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Photography

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### Alvin Langdon Coburn

This paper is about the modern architecture photography of Alvin Langdon Coburn. His photography career started in 1890 when his family visited his maternal uncles in Los Angeles. They gave him a 4 x 5 Kodak Camera. Most of his pictures are of cityscapes and bridges. His work influenced me as a photographer because all of his pictures are very detailed and beautiful just as I would like mine to be. In this paper you will understand how Alvin Langdon Coburn's works are so influential and important to photography today.

Alvin Langdon Coburn lived June 11, 1882 to November 23, 1966. He lived to be 86 years old. He was born in Boston, Massachusetts. When he was eight years old his uncles gave him a camera and he began to love photography. He was influenced by F. Holland Day, a famous photographer at the time who was Alvin's cousin. Alvin used a Kodak Camera and many composition techniques. These techniques were simplification, negative space, and shape. He was most famous for his self portrait and his pictures of cityscapes and bridges.

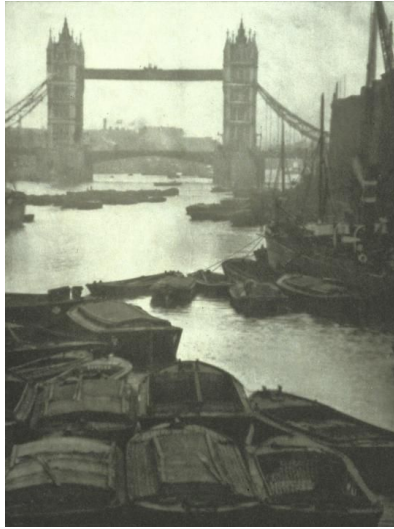
The first image I decided to recreate was Alvin Langdon Coburn's famous Bicycle Wheel Photograph. This is the image displayed at the bottom of the paragraph. This picture was taken in 1917 and depicts two shadows cast by spokes on bicycle wheels. This was influenced by the modern wheel that was common in this time period. He intended to show his skills as a photographer by taking detailed pictures of shadows. He displayed this intention very well in my

opinion. This influences me as a photographer because I one day would like to have the skill to do that.



Langdon Coburn, Alvin. Bicycle Wheel Votograph. 1917. Atlas Gallery. ArtNet. Gallery. ArtNet Worldwide Corporation. 19 March 2014

The second image I decided to recreate was The Tower Bridge and Barges. This is shown at the bottom of the paragraph. The Tower Bridge and Barges was taken in 1906 by Alvin Langdon Coburn. It depicts a busy harbor filled with barges and boats with The Tower Bridge towering over it all. It shows a busy time period with beautiful architecture watching over all of it. The message Alvin Langdon Coburn intended to show how such a busy place can have such a beautiful setting. The intended message is portrayed very effectively and strongly. This image is one of my favorites and influences me to be able to display such a clear message in a photograph.



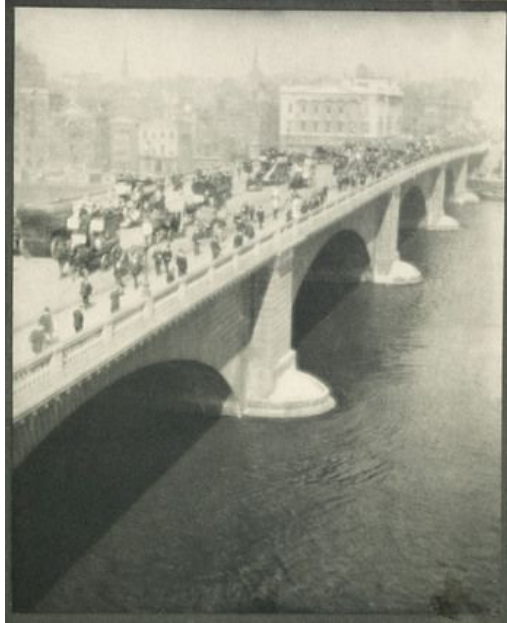
Langdon Coburn, Alvin. London Bridge and Barges. 1903. The Raymond Machesney Coburn Collection. The Phillips Collection. Laith Alnouri. 2008.

The third image I decided to recreate was The Bridge-Ipswich. This photo is displayed at the bottom of the paragraph. This photograph was taken by Alvin Langdon Coburn in 1904 just as he was starting as a serious photographer. It similar to The Tower Bridge and Barges because there is water and a bridge. The bridge is very different and is shown at a very different angle though. This image is very different then The Bicycle Wheel Votograph. There is two very different subject matters and it is showing two different styles of photography. The only similarity between The Tower Bridge and Barges and The Bridge-Ipswich are the distinct lines. The Bridge-Ipswich was influenced by simplicity of the bridge in the picture. This photograph was taken to show how simple modern architecture can be. He portrays the intended message tremendously well. This image influences my work because it shows me that there doesn't need to be a lot of things in a picture to make it a good picture.



Langdon Coburn, Alvin. The Bridge-Ipswich. 1904. The Raymond Machesney Coburn Collection. The Phillips Collection. Laith Alnouri. 2008.

The final image I decided to recreate was The London Bridge. This is by far my favorite of all the images. The London Bridge was taken by Alvin Langdon Coburn in 1909. This is very different than The Bicycle Wheel Votograph because there is a very different subject. However this photograph is very similar to The Tower Bridge and Barges and The Bridge-Ipswich in the sense that all of the pictures show bridges and how they help modern day society. This image was influenced when Alvin Langdon Coburn was in London and was fascinated by the bridge. He intended to show how bridges were essential to modern day living to help people get from one place to another. He portrayed this intention very well. The image is displayed below.



Langdon Coburn, Alvin. The London Bridge. 1909. Gilman Collection, Purchase, Joyce F. Menschel Photography Library Fund. Metropolitan Museum of Art. 1 January 2010.

References.

The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "Alvin Langdon Coburn." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 12 June 2015, [www.britannica.com/biography/Alvin-Langdon-Coburn](http://www.britannica.com/biography/Alvin-Langdon-Coburn).