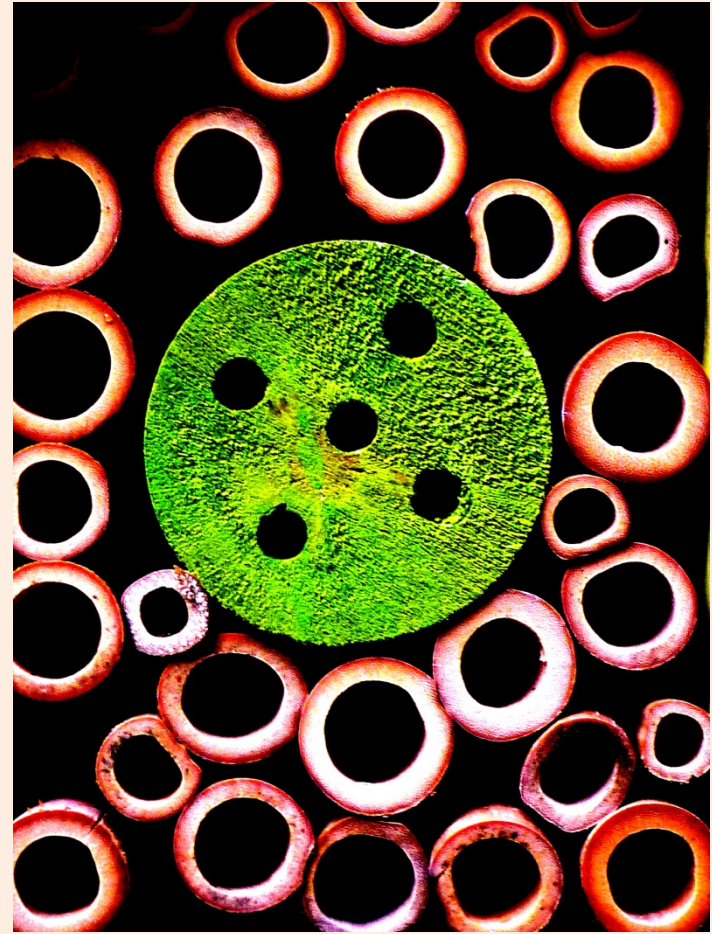


Change contrast

Or switch colour

Post Production

Crop or zoom into an area of an existing photo





Cropping a photo



Conclusion

One of the difficulties with **photography** is that it can be too exact in the way it depicts the world. It has a great tendency to show things as they actually are with vivid realism!



“There are many techniques and approaches which may be deliberately chosen to turn digital images into more abstract entities”

“ Total Digital photography” page158



by Chris George

“To take an Abstract photo you are being asked to stop thinking and experience what you see, to feel what you see. You have to suspend belief in what you KNOW for a little while.”

Kathleen Grace





Ask not: What is it, but rather, How does it make me feel?



Challenge

Experiment and use a variety of methods to create abstract images concentrating on line, colour, shape, and/or texture. Remember the emphasis is not the object but the pleasing arrangement of the elements of abstract art.

Thanks to Phyllis Watson and Elizabeth Robinson for their help and support and to **Ray Foster** for his technical advice.

Some resources

- **6 tips on how to create Abstract Photos by Peter West Carey:**
digital-photography-school.com
- Abstract Photography for Beginners by Davie Peterson:**
digital-photo-secrets.com
- Abstract Photography tips and ideas by Nate Kay:**
the photoargus.com
- Abstract photography by Ron Bigelow: picturecorrect.com**
- Abstract photography tips: ephotozine.com**
- Jeff Sinan: craftsy.com**
- 121 clicks.com**
- The Feldman technique**

