

# The Bicycle, Cross, and Desert

## Andrew Weed

---

Photos were produced by exposing Kodak Technical Pan 120 mm/25 ASA film in a Hasselblad 500C with a 50mm Carl Zeiss lens and Hasselblad polarizing filter for 1 second at F32 on a tripod by A. Weed. Negatives were enlarged to 17.25 x 17.25" and printed on 24 x 20 inch Ilford paper by Michael Lundgren.

I ride my bicycle for transportation and pleasure in the Sonoran Desert. The formal silence of the desert brings clarity to objects and pedaling brings clarity to perception. On a bicycle, thought can deepen into contemplation. I become less of an observer and more of a participant. The bicycle does for my mind what the camera does for the photograph. It provides a frame of reference, a lens, a process of looking that determines what is seen.

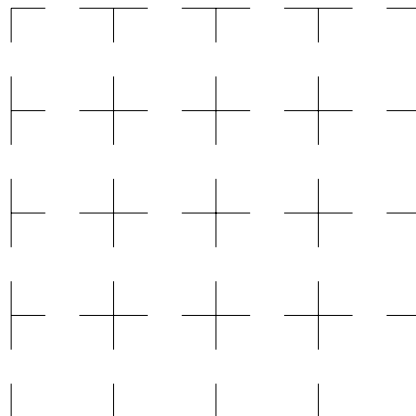
I had noticed the cross before, in the Sonoran and other deserts, keeping vigil at roadside shrines. Now I began to notice this simple indicator of human form in unexpected common objects. Questions arose: Is it an accident that a post is the same weight as the mark on its sign? Do telephone poles need horizontal bars? Fascinated with the proportion of the cross, I made these photographs, hoping to show the beauty I find in simple common objects.

Revealing what I found fascinating about the cross and common objects made decisions about the overall format critical. Dividing the medium format camera prism into 16 squares, I selected a 3:5 ratio of object to photograph plane with the cross intersection in the center. While excited with this composition, I found the overall format still lacked vertical balance. Extending the bottom edge of the format achieved balance and helped to show the relationship between the seven objects.

Discovering unexpected relationships and translating them with words is commonly called poetry. The German language makes a clear distinction between translating with words: *Übersetzung* and translating with form: *Umsetzung*. I would suggest that translating these relationships with form is design.

---

Format showing prism divisions.





---

Figure 1  
North Royce Road north of  
West Roberts Road, Sonoran Desert.



---

Figure 2  
Ranchview Road at Sierra Vista Road,  
Sonoran Desert.



---

Figure 3  
State Route 285 south of Toyah Creek,  
Chihuahuan Desert.



---

Figure 4  
East Mossy Rock Drive west of South Price  
Road, Sonoran Desert.



---

Figure 5  
Arizona Avenue at Pecos Road,  
Sonoran Desert.



---

Figure 6  
State Route 347 at Maricopa Road,  
Sonoran Desert.



Figure 7  
North Drifter Pass Road at Wrangler Road,  
Sonoran Desert.