COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Does a portrait have to include a recognizable human form? And what dictates a 'photographic' portrait in a media and image saturated economy? In this class, we will be exploring the history of portraiture in photography and how it has evolved throughout the past century. From Victorian Post-Mortem photography, to social media ‘selfies’, our language of portraiture is rapidly evolving. Students will be creating a range of portrait based projects, using a variety of digital mediums. Students will work independently to produce visual works demonstrating the concepts learned in class. By the end of this class, students are expected to have a series of images that utilize various techniques to create a coherent body of work.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

• Gain an overview of the history of portraiture age in relation to contemporary photography

• Analyze different approaches to making and viewing in order to develop conceptual understanding of portraiture and its place in the contemporary sphere

• Create your own definition of what a portrait is. Use this definition to inform your work

Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 8 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (photographing, image editing, printing, readings, writings, preparation for critiques, etc).

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance at every class is required. Students are allowed to miss one class. Missing more than one class without a written medical excuse from a doctor will result in lowering your final grade by one letter grade. Any student who misses two classes without written medical excuse will be dropped from the course and will need to re-take the course the following fall semester. Required attendance includes all final presentations. (A reduction of less than a full letter will be considered in exceptional extenuating circumstances -- students may submit an
explanation in writing for consideration.)

**GRADING:**

Grades for the semester will be based on the percentages listed below. *See individual Assignment Sheets for guidelines and expectations for each assignment.*

- 40% Assignments
- 20% Final Crit
- 40% Class participation/contributions to discussions/punctuality

**LAPTOPS:**

Laptops are only to be used on class work→ Photoshop, finding source imagery, research.

**PS: THIS SYLLABUS -> TIMING // SCHEDULING IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE!**

**Week 1**

**Friday August 31**  
Syllabus, Course Description, Introductions  
**LECTURE:** What is a portrait?  
Introduction to Portraiture- a broad overview  
**ASSIGNMENT:** find an artist that uses portraiture in their photographic practice. Prepare a 5 minute presentation on them. In this presentation, tell me why you like or dislike how they approach their practice and subject.

**Week 2**

**Tuesday September 4**  
**Artist Presentations**  
**DEMO:** Learn how to use the printer- loading a roll, color profiles, etc  
**ASSIGNMENT:** Take a quick self portrait. How can an image evoke a narrative or description of self? Bring it to next class. Use an image recording device of your choice.

**Friday September 7**
**LECTURE:** Self Portraiture

**ASSIGNMENT:** Take a series of self portraits. Think about setting, space, time, and tonality. How does your image depict mood/feeling? Do you actually have to be in your photograph, or can objects be used to represent a notion of self? Due next FRIDAY the 14th. 3 prints total + digital contact sheets

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**Week 3**

**Tuesday September 11**

**Group Discussion:** Studio time. Use this class to edit your work and print

**LECTURE:** Ways of Seeing: Ethics of photography and portraiture

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**Friday September 14**

**CRITIQUE FOR SELF PORTRAITUDE ASSIGNMENT**

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**Week 4**

**Tuesday September 18th**

**LECTURE:** Objects as descriptors: staged portraiture and still life

**ASSIGNMENT:** Create 3 portraits that pair together (a triptych)- Treat each image differently- think about using objects that are representative of a person (could be yourself), using an actual person, and ‘constructing’ a scene for the lens. Due Tuesday October 2

**For next class:** Prepare a 5 minute artist presentation on a photographer that 'constructs/sets up' portraits. Due Friday September 21

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**Friday September 21**

**Artist Presentations**

**WORK DAY**

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**Week 5**

**Tuesday September 25**

**BRANDEIS MONDAY**

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**Friday September 28th**

**WORK DAY:** Meet with visiting artist to talk about your images before crit next week. Use this day of class to print and prepare.
Week 6
Tuesday October 2
CRIT for Objects as Descriptors

Friday October 5
LECTURE: Queering Photography: Queer Portraiture Part 1
ASSIGNMENT: Craigslist Missed Connections: We are societally conditioned to assign an identity to someone by verbal and visual descriptors. Find a ‘Missed Connections’ ad of your choice, and create a portrait of who wrote it and who it is about. Due Tuesday October 16

Week 7
Tuesday October 9
LECTURE: Queering Photography: Queer Portraiture Part 2
WORK DAY

Friday October 12
In Progress Crit/Discussion
WORK DAY

Week 8
Tuesday October 16
CRIT for Missed Connections

Friday October 19
LECTURE: Building a Stage: Portraiture in Theatre
ASSIGNMENT: Create a cast of characters and a narrative. Use photography to document the narrative (staged images). What descriptors are you using to tell a story? 6 images total. Due Friday November 2

Week 9
Tuesday October 23rd
Visiting Artist. Work day and in progress discussion

Friday October 26th
Visiting Artist. Work day and in progress discussion

Week 9
Tuesday October 30th
LECTURE: Continuation of Portraiture and Theatre
WORK DAY: Crit is on Friday!

Friday November 2nd
Crit for Portraiture and Theatre

Week 10
Tuesday November 6th
LECTURE: Black Portraiture
ASSIGNMENT: PICK A WORD: pick a word from the hat. Create 1 images/portrait that responds to your chosen word. Due Friday November 9th

Friday November 9th
Crit for ‘Pick a Word’ assignment
ASSIGNMENT: Pick the name of one of your classmates out of the hat. By next class, bring in an object to give to the person you chose. You will need to create a portrait of yourself with the object that you’ve been given. Due Friday November 16th

Week 11
Tuesday November 13th
Give the object you have chosen to the person whose name you picked from the hat.

FINAL PROJECT ASSIGNMENT: Propose a final project (topic of your choice) that involves your personal definition of what ‘portraiture’ is. Write a project proposal (1 page, 12 pt font, Times New Roman, NOT double spaced) that describes your idea, artists you are referencing, and how you plan to carry out the project through photographic images. Proposal is due on Tuesday November 20th. Critiques start on Friday December 7th and will resume on Tuesday December 11th. Five photographs total + contact sheets
Friday November 16th
Crit for given object/portrait

Week 12
Tuesday November 20th
Final Project Proposals Due
LECTURE: Portraiture of the Middle East

Friday November 23
NO CLASS, AUTUMN RECESS

Week 13
Tuesday November 27th
LECTURE: Politics of Portraiture
Assignment: Find a photojournalist whose photographic practice you find unethical/exploitative. Prepare a 5 minute presentation on them for next class

Friday November 30th
Artist Presentations
One on one meetings to discuss progress on final project.

Week 14
Tuesday December 4th
WORK/STUDIO DAY.

Friday December 7th
FINAL CRITS BEGIN!

Week 15
Tuesday December 11th
FINAL CRITS!

HAVE A GOOD BREAK! 😊😊😊