

Stockton Camera Club

The Shutter Tripper **October 2018**
September Digital Images of the Month



Agricultural Tulip Farm
Class A Image of the Month - Sheldon McCormick



King of the Savanna
Class AA Image of the Month - Christine Blue



Saguaro Blossom
Class AAA Image of the Month - Dean Taylor

September Print Images of the Month



Inside Out Mum #5

Class A Print of the Month - Wayne Carlson



Sunset on California Hwy 1

Class AA Print of the Month - Paul Chapman



Ghost of Antelope Canyon

Class AAA Print of the Month - Doug Ridgway

September 10's of the Month



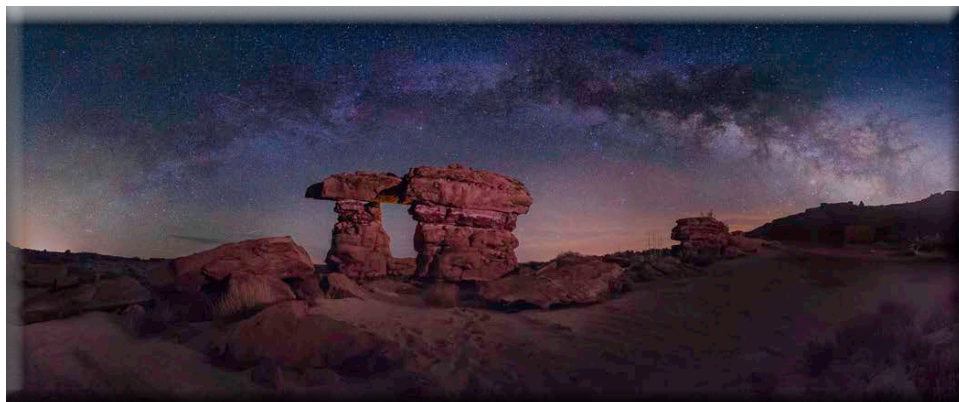
Monarch Butterfly and Sunflower
Heide Stover



Manarola
Sharon McLemore



Colorful Dahlia
Em McLaren



Recapture Pocket, Utah
Susanne Nichols



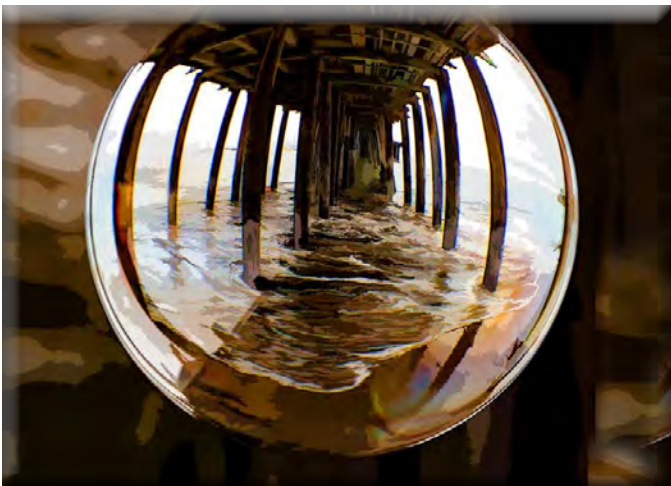
Harvesting Wheat
Dean Taylor



Palouse Farm
Susanne Nichols



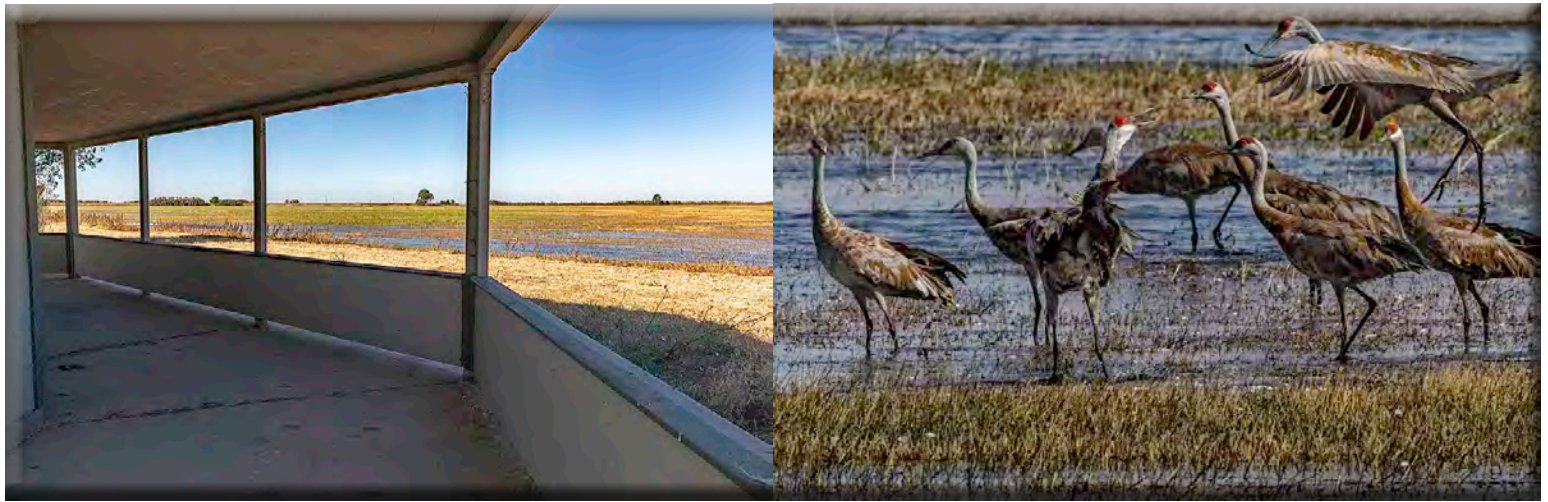
Osprey Chick Getting Fed
Heide Stover



High Tide Under the Capitola Pier
Joanne Sogsti



How Many Animals?
Wayne Carlson



Sandhill Crane Photography Opportunity

Woodbridge Ecological Reserve

Wednesday, October 24, 2018, 4:30 pm - Dark

7730 W Woodbridge Rd, Lodi, CA 95242

The Stockton Camera Club has the opportunity to photograph Sandhill Cranes as they come into roost. We will meet, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Crane Docents at the South parking lot of the Woodbridge Ecological Reserve (WER), also known as the Isenberg Sandhill Crane Reserve. We will then caravan to the the North site of the Reserve which includes the Crane Viewing Shelter. We can have a total of 20 people come but, have a limit of 10 - 12 tripods.

Members of the Stockton Camera Club will have first priority to sign up. Spots for members of other Clubs and the public will be available on a first come first serve basis. To sign up, or for more information, contact:

Doug Ridgway, doug_flyfisher@yahoo.com, (209) 617-7050.

Crane Tour Details

The Woodbridge Ecological Reserve is divided into two parcels, known as the South Site and North Site. We will meet at 4:45pm, at the South Site, where the docent guides meet you and give a presentation. We will then caravan to the North site. It's suggested that you bring your longest and a wide angle lens for your camera(s). If you aren't doing photography, though not essential, bring your binoculars and/or spotting scopes for up-close viewing. But, you should be able to enjoy the cranes with unaided eyes.

While there is no charge for this tour, a donation to the Lodi Sandhill Crane Association would be greatly appreciated. There will be envelopes available for your donation. Everyone, over 16, will be required to have a State Lands Pass, www.wildlife.ca.gov/licensing/lands-pass, unless you have a Hunting or Fishing License.

ADA-compliant portable toilets are available, at both the North and South sites.

Tours usually conclude a half hour after sunset with the anticipated fly-in of the cranes at the North Site. The Crane Viewing Shelter will allow us to be hidden from the incoming birds. The Cranes, generally, start to fly-in right before dusk.

Photographing Sandhill Cranes will be the focus of this tour but, there is the very real possibility of photographing other wildlife too. A wide lens will be helpful for the possibility of photographing the sun setting behind Mt. Diablo.

Directions to South Site (starting point for CDFW docent-led crane tours):

From Sacramento, take Interstate 5 south exit on Peltier Road. Turn left under I-5 to the frontage road which is Thornton Road. Turn right (south) on Thornton Road and travel 2 miles to Woodbridge Road. Look for sign "Phil & Marilyn Isenberg Sandhill Crane Reserve." Turn right (west) on Woodbridge Road and continue 2.5 miles to a pullout on left side of road. This is the South unit of Reserve, our meeting area. The tours will begin here with docent introduction.

From Lodi, SF Bay Area via Hwy 12, Stockton or Los Angeles head north on Interstate 5 and exit on Turner Road. Go left (north) on frontage road which is Thornton Road 1 mile to Woodbridge Road. Look for sign "Phil & Marilyn Isenberg Sandhill Crane Reserve." Turn left (west) on Woodbridge Road and continue 2.5 miles to a pullout on left side of road. This is the South unit of Reserve, our meeting area. The tours will begin here with docent introduction.

October Meeting Notes

Heide opened the meeting. John & Julie Holland were guests. All the Grape Festival entries and winners were congratulated! The next SJVCCC meeting will be on Oct. 14. All images are due by Oct. 5th. Please contact Heide for further info on this or if you want to carpool. h1stover@aol.com

1. The Sacramento Zoo will be hosting a special event by Mike's Cameras. You will be able to try out all kinds of camera lens for free. This will be on Oct. 14 from 9AM to 4PM.

2. The next Goldrush meeting will be on Sept. 23. It will be held at a new location with a new format. Please contact Dean for further information ditaylor49@aol.com or contact the Goldrush Chapter PSA.

3. Joanne Sogsti and Dean Taylor entered the Lodi Community Art Center Show and their work will be on display through the month of October Congratulations!

4. Doug will be a docent and lead a tour at Woodbridge on October 24. to photograph the cranes. There is no fee. Those who are going will meet at 4:45 in the southern lot and then head to the locked northern lot to do the photography. If interested you need to sign up with Doug. Contact him at: doug_flyfisher@yahoo.com. Also, if you don't have a Hunting or Fishing license, you need to have a Land Pass, <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/licensing/lands-pass>, in order to go.

5. Heide announced Mac, Christine and Wayne will be on the Nominating Committee to nominate the board members for 2019. If you are interested in being on the Committee or running for an office position please contact Heide at: h1stover@aol.com

Dean introduced Sam Shaw as the judge for this month. Sam is a member of the Modesto and Merced Camera Clubs and also very active in PSA, SJVCCC, and Goldrush. He is a long-time photographer and just came back from a tour of Indonesia.

PRINT OF THE MONTH COMPETITION WINNERS

CLASS A "Inside Out Mum" by Wayne Carlson

CLASS AA "Sunset on California Hwy 1" by Paul Chapman

CLASS AAA "Ghost of Antelope Canyon" by Doug Ridgway

DIGITAL IMAGE OF THE MONTH COMPETITION WINNERS

CLASS A "Agricultural Tulip Farm" by Mac McCormick

CLASS AA "King of Savanna" by Christine Blue

CLASS AAA "Saguaro Blossom and Buds" by Dean Taylor

Congratulations to all the winners!

The next Special Subject for Oct. is: BLACK AND WHITE

Please let me know if there are any corrections or additions to the notes.

Thanks, em

SCC Officers 2017

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President's Message

June 2018

By Heide Stover

Due to work I was not able to make it to the last meeting. I am sorry I had to miss it as I always enjoy seeing the images from everyone and hearing the judges' comments. Congratulations to all of you that received 10's and to those of you that had the prints/images of the month. I look forward to seeing them in the Shutter Tripper.

Our June meeting is coming up. I hope those of you that were at the Boat House learned some new things from Doug and are able to use the new information to help you with getting your prints ready for the meeting. Though it can be quicker and easier to get prints done at Costco or other places there is something to be said for printing your own prints. There is more control over how they turn out. There are also many more options for types of paper to use. This could probably be a class all on its own!

I look forward to seeing all of you at the June meeting.

A Big Thank You to Our Sponsors!



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2018 Competition Policy

A. GENERAL RULES

1. Only paid-up members may enter club competition.
2. Regular print and digital image competition period: Once each month except January. A competition year is February through December. Current regular meetings are February, March, May, July, September, October and December. The number of meetings may change from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Directors and approval of the general membership as facilities permit. The Annual Awards Dinner will be held in January.
3. A total of four (4) images (all prints, all digital or a combination of both) may be entered each competition month. A total of three (3) images may be entered in the Open Division and a total of one (1) in the Special Subject Division. The number of entries may change from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Directors and the approval of the general membership.
4. Each image will be scored from 6 to 10 points. All prints or digital images receiving 9 or 10 points will be classed as an honor image. The title of each print or digital image entered will be read before being evaluated. The name of the maker will be read for 9-point honor winners. Maker's names will be announced for the 10 point images after the Print & Digital Image-of-the-Month winners are chosen.
5. A print or digital image that does not receive an honor score, may be re-entered one more time in the same division.
6. A print or digital image may be entered in all divisions for which it qualifies; i.e., an honor image in Open may also be entered in the Special Subject Division at another competition. A print or digital image that receives an honor score may not be re-entered in the same division.
7. Any print or digital image that appears to be ineligible for competition or not qualified for a specific division could expect to be challenged. The Competition Vice-President shall decide whether or not the image is acceptable.
8. The exhibitor must have exposed each negative, slide or digital image entered. All images submitted for judging must be the work of the photographer/maker including the taking of the images and any digital enhancements and/or manipulation of the image. This does not apply to the processing of film or printing by a commercial processor.
9. The same image should not be entered both as a print and a projected digital image in the same competition.
10. In the event of absence or barring unforeseen circumstances, a member may submit make-up prints or digital images for one competition night per competition year; and whenever possible must submit all make-up prints or digital images at the meeting immediately following the month a member failed or was unable to submit the prints or digital images. Make-ups in the Special Subject Division must be the same subject as the month missed. Also, in case of absence a member may assign the responsibility of submitting his or her prints and/or digital images for competition to another member.
11. A club member who serves as judge cannot enter his or her own prints or digital images in the same competition. The judge's make-up prints or digital images can then be entered in another competition during that competition year. This is in addition to the once-a-year make-up provision already

allowed.

12. Prints or digital images may be projected/viewed briefly before the judging of each division if the judge indicates he/she would like a preview.

B. PRINT ENTRY RULES

1. Each print entered must have a completed label attached to the back of the print including; name of maker, title, date entered and Division (Open or Special Subject). The writing or printing on the form must be legible. Labels must be attached on the back of the print in the upper left-hand corner for correct viewing of the print.
2. All prints must be matted or mounted with a total size (including mat board) of no larger than 18" X 24" and no smaller than 8" X 10". Exception: One side of a Panorama Print may be no larger than 36". Prints that are smaller than 5" X 7" will not be accepted. The maker's name must not appear on the viewing surface of the image. Framed prints shall not be entered.
3. Prints accompanied by entry forms should be submitted no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the regular monthly meeting.
4. Prints receiving a score of 10 points, in each class, will be regrouped and judged for selection for the Print-of-the-Month honors. Print-of-the-Month honors will be given in Class A, AA & AAA.

C. DIGITAL IMAGE ENTRY RULES

1. Digital images must be submitted in a format and by the deadline specified by the Competition Vice-President. Digital images may be submitted by email, mailed (CD) or delivered (CD) to the Competition Vice-President. Definition of Digital Image: An image taken with a digital camera, a negative, slide or print scanned into the computer and processed digitally.
2. Images must be in a format compatible with the projector. The key thing to keep in mind when formatting photos for submission is that the projector we use in the competition has a (maximum) resolution of 1400 x 1050 pixels. This means that any photo that exceeds this size in either dimension, could end-up being cropped by the projector. In other words: the image width cannot be more than 1400 pixels and the image height cannot be more than 1050 pixels. If your image is horizontal, only change the width to 1400, if your image is vertical, only change the height to 1050. Do not change both. Down-sizing the image from the "native" resolution coming out of your camera also significantly reduces the file size. This helps when emailing the files and takes-up less space on our hard-drives.
3. The maker's name, title of image, date entered and division (Open or Special Subject) must be included as the title of the image. When you have finished re-sizing your image save your image with a new title. For example do a Save as: Smith Sunrise Splendor 05-15 O.jpeg. (O-Open or SS-Special Subject). Specify whether you're Beginner, Advanced or Very Advanced.
4. Digital Images receiving a score of 10 points, in each class, will be regrouped and judged for selection for the Digital Image-of-the-Month honors. Digital Image-of-the-Month honors will be given in Class A, AA & AAA.

Stockton Camera Club
September 2018 Competition Standing

Congratulations to all the winners!!!

Sam Shaw, a member of the Modesto & Merced Camera Clubs, viewed 50 prints and digital images for a average score of 9.28

Print of the Month Class A – Inside Out Mum #5 by Wayne Carleson

Print of the Month Class AA – Sunset on California Hwy 1 by Paul Chapman

Print of the Month Class AAA – The Ghost of Antelope Canyon by Doug Ridgway

Digital image of the Month Class A – Tulip Farm by Sheldon McCormick

Digital Image of the Month Class AA – King of the Savannah by Christine Blue

Digital Image of the Month Class AAA – Saguaro Blossom and Buds by Dean Taylor

Please check out the website, <http://www.stockton-cameraclub.com/home.html>

Class A Standings	TOTAL	OPEN	SS	FEB	MAR	MAY	JUN	JULY	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Wayne Carlson	227	187	40	37	39	39	35	39	38	0	0	0
Sheldon McCormick	218	173	45	36	35	38	38	37	34	0	0	0
Jim Cahill	90	80	10	25	0	38	27	0	0	0	0	0
Ron Wetherell	75	75	0	27	0	19	0	29	0	0	0	0
Lanny Brown	56	36	20	0	10	18	18	10	0	0	0	0
Monica Hoeft	26	26	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gary Brown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Class AA Standing	TOTAL	OPEN	SS	FEB	MAR	MAY	JUN	JULY	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Em McLaren	230	181	49	39	38	38	38	39	38	0	0	0
Heide Stover	226	180	46	39	39	37	37	37	37	0	0	0
Elizabeth Parrish	218	173	45	36	34	38	37	38	35	0	0	0
Paul Chapman	214	167	47	34	37	36	34	38	35	0	0	0
Christine Blue	190	143	47	37	39	38	0	39	37	0	0	0
Richard Bullard	111	93	18	0	37	36	38	0	0	0	0	0
Stan Sogsti	37	28	9	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ed Richter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Class AAA Standing	TOTAL	OPEN	SS	FEB	MAR	MAY	JUN	JULY	SEPT	OCT	Nov	DEC
Dean Taylor	232	184	48	39	39	39	39	38	38	0	0	0
Joanne Sogsti	231	183	48	39	37	39	39	40	37	0	0	0
Sharon McLemore	228	181	47	38	39	39	37	38	37	0	0	0
Doug Ridgway	156	126	30	39	39	0	0	39	39	0	0	0
Trey Steinhart	151	115	36	37	37	37	0	40	0	0	0	0
Susanne Nichols	60	30	30	0	20	20	0	0	20	0	0	0

2018 Calendar of Events

Every 3rd Thursday (Except April, June & Aug) 6:30 PM	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	Membership Meeting Contact Heide Stover h1stover@aol.com
Thursday October 18	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	October General Meeting Special Subject - Black & White/Monochrome
Wednesday October 24	South Parking Lot Woodbridge (Isenberg) Ecological Preserve	Sandhill Crane Photo Opportunity 4:45 - Dark
Thursday November 15	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	November General Meeting Prints only with no special subject
Thursday December 20	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	December General Meeting Special Subject - Before (Unprocessed) And After (Processed) Photo

2019 Calendar of Events

Thursday January 17	TBA	Annual Banquet
Thursday February 21	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	February General Meeting Special Subject - Guilty Pleasure
Thursday March 21	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	March General Meeting Special Subject - Focus On One Color
April	TBA	April Workshop/Photo Opportunity
Thursday May 16	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	May General Meeting Special Subject - Backlit
Thursday June 20	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	June General Meeting Prints only with no special subject
Thursday July 18	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	July General Meeting Special Subject - Gates/Fences

Black and White Photography Tips: The 5 Cornerstones of All Great Monochrome Photos

So, you want to create jaw-dropping, mind-blowing, black and white photography- but you're not sure how to go about it. Anyone with a camera can be creative and produce a monochrome image. However, if you wish to have your B&W photography excel, be it portraits, landscapes, still life, or any other subject matter- there are 5 cornerstone attributes that you should attempt to infuse into your black and white pictures. In this article, we will cover:

Basic Black & White Photography Concepts

- What is Black & White Photography
- When and How to Take Better Black & White Photographs
- Developing Ideas for Black & White Photography

Advanced Black & White Photography Techniques

- Contrast
- Tone
- Shadow
- Shape
- Texture

Examples of the Advanced Photography Techniques in Use

- Landscape Photography
- Street Photography
- Architectural Photography
- Abstract Photography

What Is Black & White / Monochrome Photography



"A demon named Aegon..." by [Reynald Nadan](#)

Black & white photography, at its most basic explanation, is the absence of any color in the photograph. But, is that the same as a monochrome photograph? Read on-

Black & White Photography Meaning

"The meaning of black N white photography" might sound elementary to some folks. However to others, especially new photographers, it may not be quite so clear.

For example, what is the difference between "B&W photography" and the moniker "Monochrome Photography"?

Is a black and white photograph a monochrome photograph- and visa versa?

A B&W photo is a monochrome photo. However, you could have a monochrome photo that isn't a black and white photo.

Confused? Let's define both.

A black and white photograph is an image where all color has been removed (either in the digital process or through the choice of film). It consists of shades of gray tone that generally go from dark (black) to light (white).

A monochrome image also has the colour removed. But... it may not display shades of gray, which is a requirement to be a black and white image. A monochrome image could be shades of yellow/red (also known as a sepia) or blue (which in the days of the darkroom was induced through the use of a chemical). So... a monochrome image consists of tones (shades) of something (red, yellow, green, blue, etc.) - not necessarily gray.



Photo by [Irena Trkulja](#)

This photograph is a monochrome photograph. It is not a true black and white photograph, because it has a sepia tone. Check out the yellowish/red tone. A black and white photograph is monochrome, but a monochrome photograph isn't necessarily a black and white image. This might seem like semantics. But, if you enter a black and white juried photography show with a sepia (toned or digitally colored) photograph, it likely would be rejected.

When to Use Black N White Photography

The idea of "when" to use black and white photography is kind of a misnomer. There are some photographers that shoot only black and white no matter what the situation is. Now, there are certain situations that seem to lend themselves well to the black white photography medium. There likely isn't a soul reading this article that hasn't drooled over a fabulous black and white landscape photograph. That being said... You will find great examples of B&W imaging from virtually every photographic genre available. The key isn't when to use B&W photography, but rather how to apply the 5 cornerstones to your particular situation.

Taking Black and White Photos

You must train yourself to "see" in tone (ignore the colors in front of your camera) if you want to become a pro at creating better black and white photos. One of the simplest black and white photography tips for learning to "see in tone" is to buy either a monochrome viewing filter, (sometimes referred to as a "black and white viewing filter"), or a pair of sunglasses with dark gray lenses. View the scene that you wish to create a black and white photograph of through the sunglasses (or the filter). The dark lens will help remove color, and make the background (subject) appear in shades of tone versus colored hues.

This simple step alone will improve your attempts at black N white photography. Discover how other photographers "see in tone" in our [free photo contest](#).



"Golden Gate Bridge - San Francisco" by [Kent DuFault](#)

By utilizing the "sunglasses technique", the photographer saw this unique black and white composition of the Golden Gate Bridge.

However, you still need the 5 cornerstones to excel!

Before, we delve into the 5 monochrome cornerstones- let's briefly talk about composition. If you read many blogs and tutorials regarding black and white photography, they will often have a section on composition.

This is somewhat misleading. Composition is important no matter if the image is black & white or color. It's the "tools" of composition that can vary based on which medium (color or B&W) that you're choosing.

A good tool of composition for a color photograph may not apply to a monochrome photograph of the same scene. This can be very important, especially if your plan is to convert the color image to a black and white image in post-production. 4 of the 5 cornerstones for amazing B&W photography are "composition tools". The tools can be applicable to color or B&W photography.

However, they are particularly essential for B&W photography!

Coming Up with Ideas for Black and White photos

Let's face it... you're not really "coming up with ideas" for monochrome photos. What you're really doing is coming up with ideas for a photo- period.

Your main concern as a black and white photographer should be... How do I photograph this scene, person, object, subject, or idea (that I have in my head) in a shot that screams for the monochrome photographic medium? Some subjects need colours- many don't. Once, you've made the decision that color is not an important element to the art (artwork) that you're about to

create– you’re ready to proceed utilizing the 5 cornerstones (we’re about to discuss), great lighting, and of course (always) considering the final composition.

How to Plan for the Best Black and White Photos

We’ve touched upon several techniques that would be part of the planning process. However, let’s put it down into a list form so that it’s easy to remember.

1. Shoot in the camera raw format (if you’re shooting digital) so that your original file will have the maximum dynamic range (ability to capture highlights to shadows) versus a .JPEG file. You should always shoot in the raw file format (if possible... or shoot both formats).
2. Use the sunglasses technique to establish that your final image will have good contrast and tonal separation. (Very important for B&W film photographers as you are limited on tonal separation once you’ve clicked the shutter.)
3. Organize a composition that utilizes as many of the 5 cornerstones as possible- while also considering the other tools of composition and the lighting.
4. Develop a processing style that results in a full range of tone (should that be your desired outcome). If your style is high contrast black and white imaging- then you aren’t going to have a full range of tone. The goal is to know what you want, and then how to get there!.

Monochrome Photography Techniques: The 5 Cornerstones

Contrast

What does the cornerstone "contrast" mean exactly to your monochrome photograph? It means that for an "average contrast" black and white photograph- there should be a smooth gradation of tone from the deepest black, through all the shades of gray, and up to the brightest white. How do you produce this type of photograph?

1. Look for scenes with a vast variety of color hues. The colors in your image must be converted to gray tones; while having a large variety of varying colors doesn’t necessarily guarantee a good tonal range in the conversion- it’s a step in the right direction. You can use your sunglasses technique to confirm how your colors are going to “turn” into a shade of tone.
2. Avoid high contrast lighting. This is not to say “always” avoid high contrast lighting when producing monochrome photography. This is saying as you practice the art of creating a full tonal range B&W photograph- with a balanced contrast ratio- avoid high contrast lighting.
3. When you begin to post-process your image file. Keep an eye on the Histogram. If your edits cause the Histogram to develop “cuts” in the flow from shadow to highlight- this means you’re dropping tones. The more cuts that your Histogram displays, and the tighter the graph becomes from left to right- the less tonal range and increased contrast your final image is going to display. Sometimes these “cuts”, or “drops” can’t be avoided. Create as few of them as possible. If you wish to create a "high contrast" photograph. Push the left (shadow) and right (highlight) boundaries of the Histogram inward.

Take a moment and enjoy these full tonal range and balanced contrast ratio photographs as examples.



Photo by Raphael Augustin

This portrait of the bird is about as beautiful an example of a full tone, balanced contrast ratio, photograph that you will ever see. Study the image closely. You will see every tone from a deep black to a vibrant white.



"Fernando's Papa" by Richard Duerksen

You want the contrast of your black and white images to be high enough to give your image some spark. But you don't want it to be so high that you begin to block up the shadows, burn out the highlights, and drop the midtones.

Many photographers mix up the concepts of brightness value and contrast. This photograph, of the flower, has a low brightness value, but still displays a balanced range of contrast. This type of photograph is called "Low Key". Low key means the image has a preponderance of dark tonal values- but still has a full contrast range back to a bright highlight value.

Tone

Contrast and tone are very similar concerns for the monochrome photographer.

However, there is one "tone related" concept that is super important and has little to do with contrast.

In black N white photography, (film or digital), a colored scene is being converted to tones of gray. With film, that conversion occurs in the camera. With digital, it occurs in the post-processing phase. (Don't set your digital camera to shoot black and white- unless you want to limit your control over the conversion process of color to tone. You have a much greater control of the conversion process in the post-processing step.)

For example... You wish to capture a black and white photograph of a very tan model wearing a red dress against a blue sky. There is a very good chance that the skin of the model, the color of the dress, and the sky will convert to very similar tones of gray; the result being a rather lackluster photograph.

For the film folks, you have to recognize this possibility, and deal with it, in camera. How do you do this? One way is to alter the tones through the use of colored filters on the lens.



Photo by [Carlos De Sousa Ramos](#)

The digital photographers have a lot more flexibility. They can shoot the scene, and then alter the tones in the post-processing conversion phase.

What other options might you try that could yield a better range of tone? You could change the lighting. Lighting plays a huge factor in black and white tone, because it raises and lowers the brightness values of the original colors in the scene. Bright light on a deep red dress is going to produce a lighter gray tone conversion. A lower intensity light on a deep red dress is going to produce a darker gray tone conversion.

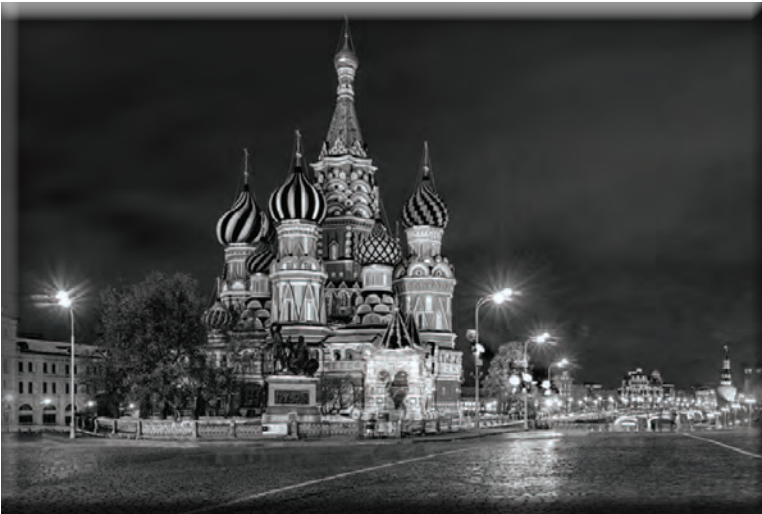
The lighting creates the highlights, shadows, and everything in-between.

If the sunglasses trick reveals a poor tonal range- try adjusting the lighting by moving the camera, subject, light source, or all three! These example photographs show excellent tonal range from the deepest shadows to the brightest highlights.

This portrait displays awesome tonal range. Is it a problem that highlight area behind the man is almost blown out on the highlight end? Not at all! In fact, the tonal range in the background is so perfectly placed on the Histogram scale that it appears to be vibrant white-without being clipped.



"Cowboy " by [Etienne Chalmet](#)



"Saint Basil's Cathedral" by [Michael Ryvkin](#)

Capturing a full tonal range photograph at night is tricky business. As you start out shooting in this genre of monochrome photography, concentrate on taking your shots right after dusk- when the sky is darkening but still has some light. This will help you achieve full tone results.



"Pure fun" by [Asif Bora](#)

This photograph is an excellent example of an image that could have had bad tonal range due to contrast. The scene has harsh lighting. Study the left girl's face. Notice how bright it is compared to the girl on the right? Also, look at the brightest highlights in the clouds. Some of them are actually blown out. Finally, look at the girl's dark pants and the shadows beneath the cart. We can see good detail in the shadow end. Sometimes, you simply cannot maintain a full tonal range due to the circumstances. In those cases, you must choose where you wish to maintain detail in your black and white shot. This photographer chose the shadows.

Shadow

Every photographer out there has stared in awe at some black and white photograph that contained beautiful shadows. It's a key feature of the medium, and one that you should be constantly aware of as you capture your images. Does your shot have strong shadows?

If it does, perhaps it then lends itself to becoming a strong black and white photograph! Why are shadows so important to black & white photography? It ties in with another one of the cornerstones, which is shape. Think about the masses that are going to observe your photograph. Some of them may love photography. Many of them might not- or simply have a mild interest in photography. Think about National Geographic Magazine. At its peak, it captured the imagination of people worldwide- whether they were an artist or a factory worker. The magazine had universal appeal- primarily due to its photography. When you create a black and white image, you've taken away a key element that creates interest in the human brain- color. You now have to find ways to attract the brain's attention. One of the ways that you can accomplish that is the use of shadows. Most of us probably have some childhood memory of standing outside, late in the day, and looking at our long shadow stretched out across some piece of pavement. Shadows attract attention, and they are visually exciting even to someone who isn't particularly interested in art. Keep the following in mind when working with shadows.

1. The shape of the shadow might be important. The shape of shadows can be changed. Maybe, a change in the shadow will strengthen your black and white composition. Maybe positioning the shadow differently inside the frame will benefit the contrast and tonal range?
2. Resist the temptation to make all of your shadows absolute black. When our eyes see a shadow, we generally see "into" the shadow. It's rare that a shadow appears absolute black to our eyes. Sometimes, a very little bit, of absolute black is fine in a full tonal range and balanced contrast photograph. But, the vast majority of shadowed areas should reveal some detail. Maintaining detail in the shadow areas is a combination of exposure and processing. Of course, some very effective black and white photography will be covered with absolute black shadowing. These images are generally special effect images. The dense, (blocked up), shadows hold a special purpose in the final piece of artwork.

Check out these examples of “open shadows (with detail)” and “blocked up (no detail)” shadows.



Photo by [Nader El Assy](#)

Shadows are very versatile in your black and white photographic efforts. A shadow can be a shape, or a leading line, and become a major contributor to the composition. This photograph is an excellent example of that technique.

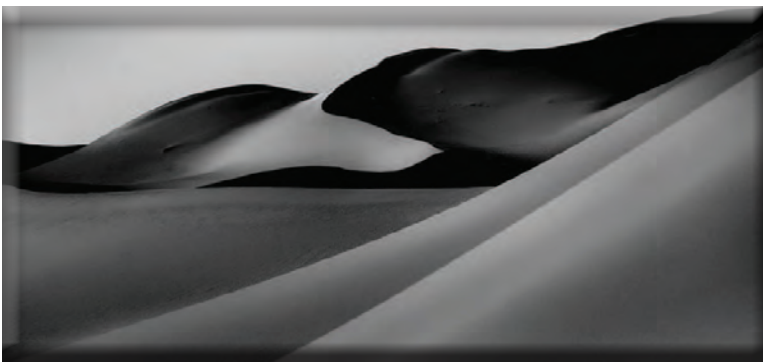


Photo by [Daniele Bonaglia](#)

The deepest shadows along the sand dunes are completely blocked up. That means they are absolute black. However, in this case the photographer used that as a technique to draw attention to the central part of the photograph. Points of contrast always attract a person's eyes. By contrasting the midtone grey of the sand dune with an absolute black shadow- it creates visual interest.



Photo by [Denis Lomme](#)

When you have the option of editing your images digitally. You can create shadows in post-production. The key to this- is to get good at it. What does that mean? Two things... First, if you're going for realism make sure the shadows you create fall in line with the lighting that was present in the shot. Secondly, if you're going for an artistic look, you have more freedom to shadow the areas that wish. The lighthouse photograph is an example of "created" shadowing. The most important editing talent to acquire for this type of work is not to leave out-of-place, weird looking, and revealing telltale signs that you manipulated the image. These telltale signs are known as artifacts.

Shape

Shape is definitely a part of shadows. However, shadows aren't always about shape! Shape can become a defining element of a highly successful black and white photograph- anywhere in the tonal range. While shadows are tied to shape... Shape is often tied to contrast. It's contrast that makes shape useful. Without contrast, in black and white photography, a shape can virtually disappear next to its tonal neighbor. Bare in mind that this isn't true for color photography; shape can be defined by color. This is a necessary skill for you as a B&W photographer- learning to see “shape” because of contrast and tone. One of the reasons that shape works so well in photography, or any art form, is because it is a core survival and training instinct in our brain. We evaluate everything by shape. Think about how important the use of shape is to road signs! Or, how would you react if you saw the shape of a bear running toward you in the woods? How do you put shape to work in your black and white photography?

1. Learn to see monochromatic shapes in a scene. This is more difficult than it sounds. It takes practice to become proficient at seeing shape. You don't want to just see the shapes that everybody sees. You want to see the shapes that everyone else misses. That will make your black and white photographs stand out from the crowd!
 2. Learn to evaluate the value of a shape based on contrast and tone – not color. This also takes practice.
- Here is a small gallery of awesome photos using shapes in monochrome photography.



Photo by [Sandi Yanto](#)

Shape can help define a composition. It can also help tell a story- such as the juxtaposition of a crocodile's teeth against the delicate wings of a dragonfly.



Photo by [Eric Forey](#)

Sometimes, just the odd positioning of a shape can help visual interest. If this photograph depicted the shape of the building in a standard point-of-view, it would be much less interesting.



Photo by [Eric Forey](#)

Including "contradicting" shapes in your black white photography is a strong attraction to viewers!



"Vrijbouter" by [Etienne Chalmet](#)

Shapes don't necessarily need to be dominant to be successful. The shape of the man's beard, as well as his sunglasses, leads us right to his eyes. The shape of the man's cap acts as a frame- keeping the viewer's eyes "in" the shot and not drifting upward.

Texture

That brings up another point, removing texture (i.e. skin texture). This editing activity can be detrimental to your black and white photography efforts- if you go too far. We've all seen the portrait where the subject appears to have on a plastic mask. You don't want to do that, especially in monochrome photos. Color photography sometimes hides things. Black and white photography strips away the distractions and really focuses a viewer on what you have left behind. If you leave something that looks out of the ordinary (and not purposeful), or unrealistic- it will get noticed! Earlier, we talked about the fact that shadows are tied to shape, and shape is tied to contrast. Texture is tied to light and shadow. We don't need light and shadow to "physically feel" textures with our fingers. But, to convey texture visually, we absolutely must have light and shadow! It's those two elements that "define" texture in a photograph (or any 2-dimensional artwork). How do you create texture in black & white photography?

1. Texture is revealed when a light source "skims" across a textured surface. The lower the angle- from the light source to subject- the more that the light will create highlights and shadows across the textured surface- visually revealing it.
2. Physical surface texture must be present for the light source to reveal it. A low angled light source will reveal very little texture on a smooth surfaced wooden table. That (same) angled light source will reveal much texture when shined across a piece of shag rug carpeting.
3. When attempting to use texture in your B&W photography... identify that surface texture is present... and then position the light source so that the created texture is visible from the camera position. You will see less texture if the light source is shining from camera position back toward the subject. You will see more texture if the light source is shining from any other angle. In other words, if the light source is shining toward the exact same direction as the camera is looking- this is a 0 degree angle and texture will be minimal to non-existent from the camera point of view. As the light source moves away from the camera position (to either side) the angle begins to increase and the texture becomes more visible.

Check out these awesome examples of texture in black and white photography!



Photo by GuruShots User

Without seeing the texture of the insect's eyes and antennae this photograph wouldn't hold the wow factor! When you're converting your shots to black and white- make sure that you don't lose your textures in the process.



"Man and dog " by [Etienne Chalmet](#)

Texture is the primary tool that defines these two subjects. The texture of the man's face and beard tell us he's an outdoorsman. The texture of the dog's fur is grizzled. He too is an outdoor being. The smooth texture of the tongue is a juxtaposition that tells a story about the relationship. Could this image have been just as strong in color? No. The color of the shirt, hat, and sky would have competed with the primary subject, which is the man's relationship with the dog.



"Matriarch " by Andy Howe [FSINWP ARPS](#)

The use of texture in this shot of the elephants helps to define the mother as the primary subject. It does this by directing the viewer's eyes up the trunk and to the elephant's head.

Now that we've identified the 5 cornerstones of great black & white photography, let's see how these cornerstones are put into functional use in several genres of photography.

Black and White Landscape Photography



Photo by [jean-marc](#)

The color in this image was uninspiring due to the mist and the positioning of the light source. The photographer took advantage of the cornerstones of black white photography to create a more visually exciting photograph: contrast, shape, shadow, and tone.



Photo by [Raphael Augustin](#)

This photograph utilizes the technique discussed earlier. It is a "low key" photograph. Why would a photographer use a low-key technique on a black and white landscape photograph? The purpose would be to direct the eyes immediately to the waterfall. The rest of the photograph is visible, (an excellent example of holding shadow detail), however it holds significantly less visual weight in the overall composition. This photograph presents these cornerstones of great monochrome photography: contrast, texture (in this case the lack of it), and shape.

Black and White Street Photography

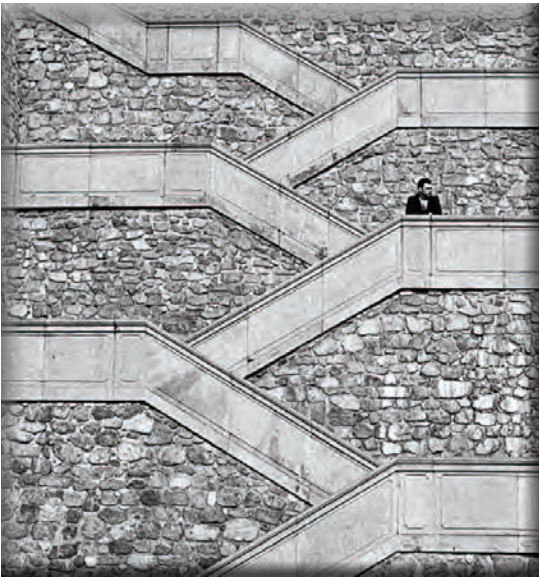


Photo by [Fernando Delfim](#)

Great street photography is often defined by a sense of timing, juxtaposition, meaning, and composition. The black and white photograph often plays well into this storytelling genre, as it eliminates potential color distractions in the background. By focusing in on the 5 cornerstones, the black and white street photographer can deftly guide a viewer's through the clutter and right to the subject. The represented cornerstones, in this photograph of the man on the stairs, are shape and contrast.



Photo by [Rosanna Rosy](#)

There are two key components to great street photography. The first is capturing the "Decisive Moment". This is characterized as clicking the shutter release button at peak action. The second is composition. The highly skilled street photographer will be composing the image as it unfolds in front of them. The 5 cornerstones are the composition tools that are rolling around in the photographer's mind as he or she is composing on the fly. The represented cornerstones in this rainy night scene are shape, contrast, tone, and shadow.

Black and White Portrait Photography



"Rockabilly" by [Etienne Chalmet](#)

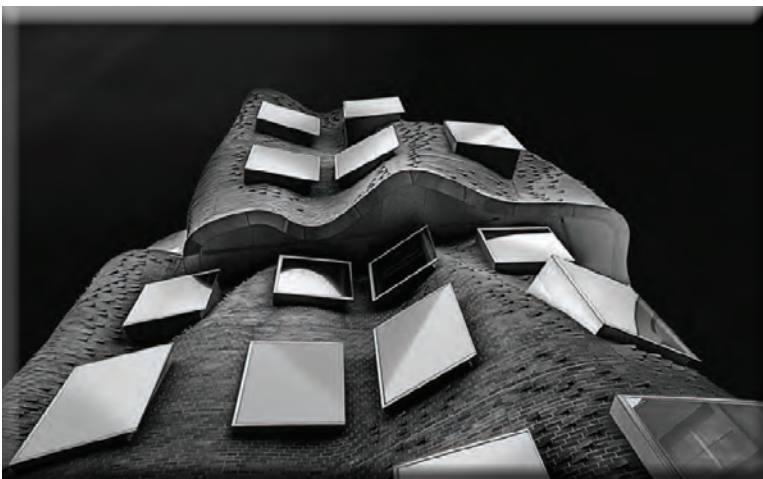
Black and white portrait photography is tricky. The reason for this is primarily due to skin tone. The cornerstones presented in this headshot of the woman are shape, texture, contrast, and tone. But- notice how important the skin tone is to each of those cornerstones. Learn to evaluate skin tone properly. It shouldn't be too light, nor too dark, it should have some texture and shape. These factors will change based upon the subject's skin color.



"eyes are a window on the soul " by [Cedric Angel](#)

The represented cornerstones are shape, texture, contrast, tone, and shadow. This image hits ever cornerstone very effectively to create a composition that is different and memorable! Of particular brilliance is the use of contrast to bring the viewer's eyes to rest on the woman's face.

Black and White Architectural Photography



"Pebble Bag Building" by [Salman Shaikh](#)

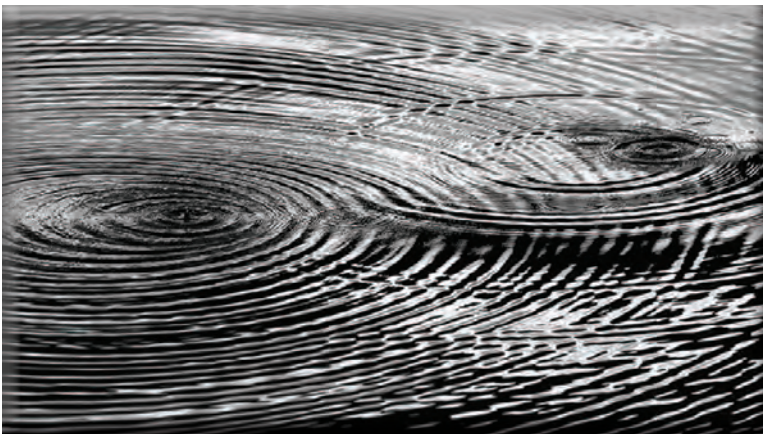
When an architect designs a building, they take into account the positioning of the building on the plot of land that it's built upon. They also take into account the lighting from the Sun throughout the year. The black and white photography medium lends itself very well to capturing an architect's intent. It's the photographer's job to discern what the intent was and then highlight it using the cornerstones. The represented cornerstones in this architectural photograph are shape, texture, contrast, and tone.



This photograph makes use of the "contrast" cornerstone. However, it does so in a very different way. It uses "low contrast", which most definitely give this black and white photograph a particular mood! Remember, the 5 cornerstones are important tools that help you create a compelling composition, and also tell a compelling story.

"Torres" by [Manuel Moraga Chamarro](#)

Monochrome Abstract Photography



In this abstract monochrome photo, the photographer used "high contrast" to accentuate the abstract effect. What is high contrast? The faster the transition from dark to light, without many middle tones is high contrast. By using high contrast, the image also displays a strong use of shape.

"Ripples In Ripples" by [Michael Stefanini](#)



Black & white photography can help establish an abstract, or semi-abstract, photographic composition because it can help eliminate distractions, and it strips the photo down to the bare essentials! When you're evaluating an image for potential conversion to black and white, ask yourself how important is the use of color? If you remove the color, does it strengthen or weaken the overall story and impact of the shot? Evaluating this on your own, prior to displaying it to others, will help your viewers understand your intent.

Photo by [bernardvinc](#)

Takeaway

The creation of outstanding black and white photography is both fun and rewarding. It does take practice. Train to see in tone versus color. The black and white viewing filter, or the pair of sunglasses trick, will really help speed up that process. In addition, don't forget your 5 cornerstones: contrast, tone, shadow, shape, and texture. Consider the 5 cornerstones not only when you're out shooting in monochrome, but also when you're post-processing. Have fun!