

Portrait

8 tips to create a better portraits









Tip 1

MAKE THE EYES YOUR FOCUS

- Not only focus on the eyes but WHERE ARE THEY LOOKING
- Directly at the camera confrontational , intense connection
- Away from the camera Relaxed, wonder about thought



David Stewart



Bruno Barbey



Garry Winogrand

Tip 1

MAKE THE EYES YOUR FOCUS: GROUP PORTRAITS

- Everyone looks at the camera
- Everyone looking in a different direction
- Everyone looking in a different direction except one person

Tip 1

MAKE THE EYES YOUR FOCUS: GROUP PORTRAITS

- Everyone looks at the camera : *Loss of Individuality, alienates viewer*
- Everyone looking in a different direction : *capturing a scene, voyeuristic*
- Everyone looking in a different direction except one person : *you are creating a connection*



Mary Ellan Mark

Tip 2

Think about the setting

- What is the setting you want your subject to be in
- Think about FOREGROUND
- Think about BACKGROUND
- Choose what to INCLUDE and what to EXCLUDE
- Think APERTURE

APERTURE

- *WIDE = SHALLOW field of focus.*
 - *Make the image COMPLETELY about the subject*
- *SMALL = WIDER field of focus.*
 - *You create a “stage” for your subject*
 - *Environment that tells a story about your subject.*



Troben Andahl



Troben Andahl

Tip 3

Choose the **RIGHT LENS**

- Different lenses have different **FEELING**
- Head shots:
 - 70mm up to 135mm (85mm)
- Wider shots : subject is in context with the environment
 - 24 up to 50 mm

85mm





50 mm



26mm

TIP 4

LIGHTING CHOICES

- What does your light choices say about your portrait?
 - IT CREATES A MOOD

Tip 4

LIGHT CHOICES

- WARM
 - THE GOLDEN HOUR
 - THE **DIRECTION** OF EARLY OR LATE HOUR NATURAL LIGHTING
 - **AVOID NATURAL PORTRAIT LIGHTING IN HIGH NOON**
 - RECREATE IT : YELLOW GELS OR POST PROCESSING



Nan Goldin

Tip 4

Lighting Choices

- COLD (THE BLUE HOUR)
 - Winter
 - Night life
 - City/Hospital/office



Lance Ries

Siddart Siva



TIP 4

Lighting Choices: Source Lighting

- On-camera flash : bold **PUNCH** of harsh light (ATTACK)



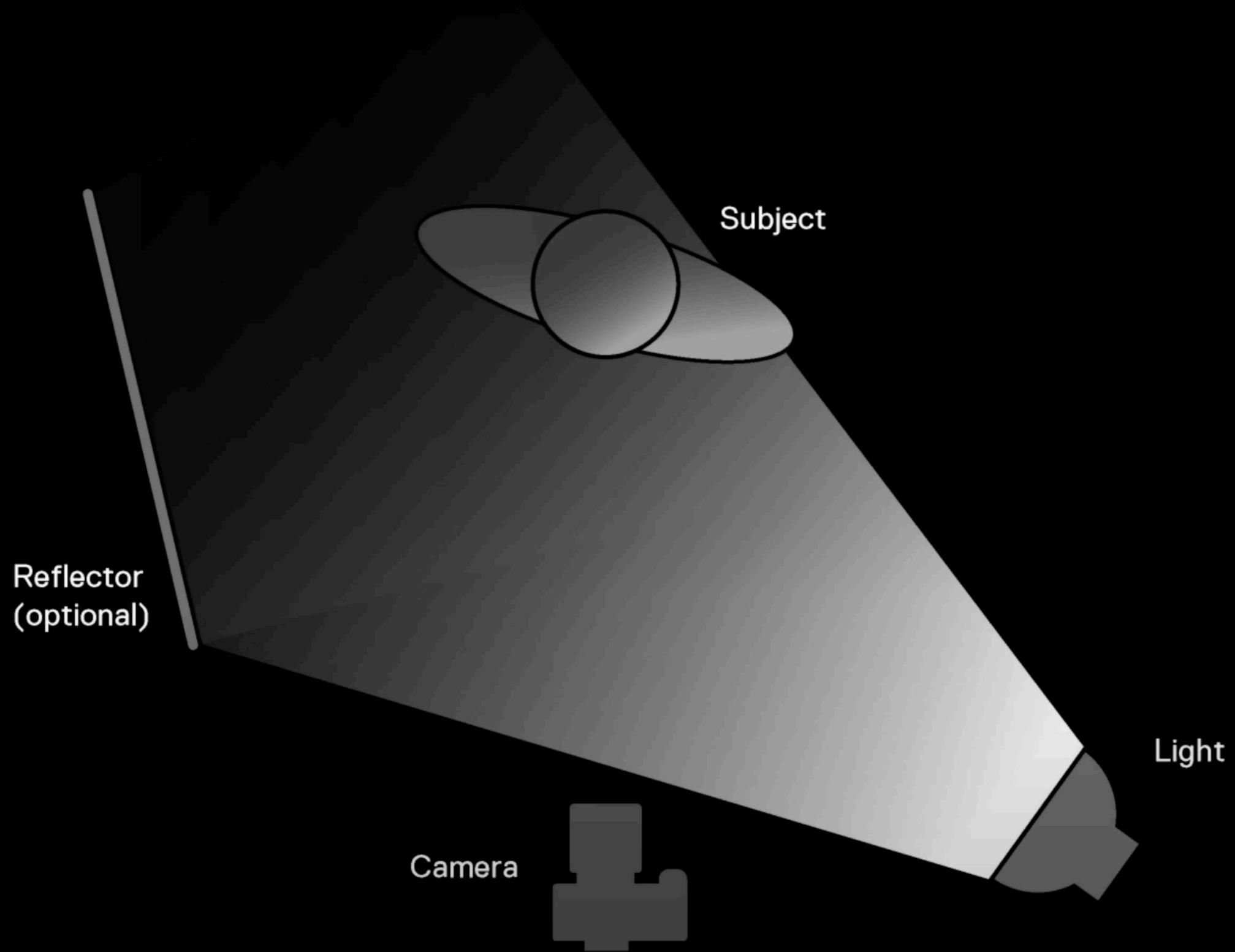
Terry Richardson

Tip 4

Source Lighting : STUDIO LIGHTING

- KEEP IT SIMPLE
- ONE LIGHT (* and maybe a reflector)
 - Rembrandt lighting







Hendrik Kersten

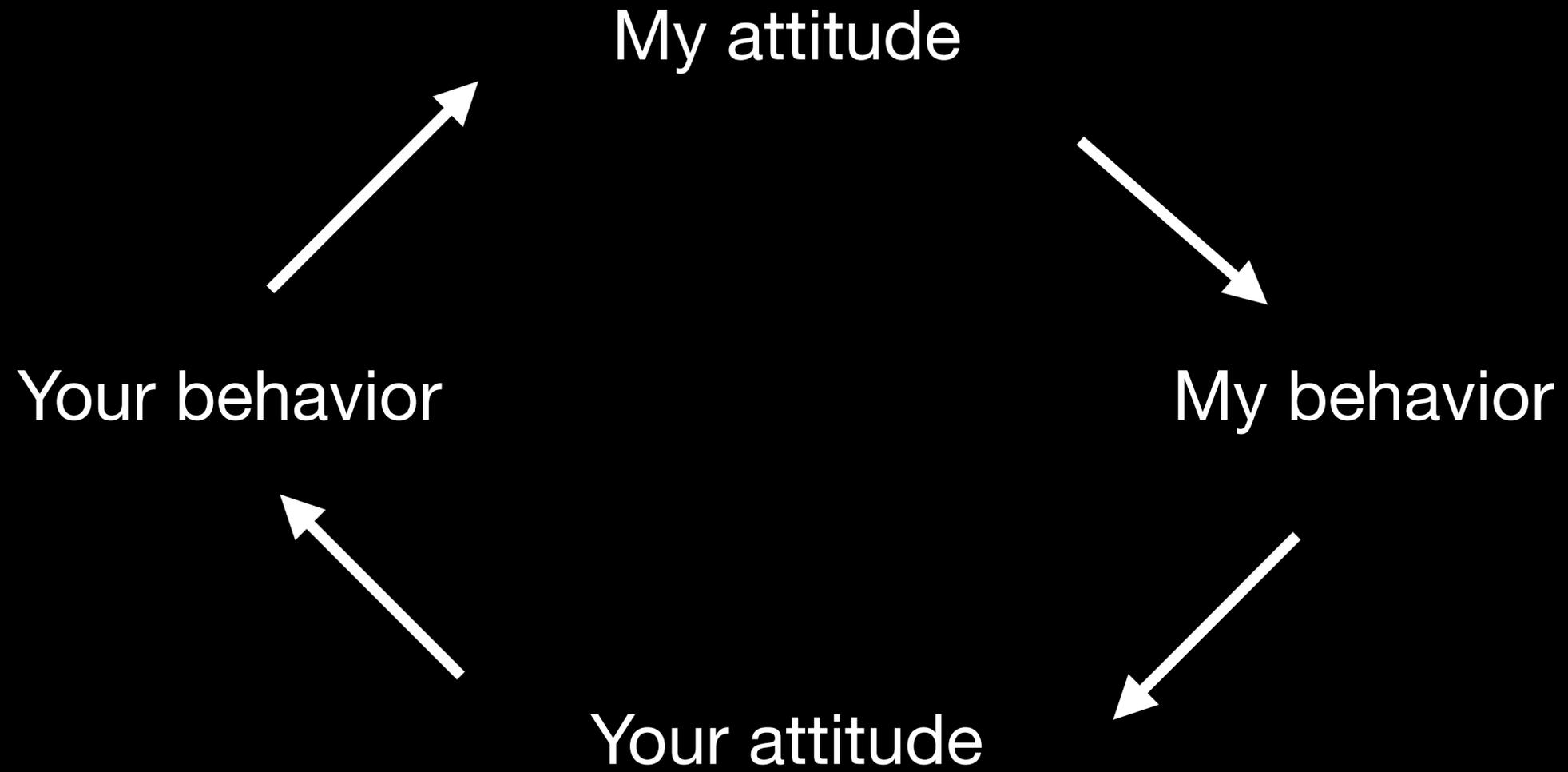


Tip 5

Let your subject be NATURAL

- **Your model does not HAVE TO smile:** A smile can be facade -> WAIT for it to drop
- To be “NATURAL” you got to be “COMFORTABLE”
 - Hide behind your camera and prepare your settings, then look and chat with them shooting randomly
 - Have them read something from the floor and then quickly look up at you
 - Make them solve a math question or dig into a remote memory
 - **Betaris Box** : your energy transmits to their energy

Betaris Box



Betaris Box

Your energy transmits to their energy





Tip 6

Learn to NOT CARE

- Embrace the fear, enjoy it
- JUST DO IT
- *You will always look back and regret what you did not do*
- If you try and it fails you will feel a lot better about that than if you never tried it .

Tip 7

TAKE YOUR TIME

- Push through until you get the shot that you wanted.
- Many times the greatest photo is not what you expected
- The unplanned and unexpected can make something ordinary into something EXTRAORDINARY.

Tip 8

TRUST YOUR GUT

- TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE is **NOT** equal to ARTISTIC KNOWLEDGE
- Technical knowledge (how to pose, shutter speed, rule of thirds, how to make people look thinner, type of lens, etc. , ect.)
- Technical knowledge : TOOLS —> TOOLBOX
- TAP into your **INTUITION**: use intuitive understanding together with your tool box to **CREATE** a portrait.

- **CREATIVITY** should not be constrained by learned photographic convention



Olga Korlavac



Olga Korlavac

Robert Frank



Robert Frank



Saul Leither



Saul Leither



A red pentagon is centered on a black background. Inside the pentagon, the words "NO RULES" are written in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

NO RULES

**It is not about how the portrait looks, it's
about how the portrait FEELS**

Jamie Windsor

BE CREATIVE

TAKE A RISK