



Photographing Families: Designing Custom Portraits with Character & Style

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Traditional portrait photographers, for centuries, have relied upon lighting and posing conventions that were largely based on the aesthetic ideals set forth by Master painters and sculptors. The results of their rigid approach to depicting the family resulted in a cookie-cutter look to portraiture. The subjects were beautifully lit, stiffly posed, and, well, proper. The resulting image presented a likeness of each family member but did not speak to the inner lives of the subjects.

Today, portraiture has changed along with the modern family. Families want portraits that make a statement—an image that tells viewers a story about the subjects who have gathered together in front of the camera. These portraits have a looser, “lifestyle” feel and are made, as they have traditionally been, inside of a photographic studio. Today, however, these portraits are also often captured in the family home, at an outdoor location—whether at the beach or in the heart of the city, or some other location that has personal meaning to the family.

In this book, Elizabeth and Trey present 60 of their favorite and most diverse family portraits, showing you the art and technique of creating highly salable portraits. With every captivating image, you’ll learn how the Homans masterfully orchestrated the technical and artistic aspects of the portrait, from the location or backdrop selection, to the overall compositional qualities, to the arrangement of the group in the scene, to the individual poses. You’ll also learn the strategies Elizabeth and Trey used to create natural poses that contribute to the feel of the portrait and will learn how the lighting (studio light, existing light, and natural light) was harnessed to create a polished, professional portrait.

Perhaps one of the big challenges of photographing families is that no family grouping or family dynamic is the same. This book will arm you with the tools you need to work with the smallest to largest groupings, including a wide range of subjects, from newborns to the elderly.

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