

Photography  
Visual Arts Program / MIT  
Fall 2002

**Introduction to Photography(4.341) and Photography and Related Media(4.343)**

are workshop-centered courses in the Visual Arts Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

They combine practical instruction, readings, lectures, field trips, visiting artists and group discussions intended to foster an aesthetic appreciation of photography/digital imaging, and a critical awareness of how images in our culture are produced and constructed.

A student-initiated term project provides opportunities to develop technical skills as well as for personal exploration. Projects are continuously presented in a critical forum. The following documentation presents a number of student projects from Fall 2002.

Cover Photograph: Peter Jamieson '03, from series *Strangers*

Peter Jamieson

Strangers

### Project Description:

I have found that many people truly act themselves when they are not put on the spot. Moreover, they will often have indeed forgotten you are pointing a camera at them, and instead are focused on themselves. This is what I am exploring. I am going out into the world, into all walks of life.

Many of my pictures are taken from the waste level without looking through the viewfinder.

Peter Jamieson















Andrew Marcus

So it was I lost the light of day...

### Project Description:

My interest is in capturing an ephemeral mood or sense of a place, however sublime or banal. Implicit in this is an attempt to document a complexity impossible to verbally relate.

I've found that a mood, or more vaguely, a sense of being from a place may be related through an image that communicates on a visceral level, and I hope to further my understanding of that phenomenon while communicating a subjective reading of a site.

My thirty by forty inch large black and white prints were installed in an MIT building with a large glass façade allowing pedestrians to view the installation during daytime and nighttime.

Andrew Marcus

















Liz Burow

In Green Pastures



### Project Description:

For the past 6 years I have been painting large scale works of acrylic, pastel and charcoal on paper. I have always said that I only paint what I see and what I see are correlations between color, light, layering, space and media. More recently, I have become more interested in urban landscapes as a subject matter, especially 'street clutter.' I find beauty in these everyday scenes and numerous exciting compositions and relationships. I have used photographs for the starting point of paintings, but now instead of having these two mediums fight against each other, I am interested in bringing them together in my work.

I have mounted the photographs on panels that separate them from the wall and installed them in a grid formation. The photographs are highly manipulated in the darkroom by changing focus during exposure as well as dodging and burning. Each photograph is about twenty by twenty-four inches in size.

Liz Burow















Jon Braddock

I Photograph Everything I Eat

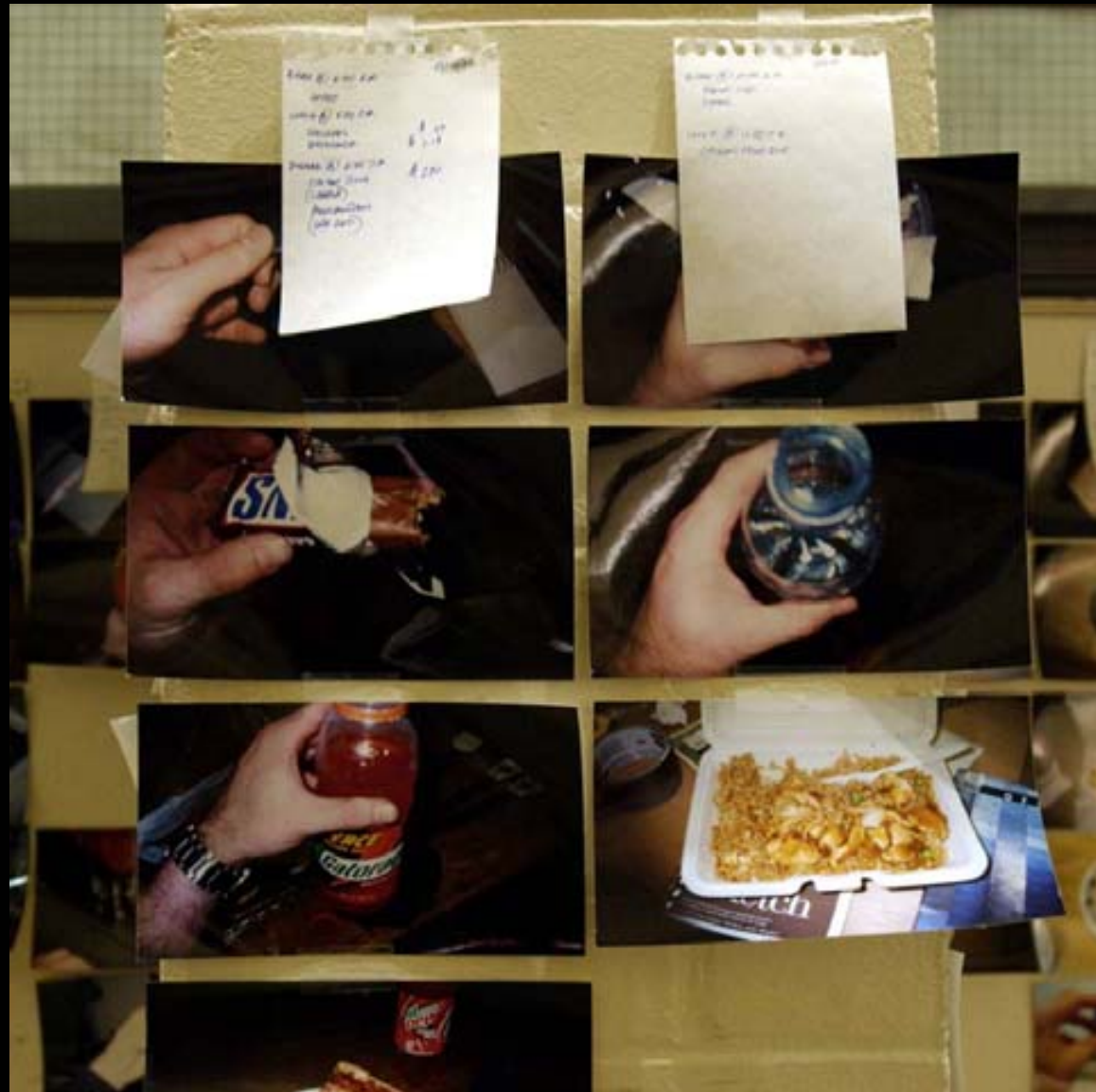
### Project Description:

I photographed everything I ate during the Fall 2002 semester. Whenever I failed to do so, I provided clues through receipts or drawings, which I included with the photographs in the wall installation near the Dome Café on the MIT campus.

Jon Braddock









Christine Gaspar

When he came home from work on Sunday, the seventh day, his wife had disappeared.

### Project Description:

In the past, photography has allowed me to access some ideas that I have been unable to get through other media. However, the graphaical nature of my work seems to override the content and its reading. I am interested in getting away from the preciousness of my previous work and get more at the content.

Christine Gaspar













Andrew Carvey

Untitled

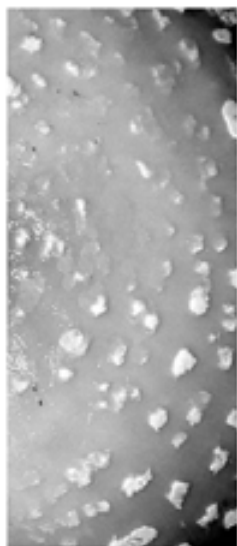


### Project Description:

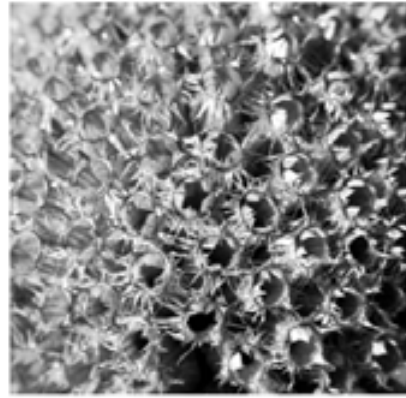
For my final photo project, I photographed patterns and structures which occurred in nature. I focused on the close up details which compose the overall item, but are usually overlooked during a normal viewing. Paying close attention to the fine detail captured in each photo eventually made even the simplest object appear amazingly intricate. Diving further into the common item revealed that the once mundane item became interesting and the merely odd quickly became mind boggling.

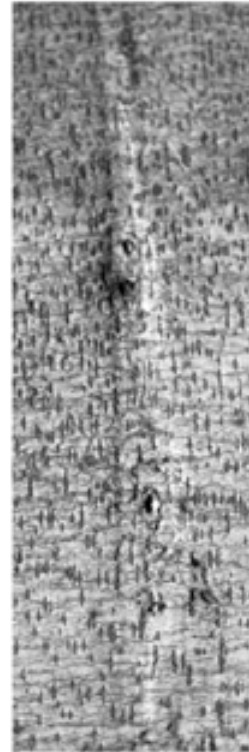
Examining nature in greater depth revealed a new perspective on what was originally seen as ordinary. With this new view, unrecognizable patterns and structures began to emerge, bringing a new level of detail to be scrutinized. Viewing only the newly discovered structure, a new, captivating, and mysterious image was revealed. Embedded among more recognizable details, my images were cropped into a photo book, revealing the now foreign structures. These images are digital representations of what one would see looking through my book.

Andrew W Carvey













Alana Lafferty

Untitled

### Project Description:

My book explores the loss of innocence through the use of Barbie dolls, toy soldiers, and real people. The project is a dark satire of modern society. The individual images explore specific large ideas related to humanity. The cover, which is not shown, is simple with a black rectangle in the center and a Band-aid. The inside cover contains a sticker that reads "From the Library of Alana Hope Lafferty" with a teddy bear and a pile of books.

Alana Lafferty













Laura Noren

Untitled

### My 8 Best Things

Dejah J.

I think I would consider myself upper middle class. I have been lucky enough to always be in this class. My mother grew up in a family that could be considered borderline upper middle class but since there were 4 children, money was always tighter than it was for other people so often she felt as though she were middle class. My father grew up in a situation where he felt it was lower middle class due to his father traveling a lot and four children in a tighter economic situation. Let me put it this way, he was eligible for full financial aid here for collage.



I have many friends that are middle class and that can be considered upper class. Usually there is not much tension but in certain situations there are. I feel as though there is more tension with the upper class friends because they may not know that sometimes it seems as though they are flaunting their money but I think that is a common feeling from people who are in a lower class than their friends. Sometimes in situations I do feel guilty being more economically stable than some of my friends. For instance, I have a close friend who can be considered middle class and we were discussing going on vacation together and there was some tension since I did not realize that it was more financially difficult for her to do the things that we wanted to do. I think that class differences become a problem when people use them as power or don't realize people's sensitivity or embarrassment at being at a "lower" level.



## My 8 Best Things Maria T.

My sister and I talked about this and we both agree that we're definitely at least middle class. I've never wanted for anything in my entire life (within reason). I've lived a very comfortable life and I think that if my parents didn't have so many kids then they could easily be very upper middle class to upper class. In my memory we've always been the same class. My parents talk about being newly married or married with a couple of us kids and how everything had to be budgeted and how poor they were. But I think it's pretty typical young couple stuff. With each promotion my dad gets in the military there's more money and along with each promotion generally another kid came along (for awhile at least :)



I think I have lots of friends in lots of different socioeconomic classes. When I was younger, obviously I was very naive about these things and I think I still am. For instance one of my best friends from elementary school is very very well off and another is often completely broke. But all three of us still love each other dearly and it's never a factor. Also, one of my best friends in college is very well off and I never even realized it until after I knew her for two years. I don't think there's ever any tension...money is rarely a topic that comes up. I think that I'd always be more than willing to share or give anything I had to a friend and I think my friends would do the same for me. I always wonder what it would be like to be part of a different class. I mean I think a lot of people like to think what they would do if they had millions of dollars. But I know for sure that when I'm on my own later on in life that I want just enough money to get by comfortably. I think a big house would just be a big pain and I'd be too nervous to drive fancy cars but I would like to travel so I'm pretty happy just being middle class.

My 8 Best Things  
Rachana O.

we were pretty poor when i was born. parents were both grad students, mostly paycheck to paycheck living. i am going to stay in the same class. we've been well off since i was maybe 5ish... no insurance when i was born, for example - i was born in a charity hospital. upper middle class now



my friends are middle to upper middle class  
i think class is a huge factor in educational and criminal disparity. but i  
dont have much firsthand knowledge

My 8 Best Things  
Sarah S.

I come from an upper middle class family. I'd pretty much say that I've always been in the same class. Unless the start up company that my dad works for does something amazing, then I pretty much see my family remaining in the same class. I guess I assume that this is the same class I will be a part of once I graduate, etc, since both of my parents have their PhD's from MIT.



I have close friends who are in a different socioeconomic class. One of them, his mom doesn't work, his dad is a postal service worker that supports his family, his two aunts and his brother and sister. Class issues have never caused any tension, and he is probably one of the sweetest, most generous people I know.  
I come from a little suburb where there is little diversity, and basically everyone gets a car when they get their license. I think sometimes class differences can make some people feel uncomfortable, but I don't think I would say it is a big problem.

My 8 Best Things  
Simon L.

I would say that I am lower-middle class.. and maybe upper-lower (do they even make a distinction below middle ?? :) ) I would however say that I am upwardly mobile I guess. At least in a monetary sense. I think earlier on in my life my family was not even middle class. But i guess after years of work etc.. they "own" a house and mess so that seems to be sort of a shift into the bottom of middle.



of course.. money is the central theme of american culture... with money (which i equate with class) comes endless opportunities. you have choice, freedom, options.. just so many intangible things. this becomes a problem, because those that have, want to keep what they have, and gain more while they're at it. you can look at so many issues in terms of class. school reform... essentially a class issue... they dont want to put money into failing schools, but still expect things to improve. this is on top of the fact that these urban schools already dont get as much as the suburban schools...basically politics at least today is class based...big government vs small government...higher taxes vs lower taxes...the thing is, that more and more...all influence is skewed toward those who have money, because they are giving to both political parties...so more and more you have an establishment run by those who "have", that protects the interests of those who "have".

Simon Halpern

A Conversation About Light

### Project Description:

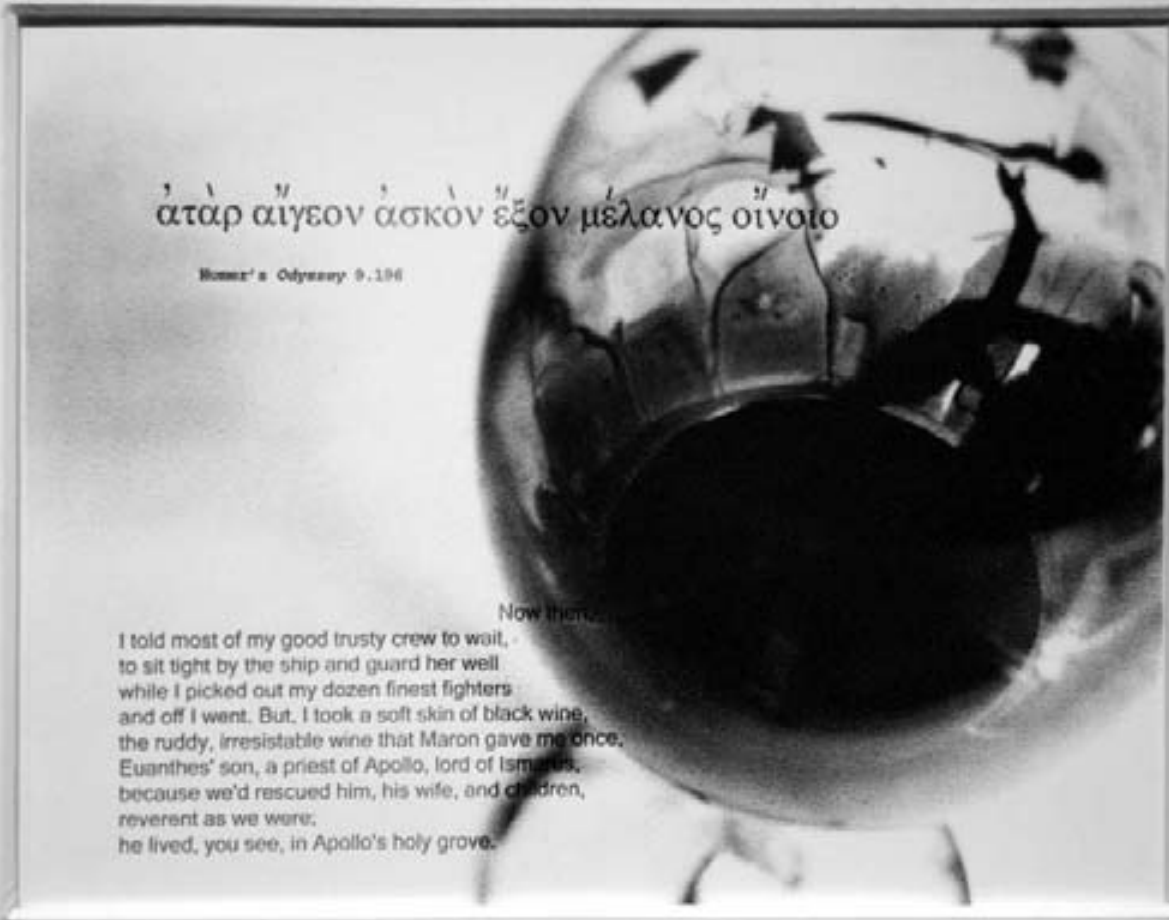
I enjoy studying light. Light is a force that exists as a physical medium and an emotional circuit. On a physical level, light has obvious scientific properties. It serves as a light source and an energy source for architecture and technology in society. Human interaction with light results in a humanistic symbolism of light- usually as a provider. Light inspires warm emotional feelings and it adopts certain societal stereotypes. Light is such a phenomenal entity that cannot be permanently defined. Only when it comes in contact with a life source can it be interpreted in a certain way.

My photography project is a small biography, or journal, of light. I designed the project in such a way as to provoke inspiration in the viewer. It is not mandatory that the viewer *understand* each image. Moreover, the viewer should imagine a chapter of light for each frame in the same way that one recognizes a sensation when looking at an impressionist painting. I tried to select (more or less) abstract backgrounds that would represent, or even dictate, elements of the theme of light particular for each title. By overlaying artistic diagrams or appropriate poetic quotations over these backgrounds, part, or whole, of the chapter is represented. Light is an infinitely large field of study, My intention in this project was to provide a first glance at some of the aspects that I find interesting, or *conversational*, about light.

Simon Halpern





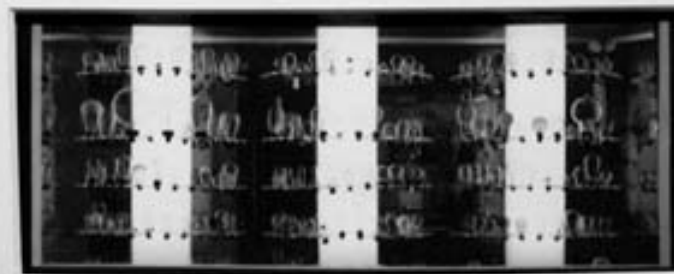
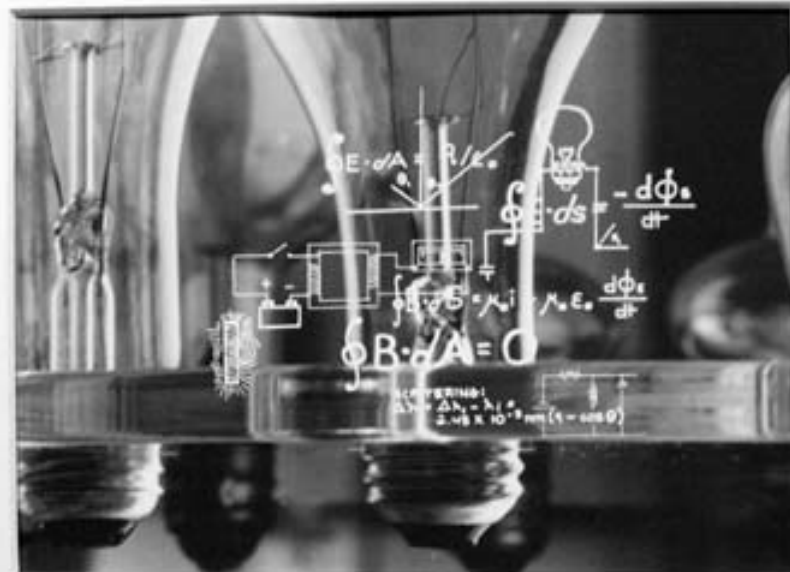


ἄτὰρ αἶγεον ἄσκον ἔξον μέλανος οἴνοιο

Homer's *Odyssey* 9.196

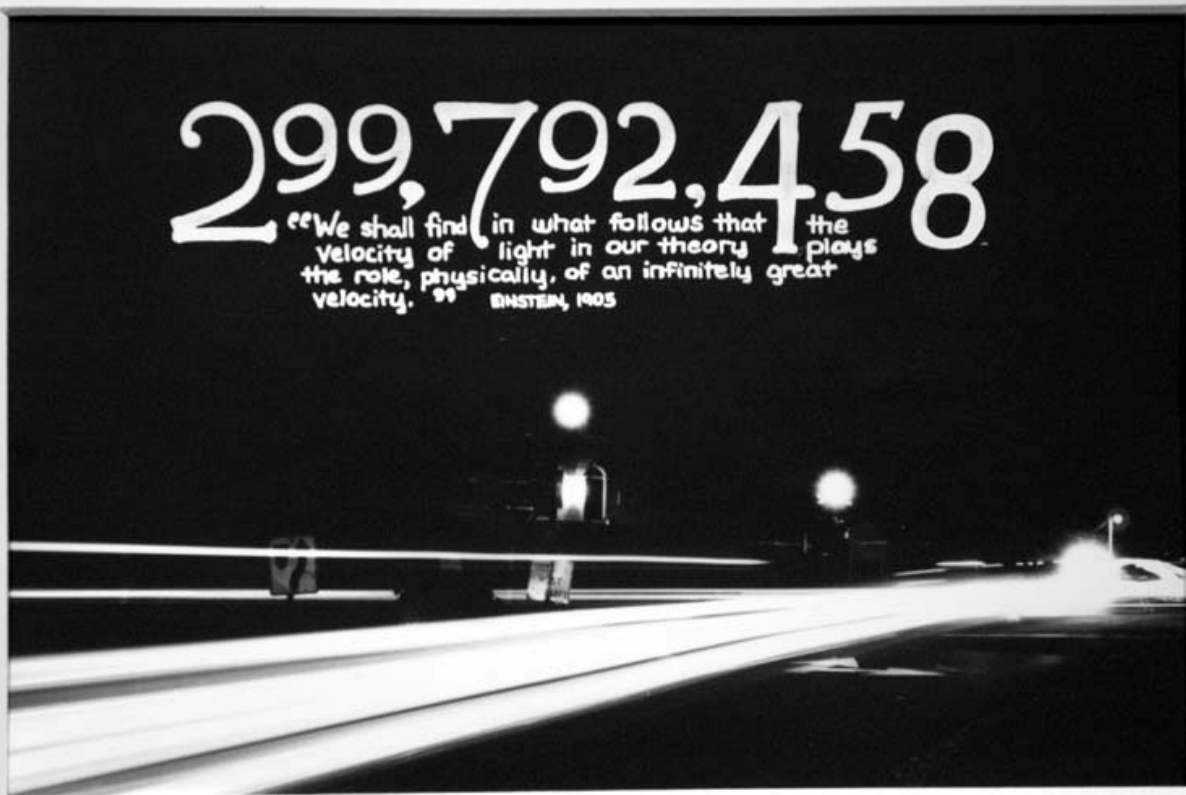
Now then,

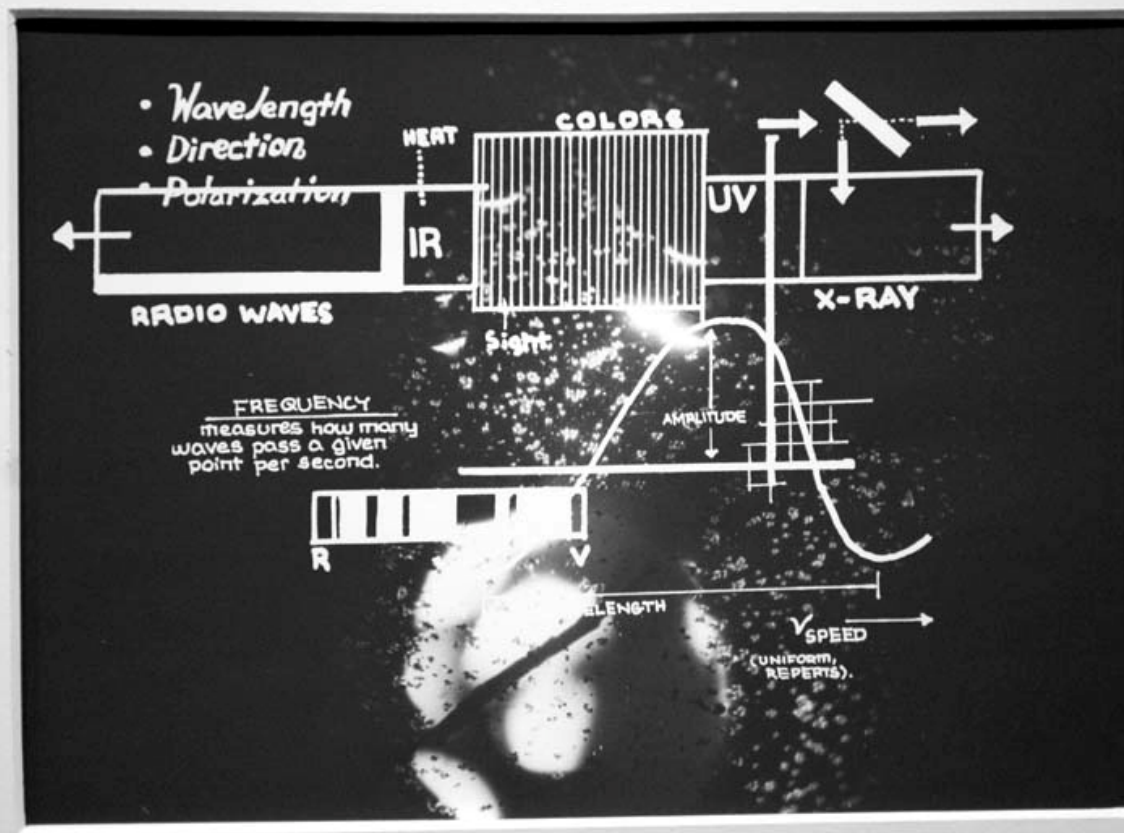
I told most of my good trusty crew to wait,  
to sit tight by the ship and guard her well  
while I picked out my dozen finest fighters  
and off I went. But, I took a soft skin of black wine,  
the ruddy, irresistible wine that Maron gave me once,  
Euanthes' son, a priest of Apollo, lord of Ismarus,  
because we'd rescued him, his wife, and children,  
reverent as we were;  
he lived, you see, in Apollo's holy grove.



299,792,458

"We shall find in what follows that the  
velocity of light in our theory plays  
the role, physically, of an infinitely great  
velocity." EINSTEIN, 1905





Stephanie Hsu

Untitled



As an Asian American traveling in China this past summer, I gained more than ever a sense of understanding of my culture. For once I saw the roots of the Chinese culture that had always had a presence in my life whether I was aware of its influences or not. Surprisingly however, I was received with more of an estranged attitude than I had expected from the Chinese in China. This presented an especially perplexing dichotomy since I am undoubtedly labeled "Chinese" in America but not considered so by the very people I have been associated with all my life.

I have come to realize the unique nature of what I have come to see as an Asian American "phenomenon." Especially as a student at MIT, I realize that there is a whole generation of young adults like me whose parents' are first generation Asian immigrants of the United States. It seems like most of us overlook the singularity of our status and do not realize the bearing it has in our lives.

I have developed a set of questions as a base of discussion with Asian Americans of my generation, and am trying to encourage not only the people I interview to face questions of their identity, but to encourage all people to think about this cultural "phenomenon." I am using this project to explore this subject I have just come to realize—hoping to gain an understanding of how it relates to me personally; and through these pages I hope my audience will also come closer to realizing the distinct position of my generation of Asian Americans.







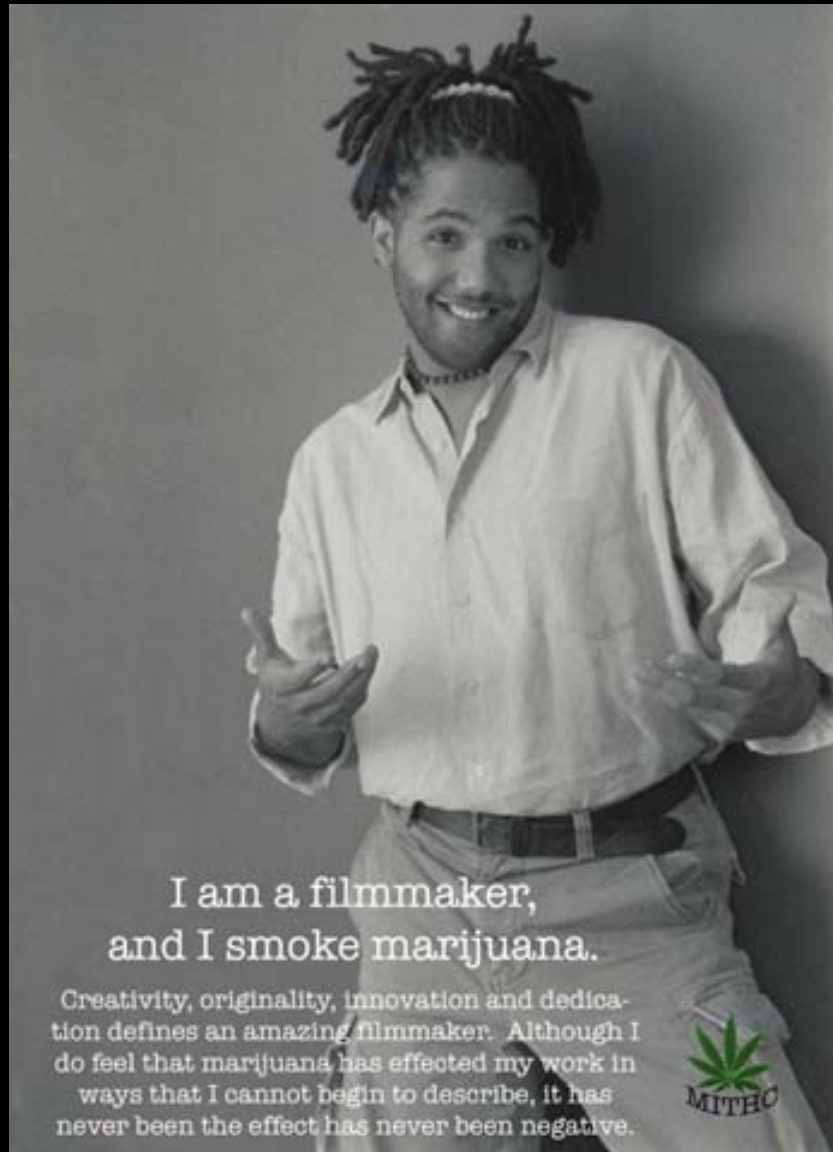




Charisse Massay

Untitled





I am a filmmaker,  
and I smoke marijuana.

Creativity, originality, innovation and dedication defines an amazing filmmaker. Although I do feel that marijuana has effected my work in ways that I cannot begin to describe, it has never been the effect has never been negative.



I am a drag queen,  
and I smoke  
marijuana.

As a child, I never cared what  
other people thought of me.  
Throughout my life, I have made  
my own decisions without  
considering the opinions of others.  
Although some may disapprove  
of my lifestyle choices,  
I am still fabulous.





I am a housewife,  
and I smoke marijuana.

I love my husband and my home. I take  
great pride in maintaining an attractive and  
tidy house but housework is boring.  
Marijuana keeps the laundry interesting.





I design airplanes,  
and I smoke  
marijuana.

Your safety is important to me  
therefore I keep I my weekend  
recreation separate from my  
work. Aerospace engineering  
is difficult but my casual  
marijuana consumption does  
not effect the quality  
of my designs.



Marianna Shnayderman

Untitled

### Project Description:

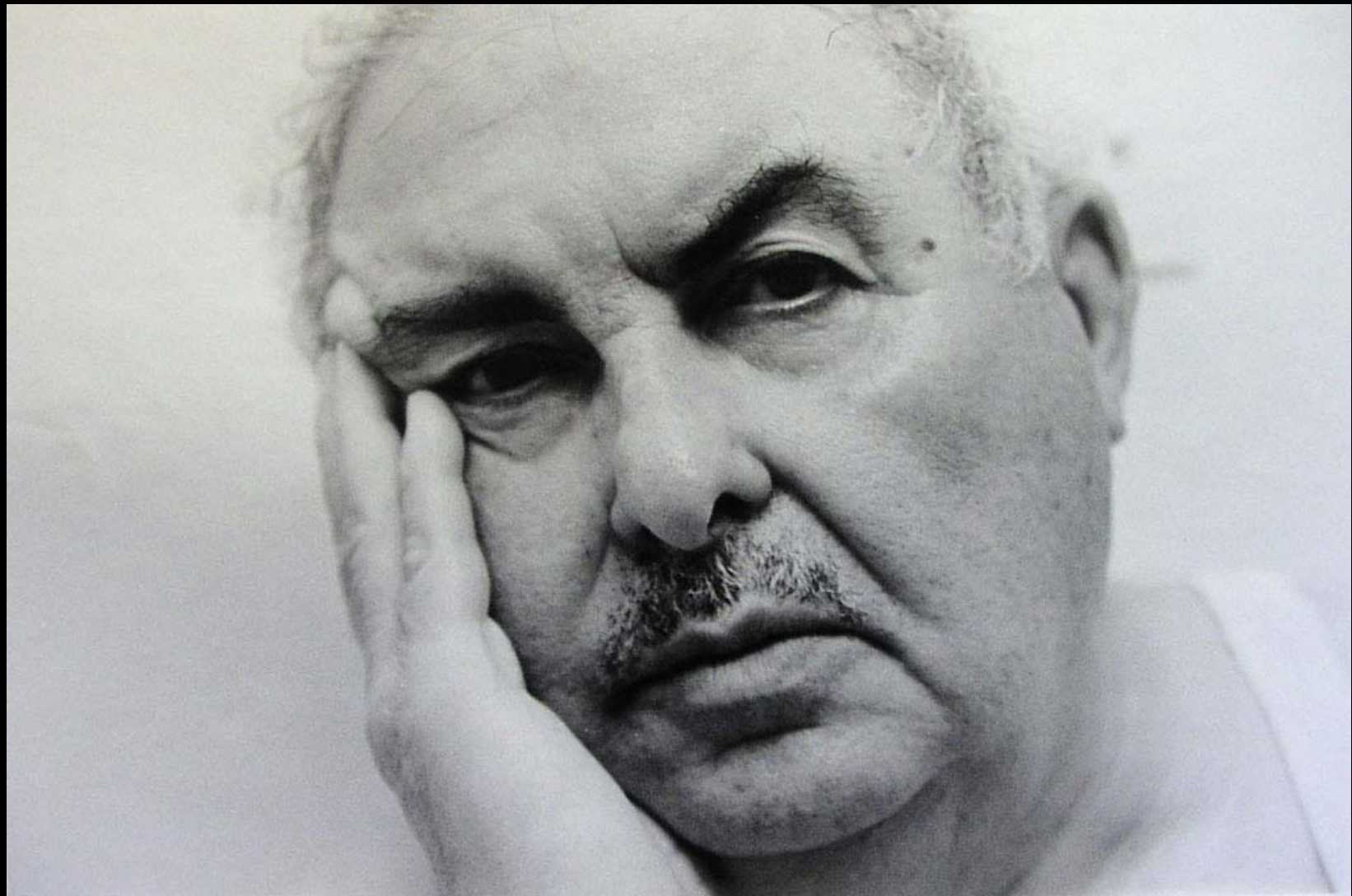
The goal of my project was to explore the role of relationships between the subject and photographer, and to try to capture my relationships with the people that surround me in photographs. The route I took to do this was ask my subjects to write about personal issues and lead intimate conversations while I was taking their pictures.

I presented the final images in a small room where the portraits lined the perimeter on eye level and were close to each other in hopes of giving an intense experience for viewers who would ideally enter the room one by one and get saturated with the same expressions that I encounter every day in my life. With each portrait, I provided fragments of handwritten ideas that my sitters left with me. These visuals were meant to add to the individualities of my subjects and give an idea of the kinds of interactions I have with them.

Marianna Shnayderman



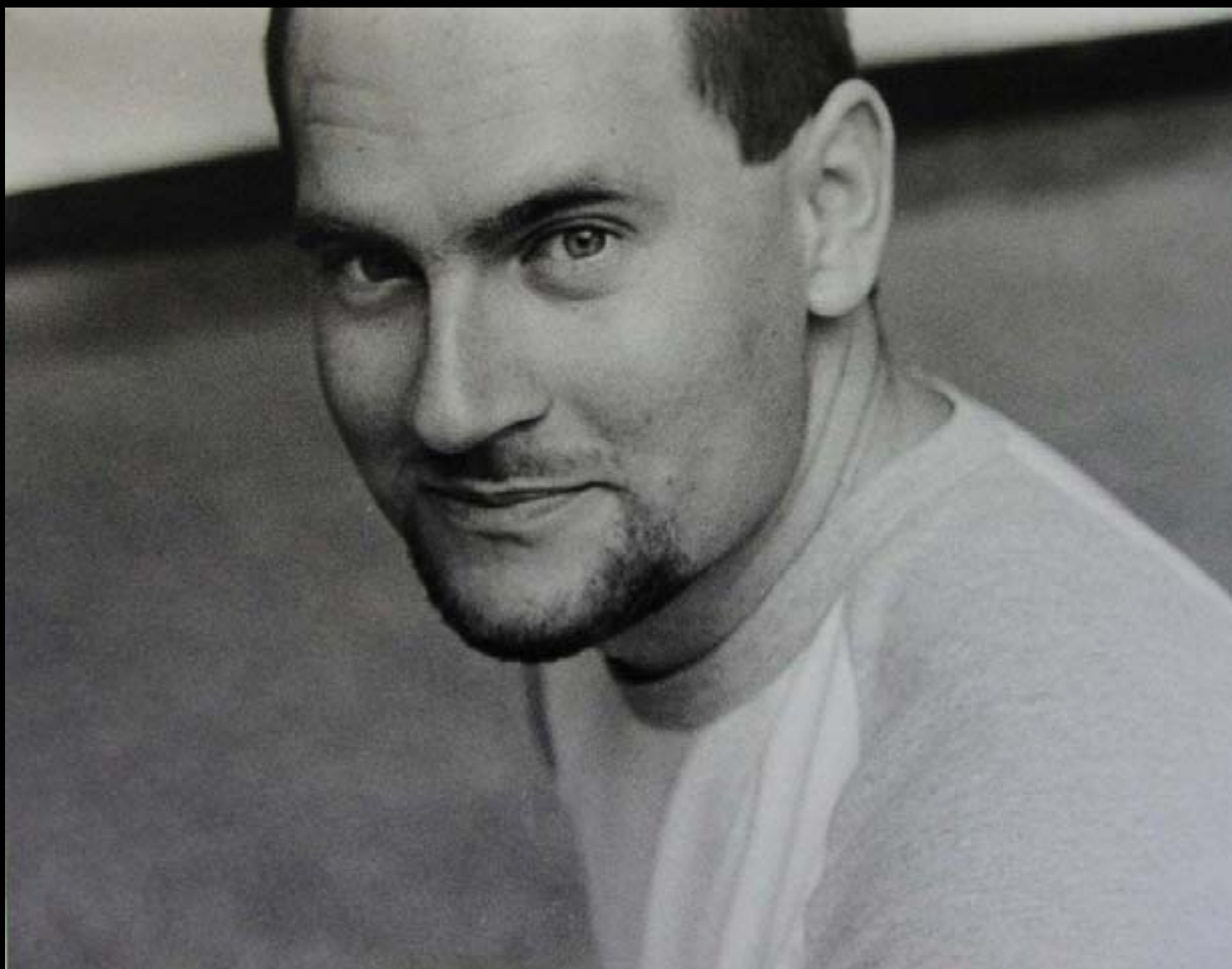












Ran Tao

Untitled









