

# STILLNESS

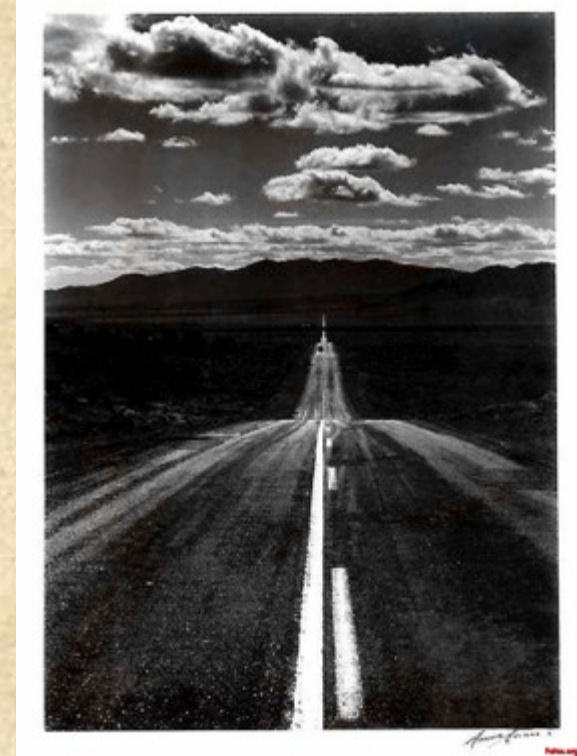
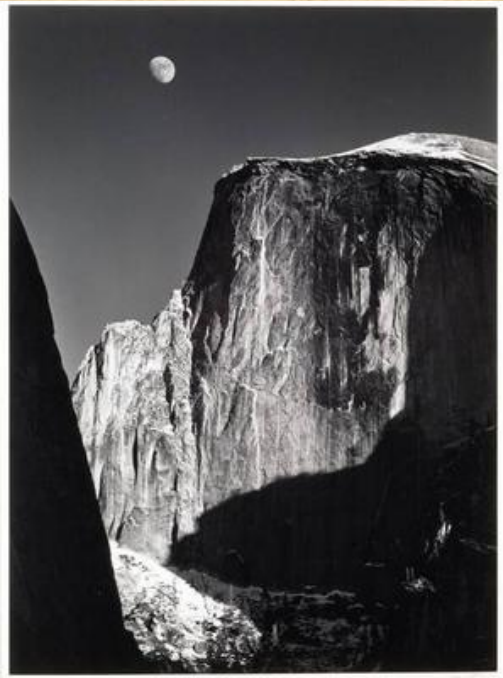
Motionless and undisturbed

Subdued, quite, or gentle

Silence or peace

Designed for, or relating to the process of, taking  
photographs as opposed to making movies.

A photographic print, either made from a single frame  
of a motion-picture film or shot independently with a  
still camera during production.



In this assignment, spend some time thinking about what it means to be 'still'.

These days we seldom take the time to slow down and feel still. You may have difficulty imagining how to portray this concept in an image.

Ansel Adams, black and white photos



However, stillness is something that can have many different meanings and very different ways of imagining

Like the postmortem photos taken around the turn of the century of loved ones,  
To the kind of isolation felt from inside a car or apartment in the photo of Lee Friedlander  
To a more traditional, “still life” set up seen in advertising images



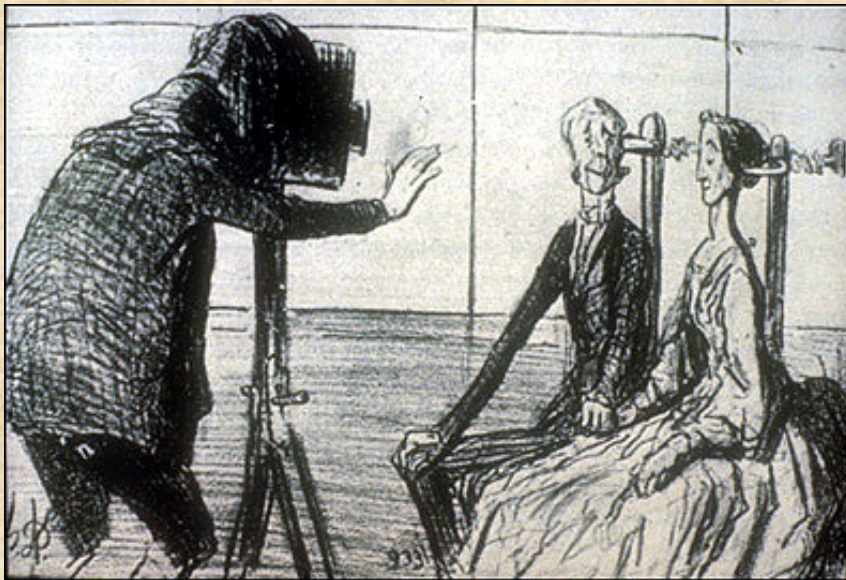


A still life is a collection of inanimate objects and was popular in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Western painting. Still-life subject matter was readily available and did not move or tire, as a model would. Traditionally, painters selected natural items such as flowers, or wild game and combined them with man-made domestic items such as books, tableware, and food. The tradition of still life is found in the roots of photography.



The tradition of still life is found in the roots of photography. Daguerre and Talbot made still-life photographs, taking advantage of the inanimate arrangements during the long exposures necessary in early photo. (1st Daguerrotype)





Daguerre and Talbot made still-life photographs taking advantage of the inanimate arrangements during the long exposures necessary in early photo.





This is an early photo by Daguerre of the street scene outside his studio window in Paris.

What did this 20 minute exposure do to the action on the street?

Louis Jacques Daguerre, *Le Boulevard du Temple*, 1839, Daguerreotype. Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich.

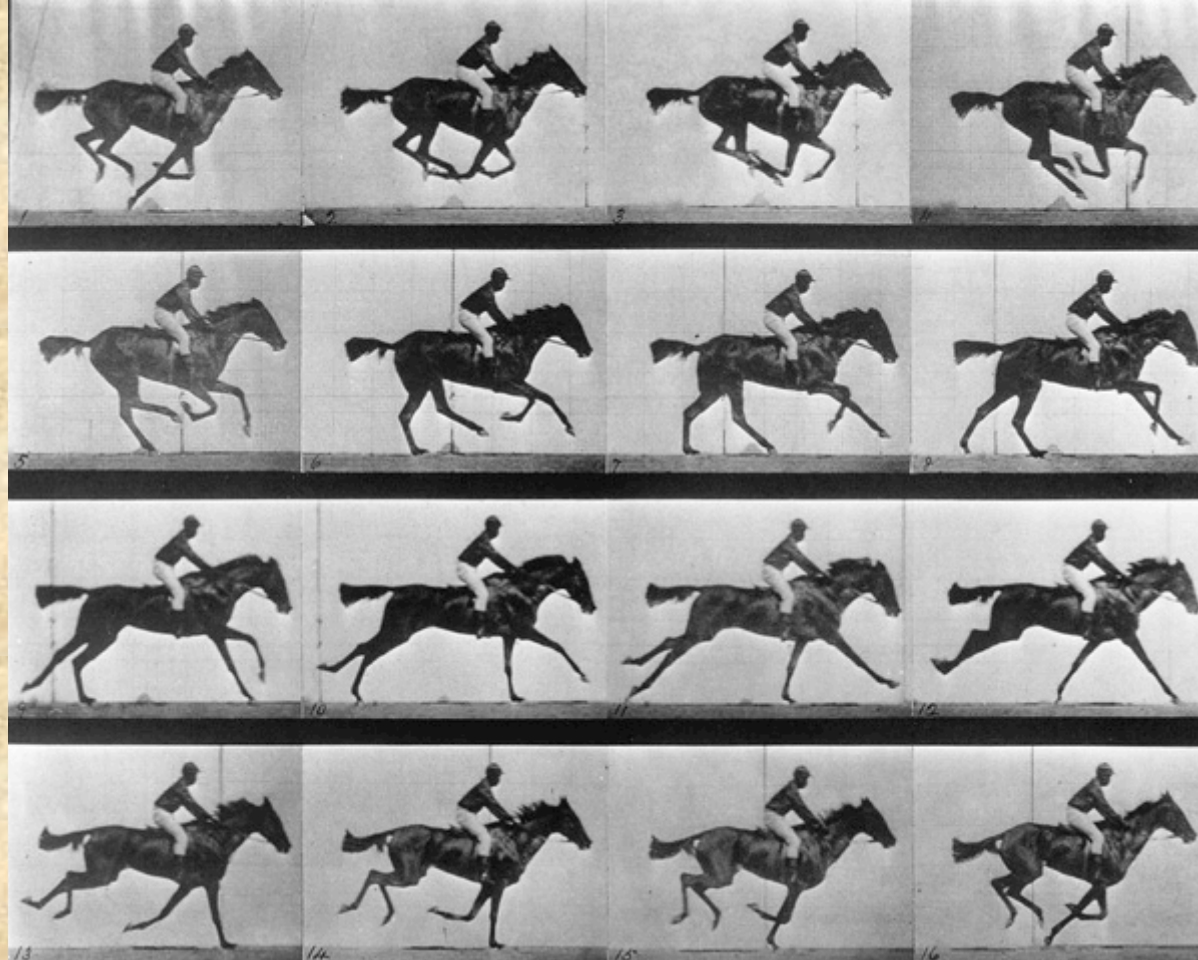




Eddie Adams, General Loan shooting a young Vietnamese suspect, 1968

Photography has been thought of as a technique that stops action. The process of taking a picture takes continuous movement and 'freezes' it in time thus creating a 'still' image... a moment in time stopped or frozen.





Once Photography could stop time by showing a particular instant, artists like Edward Muybridge began experimenting with ways to show action as a sequence of still images.

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE, Horse Galloping, 1878. Collotype print. George Eastman House, Rochester, New York.



Which led quickly to the invention of motion pictures.

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE, 1878. Collotype print. George Eastman House, Rochester, New York.



[https://  
www.youtube.com/  
watch?  
v=2wnOpDWSbyw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wnOpDWSbyw)

Thomas Edison, *Fred Ott's Sneeze*,  
Kinetoscope Record of a Sneeze,  
1894

Edison patented the kinetoscope  
(invented by his assistant, W.K.L.  
Dickson), a device for viewing  
moving pictures, in 1887. It was an  
immediate success.

This was the one of the  
first moving pictures.







The invention of the daguerreotype in 1839 made portraiture much more commonplace, as many of those who were unable to afford the commission of a painted portrait could afford to sit for a [photography](#) session. This cheaper and quicker method also provided the middle class with a means for memorializing dead loved ones.

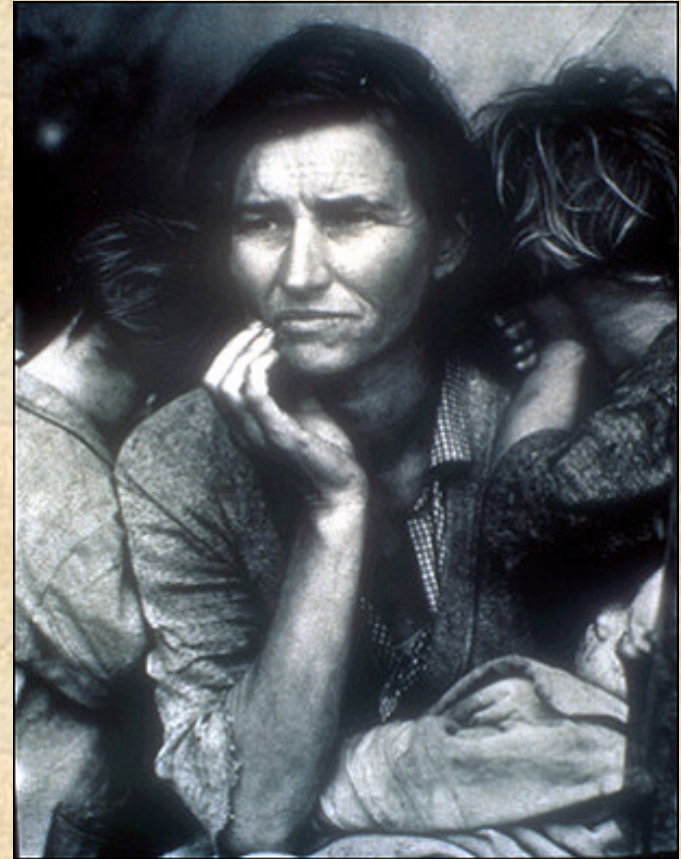




These photographs served as a keepsake to remember the deceased. This was especially common with infants and young children who often died young. The subject is usually depicted so as to seem in a deep sleep, or else arranged to appear more lifelike.

How do we feel about pictures like this today?





But photography was already part of the cultural landscape and it's ability to create the illusion of reality, to stop time, to show that someone was here, to show what someone saw, these are all things that still make photography interesting.



Alfred Stieglitz is considered the father of modern photography. Working in the early part of the 20th Century, his early pictures were attempts to make photography more like painting.

This image was an important shift to pictures of everyday life.

It also shows the difference between those who have the money to pay for rooms above deck, and those in steerage, below.

ALFRED STIEGLITZ, *The Steerage*, 1907 (print 1915). Photogravure (on tissue), 1' 3/8" x 10 1/8". Courtesy of Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth.





Stillness can be more than a still life... it implies other kinds of images...other kinds of feelings.

How do these photos express the concept of stillness?



Photos by Alfred Steiglitz  
Central Park and Terminal (it's Grand Central), 1911

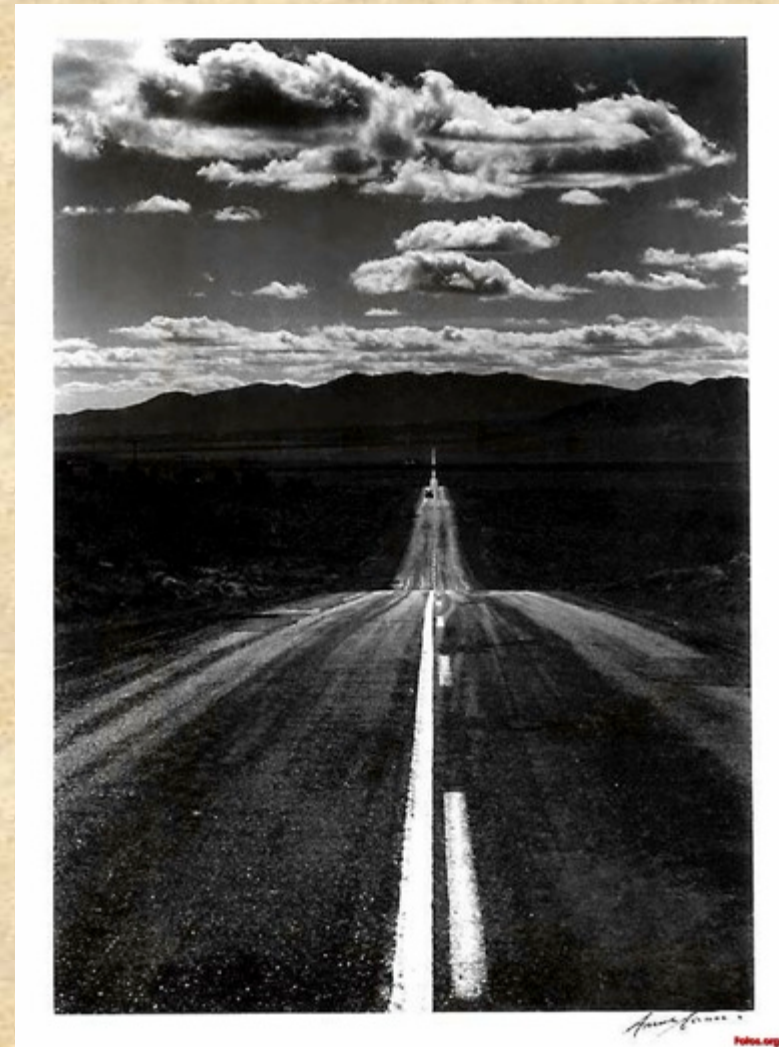
Hands





Now that we have a traditional understanding of how the concept of 'stillness' is inherent in photography, let's look at How contemporary photographers may use this concept.

Edward Weston used light, cropping and natural objects to play around with the idea of a traditional 'still life'



Ansel Adams took pictures of the American Southwest in a way that made the land appear majestic and almost spiritual through the use of large format camera and attention to space and light.





Robert Frank was an important figure in American Photography. His most famous work was a series from 1958 called, *The Americans*.

Considered one of the many street photographers he was praised for his fresh and sometimes skeptical view of American Society.





*Parade Hoboken and Central Park, Robert Frank*



## Lee Friedlander

In the 1960s and 70s, working primarily with Leica 35mm cameras and black and white film, Friedlander evolved an influential and often imitated visual language of urban "social landscape."



Lee Friedlander



Many of the photographs include fragments of store-front reflections, structures framed by fences, posters and street-signs.





Friedlander became interested in film. At the same time, he began photographing Television sets as they became part of domestic interiors. The moving image on the TV gains importance as the camera stops this one moment and freezes it in time.

Bea Nettles is a photographer whose work explores her personal life including people around her. This series explores personal memories.

*Meadowbrook*







Using more than one image, she tells a kind of story. Because the images are somewhat abstract, they read the way memories feel.

*Floating Fish Fantasy*, 1976  
*The Beach*,





THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS MY PROOF

*This photograph is my proof. There was that afternoon,  
when things were still good between us, and she embraced  
me, and we were so happy. It did happen, she did  
love me, look see for yourself!*

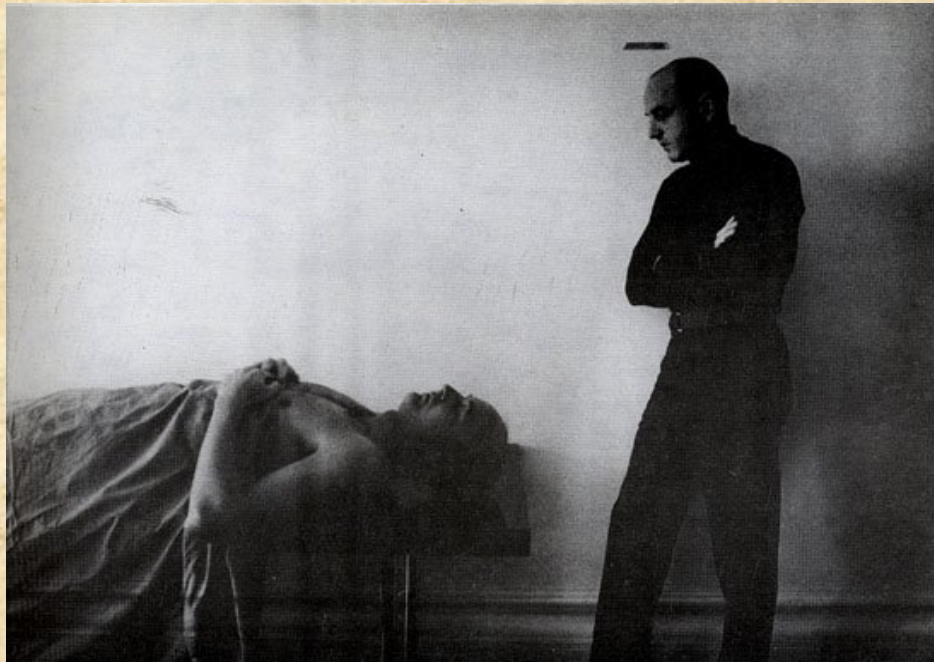
Duane Michaels, “this photograph is my proof”.

This photograph is my proof there was that afternoon when things were still good between us, and she embraced me and we were so happy. It did happen, she did love me. Look see for yourself.





Duane Michaels is a largely self-taught photographer. His work explores emotion and philosophy.



# Sally Mann

Mann is best known for her Black and White portraits of her children.



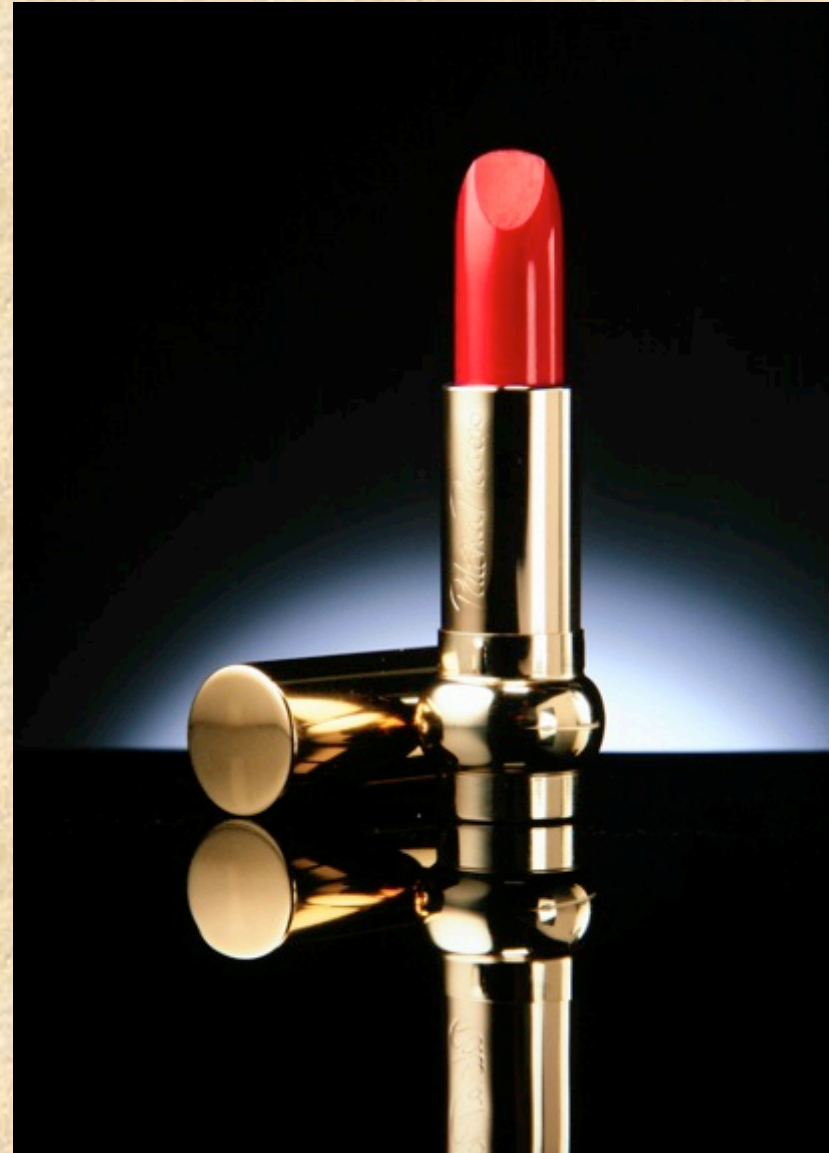




She has also created a series of large format landscapes of the south in which she explores death and decay, saying these southern places are haunted by the past.



The place we most commonly see still-life photos in popular culture is in advertising photography. The nature of many of these photos is seductive and even sexual.







Things are presented as objects of desire—even people—for the purpose of selling things.

Design elements, lighting and other aspects of Photo are used to create images of things we can't live without.





Marylin Minter's recent work focuses on hyperrealistic close-ups of seemingly glamorous images, including makeup-laden lips, eyes, and toes.



Using the techniques of Advertising Photography, she highlights the grotesque side of glamour.

Notice the top photo uses two different images together to create one photo.





As the common practice of post-mortem photography in North America and Western Europe has largely ceased, the portrayal of such images has become increasingly seen as vulgar, sensationalistic and taboo. This is in marked contrast to the beauty and sensitivity perceived in the older tradition, indicating a cultural shift that may reflect wider social discomfort with death.

The body of Maurice Clemmons with bullet entry wounds visible.



Andres Serrano is a famous contemporary photographer

Serrano was born in Brooklyn of Honduran and Afro-Cuban decent. He was raised in a strict Roman Catholic family and his work contains subject matter ranging from photos of corpses, Klansmen, burn victims, and the homeless.

He did his own series based on early photographs of people who were dead. In this case, Serrano photographs people who are considered, unimportant.

Andres Serrano, *Morgue Series*







Many of his pictures involve bodily fluids such as blood and semen as a way of exploring his bodily connection with things, in this case, his religion. At the same time, Serrano is gay. So in the 1980s his use of bodily fluids was also highly political.



Doug DuBoiss—  
"My Sister's Bedroom"

and

"Allesandra Siguenetti"

Taking pictures of seemingly ordinary things, DuBoiss transforms the everyday into something mysterious.







Jo Whaley, using nature, in particular insects, reinvents still-life including her use of old photographs.





Different ways contemporary photographers interpret, “stillness”

Stillness might be expressed in a landscape, a human body. It might be still as a result of the formal relationships or the subject.

Explore many options.

