



## *Presidio San Francisco*

by Edgar Angelone



Published in *LensWork* and *LensWork Extended* #100

### Commentary

Photography is about relationships.  
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I just didn't want you to miss this incredibly important concept. If a photograph is not about *relationships* then it simply a picture of something, some person, or some moment. It is mere description, the dry prose of classification and detail.

When a photograph is about relationships, it suddenly is a romance—a play of Yin and Yang, a dance, a conversation, with movement, action, and life. These are not normally terms one would use to describe inanimate objects, but this marvelous image by Edgar Angelone illustrates how successfully this can be done with brick and steel.

Two inanimate objects, large in scale, both man-made. One is light, suspended, airy, enveloping; the other is dark, massive, substantial, supportive, grounded. But don't they just dance with each other across the frame! This is not a photograph about the bridge, nor about the building, but about the relationship between the two. The photograph invites comparison, but in my interpretation also presents a partnership.

I know, I'm completely anthropomorphizing these two inanimate objects and imbuing them with characteristics they don't have. But this is not a photograph that is intended to document the reality of

bridge and building; it is photographic *artwork* that is intended to convey both breath and substance. Isn't that the key to using photography as a personally expressive art medium?

Why do we photograph rocks and trees, sunsets and flowers, buildings and street scenes, waterfalls and wheat fields? None of these inanimate subjects feel as we humans do, but that does not prevent us from using them — albeit with a bit of anthropomorphizing — to express human emotions. Photography is not about the world “out there.” Great photographs are always about the world inside us — not just me and you, but about all of us.

Without human emotions, photography becomes mere paper with a smudge on its surface. All photography is about human emotions, states of mind, passing thoughts, revelations, relationships. Once we recognize this, then bridges are no longer bridges, and buildings are no longer buildings. In the hands of a talented photographer — like Angelone — they become expressive far beyond their pragmatic existence. Only in the context of commentaries like this one, do such ideas surface. But if a photograph doesn't connect with us on some deeply emotional level, it's just a picture. To be *artwork* is a much more human endeavor.