Instructor: Neal Menschel, Photographer - Instructor/Mentor/Coach

This is a ten-week course meeting every Wednesday from 7:00 to 9:30 pm beginning on Sept. 23 through Dec. 2 with one field trip on Sunday, October 25th. There will be no class on Nov. 25th for Thanksgiving. I will be available after each class for questions, before class by appointment, and in between classes for questions via email.

Class Structure: Each class begins with a combination of lectures and slideshows followed by the next week’s assignments and ending with a review of the previous weeks assignment. The photo review is especially important to the learning process. Not only do we learn from an analysis of the photographs we took, but also from an exploration of how everyone else approached the assignment.

There are no required texts for this course, however the instructor requests that students take some time to specifically look at examples and take some notes from a list of internet links in an introductory letter that will be emailed shortly after registration. This will be considered your first assignment.

Materials - Requirements:
• A digital camera, preferably a DSLR.
• Either a wide angle to telephoto zoom or at least two lenses, a wide angle and a short telephoto. Ideally you should have the capacity of a wide angle going from at least 28mm, to a short telephoto of somewhere around 80 to 135mm. (These are full size sensor, 35 mm film equivalents).
• Camera flash cards with at least 8 gigs of memory.
• Lap top, or access to a computer with simple photo editing capabilities. Examples might be Apple Aperture or iPhoto, Adobe Light Room, and there are many others.
• 4 to 8 gig portable thumb drive.
• A shoe mount flash is handy but not necessary.

If there are any questions or need for clarification you can email the instructor.

Grading Options and Requirements: There are three options for grades or credits:
• To receive a letter grade, (A, B, C, D, No Pass) assignments must be completed and reviewed.
• Credit/No Credit - attendance and participation (as determined by the instructor) is required.
• No Grade Requested (this is the default option) no work is required; No credit shall be received; No proof of attendance can be provided. (Not suitable for those requiring proof of attendance/completion).

Goals and Objectives: The main goal is to create a comfort in using the knowledge, skills, methodology and strategies of content driven visuals to create meaningful and compelling images that reflect the many facets, possibilities, and complexities of photography; to develop a personal style and vision within each individual photographer.

Participation:
Students are encouraged to actively participate in the weekly critiques and discussions, to ask challenging questions and to offer insights on the subjects discussed. By doing so each student will exponentially multiply what they and their fellow students will get out of this class and its activities.

There are no required texts for this course, however the instructor requests that students take some time to specifically look for examples of portraits. A list of eight portrait photographers with internet links will be emailed shortly after registration. This will be considered your first assignment.
All the technique in the world doesn’t compensate for the inability to notice.  *Elliott Erwitt*

It’s all gestures and light!  *Jay Maisel*

**WEEKLY OUTLINE**

**Week 1 – Wed., Sept. 23, 2015 – Creating the Extraordinary from the Ordinary.**
*• Introductions
• Defining an environmental portrait. What sets it apart from the snapshot?
• Slide show with examples.
• Work flow for the weekly classes, bringing cameras and flash cards.
• Fieldtrip discussion.
• Discussion of student’s online and/or library research of portraiture examples.
• Assignment: Take one environmental portrait based on the class discussion to be shared in next weeks Sept. 30th class.*

**Week 2 – Wed., Sept. 30 – Practical Considerations, Working With What We Have**
*• The value of group reviews.
• Review of first assignment.
• Who are we taking the photograph for? Expectations, honesty, and intentions.
• Awareness and surroundings.
• Available time and place
• Final product, what are you looking for?
• Class exercise and demonstration, taking portraits.
• Assignment: If possible, retake and improve the previous week’s environmental portrait with a new twist.*

**Week 3 –Wed., Oct. 7 – Personality in Two Dimensions.**
*• Brief sharing of the previous week’s assignment.
• Discussion concerning the finding of willing subjects to photograph, permissions, legal questions, respect and dignity.
• Discussion of the first of the five points of photographic portraiture content, “Character,” with examples.
• Close ups and Parts of the Whole.
• Slide show…
• First assignment: photograph an individual using the points discussed on what defines character in a photograph. Students will present at three photographs illustrating “character” for the next class on Oct. 14th. (1) Head shot, (2) Body language, (3) Clues*  

*• Discussion of Character assignment.
• Participatory supportive class critique of photos taken during the third week’s assignment with an emphasis on reinforcing the first point of content,” character.”
• Further discussion around the subject of fieldwork.
• Introduction of the second element of environmental portraiture content; time, place, and props, with examples.
• Slide Show…
• Second assignment: Take a photograph illustrating time, place, and props. A minimum of three final photos to be presented for the next Wednesday’s class.*
Week 5 – Wed. Oct. 21 – **Arrangements Inside the Rectangle and Street Portraits**
- Review and analysis of second assignment: time place and props.
- The world of two dimensional photography takes place most often in a rectangle. What is included in that rectangle and how it is arranged is a choice. This class will look at seven elements of composition and how they can be used to create more powerful portraits.
- Breaking the rules
- Instant Portraits in 10 minutes or less, quick and dirty. Who, where to look. Finding subjects and photographing strangers
- Ethics and legality.
- Examples of composition and Street photos
*Discussion of Sunday’s Field Trip. Time, Place, and Directions:
- Third assignment: Take 4 photographs to be discussed in the next class each illustrating one of the seven aspects of composition. Include at least 2 photos from the field trip.

**Oct. 25th - Sunday Field Trip:** Mountain View Farmers Market Mountain View Caltrain, 600 W Evelyn Ave, Mountain View – off of Central Expressway a few blocks from I-85

Week 6 – Wed. Oct. 28 – **Looking for Mood and Ambiance.**
- Review and analysis of last weeks composition assignment.
- Light, where you find it, what it looks like, how it affects the photograph. What’s available.
- Examples.
- What determines mood, and what determines ambiance.
- Assignment: Two photos, one utilizing mood, and the other utilizing the concept of ambiance.

Week 7 – Wed. Nov. 4 – **What’s Going On, Activity?**
- Review and analysis of the past weeks assignment on mood and ambiance.
- More discussion surrounding ongoing fieldwork. Matching the image to the personality and the surroundings. Match it or no? Who needs to be satisfied/happy with the end product? What fits? and what is appropriate?
- Color or Black and White
- Examples
- The three components of activity and how they can enhance an environmental portrait.
- Assignment: three photographs each one illustrating one of the three parts of an activity.

Week 8 – Wed. Nov. 11 – **Working With Family and Those You Know Well**
- Review of last weeks assignment, “activity.”
- Challenges, pros and cons of photographing those you know. Locations, timing.
- Examples, Annie Liebowitz, Kate Philbrick, Sally Mann, Richard Avedon and others.
- Assignment: Group portraiture, preferably of family, include yourself. One image.

Week 9 – Wed., Nov. 18 – **Interpretation and Personal Vision: Creating a Personal Style**
- Review of family portrait.
- Stepping out of your comfort zone, and the subject’s comfort zone.
- How do you see others and the world, and how can you line that up with the images you take?
- Working with your intuition, trusting, taking risks.
- Subject collaborations, what do they look like.
- Examples
• Assignment: Last assignment, This may or may not be a portrait. For the final week, bring in a single photograph that “No one else would have thought of taking!” A complete original, something that reflects a very personal view of the way you view the world. A very personal statement on what you see around you and how you see or feel about them.
• For the final class, after Thanksgiving, add 6 images to your jump drive, of your best/strongest/most compelling, and “intelligent” photographs for our online Smugmug class gallery.

November 25th, No Class Due to Thanksgiving Week

Week 10 – Wed. Dec. 2nd – What to do With all of Those Images
• ASSIGNMENT PLUS: JUMP/FLASH DRIVE WITH 6 OF YOUR VERY BEST IMAGES!!!
• Brief review of the previous weeks assignment, the personal vision.
• Archiving
• Printing
• Online Books
• Online Services
• Online archives
• Resources handout
• Wrap up of the semester