



Pareidolia – Seeing What's Not Really There

By Joyce Genske

Pareidolia is the tendency to impose a meaningful interpretation on a nebulous stimulus, usually visual, so that one sees an object, pattern, or meaning where there is none. Common examples are perceived images of animals, faces, or objects in cloud formations, seeing faces in inanimate objects, or lunar pareidolia like the Man in the Moon. Pareidolia can cause people to interpret random images, or patterns of light and shadow, as faces. The Rorschach inkblot test uses pareidolia in an attempt to gain insight into a person's mental state. The Rorschach is a projective test that elicits thoughts or feelings of respondents that are "projected" onto ambiguous inkblot images.

These studies help to explain why people generally identify a few lines and a circle as a "face" so quickly and without hesitation. Cognitive processes are activated by the "face-like" object which alerts the observer to both the emotional state and identity of the subject, even before the conscious mind begins to process or even receive the information. A "stick figure face", despite its simplicity, can convey mood information, and be drawn to indicate emotions such as happiness or anger. This subtle capability is hypothesized to be the result of eons of natural selection favoring people most able to quickly identify the mental state of threatening people, thus providing the individual an opportunity to flee or attack pre-emptively. This ability can also function to determine the demeanor of wildlife.

So much for the technical aspect of pareidolia. Let's test your ability now. On the following page are pictures I've taken of random things that appear to have the image of a face, an animal, or another object in them. I've noted what is really there and what pareidolia says is there. Do you see what I saw?

Continued on page 2

Pareidolia *(continued from page 1)*



Just a cloud, or a roadrunner?



Burned out tree, or a witch holding a baby?



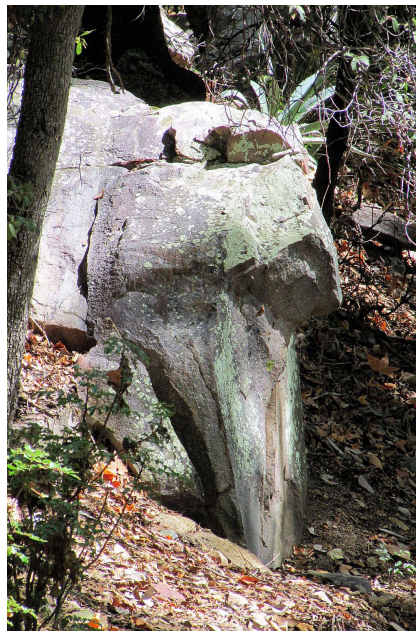
Tree trunk with vines, or a green-eyed lizard?



Random shadow, or flying witch?



Wood and cholla branch, or turtle biting a snake?



Just a rock, or a bird drinking?

Continued on page 3

It's Challenge Time!

Each month, we're posting lists of terms to get you thinking about how you can make images that fit the themes posted. Some are straight-forward, while others are more conceptual. Either way, having prompts can help you focus your photography and give you a reason to get out and shoot.

Below are the lists for September (current photos showcased here), and October (photograph these topics in October and they will be showcased in the November newsletter). Feel free to submit photos from either category.

Please consider joining! It's a fun, no-stress way to keep up your photography skills and your eye for composition. Feel free to photograph one of each word, several of one word, or mix and match. We love seeing what everyone is working on! **Send your photos to: azval.sleger@gmail.com**

September Word List

Abstract
Colorful
Time
Beverages
Healthy

October Word List

Pareidolia
Pumpkins / Pumpkin Spice
Arid
Orange
Macro

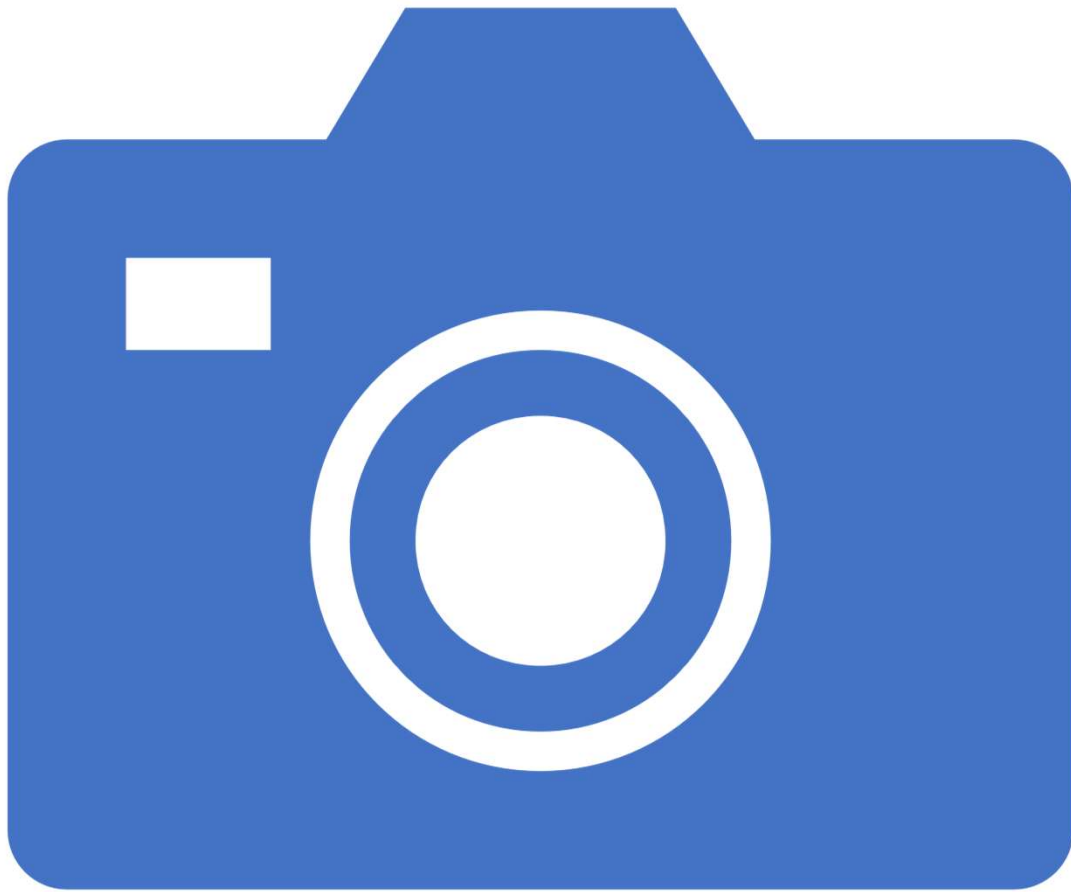
Meeting Schedule

Through the end of 2022, we have meeting space reserved at the **Sierra Vista Police Department**, 911 Coronado Blvd in the Training Room. The meeting schedule is 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM. Topics vary from month to month, but there will always be time to share Member photos, so bring a flash drive of pictures to share.

The next meeting will be **Thursday, October 20**, beginning at 4 PM. George Broxton will present to the group. Bring photos to share with the group!

Pareidolia *(continued from page 2)*

Fun, isn't it?! When you're out taking pictures, look beyond the obvious. You'll be amazed at the hidden images in everyday objects such as trees, clouds, rocks, even cut fruit or vegetables. Let your imagination run wild. You might even notice other details that really are there. Everything you learn can help make your photos better. When you're done taking the picture, turn around -- there might be something interesting right behind you too!



Member Photos

We love to see your photos – even if you aren't looking for challenge words.
We showcase them in the newsletter, and you are encouraged to bring
them to the meeting on a flash drive!

Member Photos

Joyce Genske submitted these challenge word photos



Abstract



Beverages - Day



Beverages - Night

Member Photos

Joyce Genske submitted these challenge word photos



Colorful



Healthy



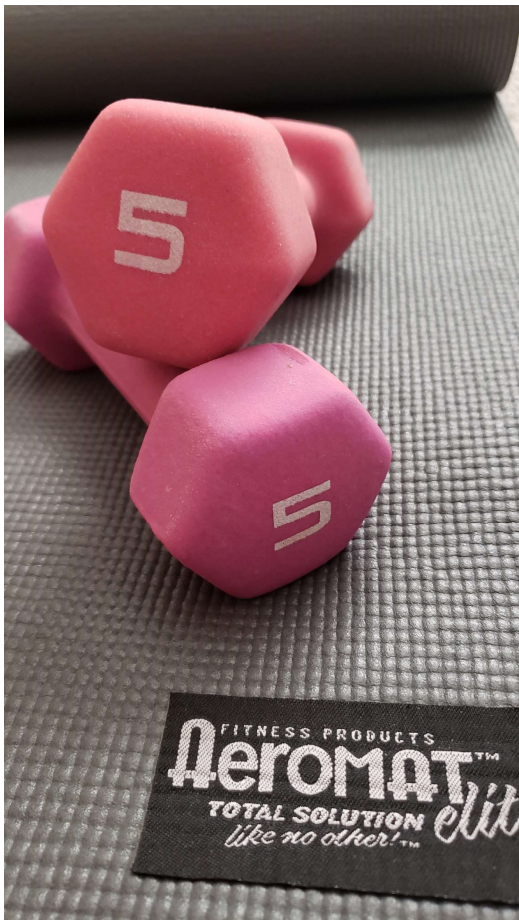
Time

Member Photos

Val Sleger submitted these challenge word photos



Colorful



Healthy

Member Photos

Val Sleger submitted these challenge word photos



Abstract



Time