

# GCSE Photography

## Unit Three—Portraits without people.

How do capture the character of a person in a portrait. Certainly much character is shown the facial expression of the sitter, but equally much is portrayed by the clothes they wear and their possessions, the 'props' they bring to the portrait.

Photographer Camilla Catrambone has recently offered us a new perspective on portraying family members. In her photo series called "Portraits of My Family" she represents each person by only photographing the 'props', the person's belongings that everyone who know them would associate them with.

Small amounts of t everyday goods associated with the family member are arranged into aesthetic compositions that create a warm nostalgic feeling about the person or a moment in time. As Catrambone says, *"I felt that the objects belonging to my relatives, starting from the ones of my beloved grandparents, were still full of energy and were capable of reminding me of moments I shared with them,"* - says Catrambone. *"If I look at the image of my grandpa, Mario, I can go back in time when we sat at his writing table and fully feel the mood of that moment."*



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The taken 'portrait' raises interesting question about the way that we remember people. It is often these little signs of a life that trigger important and powerful memories.

The inevitable question is how we would apply this technique to 'self-portraits without ourselves'. What are the elements of our lives that others would readily associate with us? Does our own perception of the things which are important to us match up with others' ideas of what we are really like? Do the things that feel make us, us really public, or are they hidden behind masks that we construct?



This is Joanne's self-portrait without her.

These are the things that she thinks make her, her. The things that are really her rather than the person we see everyday at school!