

Project 02: Photoshop / Self Portraits & Alternate Realities

Students will be creating 3 unique compositions which will demonstrate their knowledge of Adobe Photoshop CS5. These compositions will require students to compose ideas, take photographs, use scans from Project 1, and utilize key aspects of Photoshop in order to take their ideas and turn them into a finished file. Finished layered Photoshop files will be turned in electronically into the Instructor's Drop Box.

Materials

Camera, ink jet photo paper, [8 1/2" X 11" & 11" X 17"]

The Adobe Suite Basics Skills

1. Reading and interpreting menus
2. Menu structure, menu groups, keyboard shortcuts
3. Basic differences between Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign
4. How to move an image from one program to another
5. How to find answers to things you don't know how to do,
(Help menu
& Online resources)
6. Layers
7. Exporting files
8. Transparency and opacity
9. Grids and guide

Photoshop Skills

1. How to set up a document
2. (Page size, resolution, bleeds/ crops)
3. Layers
4. Canvas size vs. image size
5. How to insert an image into your PSD file
6. Drawing tools: pencil, paintbrush, custom shapes
7. Selection tools: marquee, lasso, magic wand, quick mask
8. Text: inserting, modifying, Rasterizing (emphasis on raster-based)
9. Transform: free transform, scale, skew, perspective
10. Clone stamp tool
11. Dodge & burn tools
12. Image adjustments: color, contrast, hue, etc.
13. Levels (understanding black, 50% grey, and white values)
14. Understanding channels
15. Filters (when and why to use them)

- 16. Layer styles (stroke, fill, drop shadow, bevel emboss, etc.)
- 17. Pattern tool
- 18. How to make your own pattern and paint brush, gradient, paint bucket, fill
- 19. Creating masks and saving masks for export
- 20. History window
- 21. Actions (using actions to edit multiples)

Composition 01

Photomontage / self portrait

Picture yourself in an alternate reality or fantasy landscape.

Using the Photoshop techniques that will be demonstrated, place yourself into an alternate reality and create a unique composition that illustrates your identity in an alternate world, environment or reality.

See Martha Rosler, "Invasion" 2008

<http://zine.artcat.com/2008/10/whos-afraid-of-martha-rosler.php>

Methodology

Take a full figure photo of yourself or consider something that is symbolic of yourself [digital self-portrait]

It is important to take or use a photo of yourself that is in front of a simple backdrop so that the figure can be cut out of the background without difficulty

Discuss

Vector / raster images

cmym vs. rgb

Cut out your figure from the background using the pen tool and clipping path.

**Demonstration provided*

Find a photo of a background that represents an alternate reality or fantasy landscape and place "yourself" into it. You may combine more than one image to make a collage background. Be inventive and creative with your background composition. Images may be found on line or scanned from magazine etc.

Use the clone tool and make adjustments to the background and/or your portrait to make the image appear seamless.

Create shadow using the brush tool to create a sense of depth.

**Demonstrations provided*

Combine the two images to create the final composition using a canvas size of 8 1/2" X 11"

Adjust image quality for printing and web viewing. Consider the following:

Levels
Contrast
Hue
Saturation

Save as .psd and export as .jpeg

Print out the print version using the color printer on to 8 1/2" X 11" paper.

Composition 02

Find another background image that has the same aesthetic or theme.

ie. Moonscape

Place your figure into the background in multiples of two or more

Add another visual element that the figure is interacting with. Try to make the composition seem "believable" and that the visual elements appear as if they are really part of the composition.

Create a pattern with one of the visual elements.

**Demonstrations provided*

Export as .jpeg and save as .psd

Turn in .jpeg, .psd and 8 1/2" X 11" print

Composition 03

Outputting work

How to print on the lab printers & their settings (b&w, color; 8 1/2" x 11" and 11" x 17")

Difference between glossy & matte, photo & regular paper

Printing pixel based work vs. vector based work (scaling)

How to trim print outs with an X-acto knife, straight edge, and cutting mat

Methodology

Create a third composition combining the two background images from Composition 01 and 02, include "yourself" and the objects from the compositions.

Document size:

4000 pixels by 1500 pixels / 11" X 17" document

Place your characters in the foreground, the middle ground and the background.

Include the visual element from Composition 02.

Add one other visual elements to enhance your concept.

Export as .jpeg save as .psd

Turn in .psd and .jpeg and the 11" X 17" document