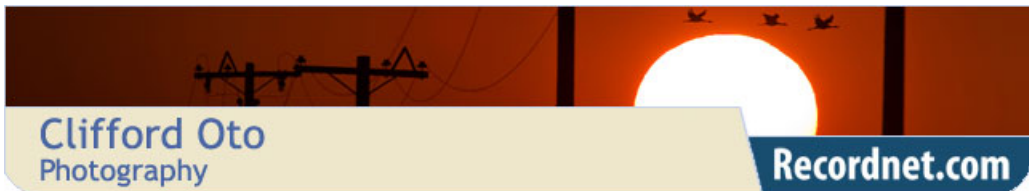


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An advertisement for Sutter Health. It features a photograph of a doctor with a white beard and a young girl smiling. Below the photo, the text reads 'PERSONALIZED CARE CLOSE TO HOME'. To the right is the Sutter Health logo with the text 'Sutter Tracy Community Hospital We Plus You'. At the bottom left, there is a green button that says '> See how we plus you'.

Know thyself

By CLIFFORD OTO | Published: JULY 15, 2013 | 1 Comment

**“Express Yourself! Express Yourself!
You don’t never need help from nobody else
All you got to do now: Express Yourself!” - Charles Wright**



A self-portrait in the broken window on Market Street near California Street in downtown Stockton. (Camera: Nikon D3s. Lens: Nikkor 24-70mm @ 50mm. Exposure: 1/125th sec. @ f/8. ISO: 200).

Although some people may think it’s a bit narcissistic, self-portraits can be the ultimate in self-expression and self-documentation. In this era of the ubiquitous cellphone camera almost everyone has taken a “selfie”, as they are called today, at one time or another.



Sacramento-based photographer Charr Crail, right, with Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom (left), with former San Francisco 49er Bubba Paris (center) and political pundit Arianna Huffington (right).

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Clifford Oto, an award-winning photographer, has been with The Record since 1984. Through the changes from black and white to digital photography, he’s kept his focus on covering the events, people and life of San Joaquin county. This blog deals ... [Read Full](#)

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Years ago Sacramento-based photographer/artist (and good friend of mine) [Charr Crail](#) started a long-term project has a long-term series self-portraits that she calls “101 horrible pictures of myself with famous people.” Started long before “selfies” were in vogue, she held her camera at arms-length, pointed it back at herself and had celebrities that she came across, whether on assignment or just at random, pose next to her.

In 2007, China studies student [Christoph Rehage](#) of Munich, Germany, started a walk across China on November 9, his birthday. For nearly a year he made his way across the Asian country racking up 4646 km (that’s about 2886 miles), He documented his travels with a “selfie” everywhere he went. From the pictures he created sort of a time-lapse slide show. At the start he’s clean-shaven and his hair is close-cropped. At the end of his travels, from Beijing to Urumqi, Rehage looked like a wild man with long unkempt locks and a Rip Van Winkle-esque beard.

From Da Vinci to Rembrandt to Van Gogh, self-portraits have been the staple of artists for hundreds of years. Artist Norman Rockwell’s “Triple Self-Portrait” is a painting of himself as he looks into a mirror while creating another picture of himself (last November for a Rockwell exhibit the Crocker art museum set up a life-sized diorama of the painting - sans Rockwell- where museum visitors could sit in his place and recreate the scene with themselves in it).

From Ansel Adams to Alfred Stieglitz photographers have also embraced the self-portrait throughout history.



Photo by Elliott Pasinsky

Part of the self-portrait’s appeal is that you have an instant model: yourself. Some artists/photographers may come across a scene, enamored with its composition or lighting and don’t have time to get a subject or can’t afford a model. Using oneself can be the best answer.

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Photo by Elliott Pasinsky

But more than just a solution to not having a model, Self-portraits can be creative in and of themselves. Lockeford resident Elliott Pasinsky's work had caught my eye through the Stockton Camera Club's Web site and his winning entries in San Joaquin County Fair's photography shows in recent years. Only 18 years old, He shows great promise and will be attending the Santa Barbara-based Brooks Institute of Photography in the Fall. Pasinsky's self-portraits go well beyond your typical "selfie." One is a hauntingly beautiful and simple photo of a thin strip of light falling across his right eye. Another is a humorous double exposure as he watches himself make a sandwich in his kitchen.



A self-portrait in a mirror at Murphys Mead in Murphys (Camera: Nikon D3s. Lens: Nikkor 24-70mm @ 24mm. Exposure: 1/80th sec. @f2.8. ISO: 1600).

Whether you take the now-classic "selfie" approach (arm outstretched, camera pointed back at yourself) or put your camera on a tripod and set the timer, a self-portrait can be an outlet for your creative expression with the only bounds being the limits of your imagination.

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CliffordOto

You can even do self-portraits as a project. A couple in New York shot "selfies" in all 118 subway station in NYC (<http://petapixel.com/2013/07/15/couple-captures-se...>)

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