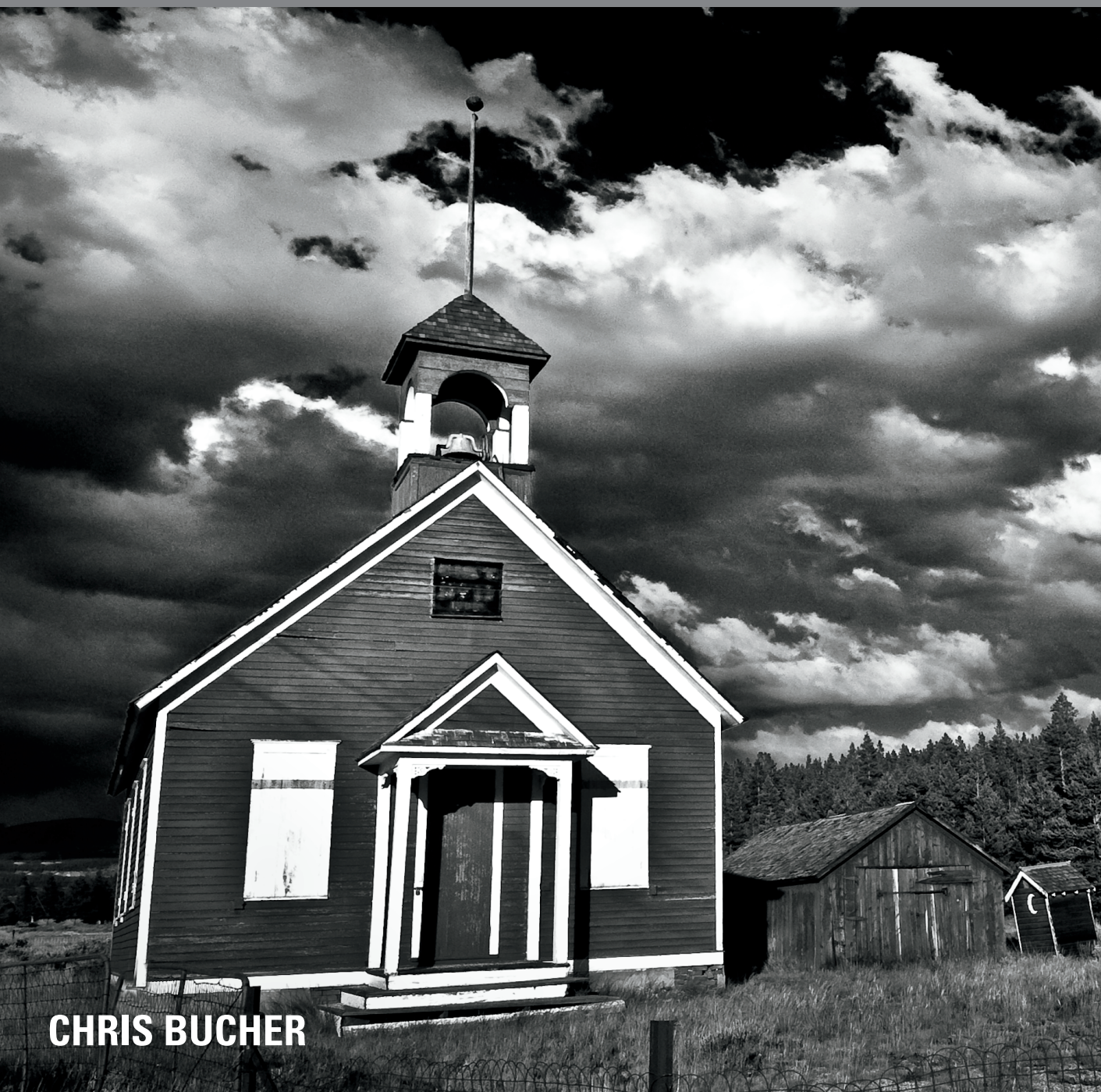
BLACK AND WHITE DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO **WORKSHOP**

Develop your digital photography talent



CHRIS BUCHER

BLACK AND WHITE DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO WORKSHOP

Chris Bucher

WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Black and White Digital Photography Photo Workshop

Published by
Wiley Publishing, Inc.
10475 Crosspoint Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 46256
www.wiley.com

Copyright © 2011 by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

Published simultaneously in Canada

ISBN: 978-0-470-42193-2

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without either the prior written permission of the Publisher, or authorization through payment of the appropriate per-copy fee to the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, (978) 750-8400, fax (978) 646-8600. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, 201-748-6011, fax 201-748-6008, or online at http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: THE PUBLISHER AND THE AUTHOR MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES WITH RESPECT TO THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS WORK AND SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION WARRANTIES OF FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. NO WARRANTY MAY BE CREATED OR EXTENDED BY SALES OR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS. THE ADVICE AND STRATEGIES CONTAINED HEREIN MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR EVERY SITUATION. THIS WORK IS SOLD WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PUBLISHER IS NOT ENGAGED IN RENDERING LEGAL, ACCOUNTING, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES. IF PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED, THE SERVICES OF A COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL PERSON SHOULD BE SOUGHT. NEITHER THE PUBLISHER NOR THE AUTHOR SHALL BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING HEREFROM. THE FACT THAT AN ORGANIZATION OR WEB SITE IS REFERRED TO IN THIS WORK AS A CITATION AND/OR A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FURTHER INFORMATION DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE AUTHOR OR THE PUBLISHER ENDORSES THE INFORMATION THE ORGANIZATION OR WEB SITE MAY PROVIDE OR RECOMMENDATIONS IT MAY MAKE. FURTHER, READERS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT INTERNET WEB SITES LISTED IN THIS WORK MAY HAVE CHANGED OR DISAPPEARED BETWEEN WHEN THIS WORK WAS WRITTEN AND WHEN IT IS READ.

For general information on our other products and services or to obtain technical support, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at (877) 762-2974, outside the U.S. at (317) 572-3993 or fax (317) 572-4002.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2011924134

Trademarks: Wiley and the Wiley Publishing logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley and Sons, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Wiley Publishing, Inc. is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

About the Author

Chris Bucher is an award-winning, Indianapolis-based photographer and author whose work, assignments, and clients are extremely diverse. Chris has editorial and commercial photo projects across the country, and he takes every opportunity to return to the deserts of the Southwest, where his fascination with natural light is fueled by the harsh but striking landscapes. His artwork has appeared in shows, galleries, and museums throughout the country and overseas. When not behind the camera, Chris enjoys mountain biking and serving the Humane Society of Indianapolis as a foster parent.

Credits

Acquisitions Editor
Courtney Allen

Project Editor
Chris Wolfgang

Technical Editor
Haje Jan Kamp

Copy Editor
Lauren Kennedy

Editorial Director
Robyn Siesky

Business Manager
Amy Knies

Senior Marketing Manager
Sandy Smith

Vice President and Executive Group Publisher
Richard Swadley

Vice President and Executive Publisher
Barry Pruett

Project Coordinator
Patrick Redmond

Graphics and Production Specialists
Jennifer Henry
Andrea Hornberger
Jennifer Mayberry

Quality Control Technician
Robert Springer

Proofreading and Indexing
Laura Bowman
Infodex Indexing Services, Inc.

Acknowledgments

So many talented people have added their time and expertise to make this book a success. Thanks to Courtney, Rayna, Haje, Kristin, and Lauren for working so hard to help me achieve my vision for this book, and for the opportunity to work together on such a great project. Also, a special thanks to Chris Wolfgang for her hard work, determination, and meticulous editing. She made the best of my words.

Thanks to Lamar Richcreek at the Herron School of Art for helping me get back into the black-and-white darkroom where I rediscovered my artistic passion and vision. The amount of help and good photo conversation that I get from good friend and assistant Kenneth Rhem is always appreciated. I also want to thank my two interns, Nicole Fraga and Justin Jett, for all of their help, especially when the projects weren't particularly fun or interesting; they were both immensely helpful in making sure these projects happen on time.

I will be forever indebted to Coach Pat, Tevin, Dajon, Denzell, Cody, and Dewayne for letting me into their lives for a while and showing me what can come of great passion and focus.

Most important, thanks to my wife and partner Jennifer for the encouragement, for crafting new ideas, and for working with me on a million different things at once.

For my mom, Lee Bucher

Contents

CHAPTER 1 Black-and-white Vision 3

Why Black and White? 4

Creating Black-and-white Images 6

Visualizing in Monochrome 7

Selecting Your Images 9
- Creating photographs 9
- Previsualization 9
- The problem with digital 11

Timing the Moment 11
- Hurry up and wait 12
- Create perfect timing 16

When Should You Use Black and White? 18

Finding Photos Wherever You Are 21

CHAPTER 2 Photography Fundamentals 27

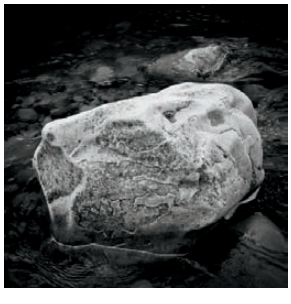
Exposure 28
- Learning the histogram 30
- Overexposure 33
- Underexposure 38
- Exposure compensation 41

Aperture, Shutter Speed, and ISO 43
- Aperture 43
- Shutter speed 47
- ISO 49

White Balance 53

Composition 55
Rule of Thirds 56
Balance and symmetry 56
Exploring design 57
Shape and simplicity 57

Your Unique Point of View 58
Get close to your subject 58
Anchor your photos 58
Find natural framing 59
Get high and low 60



CHAPTER 3 Getting the Most Out of Your Camera 63

Read the Manual 64

Knowing the Controls 66

Using the Exposure Modes 67
Reading the histogram 70
Exposing to the right 73

File Settings 74
Image quality 74
Raw + JPEG 76

Adjusting Tone and Contrast in Camera 78

White Balance Questions 79

Using Filters 80
Black-and-white contrast filters 80
Polarizing filter 83
Neutral density filters 83

Settings to Start with 85
Everything is a situation 85
Portraits 86
Landscapes 86
Still lifes 87
Street photography 88

CHAPTER 4 Working With Light 93

Metering and Exposure for Black and White 94

Zone System Basics 95

Learning Your Metering Systems 98
Center-weighted meter 98
Averaging, Evaluative, and Matrix meters 99
Spot meters 101

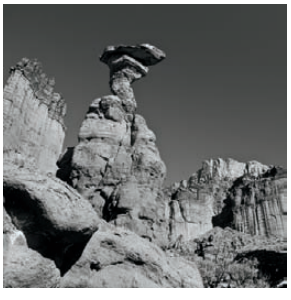
Light Direction 103
Frontlight 103
Sidelight 104
Backlight 106

Light Quality 108
Hard light 108
Soft light 110

Looking for Landscape Lighting 110

Great Light for People and Portraits 112
Reflectors and fill light 113
Shade and even light 115
Lighting groups 116

Dealing with Tones at Twilight 117
Black and White After Dark 119



CHAPTER 5 Tools and Toys 123

Infrared Digital Photography 124
IR filters 124
Dedicated IR cameras 125
Shooting in IR 126

Lensbaby 128

Black and White by Your Side 130
Camera phones and effects 131
Point-and-shoot black and white 132
dSLR specialty cameras 134

Strobes 136
Off-camera flash 138
Studio strobes 139

Tripods 140
Getting the most for your money 140
Tripod heads 141

CHAPTER 6 Tonal Quality in Black and White 145

Colors in Black and White 146

Tones and Contrast 147

Working with Shadows and Contrast 149

Light Quality 151
Soft light 151
Hard light 153
Light direction 154
Time of day 156

Dealing with Weather 157
Opportunities in bad weather 157
Making the most of where you are 158

Looking for Highlights 159

Building Depth in the Shadows 160

CHAPTER 7 The Black-and-white Digital File 163

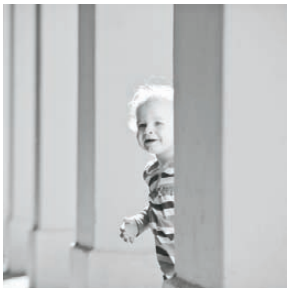
Converting to Monochrome 164

Learning from Film Filters 166

RAW or JPEG? 169
Do I need to shoot a RAW file? 169
Black-and-white mode from the camera 170
Maximizing RAW + JPEG 171

Digital RAW Black-and-white Conversions 171
Adobe Camera Raw 171
Lightroom 172
Aperture 176
Digital Negative 177

Canon Digital Photo Professional 180
The Nikon Software Suite 180
Photoshop 180
Photoshop Elements 183



CHAPTER 8 Working in the Digital Darkroom 189

Understanding Local and Global Changes 190

Multiple RAW Processing 191

Working with Adjustment Layers 195
Levels 195
Curves 196
Setting black points and white points 198

Dodging and Burning 202

Layer Masks 205

Shadow and Highlight Tool 208

Additional Filters and Tools 210
Nik Silver Efex Pro 210
Plug-ins, actions, and presets 211
Gradients 216

Selective Effects 218
Tones 218
Sharpening 220
Color 220
Brightness and contrast 222

Film Simulations 222

Create Your Own Workflow 223
Create a protocol for storing images 224
Process your images 225
Manage your images 225

CHAPTER 9 Toning, Coloring, and Special effects 229

Old-process Effects 230

Adding Tints and Tones 233
Sepia 233
Selenium 234

Split Toning 235

Coloring Monochrome Images 237

Infrared Effects 238

High Dynamic Range 240

Compositing New Images 241

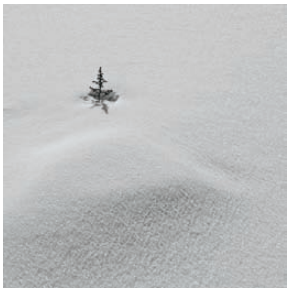
CHAPTER 10 Output: Printing and Presentation 249

Inkjet Printers and Papers 250

Calibrating your Equipment 253
Monitors 254
Paper and printer profiles 255

Creating Black-and-white Prints 256
Printing contact sheets 257
Making test prints 258
Your final print 260
Creating your own book 263
Archival printing and storage 264

Digital Output Options and Ideas 264
Creating digital contact sheets 264
Building Web galleries 265
Sharing images online 269



Glossary 273

Index 278

Introduction

Now that digital cameras are just called cameras, and film can be the added modifier, some might think that black-and-white photography is passé and no longer of interest, but that couldn't be further from the truth. There has actually been a revitalization of black-and-white imagery because there are so many options for creating new visions in black-and-white photography.

From the many monochrome options now onboard any digital camera to the black-and-white photo apps for today's camera phones, opportunities for black-and-white images are all around us. The ability to create fantastic black-and-white images is right there in every digital image that is taken (even when taken in color).

It wasn't too long ago that as a budding photographer, I put together a makeshift darkroom in my studio apartment. With an enlarger in the closet, chemistry trays perched across the sink and commode, and the shower to wash the prints, I attempted to create my own black-and-white masterpieces of the deserts in the Southwest. Those bathroom prints were mediocre at best, but it fueled my passion to become a photographer and to build on what I learned about black-and-white photography in that makeshift darkroom.

The advent of digital black-and-white photography opens all types of creative doors. By moving a slider or clicking a button, you can affect exposure, contrast, and tone greatly or subtly, and get immediate feedback. The learning curve is often greatly shortened, as is the amount of time it takes to create a masterpiece. Don't hesitate to spend a few extra moments to push the envelope a bit more to create something that you couldn't have even imagined a few minutes before.

This book looks at many different avenues of black-and-white photography in the digital world. The book focuses on how to expand your black-and-white vision and the creative options that digital black and white affords you. There are discussions on how to handle different effects and options using various image-editing programs; even if you don't use one particular program for all your editing, the theories hold true from one program to another with minor differences.

While there are people who simply push the black-and-white button on their cameras and have done with it, there are plenty of photographers out there who are constantly trying to create better black-and-white photos. This book is for those of you who know that your inner Ansel Adams or Richard Avedon is just ready to break out. The examples in this book show you that there is a great black-and-white photographer in every one of you if you just try a few new things; and that while there are so many avenues to take, one of them will make sense for you depending on your thought process and how you look for a solution.

My hope is that this book will push you to create your own black-and-white masterpieces as you learn to think critically about your own work, and to recognize the opportunities around you. While plenty of photographic and computer techniques are discussed, the book is not a technical manual documenting every step of the digital-imaging process. Photography should be fun, so use the directions, and examples of the imagery, to create the photographs that you want.

CHAPTER 1

BLACK-AND-WHITE VISION

Why Black and White?

Creating Black-and-white Images

Visualizing in Monochrome

Selecting Your Images

Timing the Moment

When Should You Use Black and White?

Finding Photos Wherever You Are

In this age of multimedia, moving pictures, oversaturated colors, and digital speed, the desire to create good black-and-white images remains as great as ever. Whether it is the allure of distinct graphic lines, nostalgia, or the simplicity of the contrast (see 1-1), people continue to be drawn to black and white.

Even though you can simply and easily convert any digital image to black and white right there in the camera, that may not always be the best option. It's important to first take a critical look at black-and-white images to see what makes them work, and why people can be more drawn to them than to color images.

WHY BLACK AND WHITE?

When I was explaining the title of this book and its creation to a friend of mine who knows nothing about photography, he asked, "People still take black-and-white pictures?"

I reminded him of the black-and-white portrait I shot of his family hanging over his mantle. Not only do people still take black-and-white pictures, but these photos are all around us — they are still very much part of our culture and everyday lives.

Although there are many different types of photography, black-and-white photography is usually considered the classic form, the birthplace of

1-1

ABOUT THIS PHOTO *This swimming pool at an old hotel had interesting shapes, lines, texture, and tones, which made me want to create a black-and-white image. Taken at ISO 400, f/7.1, and 1/40 second.*

photography. However, today black and white can be used for much more than just fine art photography or Ansel Adams–type landscapes. In fact, it is one of the most prolific tools a photographer can use to realize his creative vision. Without going overboard on art-speak, black and white can make a mediocre image more dynamic, as shown in 1-2.

Removing color from an image enables the viewer to see the essential parts of that image — the textures, tones, shapes, and composition — all without the distraction of color. There is a visceral connection between a viewer and a black-and-white photograph that does not exist with color photography. While color creates its own excitement and emotion, it can also add unwanted distraction, as was the case in 1-3.

1-2

ABOUT THIS PHOTO *The lines and shape of the water tower create interesting contrast with layers of white on white. Taken at ISO 500, f/4.5, and 1/125 second with an 18-200mm zoom lens.*

Black-and-white photographs are limited (but not in a bad way) to gray tones. As a result, the voice of the image can become greater as the focus becomes clearer. Black-and-white images can also create not only a feeling of nostalgia, but also of pastoral or timeless beauty. This holds true for many different sorts of images, but especially for landscapes and portraits.

Whether a color photograph has been painstakingly color corrected to exactly match the original scene or is very stylized, it is based on reality. Black-and-white images, on the other hand, are based in the creative process. The creative choices regarding the tone and emotion of a black-and-white photograph are there for the photographer to make right from the start, and the possibilities are limitless.

There is really only so much saturation and manipulation possible with a color photograph. The limits on color-photo manipulation are not only part of today's digital photographic rules, but exceeding these limitations often creates unattractive or incorrect images, because they no longer appear realistic. However, when extreme saturation and manipulation are applied to black-and-white images, they can still look correct. The practice of using extreme dark and light tones in black-and-white images existed long before digital photography, and the photographer's artistic freedom has always been built into shooting in black and white.

There is really only so much saturation and manipulation possible with a color photograph. There are limits to the amount of saturation and contrast that can be added to a color photograph before the

ABOUT THIS PHOTO
A red chair in front of a blue house with a yellow boat and green hose in the background create a visual mess, but in black and white, the texture of the scene creates the mood. Taken at ISO 200, f/4, and 1/200 second with a compact digital camera.

image can becomes incorrect, or worse, unattractive. These limits are due to two things: what is visually possible and realistic, and the *color gamut* of the image. The color gamut is the level of potential color in a digital image that can be reproduced, whether the output is on a screen or on paper.

However, when extreme contrast and manipulation are applied to black-and-white images, they can still look correct. The practice of using extreme dark and light tones in black-and-white images existed long before digital photography, and the photographer's artistic freedom has always been built into shooting in black and white.

CREATING BLACK-AND-WHITE IMAGES

With digital photography, the ability to create great black-and-white images, as well as the available creative options, has increased greatly from the days of the wet darkroom. There may be purists who still embrace the hours in front of an enlarger and a sink, the chemicals, and the whole process of creating a black-and-white print from a negative, but I find there are so many more options with digital photography that I struggle to return to the wet darkroom.

Furthermore, I create more (and better) black-and-white imagery with digital technology than I ever did in the darkroom. Perhaps the single greatest option with digital photography is that you can create color and black-and-white images from the same digital file.

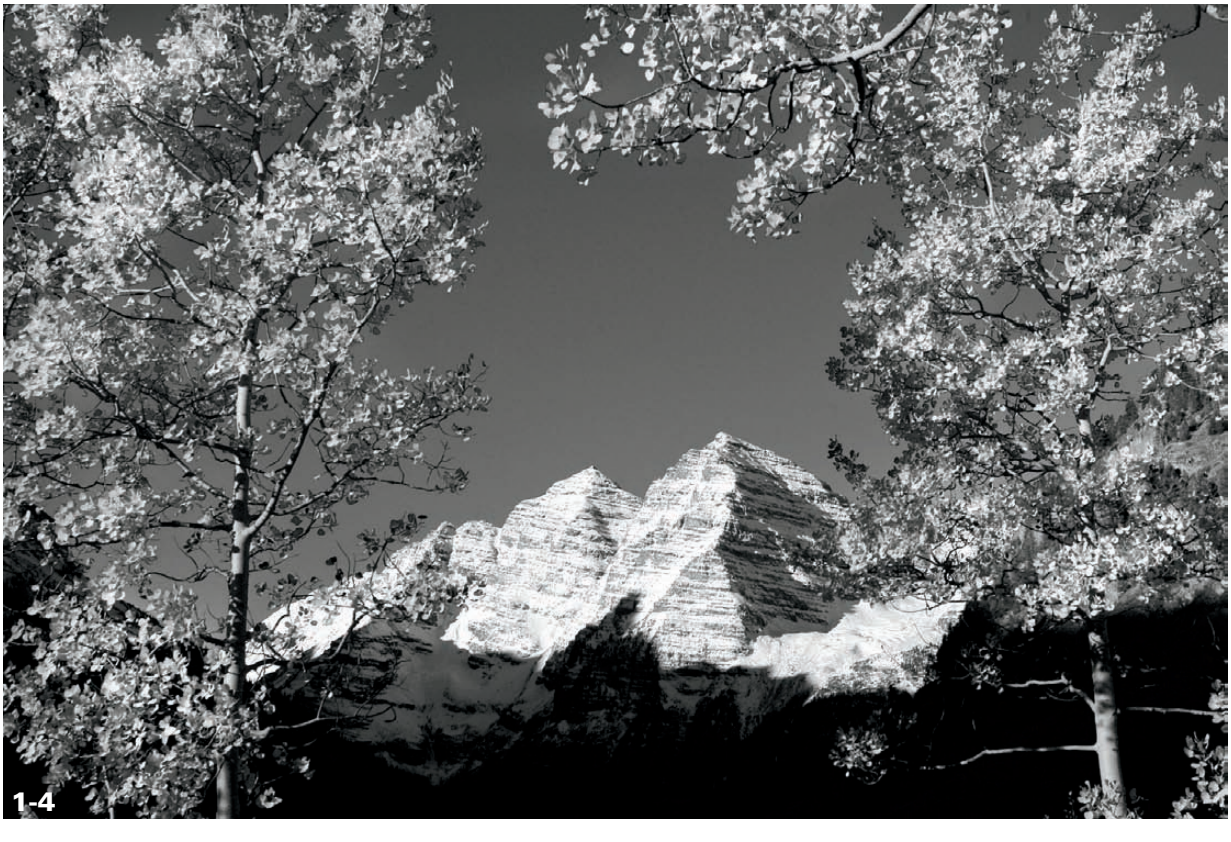
There are countless advantages to creating black-and-white photos digitally. One is the ability to change a digital image from color to black and white, or vice versa. It only takes a second to switch the camera so it creates a black-and-white, rather than color, JPEG. To get the best results, convert a RAW color image to black and white

on the computer. This doesn't slow you down at all while you are shooting. You can shoot away in color and make your decisions later (see 1-4). The days of carrying multiple cameras or film backs, each with a different type of film, are thankfully long gone.

The technical part of creating a black-and-white photograph from a color digital file might seem easy — just use the Picture Styles menu or Picture Contol menu to set the camera to black and white and off you go. However, I find that a lot more goes into creating good black-and-white photographs. Simply taking the color out of the image is not the only issue. Black-and-white photography has a lot more to do with contrast than a mere lack of color. Without color in an image, contrast is what creates depth and texture and accentuates the subject of the photograph.

VISUALIZING IN MONOCHROME

The act of visualizing a photograph is something you must do not with your eyes, but with your mind. I discuss some techniques to help you with visualization later in this book, but first, ask yourself what sort of photograph you want to create. What is the emotion or feeling that you want to present to the viewer? Should it be somber or



ABOUT THIS PHOTO *Aspen leaves turning yellow on a crisp morning make for an amazing color image, and a brilliant black-and-white. The conversion to black and white happened after the shot was made, and could never have happened with film. Taken at ISO 200, f/11, and 1/500 second.*

airy, delicate or melancholy, exciting or bright? The possible ways these can be expressed in black-and-white images are limitless.

Some people, such as great landscape photographer Ansel Adams, have called this thought process *previsualization*. It entails attempting to see the image in your mind's eye and imagining what emotions or feelings the image will evoke before the exposure is ever created.

The world does not appear in black and white. Everyday color images oversaturate our senses in an attempt to tell us what we need. Vegetables in the grocery store are covered with wax to make them more colorful and desirable. The television and Internet are chock-full of ever brighter, ever more colorful images to get our attention. However, sometimes less is more, and it is in those instances that black-and-white images become even more powerful.

The amount of contrast in an image is what builds the composition; how the contrast is applied to the scene builds the emotional tone of the photograph. On a misty, overcast day, a low level of contrast with more dark tones accentuates the feeling of the weather that is in the scene (see 1-5).

Begin to look more at shapes, textures, and forms rather than color in potential images. Study how the contrast within those elements enhances the image. Although you will likely change the final tones and fine-tune the image later on your computer, it helps to try to look at the composition critically, examining the contrast of the tones in the scene. For example, a bright expanse of green grass or a light blue sky look great in color, whereas the same elements in a black-and-white photo often end up as a vast expanse of light gray.

Think critically about your vision of the photograph and work toward creating the emotion you want a viewer to experience. This does not mean

ABOUT THIS PHOTO *To accentuate the weather and show the overall tone of the image, I underexposed the image and then increased the contrast slightly to make the dark rock stand out from the gray. Taken at ISO 320, f/7.1, and 1/320 second with an 18-200mm lens set to 200.*

you should only photograph dramatic, moody, or exciting images. Just as much effort goes into a softly lit scene, or a stark, austere one. Each has its place, and it is up to you to create the image for the viewer.

Without the color information, the contrast of a scene becomes even more important. This doesn't mean that high-contrast images are better in black and white, but being mindful of the contrast in an image will help make the photograph better. In some cases, scenes with a lot of hard

blacks and whites (that is, high contrast) will be exactly what is needed, whereas in others, subtle changes of gray (that is, images with virtually no highlights or deep shadows) may be perfect.

SELECTING YOUR IMAGES

If you have been photographing in color for a long time, it may be a challenge to start viewing the scenes in front of your camera in black and white. As you move to shooting in black and white, you gain a new level of attention to the contrast and form in an image.

You often come across subjects that are monochromatic — that is, scenes with only one or minimal color. Stones, concrete, and steel can all create monochrome-like images while still being a full-color photograph. Studying such scenes can help you easily visualize what it might look like in black and white.

CREATING PHOTOGRAPHS

Think more critically about the scenes in front of you, and truly imagine what the image will look like as a finished work. Remember that your vision is exclusive to you in your individual place and time, so create photographs that are interesting and compelling to you.

Being passionate about what you want to create will help you select the right image to shoot. This may mean that you need to create an entirely new vision of how you like to photograph, what the subject matter will be, and the style with which you shoot. Listen to your instincts about how to proceed. Look at photographs that inspire you. The idea is not to emulate these images, but to gain inspiration — see what makes them important or interesting and how they inspire you to create better images.

Try an entirely new style of photography to help build your black-and-white vision. If you have mostly enjoyed landscape photography, start creating portraits. If you have always photographed still lifes, get out and capture what is going on in the street. Shooting in black and white allows you to rethink the possibilities of your photography. When you have started seeing the world anew in black and white, returning to where you were will be even more exciting.

Use the rules of design (discussed further in Chapter 2) to create good composition in photographs. Learn to use the tools in your camera to create great exposure. Once you learn the proper exposure for each scene and good compositional rules, you will feel comfortable breaking those rules and experimenting with new things. This helps build your personal vision.

PREVISUALIZATION

Take the time to look around you at shapes, textures, tones, and the contrast between them. As I write this, I see the repetition of my neighbor's white fence against a dark shadowed lawn and accordion blinds with glowing light tones between alternating white and dark lines. Use these common things in your everyday view to help you previsualize how those things will look in your black-and-white photography.

It is often a great idea to stop where you are, evaluate the scene in front of you, and really see if that is the image you are trying to create. Take a moment to think, "What if …" and go beyond what might be considered normal. This could mean making a compositional or exposure change.

Sometimes you'll make a change, say, "Yikes," and quickly revert to where you were. However, other times there will be a breakthrough, and you will have created an image beyond what you

imagined. Going forward, apply these ideas to your photography. They can be useful tools for building your photographic vision.

While photographing a group of boxers, I spent a bit of time working to get technically good images in challenging situations. There were plenty of images that I was happy with that were interesting enough to share and display, but it seemed as though I needed to add some interest or (more likely) soul. So, I tried something totally new: I simply slowed down the shutter speed and started to recompose a little bit. I realized that I wasn't shooting reportage. I was trying to create art from violence and I needed to show more of that movement and motion (see 1-6).

As soon as I started trying a few new things, the imagery changed into exactly what I had intended to shoot from the beginning. I had a purpose and a vision, and I was taking good photographs. However, it wasn't until I connected with my vision that the images came into their own.

But it takes more than just trial and error.

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to interview legendary photographer Pete Turner, who is best known for pioneering the bold use of color. One thing he said was appropriate to any genre of photography: "Go out to photograph with a purpose. Have an image in your head and a plan to create it before you leave the house. If you just go

1-6

ABOUT THIS PHOTO *By slowing down the shutter speed to capture the motion of the boxing glove, I was able to create an image that captured the feeling I had envisioned. Taken at ISO 1000, f/1.8, and 1/80 second with a 50mm lens.*

with the idea that you're 'going to take a great photo today,' your photographs will be as aimless as your plan. If you have a plan and a new opportunity arises because you were prepared for something, you are much more likely to have great images."

Even if you are simply making photographs at a family event or during a photo-walk, think ahead and envision those photographs. This gives you a purpose and the focus to create the images you desire. Make sure that your eyes are open to opportunity; when chances for new photographs come to you, take advantage of them.

In black-and-white photography, your selection of images should reflect your ability to see contrast in the scene; for example, the way that light wraps around a subject, or the simplicity of a single subject against a stark background. As you practice seeing and shooting in black and white, the subjects that work best for your photography will become more obvious.

THE PROBLEM WITH DIGITAL

It cannot be disputed that the digital camera is a great teaching tool. Immediately after it's shot, the image and the information used to make it appears on-screen so that you can correct your mistakes — or at the very least review what you did.

However, digital photography also introduces issues of volume and management. I often remind photography students that, not that long ago, they would have been shooting with film and having to keep track of every exposure, meter reading, focal length, and weather conditions. Now, virtually all of that information is attached to the photograph in its *metadata* so that it is easy to get and learn from.

The volume and management issues come in when a photographer fills an entire memory card with photographs she doesn't really care about.

Try to think through the photograph before you make it and then create an image that is compelling to you. This way, your enthusiasm and passion for the image will not only come more easily but will show in the photographs.

Although the term *taking photographs* is common, and I even use it quite a bit in this book, I believe that there is a difference between taking photos and making photographs. If you are reading this book, or any of the *Photo Workshop* titles, chances are you are probably attempting to make photographs with your own creative tools.

Work at creating new images that you love, rather than just taking a bunch of photos. In the end, if you aren't excited about the images you have created, you'll just fill up your hard drive with images that you won't ever learn from.

More thoughts on being comfortable with your camera and its settings are discussed in Chapter 4.

TIMING THE MOMENT

Photographers such as Robert Doisneau and Henri Cartier-Bresson were masters of real-life reportage and street photography. Their photographs are classic examples of timing the shot to capture a precise moment just as it happens. Cartier-Bresson coined the term *decisive moment*, which describes the precise moment that the pivotal action occurs in any event. This event could be anything from a fleeting glance or a stolen kiss, to the moment the running back crosses into the end zone.

Cartier-Bresson describes the decisive moment as the "creative fraction of a second when you are taking a picture. Your eye must see a composition or an expression that life itself offers you, and you must know with intuition when to click the

camera. That is the moment the photographer is creative." He then goes on to explain that if the moment is missed, it is gone forever. This process and this timing is what can separate a good from a great photograph.

HURRY UP AND WAIT

Timing the moment takes practice in many ways. The first thing you need to have is familiarity with the equipment that you are using. It is vital that you know how your camera works — that you are comfortable with the controls and settings, so you are ready to shoot when the moment is upon you. Being ready is the first step, but having the patience to wait for the right time is of equal importance.

Good timing takes a quick eye on the scene. While you are walking through the city, you might see an interesting background.

In the case of 1-7, I saw that a couple was approaching my scene as they were on their way home from the market having a conversation. I quickly framed my composition and waited until they were where I thought they should be for the composition I had in mind. Just as they were in place, the man turned to listen to the woman, and that was the decisive moment — the moment I was looking for. I took a few more frames as they walked away, but at that point I had the image I had envisioned. The rest of the images were inconsequential, as the couple was too far away and I had only captured photos of the backs of their heads.

Many new digital cameras have motor drives that can capture so many images in such a short time, it seems impossible. There are digital cameras that capture four, five, six, or even up to 11 frames in one second. That capability is fantastic

ABOUT THIS PHOTO *Because I composed before the subjects entered the scene, it took only patience and timing to capture the decisive moment. Taken at ISO 200, f/5.6, and 1/125 second with a 14-45mm m4/3 zoom lens set to 29.*

for sports or action photos, when you are looking for series of images or when the speed of the subject is too fast for you to be certain of capturing the correct frame with one click.

Many sports photographers and photojournalists take advantage of camera speeds like that; and it may be helpful for you to do so in many