Studio Portrait Assignment

This assignment is intended to encourage you to think about lighting, contrast and mood in your portrait photography.

* Choose a subject for your portrait and have them stand or sit on the stage. Turn off the lights. Play around with lighting until you have an interesting chiaroscuro (a dramatically lit subject). You can use one or to lights to create this effect. Try moving the lights around the subject, closer and further away.
* Set your camera’s aperture to wide-open (F-2 or so). Remember that this will give you a very shallow depth of field. Consider this in the framing positioning of your subject.
* Get very close to your subject and point your camera’s lens directly at the spotlighted part of her/his face.
* Adjust your shutter speed until the needle in your light meter rests in the middle.
* Move back and frame your subject to your liking.
* Think about: expression, cropping, hands, eyes.
* You may want to use a tripod as in this low light situation your camera will probably be set to have a slow shutter speed.
* Focus your image. You may turn on the lights at this point to make focusing easier.
* Make sure your subject doesn’t move (shallow depth of field)
* Using the bracketing procedure, take three pictures of your subject. One at proper exposure, one underexposed by changing the shutter-speed to one increment faster, and one photo overexposed with the shutter-speed set to one speed slower than the original reading.
* Track all of your exposures on a bracketing Log sheet.
* Take a total of 9 photos per partner. Each Pose would then get three exposures with different shutter speeds.