

Analysis & understanding - Reading Photographs

IMAGE - B

Looking at one of the series image of a photographer Alec Soth called "Dog Days, Bogota" I can suggest that this image has been made on a warm day. Also it visually looks like 9x9 large format camera shot, as each side of the image looks identical in terms of a size. This image makes me feel worried, togetherness and detachment at the same time. You can observe a young couple perhaps in their 20s, with child in a buggy, but on the parents face I cannot see positive emotions, conversely I can see a desperate family with a little hope in their eyes, as something good is about to happen, a sun ray will light their path for a better life. You can tell that they are an unsecured family even by their clothes, that seems to look oversized and slovenly.

The composition of this image is a bit too crowded as the objects are filling in the whole image leaving only 1/3 of a space on the left side. The main focal point of the image in my opinion is a red jacket and the faces of the couple looking toward the camera. I also feel that the positioning of their bodies are a bit uncertain, shackled and closed, as they are trying to prevent a close contact with people and opening their life to the others, protecting each other in some way. Angle of a shooting seems to be lower than the level of subject eyes, which makes the subject look smaller and lower than in real life. The lighting does not give us as much information as it could, because it is just a normal day light, seems that it wasn't really sunny on that day, as subject bodies are not highly lighted with sun light or any artificial lighting. The lighting is soft with barely any shadows which gives you calm, comfortable and lurking atmosphere overall.

The background is light blue, a colour of the sky, quite simple and it's not repelling sight of the picture. This colour is one of trust, honesty and loyalty. It is sincere, reserved and quiet, and doesn't like to make a fuss or draw attention. By looking at this background colour merging with the subjects it creates a full story of a family that lives their own life without impulsive or spontaneous actions and don't like to be rushed - first they need to analyse and think things through, and to work to a plan.

In overall I would say that I am not as impressed of this picture in terms of a composition and location, because background and the subjects merge together creating an effect of a vertigo due to inability to concentrate of a particular subject. On the other hand, I really like the hidden twofold meaning of the image, where the subjects are trying to protect each other from unwanted eyes and where love and hope gives you a chance to live, exist and dwell with a harmony in which various components exist together without destroying one another.