The Last True Lens: A Journey from Optics to Algorithms

Comparing the Nikon Z8 + Konica Hexanon 40mm with iPhone 15 Pro Max (2×)

A project by Oberon Data och Elektronik AB

Introductory Text (First Page):

"There was a time when light told the truth. The lenses listened, with glass shaped by the laws of symmetry and physics—not software. Released in 2007, the Nokia N95 may have been the last mobile phone to render space optically—with a Zeiss-branded lens, not a neural net.

Though marketed as a Tessar, the N95's lens shows spatial behavior closer to a Double Gauss, preserving depth, volume, and coherence—hallmarks of spatial fidelity. Since then, even as pixel counts have soared and AI sharpeners have matured, the soul of light—the architecture of depth—has faded.

This document is a visual and perceptual comparison between the iPhone 15 Pro Max and a Nikon Z8 equipped with the Konica Hexanon AR 40mm f/1.8—one of the finest examples of a symmetrical, zero-phase lens design. Each set shows how one captures an image. The other captures a memory.

In each comparison set, one device captures an image. The other—a memory

Here begins a test. The human eye will see something. The brain might feel something. If it doesn't, the lens was lying.

Nokia N95, 2010. Zeiss-branded lens.
Possibly the last mobile camera with true spatial rendering.

IPhone 15 Pro Max, 2025.
Computational sharpness—without optical breath.

Set 1: MTV and the Bedspread — A Spatial Case Study

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

Set 1 – MTV and the Bedspread: A Spatial Case Study

The iPhone image resembles a well-lit stage. Everything is present, yet nothing quite *belongs*. Geometry is intact, but space is collapsed. The bed, the desk, the wall — each sits in isolation, rendered with clarity but without atmosphere. There's shape, but no weight. Light touches surfaces without embracing them.

Even the bedspread, full of folds and texture, feels detached — a flattened element rather than a spatial fabric. The photo knows where things are, but not how they relate.

The Hexanon sees differently. Its rendering is quieter, but more honest. The blanket folds with thickness, not just contour. Shadows under the chair don't merely fall — they lean, soften, and curve in relation to nearby forms. The desk recedes with grace. The TV screen becomes a participant in the room, not a pasted-in portal.

This is not about sharpness, nor resolution. It’s about **integrity** — the preservation of spatial relationships. The Hexanon’s version breathes. Its light has structure. Its perspective, even at f/11, contains tension, presence, and time.

The iPhone recorded an arrangement. The Hexanon remembered a place.

Set 1: MTV and the Bedspread — With “spatial” Iphone 15 Pro Max Photo

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max “Spatial” photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

Set 1 – "MTV and the Bedspread: Now in 'Spatial' Mode"

Apple's "spatial" photo mode promises immersive depth. But does it deliver optical space — or simply rearranged layers? This pair reveals the answer.

The iPhone 15 Pro Max "spatial" image is composed, vivid, and algorithmically well-behaved. It attempts depth through calculated parallax and subtle blur gradients. But something feels uncanny. The bed looms large, the TV floats unnaturally, and the background lacks compression — yet also lacks cohesion. This is not optical dimensionality but *synthetic layering*. The image resembles a well-executed diorama.

By contrast, the **Hexanon 40mm**, mounted on a Nikon Z8 and stopped down to f/11, doesn't simulate depth — it reveals it. The geometry of the room feels intact. The bedspread doesn't just "exist" in the foreground — it recedes, its wrinkles flowing across a spatial field defined by coherent shadows and shared lighting. The mirror's alignment and the desk's relationship to the wall communicate true volume. It's not pop. It's presence.

Where the iPhone assembles depth through inference, the Hexanon collects it through light. This isn't nostalgia — it's optics. One constructs; the other sees.

The iPhone arranged a 3D stage. The Hexanon witnessed a room.

Set 2: “Cobbles, Cars, and Canopies”

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

Set 2: Cobbles, Cars, and Canopies — A Study in Linear Compression

This is a classic city street shot. Texture, perspective, and tree canopy — everything one needs to reveal whether the lens sees *space* or just *form*. The buildings align, the cars taper into distance, and the sidewalk forms a long diagonal — a dream scenario for optical analysis.

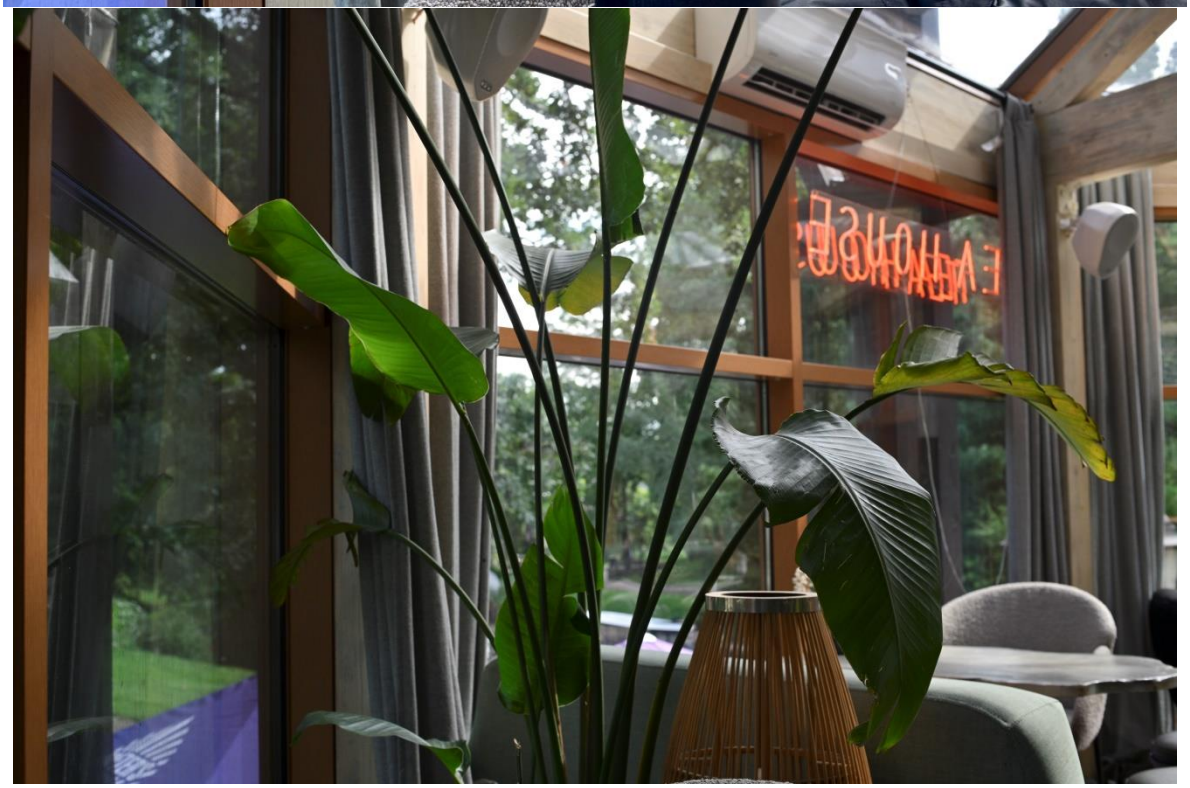
The iPhone 15 Pro Max (2× zoom) holds up at first glance. Brick color is accurate, tree contrast is high, and there's no immediate sharpness issue. But pause. Notice how the buildings on the left feel oddly close, as if someone pressed them forward slightly? And how the cars stack like layered cutouts rather than trailing off with full parallax recession?

Now compare the Konica Hexanon AR 40mm at f/8–f/11. Suddenly the sidewalk is longer, the cars breathe more, and the tree canopy stretches naturally overhead instead of forming a green blanket. The key is **phase coherence**: the Hexanon doesn't just trace outlines; it preserves **angular continuity**, so every element sits in relationship with the others. The curb doesn't just *end*—it *retreats*.

In the iPhone image, light behaves like a flat wash. In the Hexanon image, it acts like a flowing current, carrying dimensional cues across the scene. The road isn't just a textured plane — it has depth. Air. Gravity.

This isn't about liking one color rendition more than another. It's about which image obeys the **geometry of presence**.

Set 3: "The Jungle by the Window: Phase Geometry vs. Neon Acrobatics"



- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

Set 3 – “The Jungle by the Window: Phase Geometry vs. Neon Acrobatics”

At first glance, this indoor scene seems innocent enough — leafy plants in front of large glass windows, a hanging neon sign, a cozy chair, and soft curtain folds. But photographically, this is a torture test for depth integrity, translucent light interaction, and reflective phase structure.

The **iPhone 15 Pro Max (2x)** gives you a high-drama rendition: strong light-to-dark contrast, crisp leaf texture, punchy neon sign glow. It’s a visually pleasing image — but under inspection, the depth structure folds in on itself. The front leaf and rear leaves appear stitched onto the same plane. The reflective glass loses directional fidelity — it reflects light, yes, but *where from* and *how far* become murky. The neon lettering, despite its color, floats weightlessly without anchor in the physical space.

Now examine the **Hexanon 40mm at f/8**: the scene breathes. The closest leaf has volume, shadow structure, and even slight curve tension in its spine. The mid-ground foliage doesn’t “stack” behind it — it *sits* behind it, each level rendered with air and light separation. Reflections on the windowpane behave properly — dimming across angle, consistent with viewing geometry. Even the neon sign, despite appearing fainter, exists in perspective space — not just as color, but as illuminated form at depth.

This is where the Hexanon flexes its optical virtue: you’re seeing coherent cone projection preserved across the scene. Light rays haven’t been post-stitched by software — they’ve been naturally filtered by symmetrical glass at optimal aperture. Nothing is exaggerated, but everything is real.

If the iPhone photo says: “Look at this cool plant!”
The Hexanon says: “Here’s how light navigates this room.”

Set 4: “The Pavilion Across the Canal: Microcontrast Meets Leaf Logic”

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

Set 4 – "The Pavilion Across the Canal: Microcontrast Meets Leaf Logic"

This scene presents a beautiful control group for spatial realism: a geometric wooden pavilion, mirrored tree symmetry, grassy foreground, and layered canopies in the background. It's also a trial-by-fire for any optical system attempting to preserve textural integrity across distance.

In the iPhone 15 Pro Max (2×) photo, all the elements are "there" — high resolution, bold contrast, punchy greens, clean architectural edges. But the space lacks breath. The building looks illustrative, as if rendered by a landscape modeling tool. Trees compress into a flat wall of pattern, and the canal reflection — despite its color fidelity — floats atop the image rather than residing within it.

The Hexanon 40mm at f/8 sees differently. Its rendering respects both local contrast and global coherence. The grass recedes with graceful compression, the pavilion feels optically integrated with its environment, and the tree line recedes in softly stepping parallax. Water becomes not just reflective but spatial — its angular tension hinting at true directional light.

The iPhone presents the facts of the scene. The Hexanon presents its structure.

Set 4: “The Pavilion Across the Canal: Microcontrast Meets Leaf Logic” SPATIAL

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max “Spatial” photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

Set 4 – “The Pavilion Across the Canal: Microcontrast Meets Leaf Logic” SPATIAL

This same scene, when photographed in Apple’s Spatial Photo mode, is meant to imply dimensionality. The promise is subtle motion parallax, a shiftable viewpoint in post, and a more immersive playback experience. But as a still image, it suffers from the same limitations as its 2× counterpart.

Despite capturing depth metadata, the image behaves like a layered approximation. Trees, pavilion, grass — all retain their flattened compression. The stereo metadata does little to revive the air between objects or restore inter-layer optical phase. There’s a softness in some transitions and a hint of volumetric design, but it remains user-interface depth, not optical depth.

The Hexanon 40mm doesn’t need that kind of help. Its structure is already implicit in the image: coherent, angular, layered, and time-bearing. Where the iPhone captures a scaffold for synthetic motion, the Hexanon captures the moment as light understood it.

Set 5: "Old Town Geometry: Brick, Sky, and Depth"

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

Set 5 – “Old Town Geometry: Brick, Sky, and Depth”

This richly textured Riga streetscape — part floral foreground, part medieval massing — is a multidimensional challenge for any optical system. The color palette is honest: muted skies, red and ochre masonry, pastel facades. But the deeper question is: Which lens preserves the architecture of space?

Let’s first look at the iPhone 15 Pro Max (2x). The photo is, at a glance, attractive: colors are well-balanced, detail is high, and the Gothic verticals are preserved by aggressive distortion correction. But something is… off. The facades flatten like a theater set. The foreground flowers seem stuck to the same plane as the pedestrians. The sky hovers with little atmospheric layering. It’s not that the perspective is wrong — it’s that the dimensional transitions are smoothed out, replaced by what could be called “proximity wallpapering.”

Enter the Hexanon 40mm f/1.8 at f/8, and suddenly the street regains volume logic. The flowers in the foreground stretch forward, but don’t fight with the middle-ground pedestrians. The facades stack properly — not overlapping, but receding with natural angular divergence. Even the church tower resolves as a body in space, not just a texture with vertical ambition. This is phase-coherent rendering at work: every zone in the frame participates in the same light geometry.

Perhaps most importantly, the Hexanon image contains air. It doesn’t “flatten” to impress — it breathes to describe.

Set 5: “Old Town Geometry: Brick, Sky, and Depth” SPATIAL

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

Set 5 – “Old Town Geometry: Brick, Sky, and Depth” – SPATIAL PHOTO

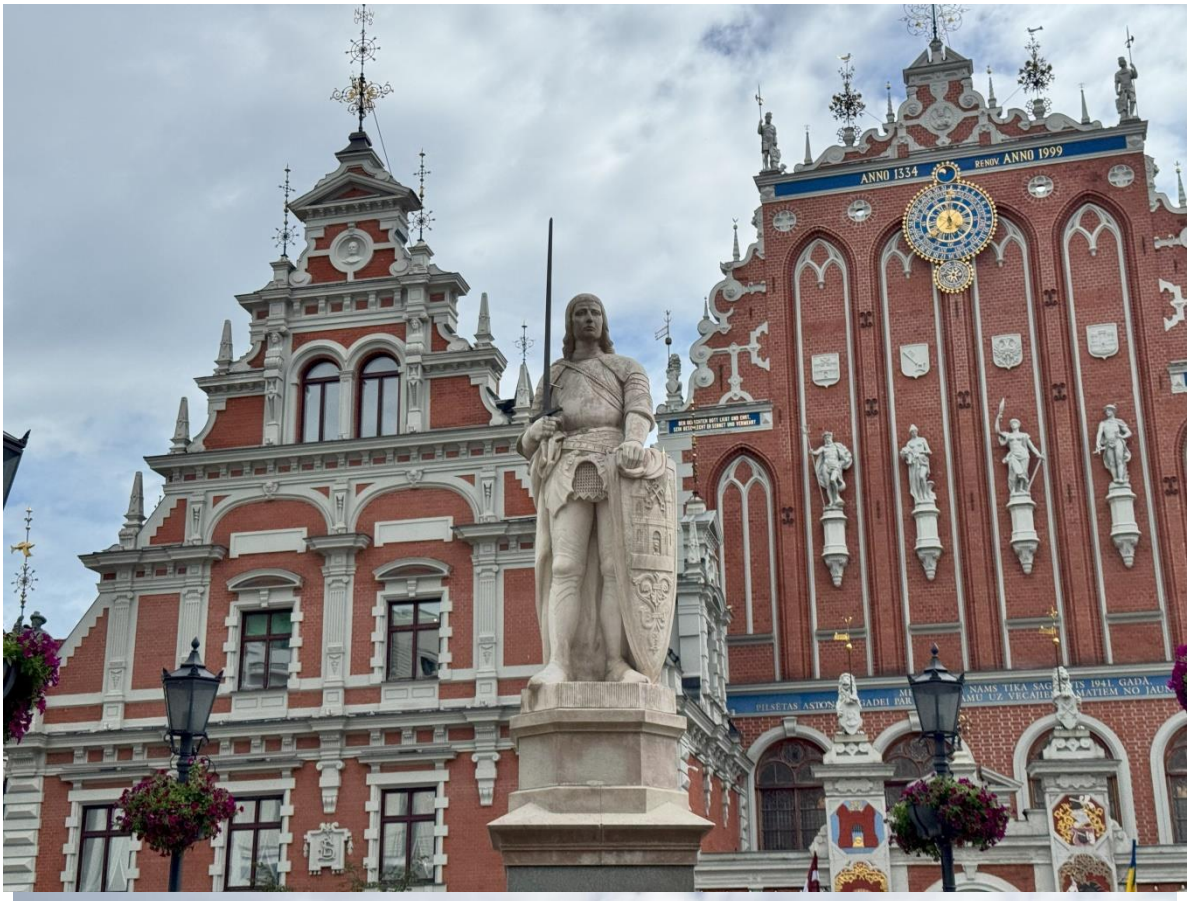
The iPhone 15 “Spatial Photo” mode promises a new era of immersive memory — but when viewed statically, its rendering tells a familiar story. The metadata for depth may support VR swiping or parallax playback, but it doesn't improve real-world spatial logic in the frame.

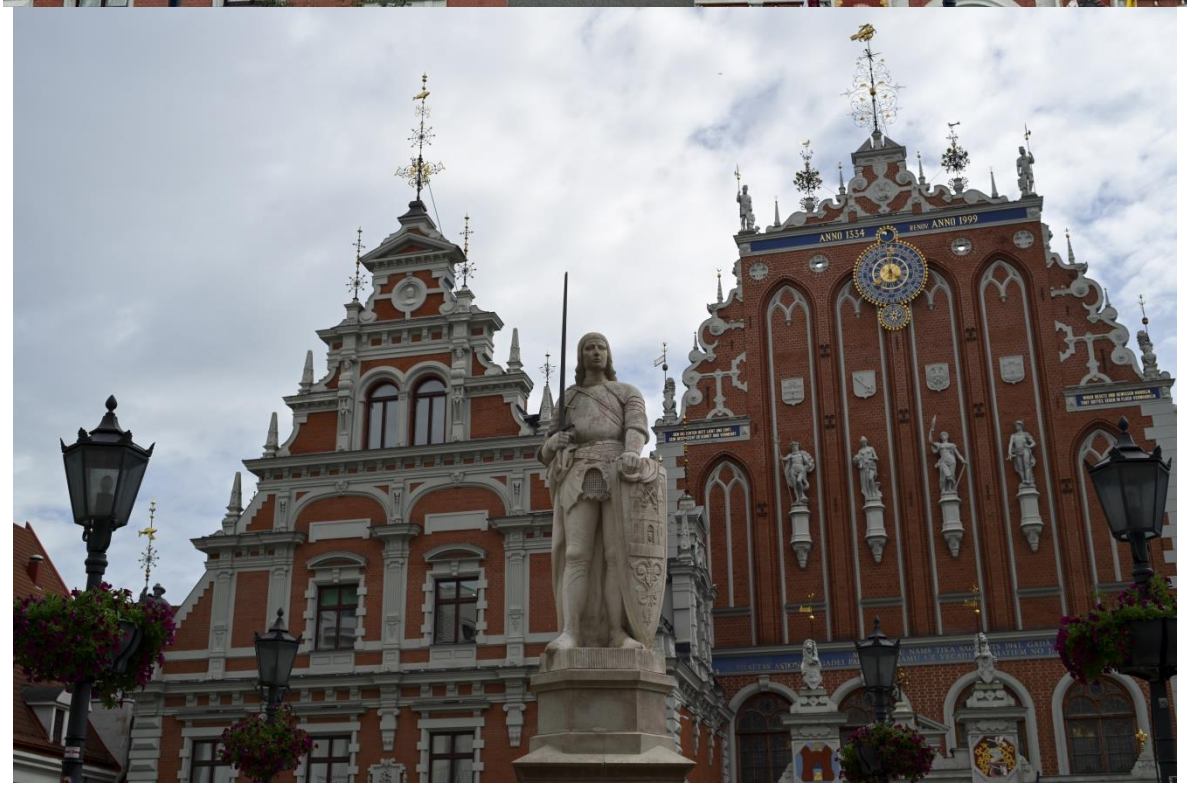
Look closely: the flowerbed is vibrant, yes, but dimensionally vague. It feels pressed up against the buildings rather than foregrounded. The layered facades of Riga’s old town flatten into a visual curtain, and the iconic church tower — while well-shaped — lacks atmospheric retreat. It’s like looking at a storyboard where everything has been equalized for clarity, not depth.

The Hexanon 40mm f/1.8 at f/8 needs no such simulation. It renders presence, not projection. The flowers lean into the viewer’s space, and the buildings breathe in calibrated distance. You feel where things *are*, not just what they *look* like.

One image is built for playback. The other is built for perception.

Set 6: "House of the Blackheads and the White Knight: Dimensional Drama in Red and Stone"





- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo • **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 6 – "House of the Blackheads and the White Knight: Dimensional Drama in Red and Stone"

iPhone 15 Pro Max (2×) vs. Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

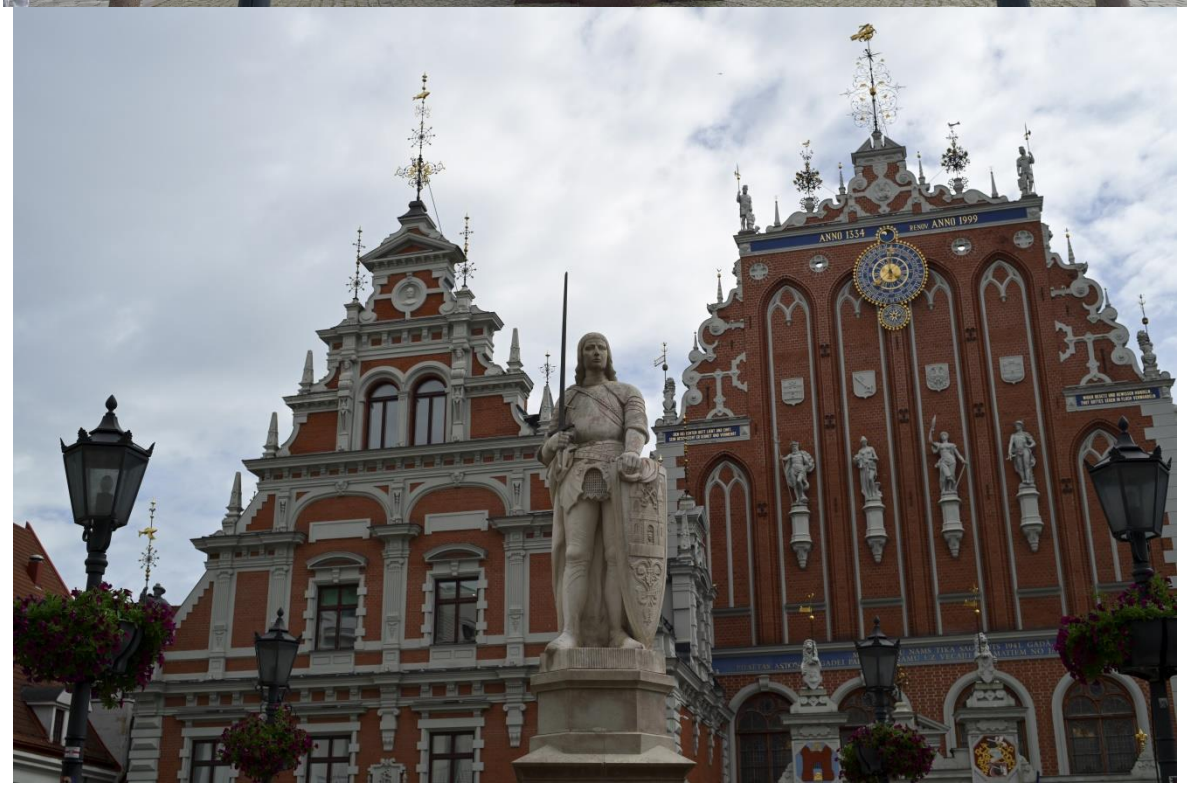
This iconic Riga composition — sharp-angled rooftops, ornate facades, and a proud white statue holding vigil — is architecturally perfect for testing fine structure, contrast falloff, and inter-object spatial tension. There's rich material here: from Gothic trim to Romanesque flourishes to overcast lighting that reveals more shape than sparkle.

The iPhone 15 Pro Max (2×) captures all the headline elements. The textures pop, the color balance feels neutral, and the stone sculpture is sharp. But once again, it suffers from the familiar spatial compression effect. The foreground statue competes for the same visual plane as the richly detailed façade behind it. In fact, the depth layering appears to be governed less by optics and more by tone boundaries. It's a segmented rendering, rather than a relational one.

In the Hexanon 40mm f/1.8 at f/8 photo, however, something elegant happens. The white marble statue detaches cleanly from its background — not through blur, but through phase-aligned rendering. The building behind it holds detail, yes, but it falls back in space. The decorative flourishes don't just resolve — they diminish with believable atmospheric softness. The two lamp posts on either side support the spatial geometry like parentheses in a sentence — framing, not flattening.

This is classic Double Gauss behavior: symmetrical light flow, consistent spatial geometry, and a refusal to over-extract detail at the cost of dimensional realism. The Hexanon doesn't just describe sharpness — it describes where things are in relation to one another.

Set 6: "House of the Blackheads and the White Knight: Dimensional Drama in Red and Stone" SPATIAL



- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo • **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 6 – "House of the Blackheads and the White Knight: Dimensional Drama in Red and Stone" (SPATIAL)

iPhone 15 Spatial Photo mode vs. Hexanon 40mm f/1.8

This iconic Riga scene — rooftops, ornament, stone, and overcast softness — feels like a ready-made exercise in spatial optics. You might expect Apple's Spatial Photo mode to shine here, bringing the proud white knight into crisp VR-like dimensionality. But that's not quite what happens.

The "Spatial Photo" mode, while designed for immersive effects, doesn't improve actual light-based layering when viewed as a static image. The depth metadata may aid in parallax motion or stereoscopic playback, but on inspection, the spatial relationships between statue, lamps, and façades remain compressed. The transitions feel smoother, but the phase behavior doesn't shift. The subject is still algorithmically isolated, not optically revealed.

The Hexanon, by contrast, doesn't simulate presence — it renders it. With the 40mm at f/8, the marble figure steps forward gently but unmistakably, as though pulled into clarity by the laws of wavefront integrity alone. The ornate red building behind it doesn't crowd the foreground but recedes in soft, believable retreat. Even the lanterns appear placed in coherent relation, not pasted as elements on a timeline.

In short: one system interprets the space. The other *knows* it.

Set 7: "The Dog on the Letters"

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 7 – "The Dog on the Letters: Depth in a Public Square"

This festive Riga square, decorated with oversized white letters, vertical flags, and a charming yellow dog statue, offers a vibrant test of spatial layering, mid-scene subject interaction, and architectural consistency. It's a playful frame — but behind the whimsy lies a serious question: Which lens tells the spatial truth?

In the iPhone 15 Pro Max (2×) image, everything is visually clear. Exposure is well-balanced, the red brick façades are crisp, and each person or object in the frame appears sharply rendered. But the scene doesn't breathe. Depth rhythm is absent. People, signage, planters, flags, and buildings all seem stacked along a shallow plane — precise, yes, but dimensionless. The result feels synthetic, like a carefully composited postcard rather than a live spatial encounter.

Then comes the Hexanon 40mm f/1.8 at f/8 — and the compression lifts. Suddenly, the image carries depth logic. Foreground figures recede from the sculpture and planters with discernible space between them. The background architecture retreats in perspective rather than looming unnaturally close. Even the fluttering flags, geometrically flat by design, now gain spatial behavior through shading and angle. The dog doesn't just perch on the letters; it exerts presence, mass, and elevation — as though you could walk a semicircle around it.

This isn't just better glass. It's a different philosophy: photography as embodied light space, not just layered color and form.

Set 7: “The Dog on the Letters” Spatial

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 7 – "The Dog on the Letters: Spatial"

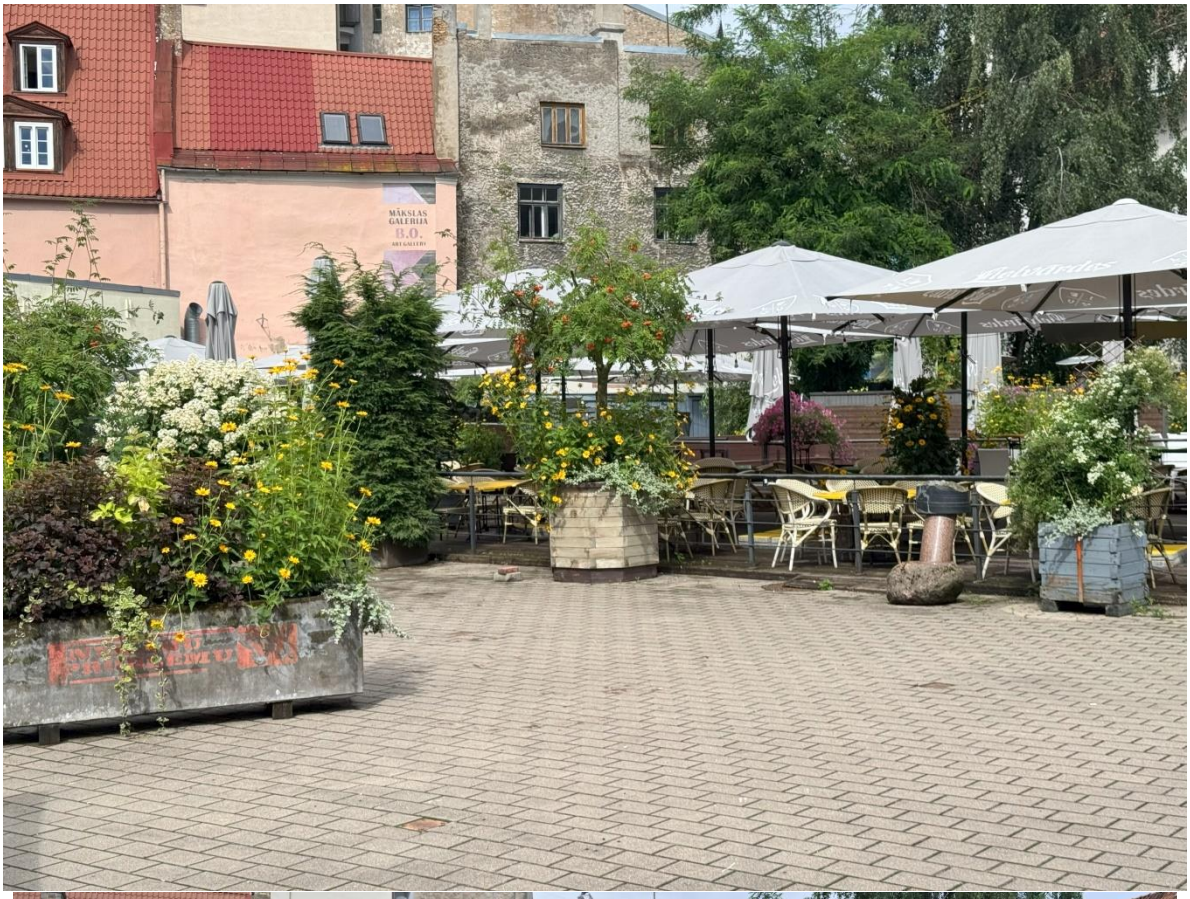
We're promised dimensionality. The iPhone 15 Pro Max's "Spatial Photo" mode suggests that depth will be captured, perceived, and conveyed. But when this Riga square is viewed as a static image — minus any VR headset or parallax swipe — the promise falls apart.

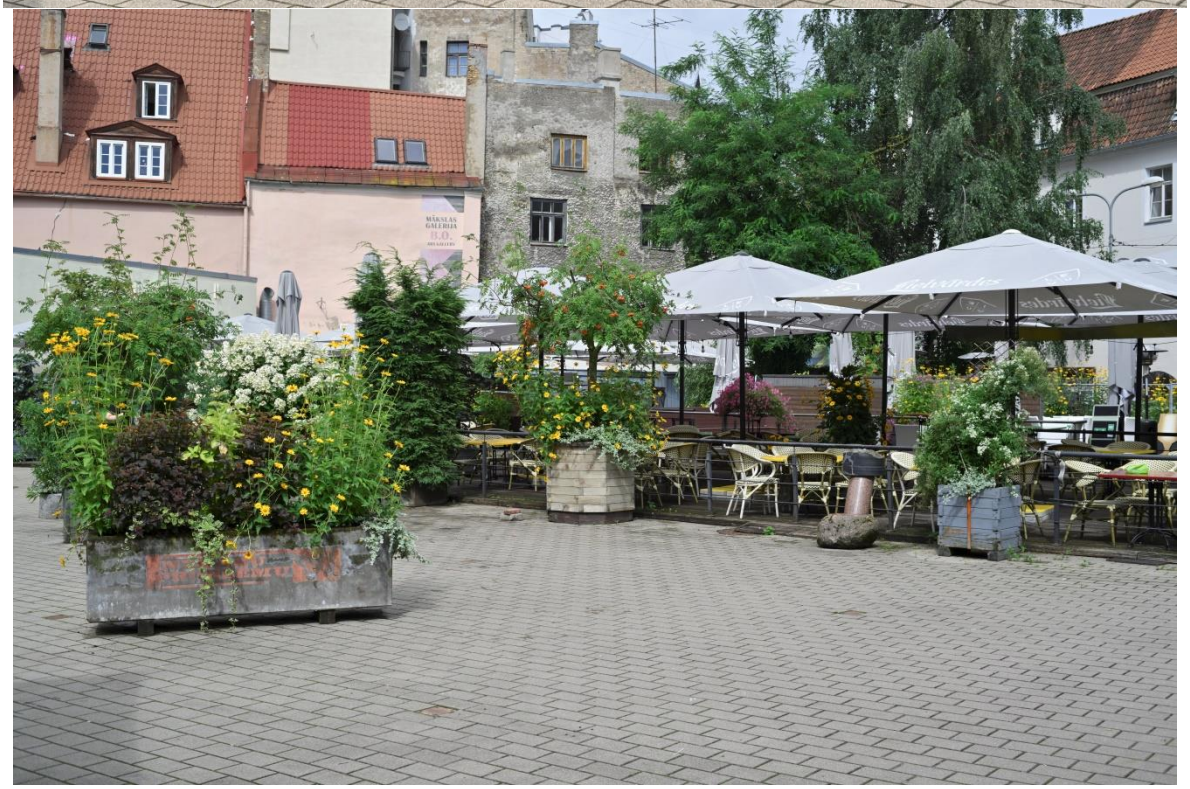
Yes, metadata for stereo depth is likely embedded. But visually, the same compression remains. The figures in the foreground don't pull forward convincingly. The famous yellow dog seems lighter, less anchored, perhaps even cartoonish. Despite slightly smoother gradients and a hint of parallax-ready softness, nothing truly occupies space in a coherent visual geometry. The façade behind the scene looms too close. The letters and statue lack inter-object contrast in phase.

Then comes the Hexanon 40mm at f/8 — the optically honest counterpoint. With no sensors measuring depth, no stereo metadata, and no trickery, it still delivers a spatial performance far beyond the computational photo. Depth isn't implied — it's embedded. The space between planter and statue is walkable, not illustrative. The flags lean back, the building recedes, and the people occupy positions in breathable, angular light space. This is not a mode — it's a lens that understands the architecture of vision.

One camera simulates depth for a future headset. The other simply sees the world as it is.

Set 8: “Terrace Garden with Umbrellas: Rendering the Middle Ground”





- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 8 – "Terrace Garden with Umbrellas: Rendering the Middle Ground"

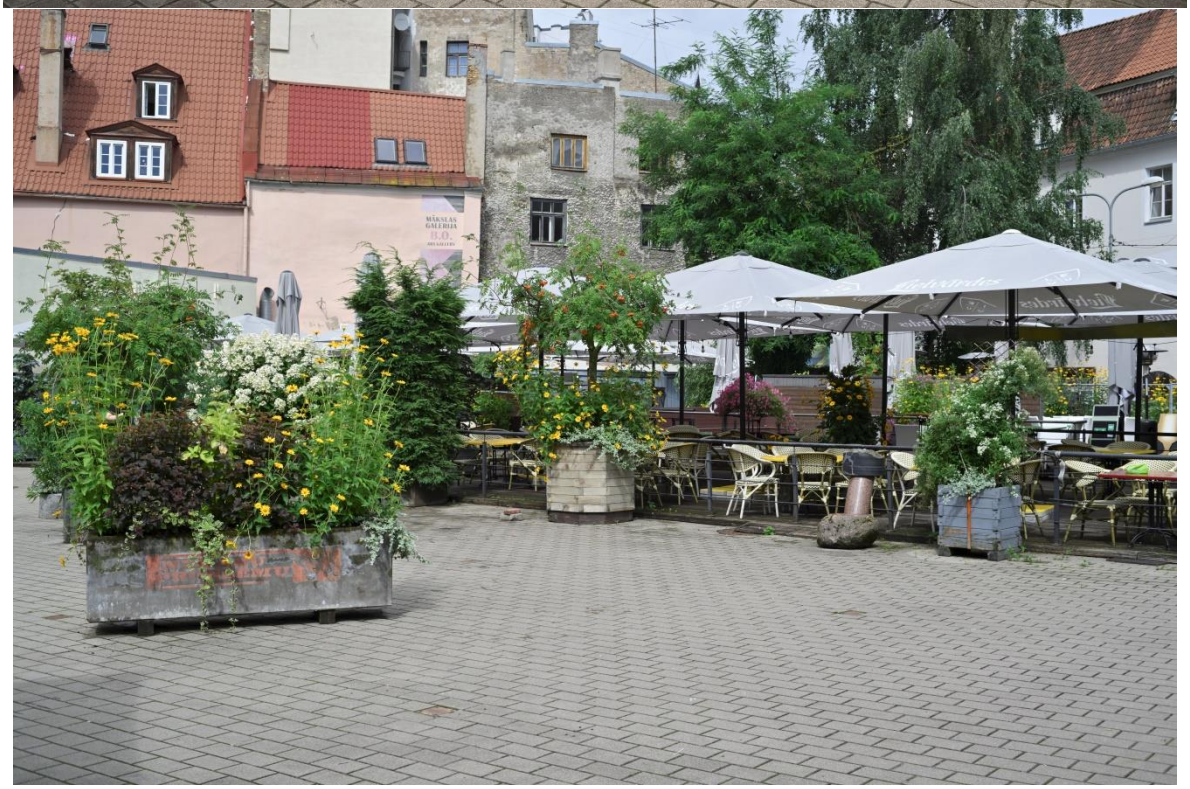
This urban terrace scene appears ordinary at first glance — flowers, planters, chairs, and parasols scattered around a café corner. But it turns out to be a subtle test of spatial integrity: overlapping geometry, similar textures, and receding midground structures that demand depth logic to be seen clearly.

The iPhone 15 Pro Max (2×) delivers a cheerful postcard. Colors are vibrant, textures are present, and the paving in the foreground reads crisply. But then something strange happens just behind the first row of elements: the scene compresses. The stacked planters, rows of chairs, and umbrella poles begin to visually fuse. Depth loses priority, and mid-distance objects become tonal neighbors, not spatial participants. It's as if the algorithm decided that detail was more important than distance — and so the image becomes decorative rather than dimensional.

In contrast, the Konica Hexanon 40mm f/1.8, stopped down to f/8, doesn't dramatize. It describes. Each object stands in proper relation to the others. The planter in the foreground is not just present — it has weight. Its shadow falls with coherent geometry. Behind it, every successive chair and flower box loses intensity just enough to mark its recession in space. The wall in the back retains structure, and the light across the paving helps modulate layers, not flatten them.

This is the quiet genius of the Hexanon: it renders proximity through phase-preserved relationships, not through saturation or edge enhancement. The result is humble, but truthful.

Set 8: "Terrace Garden with Umbrellas: Rendering the Middle Ground"



- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 8 – "Terrace Garden with Umbrellas: Rendering the Middle Ground" SPATIAL

Apple's "Spatial Photo" mode promises dimensionality — at least for dynamic viewing. In a still frame, however, that depth promise falters. This café scene, so reliant on subtle stacking of forms and midground variation, becomes oddly ambiguous.

The Spatial version feels slightly softer, even more smoothed-out than the 2× shot. It may record parallax information, but in static form it reads like an averaged interpretation of space. The parasols and planters appear to hover in adjacency, but not inhabit distinct planes. Light behavior doesn't change meaningfully between foreground and background — it merely registers as tonal drift.

This lack of inter-object phase behavior creates a strange effect: a sense of floating realism. Not because things are levitating, but because they lack anchoring. The chair legs, the bricks, the edges of planters — all rendered with a kind of benevolent blur that removes tension from the scene. Nothing feels grounded.

The Hexanon, again, anchors every form. The phase coherence of the optical path ensures that space behaves like space. Textures diminish with distance, shadows clarify position, and objects participate in a shared geometry. It's not dramatic, but it's irrefutable.

In sum: the Spatial photo smooths. The Hexanon clarifies.

Set 9: “Terrace Garden with Umbrellas: Rendering the Middle Ground”

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 9 – “Flower Flood Under the Umbrellas: Optical Integrity in Cluttered Light” (Standard Photo)

This vibrant terrace scene overflows with floral density, overlapping umbrellas, chairs, railings, textures, and layered tones. The composition’s complexity — almost chaotic in its intimacy — puts both cameras to the test, especially in their ability to preserve foreground/midground relationships and angular coherence.

The iPhone 15 Pro Max (2x) captures color vividly, and its HDR pipeline handles the shaded areas with technical elegance. But spatially? It turns to soup. The sheer abundance of shapes and lines overwhelms the iPhone’s computational segmentation. Foreground flower beds and the mid-deck railing begin to merge tonally, collapsing into a decorative plane rather than unfolding in 3D. Worse, some zones — like the white chairs or upright poles — appear hovering rather than anchored.

Conclusion: The iPhone gives you a nice table setting. The Hexanon lets you walk through the restaurant.

Set 9: “Terrace Garden with Umbrellas: Rendering the Middle Ground” SPATIAL

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo
- **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 9 – “Flower Flood Under the Umbrellas: Illusion of Depth in Static Space” (Spatial Mode)

The Spatial Photo promises more — but once again, delivers only metadata, not presence. In this still version, there’s no experiential gain over the standard 2x image. Yes, there may be a parallax file embedded for later use in dynamic views, but the captured still doesn’t reflect real optical depth.

The flower planters look pasted on, the chairs lose anchor points, and the space under the umbrellas turns into zones of similar tonal weight. What should be a delicious interplay of fore/mid/background feels like a layered collage: everything stacked but not truly related. Even the directionality of light — so crucial for helping us perceive volume — feels muffled, with shadows and highlights rendered flatter than they were in reality.

In short: the “Spatial” mode hints at a richer experience but leaves the viewer stranded in a dimensional impasse. Where the Hexanon uses light to build a walkable world, the iPhone’s Spatial Photo builds a decorative facade that never quite opens up.

Set 10: "Flower Wall and Wooden Smile: When Color Explodes and Depth Implodes"

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo • **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 10 – "Flower Wall and Wooden Smile: When Color Explodes and Depth Implodes"

This cheerful corner — bursting with flowers, whimsical faces, and dangling baskets — is an overload of color and density. Yet in optical terms, it's a trap: the more vibrant the elements, the harder it becomes to maintain separation in space.

The standard iPhone 15 Pro Max 2× image does what it always does — deliver punch. Colors leap from the screen, edges are carved to perfection, and textures shimmer. But depth? Not so much. The scene folds into a decorative tableau. The scarecrow's wooden face, meant to peek through from the second layer, hangs awkwardly with no anchoring. The flowers become wallpaper. Foreground, mid-ground, and background are all flattened into a single glowing stratum. It's pretty — but not dimensional.

Despite the clarity of edges, the image lacks structural logic. Light doesn't seem to pass between the flowers; everything emits rather than reflects. The iPhone achieves technical accuracy but misses spatial fidelity. It paints the stage, but forgets to place the props.

Set 10: "Flower Wall and Wooden Smile: When Color Explodes and Depth Implodes" SPATIAL

- **Top Image:** iPhone 15 Pro Max photo • **Bottom Image:** Nikon Z8 + Hexanon 40mm /1.8

Set 10 – “Spatial Illusion or Spatial Confusion?”

Here, Apple’s Spatial mode enters with a promise: “immersion.” But in still form, it brings no such miracle. The parallax data silently embedded in the file fails to manifest as spatial hierarchy. In fact, the additional metadata seems to hinder rather than help.

Compared to the already flat 2× image, the Spatial Photo looks even more congested. The scene turns slightly more ambiguous, as flower clusters begin to melt into one another. The scarecrow — a clear visual anchor — becomes harder to locate in depth. It hovers with no reference, like a sticker on a colorful backdrop.

If Spatial mode intends to aid dimensional clarity, it fails this test. The Z-axis doesn’t unfold; it collapses further. The added complexity of processing seems to generate a tonal smear, replacing crisp transitions with gentle gradients that paradoxically rob the image of tactile space. It’s smoother, but less breathable.