Instructor: Neal Menschel, Photojournalist/Photographer

This is a five-week course meeting every Wednesday between June 22nd and July 13th from 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm with one Saturday workshop class on June 25th from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. I will be available after each class for questions, and in between sessions via email.

There are no required texts for this course, however the instructor requests that students take some time to specifically look for examples of photo essays. A list of eight documentary photographers with internet links 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 of at least 28mm, and a short telephoto of somewhere around 80 to 135mm. These are 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 or Apple’s new Photo, 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 email the instructor before the course starts.

Requirements for a Letter Grade and/or Credit: There are three options for grades or credits:
- To receive a letter grade, (A, B, C, D, No Pass) weekly 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 tell an intelligent, compelling, insightful, and moving story. Students will learn the process of doing field-work along with honing the technical and visual skills to allow them to create personal legacies and narratives. Their strong and dynamic photographs will be combined into a solid, insightful, and intimate narrative.

∞ The universe is made up of stories, not atoms. ~Muriel Ruckeyser
∞ Civilization is a stream with banks. The stream is sometimes filled with blood from people killing, stealing, shouting and doing things historians usually record, while on the banks, unnoticed, people build homes, make love, raise children, sing songs, write poetry. The story of civilization is the story of what happened on the banks. Historians are pessimists because they ignore the banks for the river. ~Preface to the first volume of “The Story of Civilization” by Will Durant.
∞ It’s all gestures and light! ~Jay Maisel
WEEK ONE - CLASS 1

June 22, Wednesday: 7:00 - 9:30 pm
• Lecture: Introductory photo session, bring equipment, and if possible, portfolios. •
What are everyone’s expectations, goals and how do we get there from here.
• Discuss subject/project selection, content driven visuals, fieldwork, and ethics.
• Slide show of examples.
• Assignment: “Character study”.
  • Results due Saturday. June 25th. Three photographs of “Character”
  1. Tight, VERY tight, revealing headshot in a field situation.
  2. Define character through visual clues, WITHOUT disclosing what the subject
     actually looks like.
  3. Give a sense of the subject through body language and/or gestures.
  4. Create a portrait of the person as they relate to their environment.
   Slide show with examples of character based content.
   NOTE: 3 PHOTOS DUE IN ALL FOR SATURDAY, JUNE 25

WEEK ONE - CLASS 2

SOLIDIFY PROJECTS ON THIS DAY, SATURDAY, JUNE 25

June 25, Saturday: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm (with a break for lunch)
• A wrap up of the introduction to the documentary process.
• Discussion of family/friend projects. The who, why, how, where of each project.
• Photo review of first assignment, Character.
• A somewhat biased media presentation on the history of photographic
   storytelling according to the instructor.
• Part one of Assignment: “Composition.”
  _Lecture/discussion of the basics of compositional rules/guidelines: specifically
   what happens within the rectangle.
  • Media presentation of the different components of composition.
  • Continued discussion of the narrative thread that pulls you in and pulls you along.
   Two photos due that emphasize two of the five points brought out in the class
   discussion and the handout on composition.
• Part two of Assignment: “Activity.” Two photos illustrating activity.
  1. Photograph of an active scene.
  2. Photos of clues to an activity, but not the activity itself, e.g., preparation for, or
     the aftermath of an event. Slide show of examples.
   NOTE, FOUR PHOTOS TOTAL DUE IN ALL FOR JUNE 29

WEEK TWO - CLASS 3

June 29, Wednesday: 7:00 - 9:30 pm
Part One Assignment: Mood and Ambiance.
• Media show of examples of mood and ambiance.
• Photographs must address the differences between atmosphere and light and
   their impact on an image creating a strong feeling or emotion within the photograph.
• Please look up definitions of these terms for a clear understanding of differences,
   and look at the handout.
  1. Photo illustrating ambiance
  2. Photo illustrating mood
Part two Assignment: “Time and Place.”
Media presentation of examples of Time and Place.
All of our projects take place in CA, in the present. Our visuals should reflect that.

1. Photograph of Time as a place in time, e.g. (The 60’s), or passing of time (a junked, rusting auto), or as a concept (generations).
2. Photograph of Place that is specific, it relates to the peculiarities of a locale, region, or zone. It gives photos context. Sometimes that context is literal, other times it leads to paradox and/or irony.

NOTE, FOUR PHOTOS IN ALL DUE FOR JULY 6

WEEK THREE - CLASS 4

July 6, Wednesday: 7:00 - 9:30 pm
- Review the assignment on “Mood and Ambiance” and “Time and Place”.
- Lecture/discussion on the various possibilities of story lines. The classic examples and unusual alternatives. Compare to film. Sequential, conflict, resolution, redemption…
- Lecture and discussion on interviewing with demonstrations.
- Note: By this point you should be much more aware and focused on what your specific needs are in relation to what your narrative is becoming. This will be reflected in discussions, opinions, suggestions, and by a tightening of your editing.
- You should begin to edit down all the photos you have taken thus far on your project. You should begin to eliminate weaker efforts and to narrow down those photos that might make it into the “final cut.” As a group we will discuss what sort of fieldwork is still needed for the successful completion of our projects.
- We will have a class discussion on EVERYONES project. Where they see them going, suggestions, unseen possibilities, strengths, holes in the narrative that need to be filled. Be open to suggestion, and be ready to take notes.

We will write the name of each one of our classmates on one of 19 pieces of paper, write something you like about each one of your classmate’s projects, and one suggestion for each of your classmates. Do not sign the papers. We will compile and collate them in class into a “one roll” assignment, for each individual to be shot over the next week. They will be collected and handed out in tonight’s class.

Assignment: Fulfill three suggestions from classmates for the next class.

NOTE, THREE PHOTOS IN ALL DUE FOR July 13

NOTE: Bring twelve of your VERY best, portfolio quality images to class on a thumb drive for the class’ online gallery exhibit!!!

WEEK FOUR - CLASS 5

July 13, Wednesday: 7:00 - 9:30pm
- Review of the final assignment
- Discussion of personal style. From where does it come, and how can an individual develop it
- Discussion of class experience
- Discussion of publishing on demand, portfolios, websites, workshops, social media, and other resources.
- Handout: Links, Books, Website templates, Publish on demand, Further development and education…
- Reminder for evaluations
- Turn in TWELVE BEST photos.