

Portrait Photography

with Cat Gundry-Beck

Cat Gundry-Beck is an Irish photographer, filmmaker and educator based between Iceland, Ireland and travelling the world. She specialises in creating outdoor / on-location portraits and advertising imagery as well as creating dreamlike portraits for her personal work. Her clients include Adobe, Dropbox and TripAdvisor and she's been published in British Vogue and on the front page of the New York Times.

Objective

This workshop will help you learn posing, lighting, composition, and techniques to make your subjects feel comfortable in front of the camera. Cat goes over some theory of photography techniques and you'll put them into practice where you'll get to photograph someone (or yourself as a self-portrait).

YouTube workshop link

 [Youtube workshop video](#)

Workshop duration

This activity should take approximately 1-1.5 hours to complete. Please adapt to your circumstances.

What materials do I need?

- Camera phone
- Phone tripod or something to hold the phone camera up with (eg. a pile of books) if you're doing a self-portrait
- A mask or scarf to cover the faces of anyone under 18
- Some props like a hat or nice clothing (*optional*)
- A light-source eg. a window or a lamp
- A stool for the person being photographed to sit on (*optional*)



my mum-in her sewing
room-her history and
experiences- wise-sewing
machine, quilt



photography moodboard



2 black individuals in front of a
jungle/forest, wearing quite natural
green tones. the lighting would
reflect natural sunshine. the
individuals would make direct eye
contact with the camera while
showing their whole body but
keeping the focus on their face,
showcasing their individuality and
empowering other black people
around the world

Warmup

Creating a moodboard

- Grab a piece of paper and a pen
- Make a quick plan for a shoot - it's not something you have to shoot today, can be as crazy as you like!
- Think about who you'd like to photograph, it can be someone famous or someone you know.
- What aspects of their personality would you like to show?
- What feelings would you like to bring across?
- Do you have a location or background in mind?
- Would you like it to be styled with hair, make-up, props?

Catch up on the recording:

▶ Timestamp: 15:53

TOP TIP: adding some reference photos into your moodboard can help you visualise your plan. You can find images online, in magazines or on social media.

Photography Moodboard



Female
Ankara (Nigerian fabrics)
Flowing fabrics
Colourful
On a hill/mountain
Powerful
Strong
Styled hair
Expressive eyes

Moodboard



- Photographing my sister
- Bold, vibrant primary colours
- Shows fun and comedic side
- Bright lighting

Task one: expression and posing

Set up your work area: either with a person you're photographing, yourself for a self-portrait, a pet or a doll/mannequin to photograph.

Think about what emotions, feelings or story you'd like to portray.

Create a pose for the person / doll. Sitting? Standing? Where are their hands?

Catch up on the recording:

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TOP TIP: Create triangle shapes in the posing.
Eg. a bent leg or arm for a flattering and dynamic pose.



Task two: colour and light

Create a second pose for the person / doll you're photographing.

Think about the colour and lighting.

Do you want it to be in colour or black and white?

Bright or muted colours? Monotonal or complimentary colours?

Catch up on the recording:

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TOP TIP: You could use complimentary colours such as red and blue to make your image stand out.



Conclusion

This workshop is designed to help you gain an understanding of portrait photography and practise photographing someone, yourself or a doll / pet. Photographing people is a lot about the relationship between the photographer and the sitter, so it can be helpful to use techniques that make the person feel as comfortable as possible in front of the camera.

Experimenting with light and colour can help your images stand out, so go explore and try different things out!

Find out more about Cat Gundry-Beck

 [@catgundrybeck](https://www.instagram.com/catgundrybeck)

 [Cat Gundry-Beck's website](https://www.catgundrybeck.com)

We would love to see your work! Share it with us on Instagram:

 [@norwichuni_outreach](https://www.instagram.com/norwichuni_outreach)

 [@takeyourplace_he](https://www.instagram.com/takeyourplace_he)

Take a look at our Padlet board from the live session to see how others responded to the workshop!

 [View our Padlet board here](https://www.padlet.com/boards/1234567890)

Further resources

 [Schoolism website](https://www.schoolism.com)

 [Proko website](https://www.proko.com)

Photographers to look up

Steve McCurry, Annie Leibovitz, Nadav Kander, Sue Bryce (*The Portrait System*), Greg Funnell, Bella Kotak, Felix Kunze (*The Portrait Masters*)

Useful links

 [@norwichuniarts](https://www.instagram.com/norwichuniarts)  [Creative Career Paths](https://www.creativecareerpaths.com)

 [Take Your Place](https://www.takeyourplace.co.uk)  [Norwich Uni Arts](https://www.norwichuniarts.com)