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# Photo Essay

For my Conceptual Portrait project, I had a few different ideas before choosing the idea I went with. I was originally going to choose my brother, but past projects proved him to be a pain to try and shoot with. So I went with my second option and picked one of my best friends, Melanie. The last time I asked her to be a model for a project, she declined because she didn't want her face to be in the pictures. But when I told her her face didn't need to be in it, she agreed.

For the place, my friend originally chose her bedroom. She thought of it as her sanctuary, and somewhere she could relax. And when she chose rings her boyfriend had given her as her item, I grew concerned with the way the pictures would come out if I were to take them in her room. Her room is small, and there isn't much lighting which made me extremely nervous. After some thinking, we switched locations to a place she and her boyfriend would often visit. On a Thursday, after class, we went to Untermeyer Park in Yonkers and we had a little product and landscape photoshoot. I got a really great picture of the entrance of the park to use as my "place". While editing, I had to straighten the picture, and I just turned up the vibrance so that you could visibly see more of the colors. I personally love Untermeyer Park. It has a lot of really amazing architecture, and a lot of cool places to take photos.

For the picture of the people, I was thinking of taking a picture of her hand, showing off the rings. I've never played around with portrait photography before, so I didn't want to go crazy trying to perfect a pose. But during class, we were all presenting out ideas and my peers gave me a new idea. And that was, to take a picture of her and her boyfriend holding hands while showing off the rings. The day we talked about them coming over, her boyfriend was at work. She had told me at 2, that she was coming over and would be at my house by 3. Turns out, she was waiting for him, and they didn't get to my house until 5 pm. I was rushing like crazy because the sun was setting and I didn't want to lose the light. I took like 15 pictures before I let them go, and I was satisfied with the short shoot. It was a little awkward because i've never directed people before so I just constantly told them to hold hands. I thought the shot I picked came out really well, for the small amount of time I had with the two.

For the last picture, the item, my friend chose two rings that her boyfriend had given her. While we were at Untermeyer Park, we walked down to The Vista, (a part of the park) I had an idea to take a close-up shot of the rings with the river in the background. Since i've been playing around with Depth of Field all semester, I took advantage of this shot. I also tried putting the rings in different spots around the park. In the flowers, on a bench, we even poured some water over the rings. The shot I ended up going with was my favorite. It's off-center, and in focus. During editing, I noticed some of the shots had the ring unfocused. But it turned out okay, because I got the shot anyway.

Overall, I really enjoyed this project. I think it turned out better than I thought it was going to be. I think the hardest part of this project for me was the 'people' picture, and printing. We were loosing daylight and I didn't really know how to direct people. With printing, I messed

up the first print of their hands by letting the printer manage the colors, so I had to print a second picture. And, some of the pictures have ink on the edges from the printer. But other than that, I had fun shooting with my best friends, and putting everything in a folder together made it look 100 times better.