

# Rules of Composition

{ Read an article from the website before each rule

[http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/  
guidelines for better photographic comp  
osition.html](http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines_for_better_photographic_composition.html)

# How to take good photos

⌘ How can you tell if you have a “good” photo?

⌘ “It’s pretty!” ...

⌘ “It looks good!” ...

⌘ “I like it!” ...

⌘ Ok...you may *know* that you have a good photo, but can you tell me how to *take* a good picture?

Misha, 2017



# Simplicity

↳ [http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines\\_for\\_better\\_photographic\\_composition\\_simplicity.html](http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines_for_better_photographic_composition_simplicity.html)

Misha, 2017



# Simplicity

↳ Focusing attention on the subject.

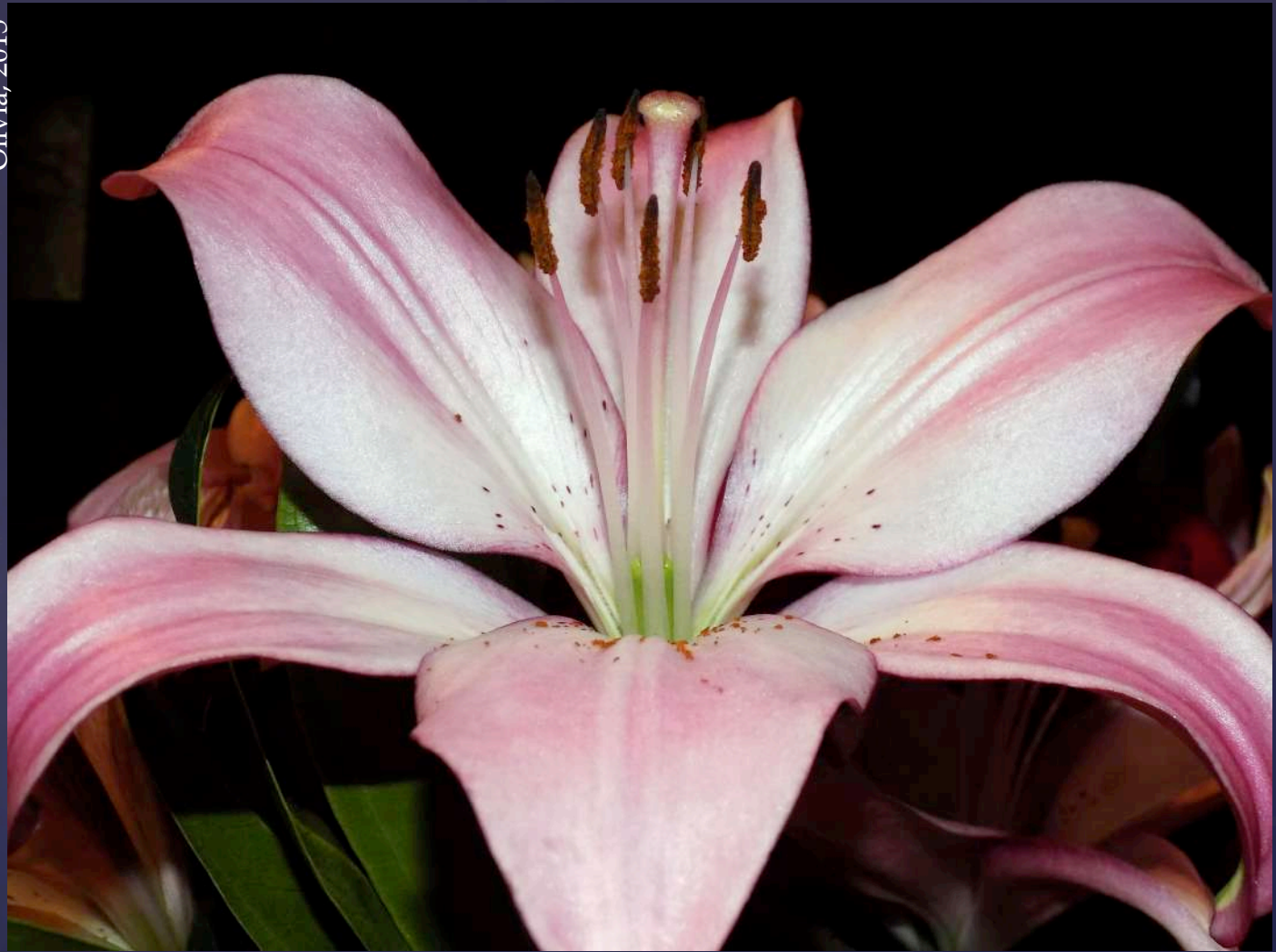
Bithia, 2015



# Simplicity

⌘ a simple background will help to focus attention on the subject.

Olivia, 2015



# Simplicity

↳ Zooming in on a subject can also help you with your simplicity.

Needs help!  
How would  
you simplify?



Needs help!  
How would  
you simplify?

A new angle that  
allows the viewer  
to focus on the  
foremost flowers  
instead of the  
grass below it







Olivia, 2015



# Rule of Thirds

↳ [http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines\\_for\\_better\\_photographic\\_composition\\_rule\\_of\\_thirds.html](http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines_for_better_photographic_composition_rule_of_thirds.html)

Olivia, 2015



# Rule of Thirds

- ↳ Splitting your photo into thirds horizontally and vertically to place your subject off center

Olivia, 2015



# Rule of Thirds

⌘ This often makes the image a bit more interesting. It can also help with balance.

Olivia, 2015



# Rule of Thirds

- ⌘ If you have a model, have them face INTO the picture. It gives them space to look and lets the viewer know what they are looking at.

Lewis, 2017



# Rule of Thirds

- ⌘ Consider the horizon. Would it be better if it were on a third?

Lewis, 2017



# Rule of Thirds

- ⌘ What do you think? It is usually a good idea to place your horizon on a third when you are shooting landscapes.



Needs help! How can you use the rule of thirds here?





Move your subject over to the third. It also helps to NOT cut him off at the rib cage and remove the horizon (or you could place it on a third).



& [http://photoinf.com/  
General/KODAK/  
guidelines\\_for\\_better  
photographic\\_composi  
tion\\_balance.html](http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines_for_better_photographic_composition_balance.html)

# Balance



↳ Using light and dark, complimenting colors, and shapes that even out the “visual weight”

# Balance



- ⌘ This image has a good amount of light and dark areas in the image.
- ⌘ It also has green on both sides of the tree trunk

# Balance



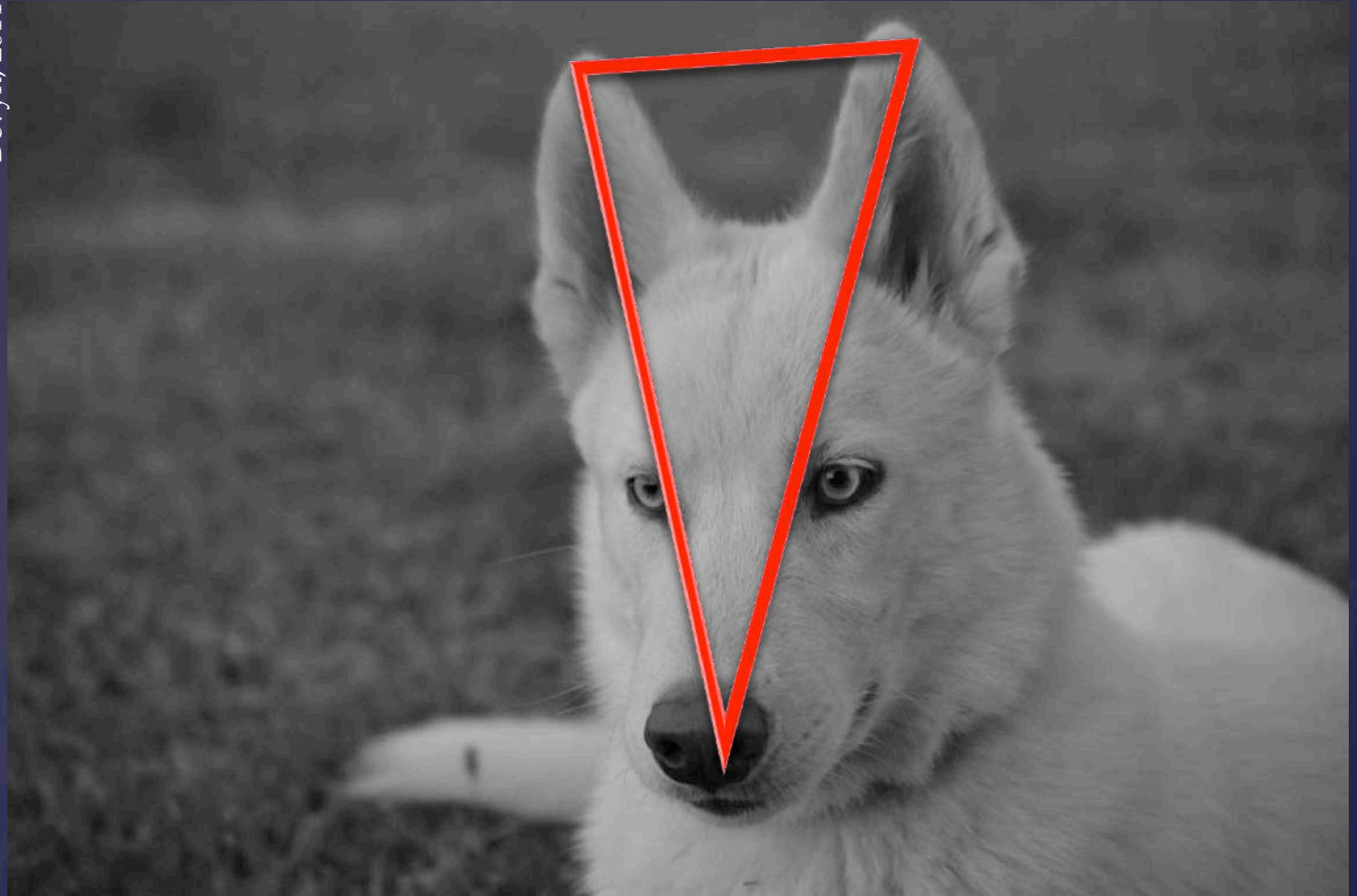
Devyn, 2014



# Balance

⌘ When looking for shapes, remember that you are using things within the frame to create your shapes. What shape do you see here?

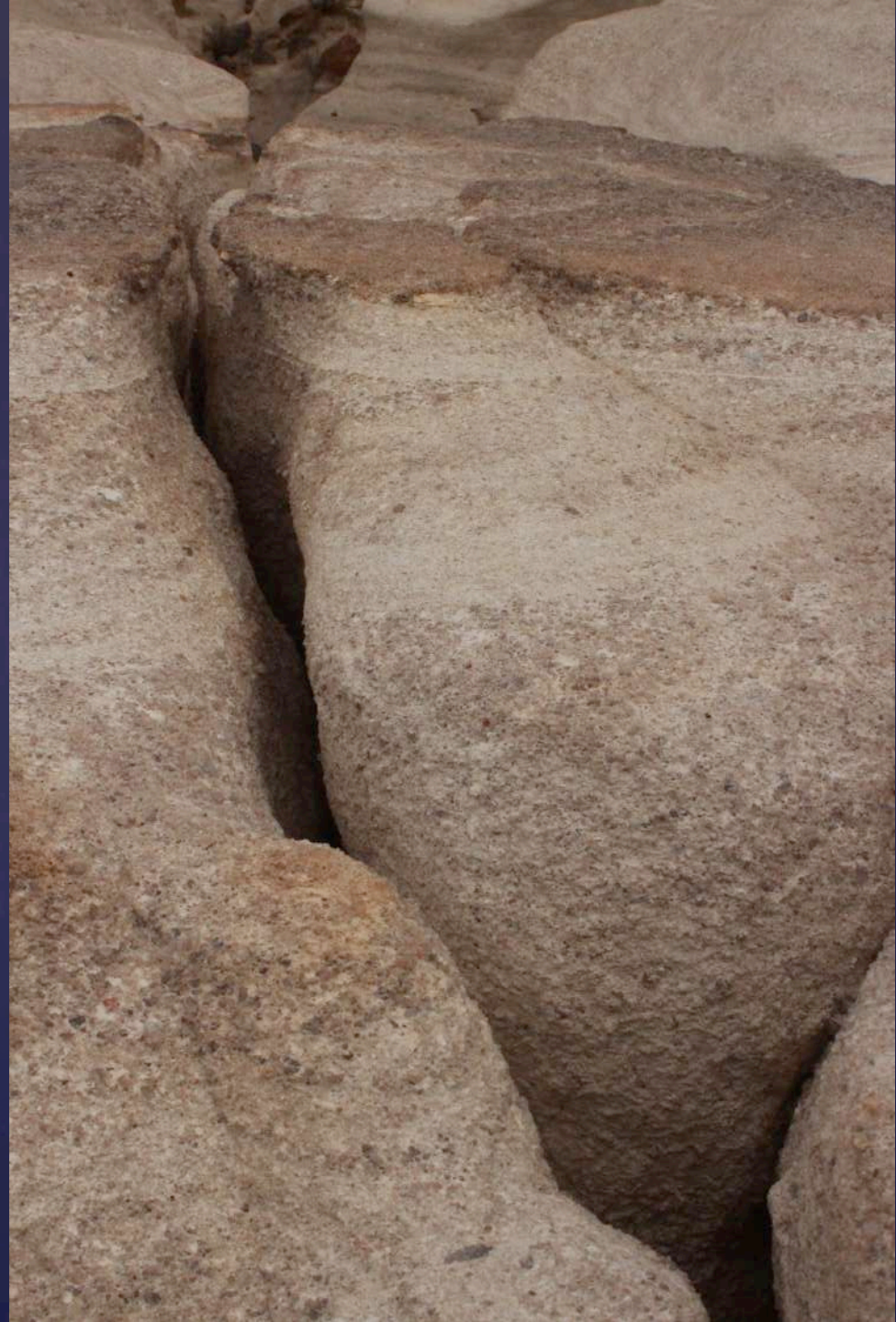
Devyn, 2014



# Balance

- ⌘ The triangle is the most dynamic shape to look for
- ⌘ This image also does an excellent job of balancing lights and darks

Needs help!  
How could  
you balance  
this better?





Needs help!  
How could  
you balance  
this better?

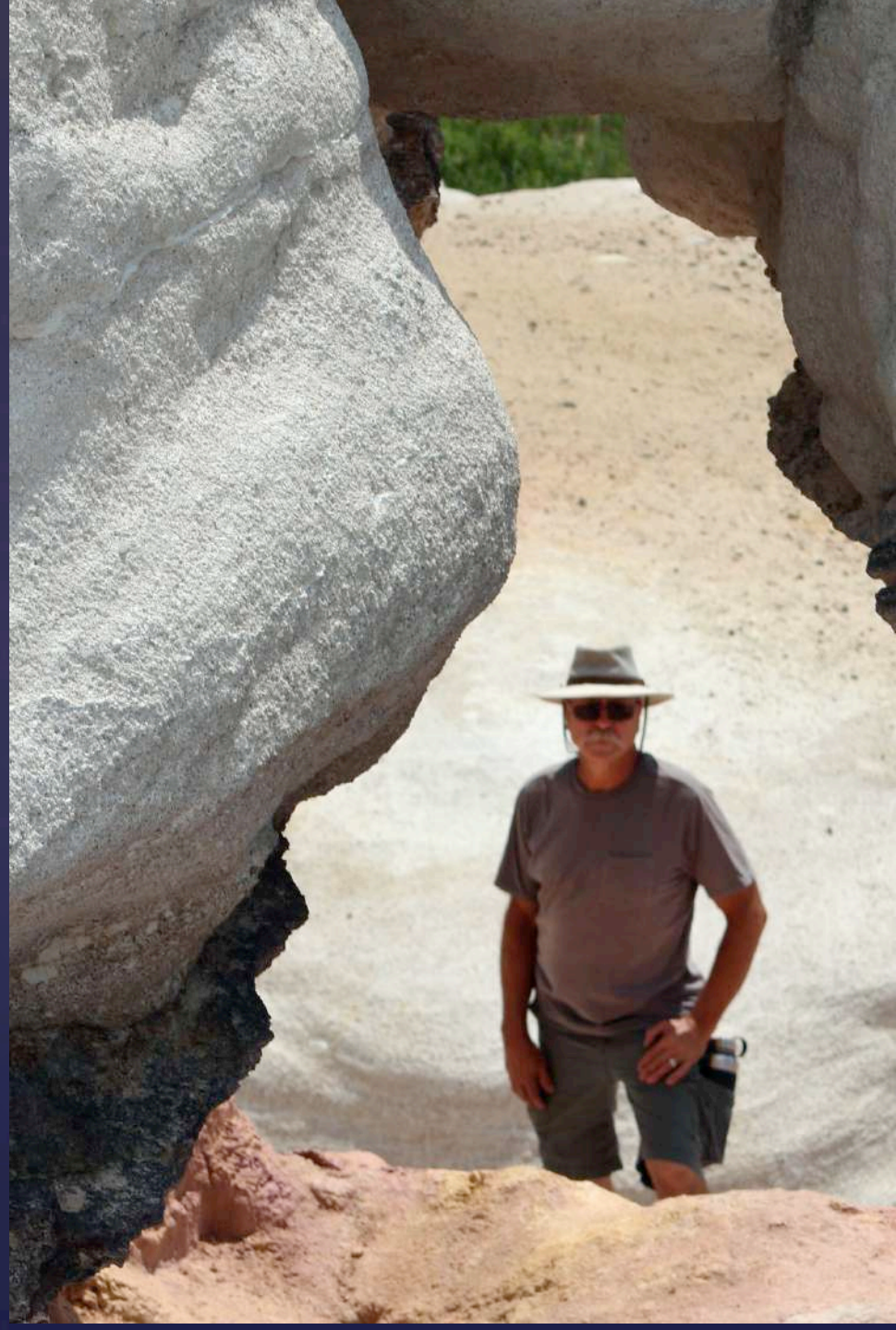
A new angle that  
gives us a little of  
the horizon (on a  
third). The darker  
rock, grass, and  
sky balances out  
the white rock.





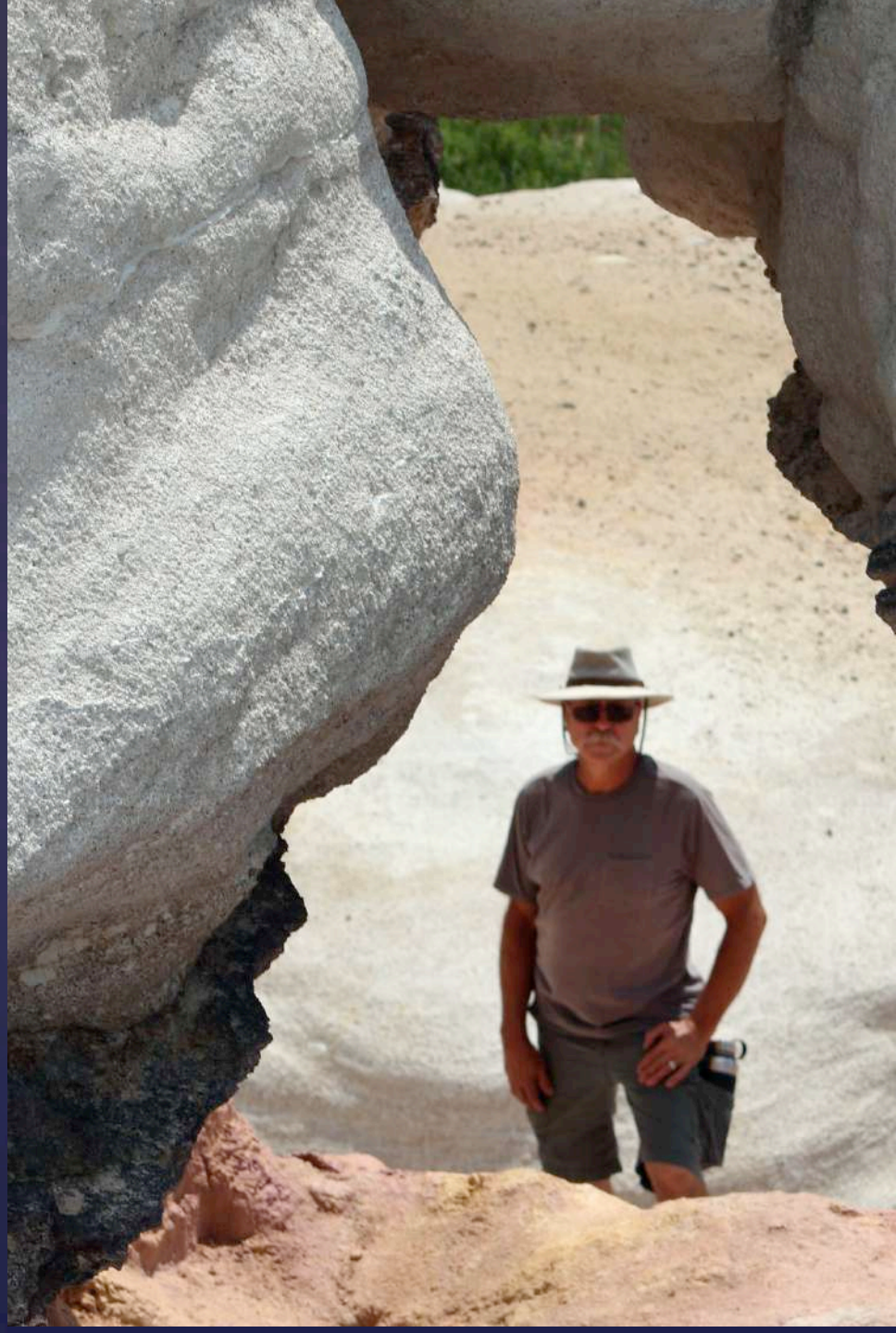
& [http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines\\_for\\_better\\_photo\\_graphic\\_composition\\_framing.html](http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines_for_better_photo_graphic_composition_framing.html)

# Framing



- ⌘ Use foreground objects to frame your subject
- ⌘ This adds visual interest to the image by showing depth.

# Framing



Bithia, 2015



# Framing

& You can use anything to make a frame

Needs help!  
Could you  
create a frame?



Needs help!  
Could you  
create a frame?

Use the items  
around you and  
change your  
angle to create a  
frame!







Lewis, 2017



# Avoiding Mergers

& [http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines\\_for\\_better\\_photographic\\_composition\\_avoiding\\_mergers.html](http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines_for_better_photographic_composition_avoiding_mergers.html)

Lewis, 2017



# Avoiding Mergers

& Sometimes purposeful (bunny ears)

Lewis, 2017



# Avoiding Mergers

& Sometimes NOT!



# Avoiding Mergers

↳ Cutting out anything that distracts from the subject



# Avoiding Mergers

- ⌘ Uncomplicated backgrounds will help you with this.
- ⌘ Also, no amputations! Be careful about cutting off body parts unnecessarily, this makes them *merge* into the edge.



# Avoiding Mergers

⌘ There! We've eliminated all the distracting factors (besides all the goofy faces, of course).

Needs help!  
Fix this  
merger!



Needs help!  
Fix this  
merger!

The simplest  
answer is to  
move over a little  
so that you can  
fit both subjects  
in the frame





Needs help!  
Fix this  
merger!

Another option  
would be to move  
your subjects  
together. Always  
more than one  
solution!





- & So show us what you've got!  
Go out and take pictures!
- & Take one shot per rule
- & You can choose any subject
- & Refer to the Photo Assignment  
page for more details
- & HAVE FUN!

## Photo Assignment 2

& [http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines\\_for\\_better\\_photographic\\_composition.html](http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines_for_better_photographic_composition.html)

# Resources