

Amanda Bozentko

Photographing a portrait conceptually can be very personal to whom you are shooting. Making a conceptual series is even more of a challenge. Each photo must have a connection to each other, but also stand alone. I have decided to photograph my mother specifically what makes her happy. My mom, Antonella, is a stay at home mom ever since my little sister was born in 1999. She doesn't like to be told that she doesn't work because she responds by saying "I clean, cook, do laundry, take care of the dogs, and so much more throughout the day. I don't know how much more work I can do." Because she is always doing something, she rarely has time to enjoy for herself. There are a few things that make her really happy though, and that is what I chose to capture.

My first image is a picture of my mom without showing her face. To tie my three photos together, I decided to include glitter, the beach, and the color blue. Antonella has shoulder length blonde hair with dark brown hair underneath. In her hair, she has thin glitter tinsel strands called "bling." Since she loves glitter so much, the bling strands are a way for her to have a clean sparkly look all the time. Dark blue thin strands run all over her head. They can either lie on the surface or blend in with the rest of the hair. I chose to place to bling on top of her blonde hair. I took a close up shot using a large aperture to create a shallow depth of field to accentuate only the bling strand and some of her hair. The background is blurry but creates a wild effect. Splitting the picture plane almost in half vertically, on the left side is my mom's hair, and on the right is scenery of the beach with palm trees, flowers, and bushes. The colors are vivid only because it is in fact a painting. Classmates thought my mom was actually at a beach when I took this, but in fact I held a painting right in front of her face. This illusion can make the photo a close up and a long shot. The artificial lighting surprisingly did not affect the quality of this illusion. Looking closely at the painting, you can notice the texture of the canvas and small impasto brush strokes. The texture of my mother's hair is thin and fluffy. The focal point is the bling strand that lies almost in the middle of the photo. Even though it does not follow the rule of thirds, the way the two subjects are placed, it can make the strand

look either towards the right or the left instead of center. The way her hair flows can mimic the palm tree in my second image. If there were any physical characteristic that someone would express about my mom, it would be her “awesome” bling strands.

The second image is a place that she loves, Aruba. She has been to many Caribbean islands like Jamaica, Bahamas, Antigua, and St. Lucia, but Aruba is her favorite. The picture I captured is a horizon shot looking over the ocean. I took this picture from our balcony. My mom has stayed in this particular room 4 years in a row, so it has an even bigger meaning. In this picture, the horizon is following the rule of thirds. The natural lighting makes the image look like you are actually standing there. There are many cool blue tones making up the ocean and part of the sky. A dark green color emerges from the palm tree leaves that dangle in from the top right and left of the picture plane. The bright warm oranges and yellows sit on the top of the horizon line and collide with the points of the palm leaves to create a vivid focal point. The clouds in the sky that once have been white have now turned a dark gray due to the setting of the sun. In the far distance, two little boats appear to be sitting afloat. If you look carefully in the middle of the picture, a pelican is in motion hovering over the water trying to find some food. The ripple in the waves creates movement and makes your eyes travel up and down as if you were floating on them. At the bottom left you can just get a glance of the soft smooth sand that glistens from the little sunlight that is left. I used a small aperture to capture a wide depth of field. I went in with Adobe Bridge to adjust some colors and light issues. I also enhanced the colors to make it a bit more dramatic. I wanted to blue and orange to clash to create a complimentary color contrast, especially at the focal point. A medium shutter speed was used, as evidence look at the motion of the pelican. This long shot landscape photo I shot captured everything in one moment that my mom enjoys.

My third image is a thing that makes my mom happy, glitter. You will never see her dressed up nice without glitter on her eyes or chest. She uses a makeup-based glitter called Kandy. Loose glitter sits in these small one inch, clear, round containers. A brush is included for application. In my photo, I set up a scene to

convey the message that glitter is the focus. I did this by taking a close up shot by using a large aperture with a shallow depth of field. There is an open blue glitter container with the black lid leaning on top. Sparse flakes of glitter lie on the lid and on the surface as if someone blew glitter out of the container. This is the only object in the photo that is crisp, which creates the focal point. It also follows the rule of thirds by sitting in the bottom right of the grid. In the foreground sits a blurry, gold, open container. There are stacked small containers behind the blue one with a closed bright yellow one in the background. The bag that holds all of these glitters lies on the horizon line and adds a punch of pink. To repeat the pink color, the tip of the application brush joins the picture plane on the bottom right pointing to the focal point. This creates directional dominance. The “floor” is a light baby blue color to mimic the ocean, and the wall in the background is a sand color. There is repetition of the round shapes throughout the whole photo, which generates visual flow. I used Adobe Bridge to adjust the color temperature and exposure. I am disappointed with the lighting of this photo. I used artificial lighting, but when editing, adjusting the exposure and temperature did not work, but I did my best. You can never miss my mom when she’s out because all she does is sparkle.

I had a difficult time with this project, but I think it was very successful. I was able to take an emotion and turn it into a series through objects. I purposely included blue as the main color in all three images for them to go together. They also all have the same blue tone whether it was bright or subtle. I think it was really awesome how in my “person” image, my classmates thought that I took that at an actual beach. This was a lucky accident. This informed me that my perspective and aperture was just the right amount to create that illusion. I had a difficult time thinking of how I can tie my person into my place and thing. The hardest part about the person photo was getting the hair in focus. I took many pictures where the whole picture is blurry. That is why I pulled the bling strand away from the head a little bit. Once I did that that I was able to get the bling and some hair in focus and created a strong focal point. The strongest aspect of this project is my place picture. The focal point is produced in a creative visual way. The adjustments I made in Bridge showed the image to be really beautiful. The weakest part of my images is my

thing photo with the light. It is a little darker than the rest, but again it was difficult to adjust. If I could go back and redo anything, it would be my thing picture. I would set up more lights to make it brighter to begin with and use the white balance tool more carefully. Overall, I think I did a great job. My mom loves the message and the images themselves. I guess my photographs are another thing that makes her happy.