

Project 2: Photographer Interview

Objective:

This project will give you the opportunity to adapt your current skills in photographic composition, lighting, and exposure to implementing them in video capture. While there are of course many subjects you could choose to video, we'll start with the direct (and marketable) skill of filming an interview. This will allow you to work in a controlled-lighting environment (the studio, or somewhere similar), to work with someone else (hopefully someone that can help you if needed), and to develop a project that is already well laid-out in scope.

For this piece, you will be interviewing another photography student one (or a few) of his/her favorite photographs. You will be in charge of lighting your subject and setting up a static camera shot (on a tripod) to record him/her. You will also conduct the interview to guide your interviewee to the responses you want to use in your final edited piece. And then you will edit your video footage down to a short snippet (45-90 seconds) that showcases that photographer and his/her favorite photograph(s).

Gear you will need:

- SLR camera for capturing video, with an appropriate lens for the shots you want
- Tripod!!! – this is essential, as you will not be behind the camera while giving the interview.
- SpiderLites, other studio lighting, or good-quality natural light – I recommend shooting in the studio, but a controlled (and quiet) environment elsewhere will also work.
- External microphone recommended, but not required

How to create this assignment:

- 1) First, find your interview subject. This can be another student in the class, or anyone of your choosing. Since you're still inexperienced at this, someone that will be patient with you (and who is willing to help you set up lights, etc.) is certainly a plus!
- 2) Get all of the necessary gear and arrange a time to conduct the interview (and book the studio, if you decide to shoot in there). You will probably need about a couple of hours to work everything out with lighting, camera settings, audio, etc., even though the interview itself will most likely only take 10-15 minutes.
- 3) Once in the studio/interview-setting, determine your subject's position and your camera position, thinking about how you want to frame your subject. Remember that you want to use the Rule of Thirds to place your subject off to one side, and you want to have your subject looking just off frame towards the "open" side of your framing. So you, as the interviewer, want to sit off to the side of your camera so that your subject can look at you while talking. The direction the subject is facing is up to you, as is how tight or wide you make your shot. If you're up for it, consider changing the "tightness" of your filming once or twice while conducting the interview.
- 4) Set up your lights for either "broad-side" or "short-side" lighting, with appropriate fill light to not have too much contrast. The SpiderLites with their medium and small soft-boxes will work well for this. Remember to position your fill-light a little further away than your key light to create some definition. (And if you're feeling adventurous, you could add a hair/rim light.)
- 5) Once you have your subject lit well for the camera – remember, your camera will be stationary, so you're lighting for that exact camera angle – set your exposure controls, white balance, and color

settings. I recommend filming at 720P / 30 fps, so you'll do well with a 1/60 second shutter speed. Then vary the ISO/aperture based on the amount of light until you have a good exposure. (Note that moving the lights closer/further will make them brighter/dimmer.) With SpiderLites, you will want to use your Tungsten white balance. And consider setting your camera's color settings to the "neutral" settings we went over in class (minimum contrast, minimum sharpening, reduced saturation).

- 6) Once your lighting and exposure seem accurate, record some test video. Make sure that sound is being recorded and at an adequate level. Having your mic on "auto" should be okay for this project, but make sure that you are getting sound on the camera. Try playing it back, or check that the "mic level" bars are showing up (you may need to rotate through your display/info screens once in live-view to see this).
- 7) If everything is a go, press record and conduct your interview. Some things to remember – try to get your interviewee to *include* the question in their answer; keep eye contact and engagement with your subject; stay quiet during the answers, so that you are only recording the subject, not yourself; and don't interrupt! If you want to change camera "zoom" during the interview, do this between answers, not in the middle of a response.
- 8) After you've captured your footage, you'll import it into iMovie, trim and edit it for your final piece, and include the still image(s) of the discussed photograph(s) into your final footage. iMovie is a tool for non-linear editing, which means you can place an section of the initial footage into any place along the final video piece's timeline. You can also create transitions between the clips, add another "layer" for the still image(s), and edit the audio. When you're done, you'll use File > Share > File... to export your piece as a Quicktime (mp4) video.

What to turn in:

- Your finished video as an "mp4" file.
- Turn in this video file through your shared DropBox folder – keep using the same one you already created, or start a shared folder with me by titling the folder "AI Time-Based Media - *YourName*" and sharing this with "andrew@andrewross.com". Bringing your completed file on a flash drive to class is fine, too
- **Please name your final video file with YOUR NAME *and* the name of your interview subject.** So you should have file name like "Andrew Ross's interview of Ansel Adams.mp4".

Grading rubric:

This project will be graded 1/3 on technical requirements, and 2/3 on quality/creativity

Is your video well lit? Do you have good definition in your subject, with highlights and shadows, but not too much contrast?		10 pts
Is your footage well exposed and of good color/quality? Is it in focus?		10 pts
Did your interview lead to good responses that you were able make into an informative video snippet? Remember, drawing good answers from your interviewee is <i>your</i> responsibility!		10 pts
Did you include footage in your video of the photograph(s) being talked about?		10 pts
Is your final video edited well to be informative and interesting while also concise? (Length should be 45-90 seconds.)		10 pts
Quality/Creativity Grade		100 pts
TOTAL		150 pts

DUE DATE: at the beginning of class Week 5