

Aaron Goodis Presentation

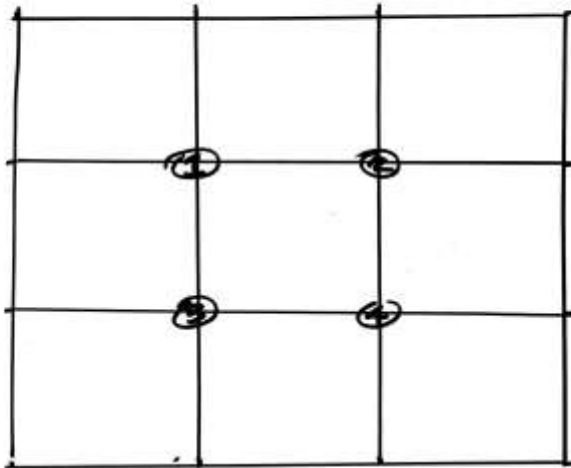
We were treated to a fascinating presentation with some amazing pictures at Tuesday night's fly club meeting. I thought Aaron wouldn't mind if I shared some of his ideas that I managed to glean from his presentation on how we might be able to improve our own photography.

A. Light and Composition

Aaron emphasized that by far the most important facet of taking a good photograph was composing the picture properly. He mentioned two ways of helping with composing the picture:

1. The rule of thirds

This involves dividing your image into 3 parts horizontally and 3 parts vertically so there are 9 sections to the picture. (Some cameras have the ability to overlay a 3x3 grid on your image—check in the menu that can be brought up on screen on the camera). Once you have either overlaid the sections or done it mentally, you should try to place your main subject somewhere off centre and close to the intersection of lines at $1/3$ and $2/3$ of the way across the image. (points 1, 2, 3 or 4).



For some reason (unbeknownst to me!) our eye perceives this as more pleasing than placing the main subject at some other location in the image!

The second rule of composition he mentioned was the use of

2. Leading lines

If you have some linear feature in the photograph which “points” to your subject, this will emphasize the importance of the subject to the photograph. Examples of leading lines might be man-made structures (like a railway or highway bridge, railway tracks, a highway, a dam on a river or some kind of structure on the river) or natural features (like a windfall tree, a drift log on a beach, a straight section of a river or a geologic feature like a sedimentary layer or a cliff face.)

All of the composition in the world will not help if you do not have good lighting conditions. On sunny days, the best time to take pictures is early or late in the day when the light is slanting and emphasizing the shadows on objects. Colours are also more brilliant at these times. Shooting during mid-day works well on rainy and overcast days when the light is muted. The colour saturation will be better on these days because the lower light levels allow the camera to achieve greater colour saturation because the exposure times will need to be longer. (a tripod will also be necessary to reduce camera shake!)

An important note for those rainy day shots—bring an umbrella to shoot under and clean your lenses prior to the trip with lens cleaner—that will reduce fogging of the lens. Other than that, keeping a good supply of lens tissue on hand will be necessary to keep the fogging to a minimum.

B. Location

Choosing areas with good subject material is also important to produce superior pictures. When shooting the pictures, you should attempt to fill the foreground and background with eye catching subjects—the midground is not as important for detail.

C. Shutter Speed

In order to generate the idea of motion in a still photograph, it is a good idea to use a tripod and shoot with a slow shutter speed (1/30th sec to 3 sec or more). This will give crisp images of the non moving surroundings but a pleasing blur to moving objects—like a waterfall. Even a point and shoot camera can be “fooled” into shooting at a slower speed by using the landscape mode or in some cameras by setting the ISO setting to a low value (under100) to simulate a slow shutter speed.

If you wish to capture a clear photograph of a moving object and don’t want the “blur” of motion you need to shoot at a high shutter speed or use the sports mode on the camera or set the ISO settings to a high value (1600 or higher).

D. F stop

The F stop is a measure of the size of the opening in the lens as the camera snaps the picture. The smaller the number, the larger the opening. (F2.8 is the largest opening and F22 is the smallest.)

Changing the F stop will alter the depth of field of the photograph (a measure of how much depth of the photo is in focus). Large F stop (small opening) produces the greatest depth of field but will require a longer exposure in order to produce a clear picture (a tripod comes in handy here again.)

In some photographs, you want to limit the depth of field (if your subject is more important than the items in either the foreground or background to the subject.) In other photographs, you would like to have everything in focus . . . in this case you should use a high F stop and use a tripod to control camera shake.

Under the conditions at the meeting, that's about all I managed to get written down so I hope there is something in these pages which might help you with your photography. I know I was reminded of some things I already knew (but manage to ignore when I take my photos!) but also learned some new things and was inspired to make an effort to take better pictures next time I am on the water! (my sore arm will probably appreciate more time spent taking photos and less time waving my rod and line around in the hopes of enticing the big one!)

Ian

PS If you google

aarongoodisphotography.com

you will be able to see some of the above applied in Aaron's exemplary photography.