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A phenomenological, visual descriptive, experimental study of photographs

- Can the phenomenological method developed in this study be used to describe artifacts?

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Abstract

This study developed a method based on phenomenology theory with super- and sub significances to describe artifacts. The research question was: Can the phenomenological method developed in this study be used to describes artifacts?

The artifacts that have been evaluated in this study belonged to two groups - the test group which included original photographs taken by the author. Those were photographs of bark on living trees, forest frozen water puddle, icebergs and rocks were photographed at a few centimeters distance.

The control group comprised of photographs of artifacts originated by other artists, i.e., photographs of minimalism art, paintings, and sculptures.

All photographs were carefully examined visually, to determine the significant characteristics of each selected artwork. Each artwork was first assessed based on super significances as appear. Seven super significances were found, and the artworks was sorted into these groups. For these seven groups, to varying degrees, the presence of 14 sub significances pertaining to the super significances was used. Thus, the sub significances were described in relation to the seven super significances.

The study confirms the research question. The method enables the visual consistent examinations by making what were perceived less obvious.

To describe and put words to what is visual, is crucial for photographers. The strength is to practice seeing and describing what is visible. Phenomenological theory and method might inspire other researchers and photographers to try.

Key terms

Descriptive, Experimental, Method, Minimalism, Painting, Perception, Phenomenology, Photography, Sculpture, Visual

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Background

Phenomenological theory

Phenomenological theory is about the relationship between perception and objects without adding any subjective meaning.

The modern phenomenological theory was first introduced by Husserl, stating that objects in the world do not exist independently but depend on human consciousness and are known as phenomena. Phenomenological research is based on evidently describing the phenomenon experienced, shutting out preconceived notions that are perceptions and describing the phenomenon as accurately as possible, refraining from all predetermined frameworks. It is worth noting that any attention to a predetermined method is also considered a preconception and should therefore be avoided (Groenewald, 2004).

In the article in Encyclopedia Britannica, Edmund Husserl/Phenomenology as the universal science (Landgrebe, 2021), the author writes about Husserl's concept of phenomenological reduction.

> Its fundamental methodological principle was what Husserl called the phenomenological reduction. It focuses the philosopher's attention on uninterpreted basic experience and the quest, thereby, for the essences of things. In this sense, it is 'eidetic' reduction. On the other hand, it is also the reflection on the functions by which essences become conscious. As such, the reduction reveals the ego for which everything has meaning.

Noem

Carlshamre defined in his article from 2007 "Phenomenology – Attempts at an Educational Overview" (Carlshamre, 2007) the concept of noem according to Hussler, which describes "what turns out as it turns out" and "what you experience as you experience". According to Carlshamre, a noem can be a real object or a concept — a meaning.

Carlshamre continues:

> To describe the noemat to perception act is to simply describe the apple tree as how we see it. This means that we cannot describe the back of the tree – we are only imagining the back, that the roots exist and what the tree otherwise might look like. Noemat contains a prediction of what to see on the back but if we touch the tree and notice that our opinion is not correct, we need to change our description of what we see (my translation).

Carlshamre has demonstrated the unfulfilled conditions of noemat:

> The unfulfilled parts of the noemat are like a horizon for the experience. Around us there is this horizon, for example, the back of the apple tree, grass, garden, gate, etc. This is taken for granted to see when looking in different directions (my translation).
>
> It is not possible to fully perceive with the perception a physical object as an apple tree, but I must fill in – this is called intention. Phenomenology is about its essence. Essence is as an act of perception (my translation).

Bello stated in her article that Husserl's theory makes a distinction between perception and how the impression interprets perception, that Husserl can accept interpretation when it comes from data that cannot be ignored (Balaban, 2002).

According to Bello, the natural sciences are deliberately trying to distinguish themselves from perceptual thoughts, example; science accepts ‘wavelengths’ but not ‘colors’ as these are considered a perceptual interpretation.

Punctum

Barthes stated in his book (Barthes, 1986a) that the photo is no different from the reference pictured in the photo. The reference is therefore a person or a thing. All photos have a reference, someone/something must be in front of the camera. This is a difference to the painting that can reproduce or pretend to reproduce reality without even being near it.

Barthes uses the term ‘study’ when we browse magazines and see photographs, which is a nonchalant public interest with a slacking between – “I like - I don't” (Barthes, 1986b).

Barthes also introduced the concept of ‘punctum’ in his book (Barthes, 1986c). “Reading the punctum is not dull as the ‘study’ but fast and active, on edge, as an active predator”.

According to Barthes punctum can be like a sting, a notch or stain. A photo's punctum is the coincidence that hits the one who checks; punctum can also hurt and torment. Punctum is not something we can agree on in a photograph but is an individual opinion. Sometimes, though rarely, there is a detail that attracts and changes the way we read the photo. According to Barthes, it is not possible to formulate a rule for the relationship between study and punctum. Punctum cannot be placed in the photograph on purpose. Punctum is unexpected. It has nothing to do with surprise.

Minimalism

What is minimalism, the question was asked in a book by James Meyer. His conclusion was that minimalism was not a uniform genre, but there were opposing perceptions and methods among artists in the 1960s (Meyer, 2004) The breakthrough was an exhibition in 1966 in New York. The exhibition had a major media and public impact, and the designation ‘Primary Structure’ began to be used (Altshuler, 2013) Minimalism is an art theoretic and artistic genre (VanEenoo, 2011).

Robert Morris (Sven-Olov Wallenstein, 2005)

> In simpler regular polyhedrons, such as the cube and pyramid, we do not have to walk around the object for the meaning of the whole, the figure to appear. We immediately see and – believe – that the pattern in one's own consciousness corresponds to the actual existence of the object. Sixty-four-page figure is difficult to visualize, yet one can imagine the whole even if it is only seen from one angle, precisely because of its irregularity.

Research aims and question

The aim of this research paper was to describe photographs by based on phenomenological theory.

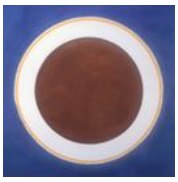
The test group consisted of 12 original photographs taken by the author. Eighteen additional artifacts originated by other artists (photographs of sculptures and paintings) were used as control group.

Through this study, the author would like to answer the following research question:

Can the phenomenological method developed in this study be used to describes artifacts?

Examples of artefacts

Black Circle, Malevich 24



Earthen Bound, Noland 60

Rock #6, Lorentzon 20

Method and Material

This study has used descriptive method according to the phenomenology theory. The perception contained a prediction of the content of the parts of the noem that were empty. Descriptions were not made of the part of the noem that was not fulfilled.

The material in the test- and control group was chosen because they show a less obvious preconceived notion of what the motives represent, which can facilitate the description of what I see.

Material, test group

The material for test group in this study comprised of a photo series by the author including 23 photographs, of which 12 were selected for this study as test group. The criterion for selection was that each series should contain at least three motifs that harmonize with each other and between the categories (barks, forest frozen water puddles, iceberg, rocks). Serial photographs enhance the visual experience of a common whole. This was essential as each photograph consists of its own whole and forms a larger whole together. The photographs were taken in 2019 and 2020.

Furthermore, the selection has been made on the basis that the natural and gentle coloring of the motifs should be reflected in the photographs. The colors in the photographs may have been influenced by dew, humidity and gutters along tree trunks and mountainsides.

The motifs have not been added anything, were completely natural as they looked just at the shutter click. The photographs have been treated moderately for contrast, rarely for light and were not cropped.

The photographs of the trees covered the surface between the left and right sides of the trunk. A tree trunk has a pillar shape. When photographing the bark at a few centimeters away, the photograph becomes sharpest in the center, which decreases towards the outer edges. In the same way, it will be when closely looking at the bark on a tree or other curved object.

The trees, mountainsides and icebergs chosen were completely vertical and photographed horizontally. The forest frozen water puddles appear in a vertical, slightly angled bird's eye view. The motifs filled the entire image surface edge to edge. Outside, there was nothing of interest in the chosen photographic perspective.

The light came from nature and there was no artificial lighting. The distance between lens and motif was only a few centimeters. Depending on the amount of ambient light to the sensor, shutter speeds were used between 1/30 sec and longer with f/2.8 – 8.0. ISO is 100 - 200. The focal length was 20 - 24 mm. No filters were applied.

The photographs had been made at the same distance from all motifs except the frozen water puddles taken at 50 cm. A tripod with a small sled (macro focusing rail) was used to facilitate fine-tuning of focus with type 1/2 mm in different directions on the horizontal plane.

Material, control group

In addition, a control group has been used in the study. The motives in the control group had been chosen to be as similar as possible compared to the photographs in the test group. The reason was that the opportunities to describe all artifacts should be equal.

The reason why the control group was used in the study was examinate whether the descriptive method was applicable to other types of artifacts as well. The control group had an impact on eliminate/reducing preconceptions in vision because the method was systematically applied to the test and the control group.

The control group consists of photographs of 10 paintings and eight sculptures originated by 10 artists.

The paintings were originated by of Dan Flavin, Eva Hesse, Sidney Nolan, Kazimir Malevich, Agnes Martin, and Frank Stella. The sculptures/installations were made from Dan Flavin, Larry King, Robert Morris, and Michelangelo Pistoletto.

Several of these artists created the genre that later came to canonized as minimalism.

Method

The descriptive method was well suited to answer the research question in this study because the artists who created the artworks themselves did not have any interpretation of what the artworks represent and mean. Similarly, so was the case with my photographs. This provided an advantage when trying to prevent predictions in descriptions. This is a challenge in the method as the test group consists of photographs taken by the author.

All photographs were carefully examined visually, to determine the significant characteristics of each selected artwork.

Crucial to the study was what should be described, what is applicable to the study's artifacts. Applicable means the degree to which what is described makes sense to answer the research question, dictation that the descriptions cannot be too detailed or too comprehensive.

Each artwork was first assessed based on significances as appear with proximity between the artifacts. Seven super significant groups have been found, and the artworks have been sorted into these groups.

The seven super significances:

- Circle, cube, diagonal, serial, shape, uniform color, white

The 23 sub significances:

From these seven groups, to varying degrees, the presence of 19 sub significances pertaining to the super significances have been noted. Thus, the sub significances were described in relation to the seven super significances.

- Background, balance, color, contrast, crack, curve, dot, edge, form, geometry, light, line, pattern, shadow, shape, space, structure, texture, topography

The book ‘Perception and Imaging’ (Suler and Zakia, 2017) has demonstrated the gestalt principles. Gestalt theory is a phenomenological science that refers to categories that are arranged primarily in terms of distance, proximity, similarity, difference, filled and unfilled elements, as well as with different formats of or absence of borders.

Four additional sub significances were therefore added based on gestalt principle:

- Asymmetry, border, distance, proximity

A total of 23 sub significances are achieved.

After significances was identified, a new check was carried out with the aim of examining the existence of a consistent relationship between the two categories (super and sub).

Two and three dimensions

Photographs and paintings are two dimensional, while sculptures have three dimensions. Objects in the study were two-dimensional photographs of all works of art. Thus, it was not possible to tactilely touch any work of art or describe a sculpture from the back. This could be a disadvantage when describing the sculptures.

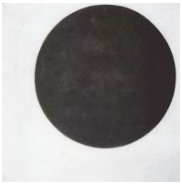
Bias was however eliminated by strict description as to lines, circles, etc. those were not assessed but just described. Therefore, a strictly descriptive and visual method according to the significances was crucial. There were no assessments of qualities.

Result

Circles

Refers to artifacts with prominent circles

Malevich painted Black Circle (“Kazimir Severinovich Malevich - The Complete Works,” 1924), Noland Earthen Bound (Noland, 1960) and Rock #6. The three artworks had circles that broke in one main color compared to the surface around them.



Black Circle Malevich 24

Earthen bound Noland 60

Rock #6 Lorentzon 20

Malevich (“Kazimir Severinovich Malevich - The Complete Works,” 1924) circle was black and placed towards the upper right corner of the square white-gray surface. This surface was slightly grayer towards the outer edges of the square and a little lighter proximity against the black circle.

Noland's circle was centered on a square surface and was reddish-brown. Around the circle there was another circle that was white and marked with a thin red outer line. The painting had a blue background.

Rock #6 had a rectangular surface that was vertically two coloreds. On the right, the field was a blue-purple-black. On the left, red, black. The field on the left covers 2/3 of the surface. Both fields have diagonal, narrow, black lines. In the field on the right there were circular black-gray formations. These were not closed as a geometric circle but were closed irregularly. In the center of the rectangle there was a black-gray figure covering 1/6 of the surface. This figure consists of a larger, centered circle. The upper left part of the circle was covered by a smaller circle that was also colored black, gray.

The circular shapes in the three artworks does not make it possible to assess whether the circles were holes or pillars that stand out from the image surface.

Cubes

Refers to artifacts with prominent cubes

Morris Mirrored Cubes (Morris, 1965), Bells Venice Fog (Bell, 2017), Pistoletto mirror painting (Pistoletto and Exhibition 2018, 2018), and Iceberg #3 2019. The first two, were photographs of works of art had glass surfaces, the third was a photo of a sculpture in the form of mirrors. Iceberg #3 was a two-dimensional photograph of a three-dimensional iceberg.

Untitled Morris 65-71

Venice Fog Bell Early 60

Mirror painting Pistoletto

Iceberg #3 Lorentzon 19

It was easy to believe all the four cubes were three-dimensional. But I knew that's not the case. So, it was not possible to describe any part of any photo as closer or further away from the lens. The cubes cannot be described as cubes because everything was in the same plane. It was my preconceived meant vison who fooled me.

When I thought I saw two or three sides of a cube, one reason was that the photographs were taken diagonally towards cube as in Untitled, Morris compared with Iceberg #3 19 was photographed straight from the front without any inclination of the camera. Another reason was when the first three images appeared to show cubes in an exhibition hall. The images might had been made with this intent. Nevertheless, I see a depth in the image due to lighter and darker colors and lines. This photograph might as well be photographs of other photographs or of paintings.

Photographs and paintings gave illusions that I was willing to accept. The perception was so strong that it was harder to see what I saw.

Diagonals

Refers to artifacts with prominent diagonals

The four works of art consisted of a two-dimensional plane in the form of quadrangle. Three of the rectangles had horizontal long sides, “The diagonal” (Flavin, 1963), Rock #4 and Iceberg #1. Untitled Striped (Stella, 1964) had horizontal short sides.

Untitled Striped Diagonally Stella 64

The Diagonal Flavin 63

Rock #4 Lorentzon 20

Iceberg #1 Lorentzon 20

Stella's Untitled Striped had two fields of wide lines where one field was vertical and the other horizontal. The fields meet diagonally over the rectangle, forming a diagonal. The bottom horizontal blue line meets a yellow vertical line. These colored lines also meet alternately from the bottom to the top right of the quadrangle.

The technique causes the vision to alternate between displaying a two-dimensional surface with two flat fields to form a three-dimensional illusion. Like two sides of a pyramid. This was an example of a preconceived vision. I had to force my vision to two-dimensional.

Flavin's The Diagonal had a diagonal where the line was drawn with a color pencil against a black background. Although all were on the same square surface, the approach gives a three-dimensional illusion that the diagonal hovers above the surface or is below the surface.

Rock #4 and Iceberg #1 also gave illusions of three-dimensionality by displaying structures that were approaching or further away from the surface plane. The visual impression was achieved by several, thin, dark diagonal lines that contrast with brighter surrounding areas. On the right side of Iceberg #1 there was a narrow vertical area of light in several tones.

The light in Iceberg #1 and Rock #20 shifts all over the image surface. Untitled Striped and The Diagonal had equal amount of light all over the whole surfaces. The light in the paintings was visible through the color selection.

Stella's diagonal was three colored and Flavins had two colors. The contrasts were clear where the colors meet in geometry. Rock #4 and Iceberg #1 were tinted in their prime colors that transition into darker and lighter sections.

Rock #4 and Iceberg #1 were composed with lots of contrasts, dots and cracks, small color fields, lines, and shapes. Iceberg #1 had two lines crossed centered of the image like a curved X. Untitled Striped Diagonally and the Diagonal had uniformity and distinctive colors and less details.

The four artifacts were balanced in different ways. The square of untitled Striped Diagonally stands on a gray rectangle-shaped surface. The position was proximity to the top edge compared to the lower edge of the rectangle. To the left of the square there was a narrow grey area, and, on the right, there were no free space.

Flavin's diagonal was an unbroken line set to 07:07. The diagonal did not reach the edges. This means that the diagonal was not centered against the left lower edge and right top of the rectangle. If a square was plotted, the diagonal will run from the left bottom to the right top.

Rock #4 was massive and unbalanced with its center of gravity diagonally towards the bottom. Iceberg #1 was also unbalanced. The image surface on the left was more color-filled compared to the rest of the surface.

There was no information about what was outside the image surface. Maybe there was something or nothing. I could only see what was displayed. All four photographs can be gigantic or tiny.

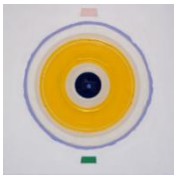
Serial

Refers to at least three serial artifacts that reinforce the whole

The serial works of art reinforce each individual work and the whole that the works together form. This were done by varying the basic shapes. Split (Noland, 1959), (Noland, 1999) and King (King, 1962), (Tate, 1963) , (King, 1964) and Rock #7, 6, 10, Bark #1, 2, 3, Forest frozen Water Puddle # 1, 2, 3.

Split Noland 59

Earthen Bound, Noland 60


Refresh, Noland 99

Rosebud, King 62

Genghis Khan, King 63

And the Birds Began to Sing, King 64

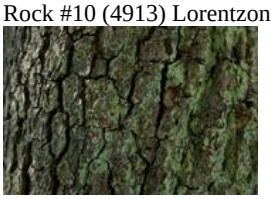
Rock #7 4802) Lorentzon 20

Rock #6, (4800) Lorentzon 20

Rock #10 (4913) Lorentzon 20

Bark #1 (1528) Lorentzon 19

Bark #2 (1533) Lorentzon 20


Bark #3 (1724) Lorentzon 20

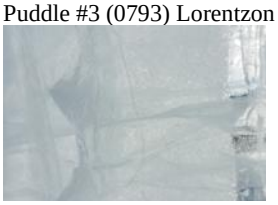
Puddle #1 (0791) Lorentzon 19

Puddle #2 (0792) Lorentzon19

Puddle #3 (0793) Lorentzon 19

Iceberg #1 (0787) Lorentzon19

Iceberg #2 (0785) Lorentzon 19


Iceberg #3 (0786) Lorentzon 19

The artworks were clearly separated into lines, colors, and shapes. The first three series had super significant shapes this mainly were circles, and cones. The fourth had the super

significances of shape and color. The fifth of uniform color. The sixth of diagonals. The eye may soon get an idea of the images. At the same time, in each image there were something that stands out:

Split by Noland had a square among the circles and a red circle that contrasts with the other soft colors.

Rosebud by King, “a pink heart-shaped gift box” the cone closes not through straight lines but by two quarter circles at the bottom and a little further up by a small turn that corresponds to a turn-in on the oncoming side.

Rock #7 had a black, filled irregular circles in focus. Above was a diagonal formed by two unconnected lines from outer ends.

This makes each work of art unpredictable. That makes it not possible to look at a part and understand the big picture.

Bark #1 – 2 gave me the first impression that the bark was not horizontal in these photographs. It's just the pattern that misleads perception. In the photographs, I saw in the backgrounds that the bark was finely patterned horizontally. In the last photograph, the entire photo had a common pattern in the form of small pieces of bark that sit directly next to each other. At the four sides of each piece of bark, a darker, line of almost black color appears. If I look more closely, I can see that the bark pieces together have several horizontal as well as vertical wave shapes.

Shape

Refers to artifacts with prominent shapes

Morris artwork Untitled 73 (Morris, 1973) was an installation in the form of a gestalt suspended with the base upwards. It hangs five tabs in each of the two outer edges of the body two sides. The two lowest tabs on each side, reach down to the floor where they make a 90 degree turn along the floor halfway towards the outer edges of the gestalt. An accurate examination of colors shows that it was dark brown with a darker oval section at the top of the figure and on the hanging tabs. The installation was suspended against a white surface. This made the structure prominent.

Untitled Morris 73

Bark #1 Lorentzon 19

Bark #1 had two curved, shaped gestalts, one slightly up the left and the other slightly down the right with the base facing downwards. The color of the gestalt to the right was a shade darker in comparison to the surrounding bark and gradually transitions into the same hue. The gestalts were encased in dark lines that follow the outer edges of the figures. Vertically in the right there were a soft elevation split by a vertical, slightly curved crack from the top to the lower part, surrounded by thinner horizontal lines. The gestalt on the left had an elevated ellipse form with

a crack that was open on the center and closed at the top and bottom. If one of the two artifacts were twisted, they get the same direction. The whole subject covers the entire image surface, which means that there was no void.

Unicolor

Refers to artifact with a uniform color scheme

The Marriage of Reason and Squalor II, Black painting, Stella (Stella, 1959), Martins The Tree 64 (Martin, 1964), Hesse Untitled 67 (Tate, 1967), Bark #3 20, and Forest frozen Water Puddle #3 19.

Four of the five artworks were rectangles, one was a square, and all were solid, which means that there were no framing or outer edge. Three of the images' pictures of paintings and two were photographs, which made them all two-dimensional. All images had uniform colors.

Stella's Black Painting had a black background. Black was opposite to white. Black or white color can as well be just nothing. But this was not the case. The painting was divided into two equally wide vertical sections. Against the black surface there was bright lines in the form of upside-down "U" in the two sections. These "U" shaped lines go from a large "U" to ever smaller and narrower "U-shapes". The bright lines were not completely filled but had a variation in light where the lines sometimes fading and sometimes brightens.

Martins, "the Tree" had a light blue color with a vertical, standing ellipse-shaped midfield that was slightly brighter in comparison to the background. The ellipse extends from the top of the painting where it was slightly wider down to the lower edge where it narrows. In the painting there were lots of small figurations both in the darker and brighter parts. Morris had a descriptive term for the painting.

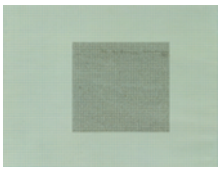
Hesse's Untitled painting had a square positioned slightly more to the right. The distances to the upper and lower edges were the same. The surrounding field had a lighter green hue compared to the square. Throughout the image surface there were small bright lines that were geometric. They were straight and have angles of 90 degrees.

Bark #3 and Forest frozen water puddles #3 contains lots of and different-shaped details, shapes, shades, and asymmetry that together form a whole. In these photographs there were unpredictable deviations by, for example, missing a piece of bark and the Forrest frozen water puddle, had a couple of small green spruce twigs lying on the surface and yellowish grass straws protruding through the ice.

In the four works of art, the whole was prominent. On closer examination, details and variations were shown.

Black Painting Stella 59

The Tree, Martin 64



Untitled Hesse 67

Bark #3 Lorentzon 20

Frozen Puddle #3 Lorentzon 19

White

Refers to artifacts with white, off-white, and grayscale colors

Descriptions show Malevich White on White (Malevich, 1918) and Flavins in daylight or cool white (Flavin, 2018). In daylight or cool white was also the title of Flavin's autobiographical sketch, 1965 (Weiss, 2012) and with Iceberg #2.

White on White, Malevich 1918

In daylight or cool white, Flavin

Iceberg #2, Lorentzon 19

Malevich artwork had a tilted square object against a square surface. Flavins four-sided standing in a corner. These two works of art were not white in the presentation of the photographs.

The outer square of White on White was light yellow while the inner square was white gray. Malevich inner square stands at a 15-degree inclination. It was marked with a line or border against the larger square.

Flavin square consists by four light-filled pipes (Daylight is 5000K-6500K, Cool White 3000K-5000K) which, with different intensity, illuminates the walls of a corner. The color of the wall was gray-white to light yellow. The color of the floor was greyish-white-yellow.

The surfaces of Malevich and Flavin's works were tinted and not evenly colored by the respective light. In Malevich painting, the texture of the canvas can be seen through the color.

Iceberg #2 had a light blue color with slightly darker sections in blue and a vertical band near the right short side that was partly colorless, transparent to light and dark blue. Iceberg #2 was rectangular, and the colors were broken into horizontal and vertical paths and asymmetric lines. Through the shadowed color scales, certain paths can be perceived as in front or behind.

The two first photos demonstrate an imagination of a depth and the last one imaging a topography. Shadows and light are just different colors. One more time, what I saw was a flat surface.

Described super- and sub significances

The following table shows the number of times super and sub-significances were used in the descriptions of the artifacts. The super significances were described between seven and 49 times using the sub-significances. Most times the super significance ‘diagonally’ was used, 49 times. Most times the sub significance ‘white’ was used, 26 times.

There are eight sub-significances that were used only once. These were ‘asymmetry, border, distance, dot, geometry, space, texture, and topography’. The results showed that these sub-significances were not relevant to the descriptions and therefore excluded. Additionally, sub significances ‘proximity, shadow and structure’ were used two times and were excluded in Table 1. The method consists now of seven super significances and 14 sub significances.

Table 1 Result: Super- and sub significances

Super/sub	circle	cube	diagonal	serial	shape	unicolor	white	sum
background	1		1	1		2		5
balance			3					3
black	9		1	2		6		18
color	3	1	10	5	2	3	9	33
contrast			3	1				4
crack			1		2			3
curve			1		2			3
edge	1		4		3	3		11
form	1	1	4	4	2	3	1	16
light	1	4	5		0	3	10	23
line	2	1	9	4	2	5	2	25
pattern				3				3
shape	1		5	6	1	5		18
white	2				1	9	14	26
sum	22	7	49	26	16	39	38	

Analysis, evaluation, and discourse

Groenewald writes that phenomenological research is based on describing phenomena as experienced without preconceptions and frameworks. Methods of description are also a preconceived limitation that should be avoided (Groenewald, 2004).

Methods for describing phenomenon were a filter that affects what was perceived. For me, this was about understanding the connection between the method in the study and what was perceived. Without method, descriptions of phenomenon become random guesses. The method allowed me to go back and check descriptions and/or adjust the method. Also, this was a filter.

When examining the results of the method, eight sub-significances were eliminated because they were not useful enough to describe the artifacts. At the same time, it was obvious that all meanings (super, sub) were preconceived framework that governs the descriptions according to Groenewald.

The question of describing phenomena without a method is very large and cannot be solved within the framework of this study.

According to Husserl, the basic phenomenological principle is reduction, which focuses uninterpreted impressions. An eidetic reduction that becomes aware of essence. The ego for which everything has a meaning is revealed by the reduction

This study had the ‘ambition’ that Landgrebe mentioned to focus on uninterpreted experiences and describe the essence of things. The basic phenomenological principle is reduction. Through

this, the ego for which everything has a meaning is revealed (Landgrebe, 2021). In a new study, I want to go further and refine my descriptions according to this quest. One possibility is to investigate how super- and sub-significances can be further reduced from interpreted experience and meaning.

Carlshamre wrote about experiences through vision; *"…*describe what you experience as you experience*"*. This was not so simple as we have many preconceptions that we do not see what we were seeing. One example was a "painter who must train himself to paint what he sees and not what he knows"(Carlshamre, 2007).

Barthes writes; that photographs show a thing as it appeared when it was photographed (Barthes, 1986a). My interpreting of Barthes: In the context of this study, this means that what we saw were photographs, even if it was claimed to be something else. In my words, if it was a photograph, I cannot describe what I knew was a sculpture or painting.

Photographs with diagonals can be found in all seven super significant groups in which the photographs were organized. Stella said; "Is there something as radical as a diagonal that is not a diagonal?"(Wallenstein, 2005a). In several of the artifacts, this was true. Stella's, "The Diagonal" was not a diagonal.

Filled circles, when viewed straight from the front, can be perceived as color filled and flat spheres, a circular line, a pillar, or a circular hole. It was not possible to determine without shadows and differences in light.

Art is color, which became clear when examined the seven super significances in the study. In sculpture/painting, the artist paints and in the photographs the photographer selects motifs with the color scheme that were sought. It was almost unthinkable to imagine a colorless work of art. The closest I could get, within its limits was window glass, white-white or black-black color. Morris wrote that "Obviously all existing things have their own color" (Wallenstein, 2005b).

The importance of colors was prominent in the descriptions: White colors were difficult to use, but it often becomes off-white. One reason was that a white surface could be perceived as nothing or just as an empty surface. In this article, white and black were the colors mentioned the most times of the super significances. It shows the importance of something that can be invisible, nothing. White and black spaces are a development area for photography, and these sources are found in nature.

Angela Bello (Balaban, 2002) described that there was a difference between perception and how perception was interpreted according to Husserl. Interpretations based on evidence could be accepted while colors are seen as a perceptual interpretation.

This study has noted colors in the descriptions. This was a necessary deviation from orthodox phenomenology. My assessment at the time was that the scale between white and black were also interpretations of colors. Think of a photography of a red apple falling free of its tree. In the background, only the sky can be seen. If someone who was not a phenomenologist answered, the answer could be that there was a red apple against a blue sky. An orthodox phenomenologist could have responded, "nothing" because the colors were interpretations and if these are removed there is nothing, not even the contrasts in the apple skin itself and between the sky and the apple.

The super significances: ‘diagonals, circles and serial’, the photos of paintings/sculptures had clearer contrasts between uniform colors compared to the photographs. In the other super significances, these distinct differences did not exist.

In serial, the black, stuffed circles, Rock #7, Rock #10 were sharp while the background were pigmented by small red-and-white dots. The strong color contrasts were effective. The choice of color scheme depends on what the photographer's idea was with the image and the context of placement. Serial motifs act also as an amplifier of the colors of all the images if there were at least three designs that can be identified as ‘sibling’.

The cubes described were made of uncolored glass, an outer uncolored and an inner stained glass, mirror glass and a transparent iceberg. A fully transparent cube against a white background becomes like a drawing by an engineer, where only the border marks were visible. A black cube against a black background was invisible. The background was part of the artwork and therefore needs to be well thought out. There were many details in the photographic iceberg in comparison to the other ‘cubic artworks’. There were few polyhedrons in nature.

Should I come across these cubes that were not necessarily cubes. I was sure that there were one or more backsides that were consistent with the planes I saw. According to Carlshamre (Carlshamre, 2007), the noemat of the thing contains a prediction of the back. Filling in is called intention. If the prediction was not correct, I must change the description of what I saw, Carlshamre writes.

I would like to add; it is advanced to be aware that was a prediction. It's about being critical of our own experience.

Robert Morris wrote in “Notes on the sculpture” (Wallenstein, 2005b) It is possible to understand simpler polyhedrons without walking around them. A 64-plane figure is harder to visually perceive from a position. But one can still imagine the whole because of its irregularity.

There is a huge difference between sculptures and trees in the forest. If I stand at a nose length distance to the bark of a tree, there will be randomized guesses about what the tree looks like at the back. This is because there is no tree that grows in nature that is completely identical to other trees. Nature is versatile and surprising in comparison to created works of art that have the logic of an artist.

Stella points out that European painters strive for a rational balance. Balance wasn't the important thing according to Stella (Wallenstein, 2005b). Balance was thus avoided in the minimalist works of art and instead the intention was to create asymmetry that becomes a signum. In the photographs, the relationship were that bark, icebergs, and forest frozen water puddles were photographed from edge to edge, which determines what were in the photo. The motifs of the Rocks were balanced while the filled circles were asymmetrical.

Conclusion

This study had developed a systematically method with seven super significances and 12 sub significances. This facilitates the visual consistent examinations by making what were perceived less obvious.

The study confirms the research question: The phenomenological method developed in this study was used to describes artifacts. Although the method needs to be developed. One

possibility is to investigate how super- and sub-significances can be further reduced from interpreted experience and meaning.

It was not possible to use a significance as ‘movement’ in visual phenomenological description of photographs. Because movement was an interpretation what I thought moves in a photo even though the image was stagnant. Study a photo of a runner in action. Was the runner running? No, that's what I knew the runner did but not what I saw.

This was because I had a preconceived notion that “I do not see what I see” (Carlshamre, 2007).

When I was looking at a photograph of a cube, it was easy to describe what I first believed I was seeing, a cube , although it was a two-dimensional photograph. The noemat that touches the photographs two-dimensional surface was fulfilled while the rest of noemat was empty. What I did was filling in with my prediction that the cube was three dimensional. Then I had to correct my vison according to the method.

A systematic method was needed to become self-critical of one's own experience. By describing and putting words to what was visible, the visual ability improves. Which might increase the crucial and critical skill as essential to take photographs.

Propose of further research is to continue develop visual phenomenological, descriptive photographic methods. In a new study, I want to go further and refine my descriptions according to this quest.

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Ethical approach

Law on ethical review (2003:4601) and GDPR is not applicable. The Copyright Act, 1960:729 applies.

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