

Photojournalism
Fall 2010
Assignment #3: The environmental portrait

Portraits are a common assignment for news photographers. They serve to introduce the viewer visually to a character. The 'environmental' in environmental portrait express the idea that a good news portrait should include some cue or prop that illustrates what the subject is in the news for.

Portrait assignments present photographers with some interesting challenges. On the one hand, it is often acceptable to set up a shot in the interest of bettering lighting and/or more explanatory environmental elements. On the other hand, technical and compositional expectations are often high with portrait work than with straight news photography.

When shooting a portrait assignment, it's a good idea to give editors, designers and subscribers variety. Try and take few pictures with the subject posed and looking at the camera. Also try and shoot some more candid images of the subject doing the things for which they are being photographed. As with most assignments, it's also important to shoot a variety of closer shots (even a straight mug shot) and wider shots. A selection of horizontals and verticals is also a good idea.

Look at the variety in this selection of pictures of Iranian sculptor Parviz Tanavoli. Notice the use of light.

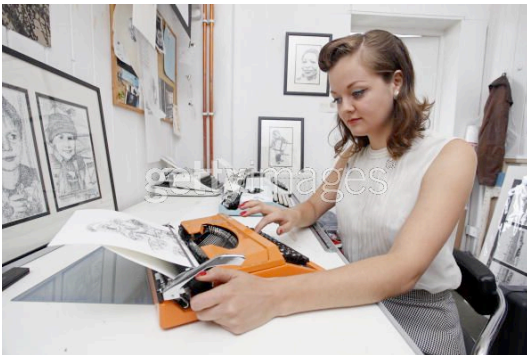


Look at the variety of images of the images from this story about the first paraplegic to land two back flips in extreme wheelchair competition. Not the use of motion



With each of these three examples I have included only a few of the images that were filed (you can go to gettyimages.com and click on the 'Images' tab and then 'Features' to see the rest). I'd like you to file six pictures (more or less) that represent a variety of images.

Think angle of view. Think close-up and wide (angle lens). Think eye contact and candid. With the typewriter artist below, the photographer even changed locations and took the subject outside (though I don't think it was necessarily the best choice for this story).



You have to photograph someone you don't know from your personal life. It can be someone you already have a relationship with from a previous or ongoing story. The assignment is due at 8 a.m. on Sunday, Sept 26.