

In the Style of...

**An Appreciation of Famous and Influential Photographers
The Specified Topic for April 2026 competition**

By Stan Tetrault for the Charter Oak Photographic Society, 11/10/25

Introduction

- Photographic Legacies
 - Much of what we currently see in photographic styles today have been established by iconic photographers, both past and present, in terms of technique and vision.
 - We can learn a lot by examining some of the masters.
- Habitual behaviors
 - As normal human beings, we often fall into habitual behaviors that we have become comfortable with.
 - The same is true of many of our club's competition participants (myself included).
- Specified Topics Competition Type
 - An attempt to introduce new subjects, learn new techniques, break out of your comfort zone, expand your knowledge.

Goals

Apply a given style or technique to your competition entry

- Review the list of photography icons in this presentation, or chose your own
- Do research on your choice - easily done on the internet, use ChatGTP
- Read about the photographer
 - Identify their particular contributions or how they influence(d) the craft
- Determine if their style or technique can be emulated by you
 - Within reason and without undue burden (extensive travel, additional equipment, expense)

Famous and Influential Photographers

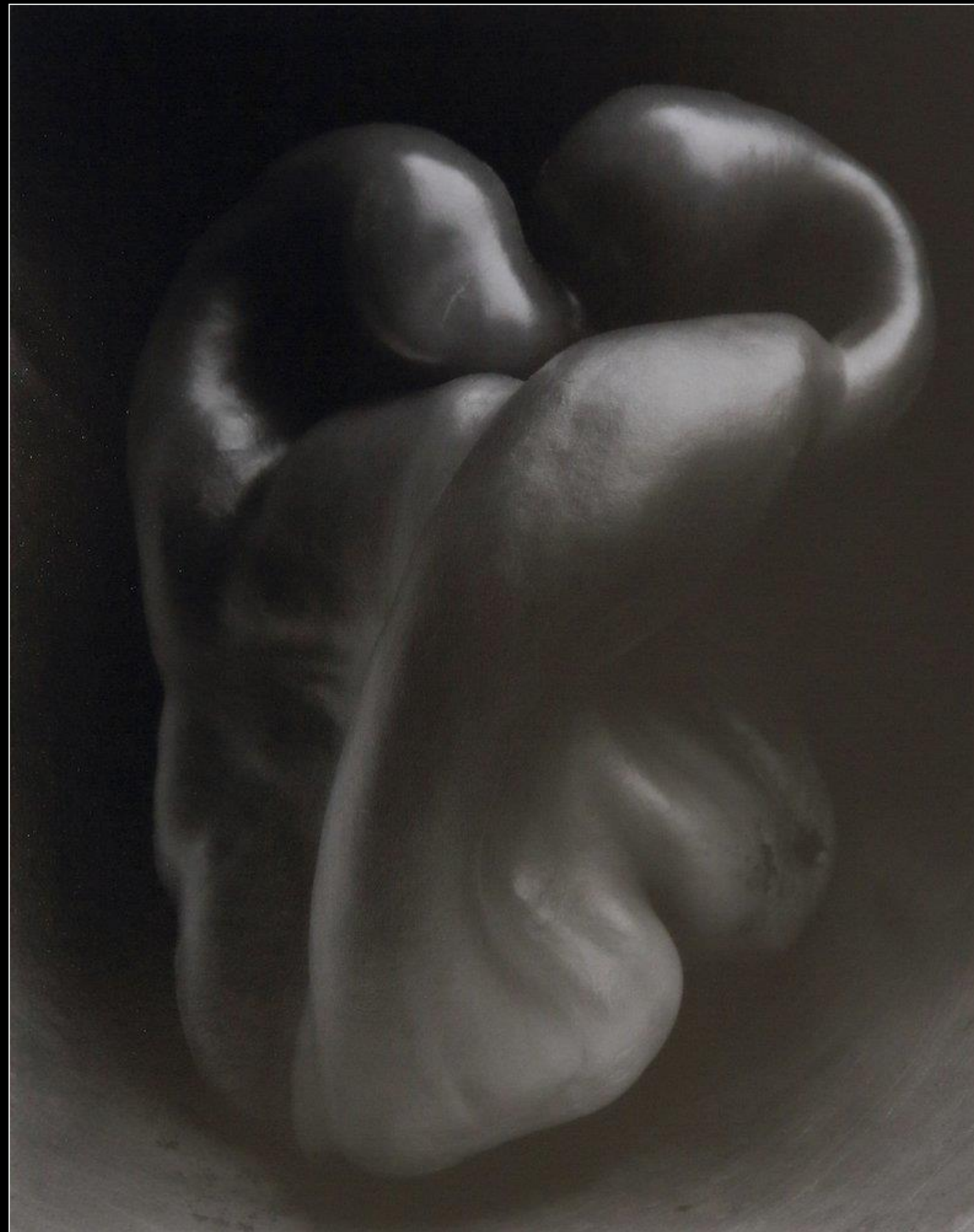
Edward Weston (1886-1958)

- American modernist photographer
- Co-founder of group f/64
- Focused on texture, form and purity in photography
- Best known for his black and white still lifes of forms like peppers, shells and nudes
- Notable work:
 - Pepper No. 30 (1930)

Edward Weston

Pepper No. 30 (1930)

A black and white image showcasing a green pepper with a soft, sculptural quality, achieved through careful lighting and composition. The photo is admired for its focus on the form of the pepper, highlighting its curves and texture as if it were a human figure.



Ansel Adams (1902-1984)

- Master of landscape photography
- Developed the Zone system
- Environmental advocacy through imagery
- Notable work:
 - Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico (1941)

Ansel Adams

Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico (1941)

Arguably Adams' most iconic image, this black-and-white photograph features the moonlit homes and cemetery of a quiet community. Perhaps the most eye-catching element of the photograph, however, is the stark contrast between the glowing moon and darkened sky—a striking visual that Adams himself was obsessed with obtaining.



Annie Leibovitz (b. 1949)

- Contemporary portrait photographer
- Known for celebrity portraits and conceptual imagery
- Worked for Rolling Stone and Vanity Fair
- Her work often blurs the line between portraiture and fine art
- Notable work:
 - John Lennon and Yoko Ono (1980)

Annie Leibovitz

**John Lennon and Yoko Ono, New York
(1980)**

Taken just hours before Lennon's death, this image is one of her most famous. The photo, which was initially intended to be a lighthearted representation of the couple's relationship, suddenly took on a much deeper meaning.



Dorothea Lange (1895-1965)

- Documentary photographer during the Great Depression
- Worked with the Farm Security Administration
- Captured human suffering and resilience
- Notable work:
 - Migrant Mother (1936)

Dorothea Lange

Migrant Mother (1936)

Her Pictures on the Great Depression got her enormous recognition and fame. “I saw and approached the hungry and desperate mother, as if drawn by a magnet. I do not remember how I explained my presence or my camera to her, but I do remember she asked me no questions. I made five exposures, working closer and closer from the same direction. I did not ask her name or her history. She told me her age, that she was thirty-two. She said that they had been living on frozen vegetables from the surrounding fields, and birds that the children killed. She had just sold the tires from her car to buy food. There she sat in that lean-to tent with her children huddled around her, and seemed to know that my pictures might help her, and so she helped me. There was a sort of equality about it.”



Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908-2004)

- French photojournalist
- Coined “the decisive moment”
- Co-founder of Magnus Photos in 1947
- Philosophy - great photography captures fleeting moments of balance and harmony
- Notable work:
 - Behind the Gare Saint Lazare (1932)

Henri Cartier-Bresson

Behind the Gare Saint-Lazare (1932)

Focused on texture, form, and purity in photography

A perfectly timed shot of a man leaping over a puddle, embodying his philosophy.



Harold “Doc” Edgerton (1903-1990)

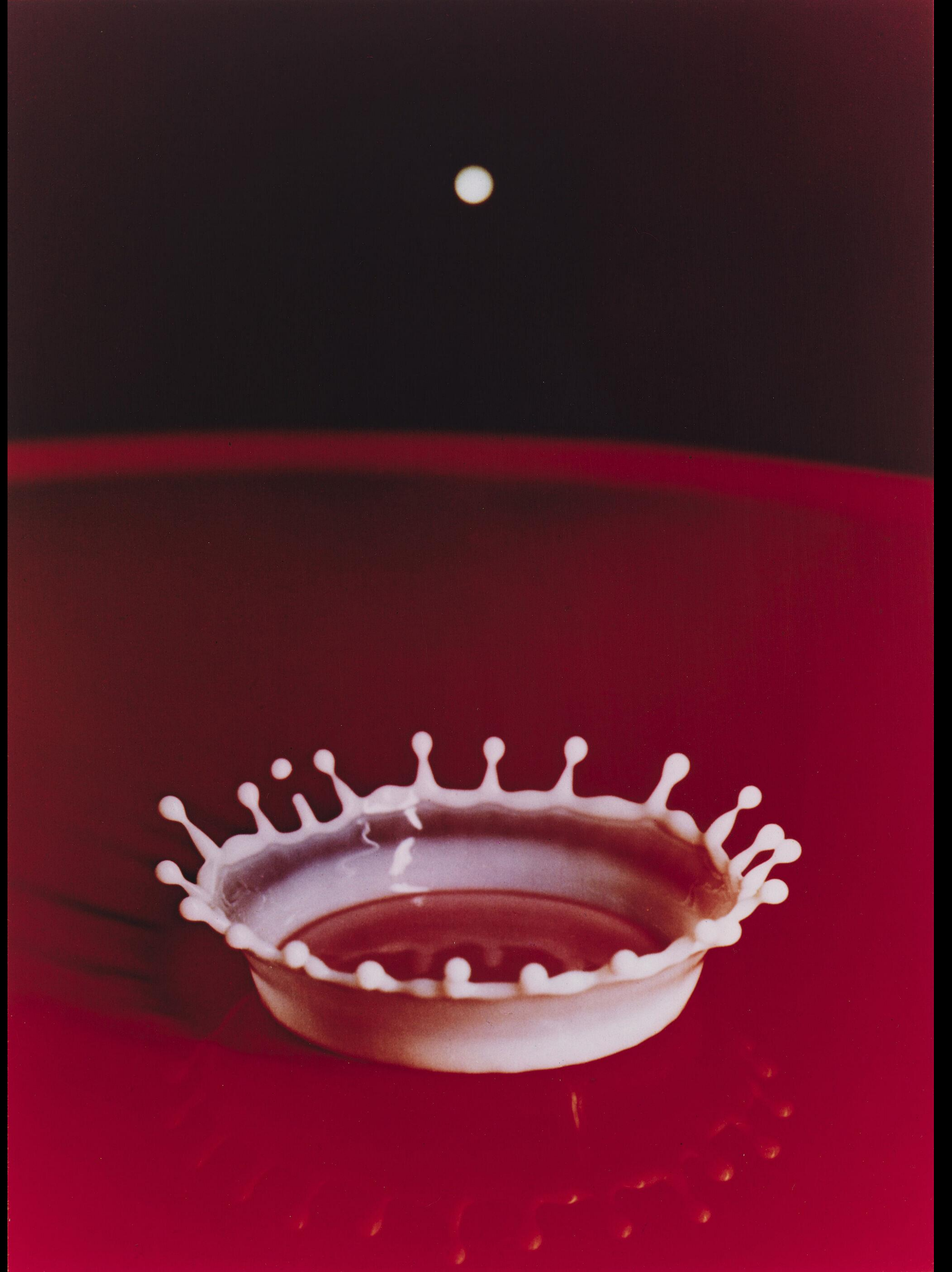
- Pioneer in high-speed photography
- Invented stroboscopic flash
- Made motion visible to the human eye
- Notable work:
 - Milk Drop Coronet (1957)

Harold “Doc” Edgerton

Milk Drop Coronet (1957)

An engineer and photographer, Edgerton developed flash technology in the 1930s that allowed him to photograph objects and events moving faster than the eye can perceive, capturing phenomena like a bullet piercing an apple or a drop of milk mid-splash.

Combining technical insight and an aesthetic sensibility, Edgerton’s photographs give unprecedented clarity to the physical world and reveal the magic of everyday life.



Berenice Abbot (1898-1991)

- Documented NYC architecture in the 1930's
- Advocate of straight photography
- She captured the city's rapid transformation with a clear and objective eye
- Later focused on scientific imagery
- Notable work:
 - Changing New York (1935-1939)

Berenice Abbott

Waterfront - South Street (1935)

Changing New York (1935-1939)

A comprehensive project supported by the WPA that showcased the architecture and street life of NYC.



Jimmy Chin (b. 1973)

- Adventure photographer and filmmaker
- Combines photography with climbing and skiing
- His work blends extreme sports with storytelling, often captured in perilous conditions
- Directed *Free Solo* (2018), won Academy Award-Best Documentary Feature
- Master Class-really good mini biography, tips, philosophy, work ethic, etc.
- Notable work:
 - Everest summit photos, *Free Solo*

Jimmy Chin

Rock Climbing and *Free Solo* Images (2018)



How do we do this?

- Edward Weston
 - Open your refrigerator and pull out some veggies. Pose them artistically.
- Ansel Adams
 - Find a dramatic landscape and post process the lights and darks for contrasting tones
- Annie Leibovitz
 - Find a willing subject (friend, spouse, relative, model), pose with an interesting background that compliments the model. No kitchen cabinets.
- Dorothea Lange
 - Find a situation that documents a story of suffering and/or resilience.

How do we do this? (continued)

- Henri Cartier-Bresson
 - Engage a willing subject and arrange a scenario that captures a fleeting moment.
- Doc Edgerton
 - May require a set up with good lighting. Freeze action of a flowing liquid or wafting steam from a cup of tea or coffee.
- Berenice Abbot
 - Next time you're in New York City (or any other metropolis), find a scene where the composition includes both foreground objects and a city skyline in the background.
- Jimmy Chin
 - No need to climb Everest or El Capitan with rope in one hand and camera in the other.
 - Find any local sporting activity where you can safely get close enough to the action to make a dynamic capture.

Other considerations

- Color or monochrome
- Please, no pets, no birds, no bugs.
- Naming your submission
 - Include short title, followed by “In the Style of *Famous Photographer Name*”
 - Example: “Puddle Jumper ISO Cartier-Bresson”
 - Title must be less than 40 characters
- As always, consider:
 - Impact
 - Composition
 - Center of interest
 - Technical excellence
 - Story-telling
 - Lighting
 - Creativity

Questions?

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