Intro to Black and White Photography

Instructor: Roger Buchanan   Notes available from: www.thenerdworks.com

Outline: This class will deal with capturing, processing and producing photographs with a focus on producing the best Black & White reproduction possible.

Materials used in the production of Black and White Photographs are:

- Camera: Colour RAW or jpeg photos or Colour Scans
- Computer/Software: Calibrated Monitor, Photoshop Elements, Photoshop "plug-ins"
- Printer: Regular CMYK printer, special B&W inks, Lab B & W Chemical Prints

What is required to make a good Black and White Photograph? Tones!

It requires that you are able to view the scene with an eye not towards colour, but towards tonality. Learn to see in values of light and dark, not shades of colour. Similar colours can blend together to make a bland B&W photographs. Black and White requires there to be contrasting tonality present in the scene. Digital B & W is actually best captured in colour!

Creating your best Black and White Photograph:

Image Capture: A proper exposure, often with the use of Circular Polarizer to enhance contrast.

Image Processing: Calibrated Monitor, Proper colour image processing and then "Channel Mixing" in Photoshop. Also, you can make nice "Spot Colour" copies of your images this way.

Image Production: Paper selection is important, as it determines the "White" in the image. Best Black and White Quality is obtained by using special inks, or sending the image to a lab for making a traditional chemical B & W print.
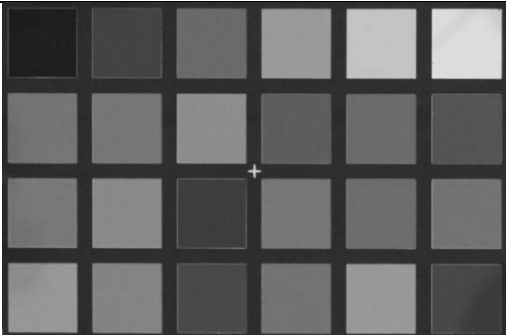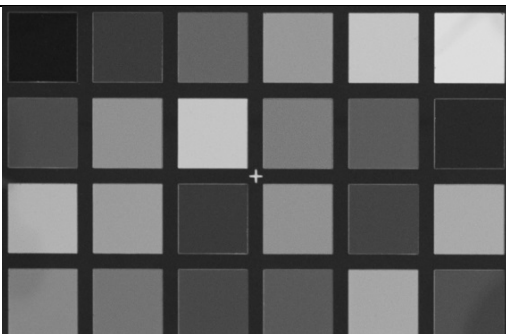
Resources:

www.northlight-images.co.uk Go and do a search for "black and white"

www.ilfordphoto.com/applications/page.asp?n=27 Info on Shooting B & W and Lab printing.

Evaluation: When filling out the evaluation form please consider the value of the time you invested in being here. Also, please consider that this presentation is a direct result of the feedback provided by previous students. Your comments and suggestions are welcomed, appreciated & put into action!

Converting Colour into Black and White: Desaturate vs. Channel Mixing

Swatch	Conversion Method	Photograph
	Normal Colour The photo can be captured as either a jpeg or RAW, and then converted with Photoshop into B & W. All colour photographs are made up pixels that contain within them various combinations of Red, Green & Blue. These are the colour "Channels" that are used in channel mixing to create B & W.	
	Desaturate Colour is removed, and only brightness values remain. This method results in many different colours being represented as similar tones. This results in a Black & White image with a poor range of tonality.	
	Channel Mixing Different colours are converted into different B & W tones since the Channel Mixer method uses the RGB values of each colour in the swatch to convert to Black & White. This method of creating B & W images results in images with much greater range of tones, and more detail.	