Project 2: Shape and Material – Commercial Products

Objective:

In this project, you are going to be making "promotional" photos of 3 commercial products. You will be learning how to light and photograph differently shaped objects, how to work with different material surfaces, and how to highlight a product's identity.

The photos you are making should have the look and quality of something that would be used in advertising or promotion. Be sure that the product "brand" is recognizable and readable. Look to give meaning and importance to each product – photograph them in a way that not only shows the shape and texture, but also elevates their status above being a mere "object".

How to shoot this project:

1) You will need 3 **commercial** products for this project. By "commercial", I mean products that have a name/identity that will be readily recognizable in your photo. A *box* of cereal is a commercial product, whereas a *bowl* of cereal is not. Important requirements for these three products:

   • You need to have three differently-shaped products – one that is generally rectangular (such as a "boxed" product), one that is cylindrical (soda bottle, canned food, jar of peanut butter, Pringles can, fire extinguisher, etc.), and one that is of a non-geometrical shape (try to find something really unique here)
   • I also want you to photograph at least two "surface" types – something opaque and matte (like cardboard) and something shiny or translucent (like metal, plastic, or glass)

2) Set up and light each of these items in the studio, using studio lighting and a seamless backdrop (where the same backdrop is both beneath and behind the object). The two table-top setups are ideal for this, but you may want to use regular seamless paper if you do *not* want the reflection that comes with the acrylic table-tops.

3) Spend plenty of time working with each of these objects. What is the ideal lighting angle to help define and enhance the shape? Can you eliminate distracting highlights and/or shadows, both on the product and on the background? Play with the lighting ratio between highlight and shadow on the product. And, as always, be sure to use your light meter to get the perfect exposure for your lighting setup.

4) Shoot in manual mode, and set and use a Custom/Preset white balance that matches the studio lighting you are using. Keep taking photos as you change and adjust your lighting. I want to see 3 different photos for *each* product so that we can compare how each looks with different lighting.

5) You will be turning in nine (9) photos, 3 photos of each of 3 products. So please name them appropriately with "*YourName*-Item1-Photo1", "*YourName*-Item1-Photo2", "*YourName*-Item1-Photo3", "*YourName*-Item2-Photo1", etc.

What to turn in:

• 9 digital images in **RAW format** – 3 photos of *each* of your 3 products. If you want to make any edits to your photos in Bridge or Photoshop, also give me any XMP or PSD files *in addition to* your RAW files. Files should be named as above. **If you do not turn in RAW files, you will receive a ZERO!**

- Turn in the photos in your shared DropBox folder (if you haven't already done so, share a folder titled "AI Studio Photo – *YourName*" with "andrew@andrewross.com", and put your files inside of this for me), but bringing these completed files on a flash drive to class when it is due is fine, too.

Grading rubric:

This project will be graded 1/3 on technical requirements, and 2/3 on quality/creativity

Did you turn in all 9 photos, 3 photos of each of the 3 products?		10 pts
Did you use 3 *differently shaped* **commercial** products (as in step 1 above)?		10 pts
Do your three objects include at least two different material surfaces (matte surfaces, metal, glass, plastic, etc.)?		10 pts
Are your photos well exposed, and did you create unique and appropriate lighting for each subject / photo?		10 pts
Did you shoot in Manual mode using a custom white balance?		5 pts
Did you name your photo files appropriately?		5 pts
Quality/Creativity Grade		100 pts
TOTAL		**150 pts**

DUE DATE: at the beginning of class Week 8