

## JANUARY ASSIGNMENT - TECHNIQUE: BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

### January Assignments

To be shown in February 2015

Stefan Steinberg and Andy Schmidt

Technique: Black and White Photography

If this assignment had been given before 1936, all images would have been black and white. The introduction of Kodachrome was a huge game changer in photography. Now black and white photography has become more of a dramatic art form specialty.

In this assignment, think of color as a distraction from the art form. Color takes attention away from the visual building blocks of a great photo; texture, tonal contrast, shape, form and lighting. A photographer shooting in black and white has to learn how to use all these elements to create a memorable image.



Norman Chu

### FIVE QUICK HINTS FOR GOOD BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

**SHOOT IN RAW COLOR:** RAW files provide a much higher dynamic range and more information to work with in post production to bring out better texture, contrast shading and detail.



Jacki Roberts

**SHOOT IN COLOR:** If your camera doesn't allow you to shoot in RAW or you choose not to, shoot in color and do your conversion to black and white in post production. While most digital cameras offer you the option to shoot in Black and White and can produce some reasonable results, you have more control over your end results if you have the color data to work with.

**USE LOW ISO:** Shoot with the lowest possible ISO possible. While this is something that most of us do in color photography, it is particularly important when it comes to black and white where noise created by a high ISO setting can become even more obvious. It's easier to add 'noise' than take it out in post production.

**WHEN TO SHOOT:** Many digital photographers actually prefer to shoot images for Black and White in low contrast situations. So a dark or overcast day can be a great time to shoot outdoor shots. Ironically these are the days that those who shoot only in color sit at home complaining about the 'poor light'. So next time you find yourself with a dark and gloomy day – shoot some black and white shots. They can look positively dark and evil.

**COMPOSITION:** Most of the general tips on how to compose or frame a good shot apply equally well to black and white photography as to color – however the obvious difference is that you're unable to use color like a person in a red shirt to lead the eye into or around your shot. You will need to train yourself to look at shapes, tones and textures in your frame as points of interest. Pay particular attention to shadows and highlights which will become features of your shot.

There are very good plug-ins for Lightroom, Elements, Photoshop, and Aperture and dedicated programs for working in black and white.