The image to the right demonstrates the principle of occlusion, which states that objects that occlude others are perceived as in front of the objects they are occluding and closer to the observer. We perceive the container of red paint closer to us and the container of white paint as furthest from us in the visual scene because the container of red paint occludes all the other containers and the container of white paint is occluded by all the other containers.
The principle of relative height states that objects resting higher in the visual field are perceived as being farther away from the viewer than objects resting lower in the visual field. In this up close “macro” image of large salt grains, those particles that are further towards the top of the image are generally perceived as far away from the viewer while those salt grains resting towards the bottom of the image are perceived as closer to the viewer.
As any artist knows, linear perspective is another strong depth cue. The lines of a railroad track that converge to a point on the horizon in this image are an example of linear perspective, wherein objects that appear closer to the point of convergence (otherwise known as the focus point) are perceived as farther away from the viewer than objects resting away from the focus point. The wood planks that are closer to the focus point, which is just to the left of the figure’s upper arm, are perceived as farther away from the viewer than the wooden planks that are near the converging railroad tracks when they have the most space between them.
Texture gradient is another cue that is related to the size depth cues, wherein gradients or patterns that have large space gaps are perceived as closer to the viewer while those that are dense are perceived as farther away from the viewer. In the image to the right, which is an up close “macro” photograph of a rusty bell, the size of the rust spots on the seam in the upper right are larger (and spaciously distributed) than the (densely packed) rust spots on that same seam in the lower left. Thus, most perceive the object as more closer to the viewer on the right side and further from the viewer on the left side of the image.
The law of common fate parallels the law of good continuation and states that objects that appear to move in the same direction are generally grouped together, as seen in the lamp strings depicted in the bottom image. All the strings appear to be moving to the right, as cued by the blurry trails they leave behind them and the direction in which they are tilted, so viewers more quickly understand the picture as a group of strings moving to the right rather than individual strings moving to the right. Another way of realizing this is that viewers do not need to identify each string and then each string's direction of motion to understand the scene, but use the law of common fate to understand the “gist” of the visual scene.