

# The Portfolio Project

A Presentation at NVPS 1/25/2011

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# The NVPS 2010 – 2011 Portfolio Project

Project Overview & Schedule

# What is the Portfolio Project?

- A celebration of a body of work lovingly made and presented by each Project participant.
- An effort to encourage you, the participant, to produce a great portfolio of your own body of work for your personal use and enjoyment.
- It is not a competition.
- Primarily you should shoot new images for this project but you may fill in the portfolio with some images you've previously taken.

# What have we done so far?

- The Portfolio Project Started Earlier this Year. So far:
  - Information has been posted to the NPVS Website on:
    - How to create a portfolio
    - Project guidelines and how to create an artist statement
    - Presentation options
  - Members have
    - Asked for comments on their artist statement (email [portfolio@nvps.org](mailto:portfolio@nvps.org))
    - Uploaded some images and artist statements to the NVPS Portfolio Project Gallery

# What's Next in the Portfolio Project?

- It is not too late to participate! Go the website and sign up (or sign up on the sign-up sheet tonight)
- Choose a topic
- Craft a draft artist statement
- Shoot your images
- Upload to the website
- Shoot more images
- Update the website
- Finalize your digital portfolio
- Create your printed portfolio

# Portfolio Project Schedule

- Sept – Sign up for the Portfolio Project [www.nvps.org](http://www.nvps.org)
- Oct – Craft your artist statement
- Sept-April – Shoot (or find your previous) images that support your artist statement
- Oct-Nov 2010 – Submit a draft artist statement
- Oct-Nov 2010 – Portfolio Project Coordinators comment on artist statements submitted
- Nov 2010 – Begin uploading your images to the NVPS website
- Nov 2010 – Start of informal online critiquing of portfolio images
- January 25th, 2011 – Today's Presentation on Portfolios
- March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – Final Critique
- March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – Last Day to Join Project
- April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – Collect digital portfolios for judge
- May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – Final portfolio presentation, bring your printed portfolio

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# Sherwin Kaplan

What I look for in a Portfolio

# What I look for in any photograph

- Technical Proficiency
- Vision
- Composition
- Lighting
- Background Control



# What I Look for in a Portfolio

- Theme
- Variety within the Theme's Concept
- A demonstration of everything mentioned in “What I look for in any photograph”

# Portfolio Problems

- Repetitiousness
- Variations in quality (a Portfolio is no stronger than its weakest image)
- Failure to fully demonstrate the maker's artistic skills and craftsmanship
- A theme that is not strong enough to provide a platform for the individual images

# Artistic Statements

- Should not be pretentious
- Should explain why you, as an “artist or “craftsman” chose the theme
- Should explain how you developed the theme
- Should not try to do more than provide a rationale for this specific portfolio
- Should Provide a basis or benchmark for me to evaluate your images



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# Photo Books, Portfolios & Calendars

Presenting Your Images

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# What can you do?

- Use a commercial company for printing and binding
- Print your own images and use a portfolio/album to display photos
- Print your own images and have commercial company bind for you
- Print and bind your own images

# What this presentation is NOT

- A consumer report
- An exhaustive list of all possibilities
- An endorsement for any particular vendor

# What this presentation IS

- My personal opinion
- Based on my experiences and research
- **YOUR MILEAGE MAY VARY**



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# Printed & Bound by a Commercial Printer

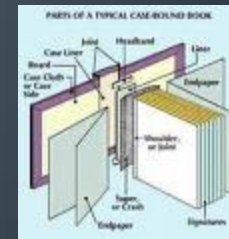
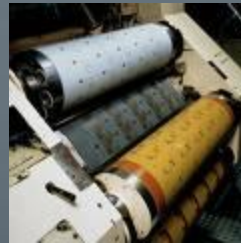
Your Photo Books & Calendars

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# Commercial Printing

- For many years printing of books was done by the offset process.
- Development of the offset press came in two versions:
  - in 1875 by Robert Barclay of England for printing on tin, and
  - in 1903 by Ira Washington Rubel of the United States for printing on paper.



# Digital Printing

- Has been revolutionized by the digital age
- Is printing using digital techniques developed for computer printers such as inkjet or laser printers – Wikipedia
- Differs from lithography, flexography, gravure, and letterpress printing:
  - Every print can be different, because printing plates are not required, as in traditional methods.
  - Less waste in chemicals and paper, because it's done in one pass
  - The ink/toner does not permeate the substrate, but is laid on the surface of the paper and is fused to the surface

# Digital Printing Vendors

Vendor	Address
AdoramaPix	<a href="http://www.adoramapix.com/">http://www.adoramapix.com/</a>
Artscow	<a href="http://www.artscow.com/">http://www.artscow.com/</a>
Blurb	<a href="http://www.blurb.com/">http://www.blurb.com/</a>
Bookemon	<a href="http://www.bookemon.com/">http://www.bookemon.com/</a>
Cafe Press	<a href="http://www.cafepress.com/">http://www.cafepress.com/</a>
Clark Color	<a href="http://www.clarkcolor.com/">http://www.clarkcolor.com/</a>
Create Picture Books	<a href="http://www.createpicturebooks.com/">http://www.createpicturebooks.com/</a>
CVS Photo Center	<a href="http://www.cvsphoto.com/">http://www.cvsphoto.com/</a>
Digilabs	<a href="http://www.digi-labs.net/">http://www.digi-labs.net/</a>
dotPhoto	<a href="http://www.dotphoto.com/">http://www.dotphoto.com/</a>
Hoorray	<a href="http://www.hoorray.com/">http://www.hoorray.com/</a>
iLife	<a href="http://www.apple.com/ilife/">http://www.apple.com/ilife/</a>
Inkubook	<a href="http://inkubook.com/">http://inkubook.com/</a>
Kodak Gallery	<a href="http://www.kodakgallery.com/">http://www.kodakgallery.com/</a>
Kolo	<a href="http://kolo.com/">http://kolo.com/</a>
Lifephoto	<a href="http://www.lifephoto.com/">http://www.lifephoto.com/</a>
Lulu	<a href="http://www.lulu.com/">http://www.lulu.com/</a>
Memory Escape	<a href="http://www.memoryescape.com/">http://www.memoryescape.com/</a>
Mixbook	<a href="http://www.mixbook.com/">http://www.mixbook.com/</a>

Vendor	Address
MPix	<a href="http://www.mpix.com/">http://www.mpix.com/</a>
MyCanvas Photo Books	<a href="http://www.mycanvas.com/">http://www.mycanvas.com/</a>
MyPublisher	<a href="http://www.mypublisher.com/">http://www.mypublisher.com/</a>
OurHubbub	<a href="http://www.ourhubbub.com/">http://www.ourhubbub.com/</a>
PhotoBookDirect	<a href="http://www.photobookdirect.com/">http://www.photobookdirect.com/</a>
Photoworks	<a href="http://www.photoworks.com/">http://www.photoworks.com/</a>
Picaboo	<a href="http://www.picaboo.com/">http://www.picaboo.com/</a>
Polaroid Studio	<a href="http://www.polaroidstudio.com/">http://www.polaroidstudio.com/</a>
Printmyphotobook	<a href="http://www.printmyphotobook.com/">http://www.printmyphotobook.com/</a>
Qoop	<a href="http://www.qoop.com/">http://www.qoop.com/</a>
Ritzpix	<a href="http://www.ritzpix.com/">http://www.ritzpix.com/</a>
RocketLife	<a href="http://www.rocketlife.com/">http://www.rocketlife.com/</a>
Scrapblog	<a href="http://www.scrapblog.com/">http://www.scrapblog.com/</a>
SeeHere	<a href="http://www.seehere.com/">http://www.seehere.com/</a>
Shutterfly	<a href="http://www.shutterfly.com/">http://www.shutterfly.com/</a>
SmileBooks	<a href="http://www.smilebooks.com/">http://www.smilebooks.com/</a>
Snapfish	<a href="http://www.snapfish.com/">http://www.snapfish.com/</a>
Viovio	<a href="http://www.viovio.com/">http://www.viovio.com/</a>
Winkflash	<a href="http://www.winkflash.com/">http://www.winkflash.com/</a>

# Vendor Differentiators

- Quality
  - Paper
  - Covers
  - Binding
  - Image accuracy
- Price
- Sizes available
- Creation Software
- Online Photo Sharing
- Commerce Enablement
- Covers available
  - Leather
  - Linen
  - etc
- Papers available
  - Glossy
  - Matte
  - Semi-gloss
  - Lay flat pages
  - Vellum End Pages

# My Experience

- I've used the following
  - Café Press
  - My Publisher
  - Shutterfly
- I know people who've used
  - Blurb
  - Mpix
  - Signature Printing (local – not online)

# Café Press - Calendars

- What I like
  - Good prices on quantities of 15 or more calendars
  - Quick manufacture and delivery
- What I don't like
  - Poor layout software
  - Impossible to understand discount pricing
- Would I use them again?
  - Yes, but not for product that I want high quality output

# Shutterfly

- What I like
  - Online software easy to use
- What I don't like
  - Online software not very flexible
  - Paid for next day shipping – product never shipped, got replacement 10 days later; bad customer service experience
- Would I use them again?
  - I have, but I didn't pay for the rush shipping 😊
  - Nice output

# My publisher

- What I like
  - Good creation software
  - Ability to share book online
  - Quality of finished product
- What I don't like
  - Shipping costs are high
- Would I use them again?
  - Absolutely



# MPIX - Melanie Marts Review

- What I like
  - Quality of the product
  - Speedy service. (they answer emails promptly)
  - One person who monitors your job, so your questions are always answered by the same person.
  - Software is easy to download, and has gotten easier to use over the years.
  - They make improvements on the software each year as well, adding new features.
- What I don't like
  - Sometimes the colors are not accurate, especially blues and greens. however, that has also improved.
- Would I use them again?
  - Certainly! I've been using them for the last 4 years for calendars, and will probably use them for xmas cards this year as well.

# BLURB – Matthew Schmitt Review

- What I like
  - Online software was easy to use
    - Page layouts were infinitely adjustable
    - Custom page layouts could be saved
  - Software had 2x3 picture boxes in addition to 1x1 and 4x5
  - Could share a Flash example of the book with others
- What I don't like
  - Single run books are relatively expensive
    - Competitive with other services only if you buy 10 or more books at a time
  - Paperback, printed hardback and dust jackets all printed with different saturations on cover.
  - Automatic cropping of images (this seems to be true of all sites)
- Would I use them again?
  - Yes, very satisfied except for cost

# Signature Printing - SANDI CROAN REVIEW

- What I like
  - Control over the process and being able to proof and color correct in person
  - Price (on 100 or more)
  - Quality
  - Friendly people
  - Having it ready when they say it will be ready
- What I don't like
  - Need to do a large quantity (100 or more)
- Would I use them again?
  - Absolutely

# Color Profiles

- Most online book printers don't discuss support for color profiles.
- I recommend using sRGB (unless site makes recommendations).
- Specific support for color profiles
  - AdoramaPix (provides download)
  - Mpix (sRGB only)

# Other reviews

- These are sites found on the internet. I know nothing about their validity or backing, but they provide some useful information:
  - <http://www.make-your-own-photobooks.com/photobook-publishers.html>
  - <http://www.photobookcompare.com/>
  - <http://photo-book-review.toptenreviews.com/>
  - <http://www.digitalphotos101.com/photo-book-reviews.htm>
- Warning: the features, quality and ownership of all these providers changes very frequently so reviews are quickly out of date.

# Recommendations

- Use commercial online printers. They are an excellent way to present your portfolio of images if you
  - don't have your own printer
  - struggle with color management
- Online printers provide sizes and styles not available in home binding
- Save your images with an sRGB color profile embedded unless the printer provides you with different directions.

# Recommendations

- Use companies that let you download software onto your computer for creation and sharing of your images.
  - Avoid web-based programs
- Use companies that others have had success with such as:
  - MyPublisher
  - Blurb
  - Mpix
  - Shutterfly



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**Print images yourself & use a portfolio/album  
to display photos**

Your Photo Books & Calendars

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# Portfolios & Photo albums

- Types to Consider:
  - Presentation/Portfolio Books (screw post)
  - Presentation/Portfolio Binders
  - Presentation/Portfolio Cases
  - Presentation/Portfolio Albums
- Available in Landscape or Portrait orientation
- Several fabrics and materials available

# Presentation/Portfolio Books

- Overview
  - Nice looking
  - Price tag to match!
  - Often use screw posts for binding
  - Images placed in sleeves (archival available)
  - Sleeves often double sided
  - Durable
- Use consistent paper and image size for best look

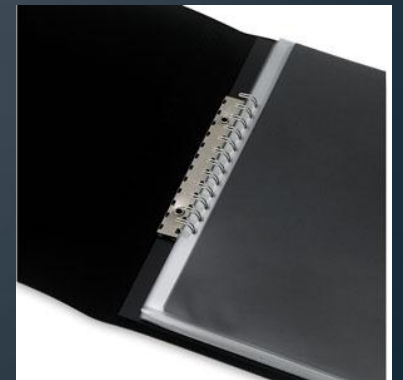


# Presentation/Portfolio Books

- Brands
  - Pina Zangaro
  - Case Envy
- Available at
  - Adorama ([www.adorama.com](http://www.adorama.com))
  - B & H Photo ([www.bhphoto.com](http://www.bhphoto.com))
  - Dick Blick ([www.dickblick.com](http://www.dickblick.com))

# Presentation/Portfolio Binders

- Overview
  - Nice looking (but not as nice as screw post style)
  - Not as expensive as screw post style
  - Images placed in sleeves (archival available)
  - Sleeves often double sided
  - Rings are more subtle than in typical notebooks
- Use consistent paper and image size for best look



# Presentation/Portfolio Binders

- Brands
  - Pina Zangaro
  - Florence
  - Itoya
  - Many more
- Available at
  - Adorama ([www.adorama.com](http://www.adorama.com))
  - B & H Photo ([www.bhphoto.com](http://www.bhphoto.com))
  - Dick Blick ([www.dickblick.com](http://www.dickblick.com))

# Presentation/Portfolio Cases

- Overview
  - Same features as portfolio binders
  - Usually with zipper or clasp
  - Often leather or faux leather



# Presentation/Portfolio Cases

- Brands
  - Robert Ware Art Stuff
  - Prat Start
  - Global Art
  - Panodia
  - Many more...
- Available at
  - Local Art Supply Stores
  - Adorama ([www.adorama.com](http://www.adorama.com))
  - B & H Photo ([www.bhphoto.com](http://www.bhphoto.com))
  - Dick Blick ([www.dickblick.com](http://www.dickblick.com))

# Presentation/Portfolio Albums

- Overview
  - Much like your typical photo album
  - An affordable solution
  - Pages bound to cover
  - All plastic





# Presentation/Portfolio Albums

- Brands
  - Itoya
- Available at
  - Local Art Supply Stores
  - Adorama ([www.adorama.com](http://www.adorama.com))
  - B & H Photo ([www.bhphoto.com](http://www.bhphoto.com))
  - Dick Blick ([www.dickblick.com](http://www.dickblick.com))

# Recommendations

- Portfolio Books, Binders, Cases and Albums are only for people who:
  - Have a printer
  - Get good results with printing
  - Have a good color management strategy
- Choices of designs and styles
- Personally like the look of the screw post books



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**Print your own images and have a  
commercial company bind for you**

Your Photo Books & Calendars

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# Commercial Binding

- Overview:
  - Print items yourself for control color management, quality, and greater paper types
  - Have someone else bind for you
  - Good for Calendars (spiral bound)
  - Commercial binding offers plastic covers and hole drill (extra charge)
  - May be able to have soft cover books bound

# Commercial Bound

- Vendors
  - FedEx Kinkos
  - UPS Store
  - Other local companies

# Recommendations

- Carefully research the price. I found it was cheaper for someone else to print and bind for me.
- Gives you total control over the printing process and if this is important to you, this solution may be ideal.

The background of the top half of the slide is a light gray gradient with a pattern of thin, vertical, slightly wavy lines in a muted teal color. A thin yellow horizontal line separates this background from the dark teal banner below.

# Print images & BIND IT yourself

Your Photo Books & Calendars

A solid dark teal horizontal banner that contains the main text. A thin yellow horizontal line is located at the bottom edge of this banner.

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# Home Binding Solutions

- Overview

- Thermal Binding is now available to the home user, not just to book publishers.
- Heating element used to glue the cover to the pages and the pages together
- Requires use of covers that have the appropriate glue or to apply glue to covers
- Variety of covers, but limited sizes
- Available in bulk packs at reduced cost
- Use your favorite double sided paper (Epson, Moab)
  - Red River
  - Pictorico
- Use providers software or Photoshop
- Photoshop enables color management!!!





# Home Binding Solutions

- Overview Continued
  - Not significantly cheaper than online publishers
  - Covers available in bulk (this improves the cost aspect)
  - Covers are not archival
  - Only Unibind covers are self-gluing
  - Don't know how long they will last
  - Provide layout software (same as Mpix)

# home Binding Solutions

- Brands
  - Unibind
  - Pro-Bind
  - Perfect Bind
  - Fellows
- Machines & Covers Available at
  - Adorama ([www.adorama.com](http://www.adorama.com))
  - Amazon ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com))
  - Office supply websites
  - Office Depot

The background features a light gray gradient with numerous thin, vertical, teal-colored lines of varying lengths and positions, creating a textured, rain-like effect. A solid teal horizontal band spans the width of the slide, containing the word "Conclusion" in white text. A thin yellow line is positioned at the top and bottom of this teal band.

# Conclusion

# Recommendations

- Online publishers are a great solution
  - Doesn't require use of your own printer, ink
  - Takes less time
  - Quality is good
  - Large sizes available
- Home binding benefits
  - Can be done quickly
  - Control of color and quality
  - Binding is easy

# Conclusion

- If you get good results with printing and are a stickler for quality – home binding is a nice solution for a single book
- Online publishers provide good quality with many size and cover options – stick with vendors you know (or who others know)
- For large quantities, always do a test run to prevent an expensive disappointment.