

Project Planning – The Photographer’s Roadmap

Part 1: Passion & Mission

What do you care about? Where do you want to go? Without a sense of purpose, a project can fail or, at a minimum, not reach its full potential.

An initial step is to find out what you are passionate about. You’ve already started to do this with your list of “What’s Important” to you and now you have a chance to take that passion and define it further.

Take your list of *What’s Important* and find at least one list item that really pulls you in and offers up possibilities for a photographic project. It does not matter much what it is. It could be a word, an idea, a place, a person or an event. The important thing is that you have a strong connection to it and that it is one of the most important things on your list.

Once you have that in your head, think about how that passion can be translated into a photographic project. In other words, how can you tell the story of that passion in photographs?

To begin to answer *that* question, first answer these:

– What –

What are you interested in talking about?

What does the body of work look like? (in your imagination)

What is the tone (positive, negative, romantic, ambiguous, etc) you want the statement to take?

– For Whom –

Now, think about what’s going to happen to this work once it is completed. Who is your main audience for this work?

Think about the concentric circles of those people who would be most interested in seeing the completed project.

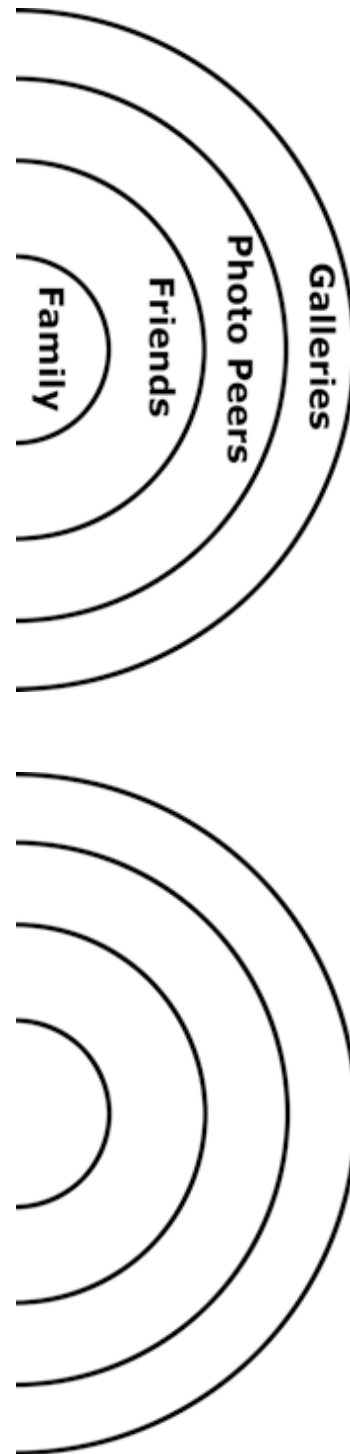
At right is an *example* of what an audience circle might look like.

In this example, the people who would be most interested in seeing the work are those in the photographer’s “inner circle:” his family. Next, his friends, then any peers he might have in the photography world and finally others who might find the work interesting like gallery owners, publishers, etc.

In point of fact, the photographer him or her self could be one of the circles, as we do, in fact, tend to create work that interests us.

So, consider your audience and draw your own set of circles for your project. You should also answer the questions below:

- Who will benefit from seeing this work?
- What is the reaction you want them to have?
- Who is in your audience circle? Fill in the circles at right; draw more circles if you need them.



– Mission Statement –

Your last step is to create a mission statement. A Mission Statement is a clear, concise declaration of purpose. Like a compass, it helps you by allowing you to define a direction and then be able to reference that direction as you begin to work. Your Mission Statement will act as an affirmation of your intent, allow you to state what you want and offer you a foundation to build on.

By answering the above questions that have dealt with what and for whom, you have effectively created your Mission Statement. All that's left is for you to write 3 to 5 sentences that clearly state what your project is for whom you are creating the work.

Use the space below to write your Mission Statement:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their mission statement. The box is positioned below the instructions and occupies the lower half of the page.