

**GRZEGORZ KLAUSE** 

 Personal Study

*Lucien Hervé*

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**“We are born of light. The seasons are felt through light. We only know the world as it is evoked by light.” – Louis Kahn**

This quote by the architect Louis Kahn captures succinctly what has been the central theme in my personal study: light is basic to our sense of and interaction with the world; it predisposes us to different emotions, perceptions, and understanding of space. In this investigation, I will look into how light interacts with architecture and how photographers use it to shape meaning, mood, and atmosphere. My study will investigate the ways in which both natural and artificial light can transform buildings, alter perception, and communicate emotion via photography.

I am particularly interested in how light and shadow may define structure and space, how reflection may create movement and contrast, and how the absence of light may invoke mystery or isolation. Throughout this exploration, I will also consider how lighting may reflect social or environmental differences—for example, how dim, warm lighting may hint at comfort or neglect, whereas bright, white light conveys modernity, cleanliness, or emotional detachment.



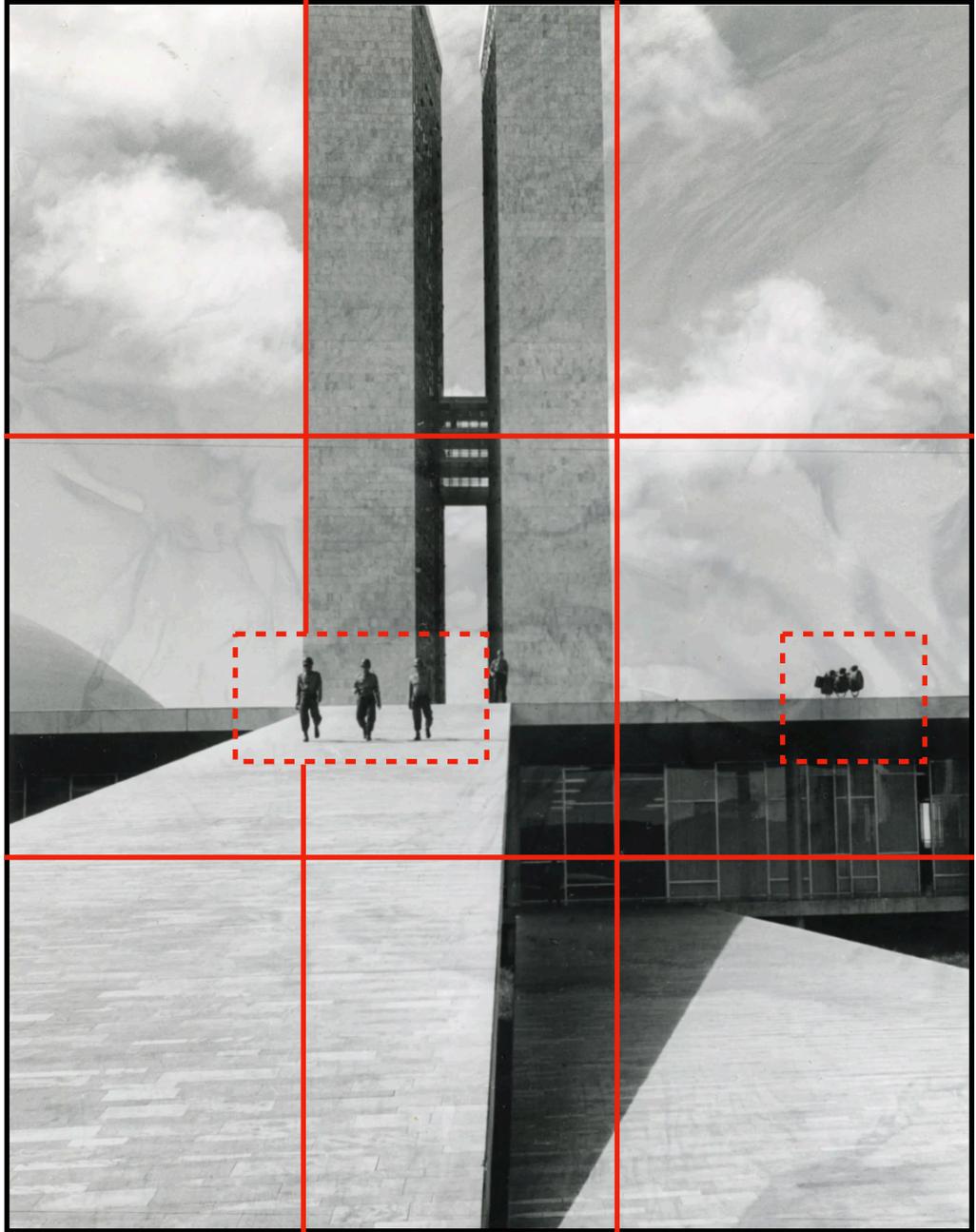
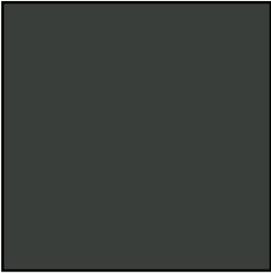
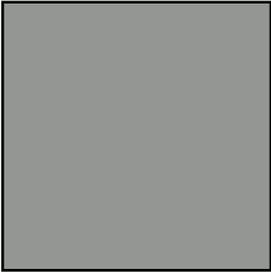
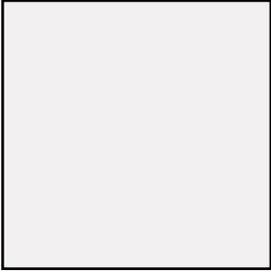
HÔTEL MARTEL, RUE MALLET STEVENS, PARIS, ARCHITECTE: MALLET-STEVENS, 1976

"The role of the  
architectural  
photography is to  
reveal the work and  
to remain faithful,  
with humility, to its  
creator"

Lucien Herve

For the first piece of analysis I will talk about Lucien Herve and the work that he did in Brazil, with famous and successful architect: Oscar Niemeyer who he worked with throughout his project. What I like the most about Herve's Congress National Picture is that with the use of the "rule of thirds" is that when you look in each corner of the picture (**4 corners**) it captures a different shade / object. In this situation the bottom right captures what we can assume are some sort of living quarters, in the bottom left it captures the workers walking up and down the ramp. What else I realized is that the picture's gradient increases from light to dark as the picture goes further down. The pictures he's taken in this project are very similar to what I inspire in doing, they have that bold contrasting shadow, and how nearly the boldness in the picture is the first thing you notice.

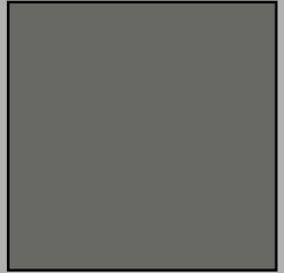
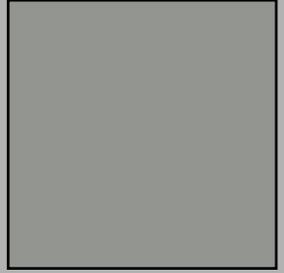
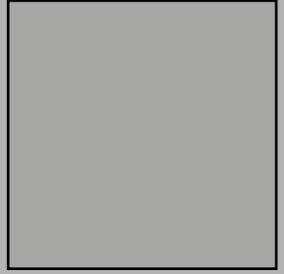
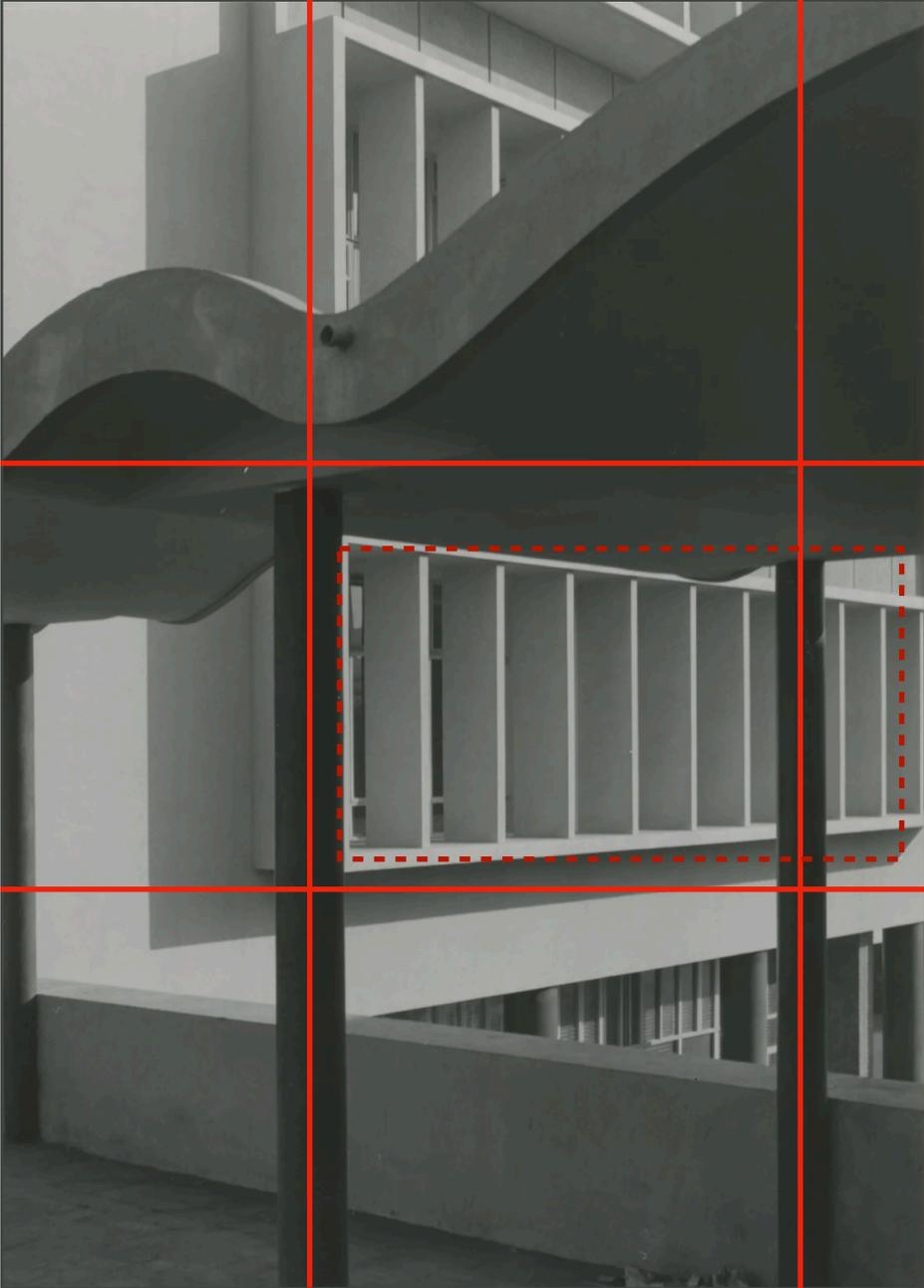
Lucien Herve's photographs of the buildings in Brazil really capture how light can completely transform the feeling and atmosphere of a structure. The way he uses natural light to create harsh shadows and strong contrast makes the architecture almost seem alive. In his photograph of the Congress National, Brasilia, designed by Oscar Niemeyer, Herve manages to balance light and shadow perfectly so that the building looks both heavy and weightless at the same time. The sunlight bounces off the smooth curved concrete, creating a glow that makes the surface seem soft even though it is made from solid material. This effect shows how light can change the viewer's perception of scale and texture. Herve also shows how shadow is just as important as light. In many of his images, the shadowed areas feel just as strong as the parts in full light, giving a sense of balance and rhythm.



CONGRÈS NATIONAL, BRASÍLIA, ARCHITECTE: OSCAR NIEMEYER, 1961

In his photograph of the Congress National, Brasilia, designed by Oscar Niemeyer, Herve manages to balance light and shadow perfectly so that the building looks both heavy and weightless at the same time. The sunlight bounces off the smooth curved concrete, creating a glow that makes the surface seem soft even though it is made from solid material. This effect shows how light can change the viewer's perception of scale and texture. Herve also shows how shadow is just as important as light. In many of his images, the shadowed areas feel just as strong as the parts in full light, giving a sense of balance and rhythm. This links to what Simon Unwin says in his book *Shadow: The Architectural Power of Withholding Light*, that light is what defines shadow, and shadow defines light. Without the darker areas, the brightness would have no meaning. Herve's photos demonstrate this idea perfectly because he never lets the light overpower the image; instead, he uses it to shape the structure and give it depth.

What I like most about Herve's work with Niemeyer is how it shows the relationship between modern design and natural light. Even though the buildings are made from concrete and glass, the sunlight softens them and adds warmth. The contrast of bright highlights and deep shadows almost makes the buildings look abstract, like a painting. This abstraction inspires me because it shows how photography can make something real look artistic and emotional at the same time. Herve doesn't just take pictures of buildings; he makes the light itself the main subject. "Through light and shadow, he defined the dialogue between substance and form," and a reflection on his work with Le Corbusier: "With Le Corbusier I learned to discern and identify beauty in its nascent form, along with a need for total purity".



“Seeking  
everywhere 'the  
presence of the  
living”

-Lucien Herve

Hugh  
Campbell

Campbell often talks about how light can affect how we experience space emotionally. In *Space Framed: In Conversation with Abelardo Morell*, he discusses how lighting and shadow can create atmosphere and tell stories about how people live and interact with their environment. For example, in the image *Camera Obscura Image of Times Square in the Hotel Room* by Abelardo Morell (which Campbell writes about), the light is much softer and more diffused. It projects the outside city scene inside the room, turning the interior into a dreamy and reflective space.

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"It wasn't as easy as  
you think. It's hard to  
stay awake that long"

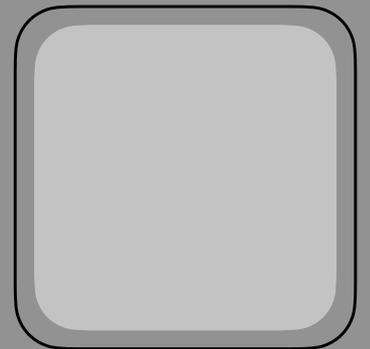
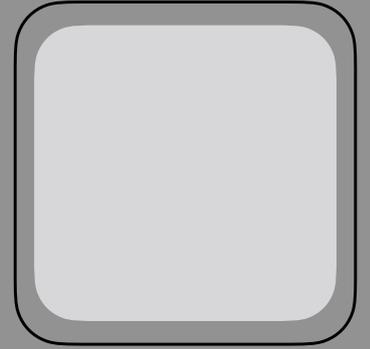
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-Hugh campbell

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This kind of image feels more  
**personal and emotional**  
compared to Herve's **strong and**  
**graphic style**. The way I  
analyzed this picture is I split it  
up into grids to show how many  
different things have been  
captured within a single photo, as  
it ranges from: bed, bill boards  
with adverts on it and the ceiling  
being covered with busy and calm  
streets.

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Campbell's writing makes me think about how light can express mood rather than just shape. Herve shows strength and structure, while Campbell focuses more on how lighting makes us feel connected to a space. The soft light in Morell's photograph makes the room seem calm and quiet, even though Times Square outside is busy and loud. This contrast reminds me that lighting can completely change the mood and meaning of an image depending on how it's used. Both Herve and Campbell show that light is more than just a visual element—it's also emotional and symbolic. Herve's bold use of sunlight and shadow creates feelings of power, precision, and confidence, while Campbell's approach shows reflection, time, and memory. Together they represent two sides of how light interacts with architecture: one that defines and sharpens, and one that softens and blurs.

Both Lucien Hervé and Hugh Campbell have significantly influenced how I think about light in photography. "Seeking everywhere 'the presence of the living" - Hervé inspires me to explore bold contrasts, sharp shadows, and strong compositional structures, showing how light defines the physical qualities of architecture. "It wasn't as easy as you think. It's hard to stay awake that long" - Campbell, on the other hand, encourages me to think about mood, atmosphere, and emotional connection, showing how light can tell stories and express feelings. Through studying these two photographers, I have come to understand that light is much more than just a means of visibility, it's a way of understanding and interpreting the world. It can change how we perceive space, shape, and emotion.

Whether it's the harsh sunlight that turns a concrete wall into a pattern of shapes, or the soft evening glow that makes a building feel calm and alive, light transforms everything it touches. In my own work, I want to merge these ideas using light to not only reveal architectural form but also to communicate emotion. By experimenting with both natural and artificial lighting, I aim to capture how illumination can alter meaning, atmosphere, and perception. Inspired by Hervé's abstraction and Campbell's introspection, I hope to create photographs that show architecture not just as a physical structure, but as something deeply connected to how we feel and experience the world through light.

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## Source Of Quotations

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Lucien Herve

The role of the architectural  
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We only know the world as it  
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Khan

It wasn't as easy as you think.  
It's hard to stay awake that  
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