

Project1: Scannogram Self-Portrait

"I think photographs should be provocative and not tell you what you already know. It takes no great powers or magic to reproduce somebody's face in a photograph. The magic is in seeing people in new ways."

– Duane Michals

Conceptual Requirements:

In the tradition of the Photogram, use the scanner as a camera. Bring in objects that reflect who you are and your personality. Just because you own or use an object doesn't necessarily mean that it reveals something of your essence. Think of the scan as direct impression of the material on the scan bed, like imprinting a leaf in clay. The scanned image is indexical: It is a literal record of material things in the physical world, and yet the scanned image can be enigmatic and mysterious. As Man Ray and Moholy Nagy did in their camera-less photography, play the meaning of the things recorded against the meanings you create through abstraction or slight of hand. These images should be *about* you; think not only about the objects your using, but how they are used in the image. Create compositions on the scanning bed. Experiment with opacity and texture; consider the density, translucence and visual texture of what you lay on the bed. Fabrics or papers of different thickness and reflectivity (lace, gauze, velvet, waxed paper, plastic wrap, tinfoil, natural materials).

Techniques to try:

What happens when you move objects on the scanning bed while the light traverses? What happens when you light objects? Consider using backdrops of different color. What happens when the object is held away from the scanner glass. Try scanning objects separately then composing with photoshop layers. Try manipulating the image after the scan as well as leaving the image as planned initially.

Technical Requirements:

Make 6 Scannograms. The files should be 8x10" at 240ppi resolution. Save the original layered files into your firewire drive. You will turn in your files by creating a folder titled with your last name and placing flattened versions of each of your files inside. Each scannogram file should also be titled with your last name and a serial number. You will then copy that folder to the instructor's machine at the beginning of class on the critique day.

GROUND RULES FOR USING THE FLATBED SCANNER:

Only use the scanner designated for scannograms. Under no circumstances should you use any other scanner for this purpose. Be considerate of the equipment! Scanbeds are sensitive to moisture and weight. The glass can be easily scratched.

Avoid using anything wet, direct contact with fingertips, and skin (oil and acids can etch the glass). Heavy objects, sharp objects, objects with hardness greater than the glass should not be used. Experiment with laying an intervening layer of plexiglass or plastic wrap on the scanbed (you may or may not encounter limitations with focal depth).