portfolio seven

artists

Artists are listed in the order they appear in the portfolio.

Leanne Eisen
Ariel Rubin
Jamie Campbell
Allison Rowe
Che Kothari
Wieslaw Michalak
Becky Comber
Irina Lyubchenko
Heather Westfall
Nicole Stafford
Calla Evans
Tanya Winter
Yulanda Yee
Jordan Bowden
Amy Grinyer
Brianna Beacom
Paul Hubble
Gussy Elassaad
Sammy Rawal
Julia Holdway
Ariel Thomas
Lisa Pesic
Dianne Fukanaga
Syeda Sarwat Zaidi

Shannon Buck
Amy Van Gerven
Shai Wallach
Denise Steller
Togo Meirelles
Sarah Slocum
Kareena Felker
Nikole Peters
Kate Dylnicki
Leah Maghanoy
Sabina Zych
Kenneth Chou
Andrew J. Sutherland
Emily Bryan
Nikki Chan
Fara Winestock
Haruna Murota
Andrea Valade
Katie Stringer
Sarah Mangialardo
Anna Morellato
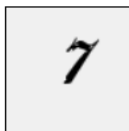Peter Beyer
Mimi Cabell
Brenna Fava

che kothari

4TH YEAR, PHOTOGRAPHY
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"I want to make portraits as intense as people. I want your intensity to pass into me, go through the camera and become a recognition to a stranger."
- Richard Avedon

In our image saturated world, I continuously look to Avedon's portraits for inspiration. I am absorbed in doing portraiture and the intensity that can be captured in the interaction of my subjects, my camera, and myself.

When asked what I do, my typical response is, "I shoot people." I don't shoot to kill, I shoot to immortalize. Each person possesses a distinct character and life and that singularity is what I aim to capture. Each portrait is a conversation between the subjects' instinctive reaction to being photographed, the personality they present, and what I am able to extract from them. I encourage people to be who they are or who they want to be. Each shoot evolves differently, some with the subject providing direction and some with me providing guidance. My motivation is creating intense portraits that juxtapose the idea of who people are and what else could be discovered about them.

Alongside Avedon, David Lachapelle and Platon also provide inspiration to me. These three artists create portraits that are undeniably intense. Each portrait elicits a performance from the subjects for the camera. The performance develops as a product of the relationship between the subject and the photographer. And thus, my role, as photographer, becomes to capture the essence of each sitter's performance while acting as both the director and audience. Like Platon and Avedon, I have often used a plain background which directs the viewer's focus to the individual. In contrast to this style of work, I have recently started following the stylings of Lachapelle and have begun creating environments in which to photograph people. In either approach, my motivation remains to represent an aspect of a person while leaving room for further interpretations of their life.

The photograph I have chosen to represent my work is a manifestation of my goals in portraiture. Photographing unrecognized people allows a viewer's experience to be totally pure in seeing what is obviously being depicted within an image, and in their creation of the stories that the image provokes. Finding anonymous personalities and telling their stories intrigued me, so last summer I decided to embark such a journey. I found myself setting up a small studio in the midst of a festival in northern Ontario and photographing over 500 people during a three-day period. In the moment preceding this chosen image, I remember saying, "Okay let's see it" and with that he took a drag of his joint while showcasing his marijuana case. In the same instance he threw back his head slightly and squinted his eyes in an act of defiance over the experience of being photographed. As I look at the photograph now I still see the performance that he gave on the day the portrait was taken. He presented an aspect of his reality in his gestures and use of props and gives the viewer hints of his persona through his clothing, tattoos, and hair. This is all we know of him. There are more questions formulated from the image, all of which ask, "Who is this person?" as the answers develop in the viewer's imagination and perception. I hope to find answers directly from the subjects themselves. Next year I plan to return to the festival with my collection of photographs, find the people in the shots and have them write a response to how their photograph represents them as a person. Undoubtedly each person will have changed with the elapsed time, but these pictures will always remain as they were taken.

Selected Portfolio Images:

Leanne Eisen

Jamie Campbell

Heather Westfall

Tanya Winter

Paul Hubble

Sammy Rawal

Shannon Buck

Sarah Slocum

Katie Stringer

Mimi Cabell

Brenna Fava

Portfolio page with text:

Che Kothari

Original prints from this and earlier Portfolios may be viewed in the Mira Godard Student Centre in the School of Image Arts; the complete project was on display in the Image Arts Gallery, 122 Bond Street, during January 2005.

Gallery Photos