

Creating and Dressing for a Timeless Portrait with Brandi B. Photography

When more than one person is to appear in the portrait, or when a special effect is desired, clothing and prop choices can make or break a portrait. Here are a few things to consider:

Remember when choosing what to wear for a portrait, simple is always best. Try and stay with solid colors (not patterns or stripes). Also remember that darker colors are much more slimming than lighter colors!

Clothing for Small Groups – couples or small groups should choose simple garments within the same tonal ranges. When subjects appear in a mixture of light and dark tones together, there is a visual confusion. The light color comes forward and the dark color recedes. When this happens, one person becomes dominant and appears heavier than in reality.

Clothing for families – In a family group, proper clothing coordination is critical. When decorating a home, a major concern is to coordinate the colors and tones of the walls, drapes, furniture etc. Similar coordination is necessary when selecting clothing for a group portrait. Choose clothing in the same tonal ranges so that no single member of the family stands out because the clothing is too light or bright as compared to the rest of the group. Proper clothing selection makes the difference between a portrait that appears to be a group of seemingly unrelated individuals and one in which every member of the family belongs to the group.

Tips for Preparing for a Successful Portrait:

For close up portraits, long sleeves are essential for teens and adults, as bare arms call attention to themselves and will overpower the face. Women being photographed in full length should wear long pants or skirts in order to keep the eye from being directed toward the legs and away from the face.

If feet are to show in the portrait assure that shoes and stockings are in keeping with the visual intent of the portrait. Men should be clean shaven or facial hair should be carefully groomed, with their hair cut about on week before the portrait session. Women should be photographed whenever they are happiest with their hair in relation to the time it is styled.

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