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Portrait Assignment

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Description

The goal of this project is to make portraits of people.

Decide what you want to express about your subject and how you can express it. You want your work to describe your personal point of view. Do not accept the smiling face that a person presents. Describe what you want to show about your subject and wait until she or he has a certain look you want, or try to direct the subject to look the way you want.

Requirements

Photograph a minimum of three people, including at least one stranger. Shoot at least one roll of film. You must have a minimum of three finished prints for review.

You are welcome to shoot additional rolls of film if you wish. You get credit for all serious work you do.

In addition, find and bring in one portrait photograph that you feel is a great image. Look at books, magazines, newspapers, Web sites, or CDs. You don't have to cut the picture out; bring the book or magazine to class. Family snapshots are unacceptable. Answer the questions on the next page in response to your portrait.

Notes

Put into practice the basic photography skills, such as composition and exposure, you have learned so far. Your goal is to make portraits that are expressive and well composed. Consider some of these issues when making and looking at portraits:

- The expressive moment of the subject
- Extreme close-up or part of a face
- Portraits without faces
- Props, clothing, etc.
- Psychological portraits
- Camera angle or point of view
- Dramatic facial expressions, poses, and gestures
- Lighting

Quotes to Consider

"If your pictures aren't good enough, you're not close enough."

—Robert Capa

"Every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not of the sitter."
—Oscar Wilde

"I think photographs should be provocative and not tell you what you already know. It takes no great powers or magic to reproduce somebody's face in a photograph. The magic is in seeing people in new ways."
—Duane Michals

Portrait Assignment

Name

Describe the portrait:

What can you assume about the person from looking at the picture?

Why do you think this is a great image? What does it express?

How does the composition and lighting add to the success of the photograph?