

Rationales: General Framework

Imagine: Season 11, Episode 3. ***Annie Leibovitz: Life Through a Lens (10 Jun. 2008)***

The ___Art___ Department has carefully evaluated ___this video_(86 minutes)___ as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 8-12 grade Digital Photography curriculum.

I. PLOT SUMMARY

Annie Leibovitz is one of the more celebrated contemporary photographers and was the primary photographer for *Rolling Stone*, *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* magazines. She has photographed major rock stars, actors/actresses, all Presidents since Nixon, writers and even the Queen of England. The documentary includes candid interview segments mingled with photo assignments/commissions and her own life history.

Leibovitz, while with the Rolling Stone, traveled with and documented the Rolling Stones, covered the Washington political scene with Hunter Thompson during the Nixon era, she took the last photo of John Lennon, just hours before his murder. It is a good story of self-discovery, and the difficulty of how an artist selects their strongest images.

From Amazon: (<http://www.amazon.com/Annie-Leibovitz-Life-Through-Lens/dp/B001C71IEM> accessed May 13, 2014)

"In her portraits for Rolling Stone and Vanity Fair, Annie Leibovitz has photographed a generation (and more) of rock stars, politicians, and supermodels. Annie Leibovitz: Life Through a Lens, a documentary created by Leibovitz's sister Barbara, suggests that she might be somewhat overqualified for the job. Not that Leibovitz reflects too much on the business of photographing movie stars for a living. Her nomadic life suits her just fine, and might have come from a childhood spent as an Army brat, moving around the world every few years. Home movies give some of the flavor of Leibovitz's youth, and her arrival in San Francisco just as the Sixties counterculture (and Rolling Stone magazine) were getting underway is covered with old footage and new interviews with colleagues, including publisher Jann Wenner. It was a wild time (Wenner speaks of sending Leibovitz on tour with the Rolling Stones as though he were responsible for selling her into slavery), and it took its toll; the movie doesn't go into great detail, but a substance abuse problem and subsequent rehab is acknowledged and quickly forgotten. Mick Jagger and Keith Richards remember her warmly, in any case. Leibovitz's personal life is in the shadows, except for her relationship with writer Susan Sontag. The rest is a series of testimonials from admiring subjects (Arnold Schwarzenegger, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Whoopi Goldberg) and some on-location stuff for Vanity Fair, including a shoot with George Clooney and Julia Roberts. Her working methods show someone with very specific ideas about what she wants, and a disarmingly blunt way of getting them. Perhaps the most memorable section of this American Masters program is the account of Leibovitz's photographs of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, including a celebrated Rolling Stone cover of a naked Lennon embracing his wife, taken a few hours before Lennon's murder. That kind of work proves that in Leibovitz's world of portraiture, intimacy is everything. "--Robert Horton

II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES BASED ON STANDARDS

National Core Arts Standards (<http://nationalartsstandards.org/>)

Connecting: Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.

Anchor Standard #11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

III. SENSITIVE SUBJECTS IN THE TEXT AND HOW POSSIBLE OBJECTIONS WILL BE HANDLED

Possible sensitive topics contained in *Captured Light: The Invention of Still Photography (1997)*: a few blasphemous terms and a couple of nude photographs (John Lennon last photo which was on the cover of Rolling Stone (side view holding Yoko) and Demi Moore (pregnant cover photo of Vanity Fair) both are tasteful photos that were on the newsstand. The rationale of these photos is covered in the video and will also be dealt with in the classroom in a mature fashion reinforcing the reason the why this material is included in the video.