Assignment 4: Portraiture / Self Portraiture

Due:

Remember, we all already know what a tree, car, house and person look like. What else can or will you tell us about your subjects that are not the typical portrait? A portrait does not always have to be about the figure but, if it is, then it does not have to be the only element. With this assignment, I would like for you to consider what and how you are portraying your subjects, be it a person, an object, or a place. What do you want to reveal or conceal from the viewer? Will it be a close-up detail, personal belongings, or the surroundings of a person? Think about the typical portraits that everyone is used to seeing. What would you do to make them more interesting and personal, not so generic and typical? Think about the camera angle and the prospective that you take the picture at. Also, remember the importance of depth of field and wither you want shallow (to emphasize the importance of the subject) or wide (to show detail in a wide area). How are the other elements of lighting, focus and movement playing a role in your images? If using a person, is that person an actor within the image or will you take more of a documentary approach? How are you treating the setting—does it matter? Is there a narrative or story involved in the images? Have fun and explore what your subject means to you. The more creative you photograph your subject, the more interesting it will be to others. You make work in a series or create entirely separate images.

Here is a list of some artists who’s work you might find inspiring:

Cindy Sherman

Diane Arbus

Paul Strand

Edward Sheriff Curtis

Julia Margaret Cameron

Dorothea Lange

Walker Evans

Alfred Stieglitz

Lorna Simpson

Gregory Crewdson

David Levinthal