

Michael Christidis

**MC ART
FRAMEWORK™**

...for empowering visual
creativity

A Methodology for Creating Art by Michael Christidis

...for anyone wishing to
become more creative.

The MC Art Framework evolved over many years and is how I create my work today. I fully credit this approach for enabling me to live the enriched and creative life that I do.

I compiled everything I've learned about visual creativity and the making of art into this four-part, eleven-step visual creativity empowerment and artistic growth approach.

I identified key practices for developing creatively and assembled a selection of design protocols to use with elements of design for constructing strong compositions and images with impact. I then devised and refined an approach to systematically apply all of this to the creation of my art and the making of photographs.

How to Make this Approach Work for You

All you need to do is adopt MC Art Framework practices when creating new work and use the "MC Art Framework Organizer" tool. Ten of the eleven steps of the framework pose multiple questions to the artist. These questions are designed to guide the artist's thinking through each step of the framework. Do not skip any questions. Commit to documenting ALL of your answers when initially starting to work this way. You will develop a sense of when you'll no longer need to document the entire process as you work through it repeatedly over a period of time (when it simply becomes the way you naturally "see" and create).

Below are the eleven steps of the MC Art Framework for empowering visual creativity.

STAGE 1: CONCEIVE

Step 1 - Find

- What caught my attention about my subject?
- What is interesting or appealing?

Step 2 - See

- Is my subject matter clearly evident to me?
- What part of the scene is actually my subject?

Step 3 - Feel

- Is it what I am looking at in front of me that attracts me or is it simply how the scene makes me feel?
- What is **the mood of my scene**?
- Am I **excited** about the creative possibilities here?

STAGE 2: DEFINE

Step 4 - Clarify

- What is my centre of interest and how does it relate to what I see and feel?
- What is the **mood I wish to convey** in the finished work and how is this different from the mood of the actual scene?
- How can I best **articulate what I see and feel in one or two sentences** to reflect what I want to portray/express?
- What do I **want my viewer to see and feel** when they view my work and what choices will I have to make to ensure that this is the case?

Step 5 - Know

- Do I want to do something with this subject?
- Do I have the right tools and enough skill and knowledge to work with this subject matter and express my vision for it?

STAGE 3: CONSTRUCT

Step 6 - Connect

- How can I best **convey what I see and feel** and what are my best options regarding how to approach this?
- What are the **basic shapes** in my scene?
- How can I best **arrange and isolate core elements** of my scene to **simplify my composition** as much as possible?
- Have I **filled my frame** with my subject matter?
- Are there any distracting elements that need to be addressed (tree branches, small areas of light in dark areas of the scene, anything that detracts from the centre of interest...)? Can these be excluded or mitigated, or are they a necessary part of my vision for the scene?
- How do I want the viewer to experience my scene? Where do they begin to examine my image? How is their eye guided through the scene to my centre of interest (if there is one)? Does their eye rest anywhere and, if so, is this a distracting element that needs to be addressed?
- How to arrange the elements in my frame in a way that **guides the viewer to my centre of interest**?

Are there any areas of contrast between tones or colours to attract the viewer's eye and do these support or detract from the viewing experience?

- How well do my **compositional choices support my desired mood**?
- How should I **"light" my scene** to leverage compositional elements to best convey my desired mood? Should it be darker or lighter overall and/or only in certain areas?
- How well do my compositional and lighting choices and my desired mood for the scene align with the viewing experience? Are there any compositional changes that can **optimize the viewing experience**?

Step 7 - Plan

- Plan your approach; determine the optimal perspective (position relative to your subject matter) and define any technical considerations required for starting your drawing, painting or the taking of a photograph.
- Prepare your equipment and work area.
- Wait for the right light if you're physically at the scene and it is changing or as per how your painting or drawing should be lit (point in Step 6 - Connect).

- Refer to or make a paint sketch, drawing, quick pencil sketch, exploratory cell phone snaps, take notes, take a phone pic and mark it up...whatever tools you have decided to use as an aid to support the creation your final work.

Step 8 - Execute

- Stick to your plan, "do" and finish...it's just that simple.

STAGE 4: EVOLVE

Step 9 - Evaluate

- **Have I achieved a viewing experience that aligns with my articulated vision for the work?**
- How successfully did my compositional and lighting choices help convey my vision for the work?
- Did I do an adequate job with my selected tools?
- Was my approach appropriate for my subject and my desired mood, and was it the best option?

Step 10 - Learn

- How do I feel about this attempt? Was what I initially felt and what inspired me reflected successfully in my end result?
- Can I clearly articulate how I came to produce this work? Have I followed my stated vision for this piece and conducted all the required due diligence?
- How well does this work convey my vision for it to the viewer? Is there anything more that I could have done?
- Did this attempt turn out as I had originally intended? If not, is this the result of planning or execution shortcomings and/or of not sticking to

the game plan, or is it because my vision for the work changed as I started working on it?

- Did I make the most appropriate compositional choices given my vision for the piece?
- Did I make the most appropriate lighting decisions, and were these reflected in my piece?
- When I view the end result, is the viewing experience (starting/ending points, where my eye rests, is my eye drawn to my center of interest) as I had originally envisioned? If not, document where the gaps are and why.
- Share your work with others and ask for feedback. Provide comments on aspects of your planning process for each piece and also on how you feel about the end result.

apply my lessons learned to produce superior work)?

- Can this experience inspire me to do different work and/or change my approach in the future?
- Is what I learned from this experience inspiring?
- Am I on an exploratory path of improvement?

Step 11 - Aspire

- What have I learned from creating this work? Can I directly apply what I have learned to future work?
- What do I need to work on to improve? Make notes regarding areas of improvement and repeatedly reference this archive of notes to inform future work. Seeing this in writing is the most powerful tool for helping to keep your eye on the ball and it also contributes to your sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.
- Can this experience inspire me in some way to do similar work in the future (situations where I can

Michael Christidis

MC ART FRAMEWORK™

...for anyone wishing to become
more creative.

Being creative is part of experiencing and appreciating the world around us. When we create, we communicate emotional impact, we preserve beauty and capture moments and feelings. This is why everyone should strive to liberate and express their creativity in any way possible—it's a part of all of us.

It is our competencies as creatives that determine the quality of work we produce and how our work touches others thus everyone can benefit from adopting a more pragmatic approach to creating, learning and growing artistically.