

PHOTOGRAPHIC LIGHTING

Basic Areas of Exploration/ Creative Options

Extreme Lighting

Shoot in the field in Extreme Lighting
Replicating on-site lighting with Artificial Light [Berkowitz]
Fantasy Lighting [Gregory Crewdson]

Nighttime/ Dusk Photographs

(Un)Natural Lighting (street lights, car headlights, etc.) [Hatakeyama]
Fill Flash in total darkness (selective lighting) [David Graham],
Fill Flash at Dusk, [John Divola]
Overblown Flash [[Richard Misrach](#)],
Flash with long exposure [[Mark Cohen](#), Michael Siede],
Flash recording activity [Tokihiko Sato, Michael Becotte]
Light Painting with choreography (careful to avoid all the clichés) [Vicki DaSilva]

Self-Portraiture

Studio Lighting vs. On-Site lighting (improvised lighting) (reflectors) [Albert Watson]
Self-Ports with a desk lamp [

Light Images

Light Modulators [[Lasso Maholy Nagy](#)] (is this sculpture?)
Projections [Diana Thater] [Brad Jamula (shadow projections)]
Illusory Space [James Turrell] :
Light Environments [Anthony McCall] :

Conceptual Topics:

Ambience How light controls the feel of an environment and how the time of day determines the color of the ambient light, and how that is recognized by most people.

Mystery Photos that pose questions will be viewed much longer than photos that answer questions (subjective vs. objective, passive vs. active).

Extended Space / Extended Time How can light extend the communicative ability of a photograph.

Multiple images How the content can be extended beyond the photographic frame, [content bleed] 2 photos present a comparison, 3 photographs present a conversation, 5 photos or more present a conclusion.

Sets/ Series/ Sequence How images can work together and expand a subject beyond what is possible in a single frame. This requires research for content and results in consistency. Form Supports Content There needs to be a symbiotic relationship between the formal aspects of the photograph and its content.

Photo Journ Meet with a group of likeminded photographers and go out to shoot together (sometimes the journey is more important than the destination). [Shinya Watanabe]

- Topic: Shoot On The Street In Extreme Lighting Situations

I was exhibiting work in a Tokyo gallery several years ago and one of our friends who is a studio photographer came to my opening. When he saw the photograph shown below he asked me, "What kind of light did you use for this?" I was amazed. The whole point of the photograph was that this shadow of this little leaf was caught just as the sun was setting. As you can see, it is a set of nine photos. It was shot from left to right and when I was finished I moved back to the beginning to shoot it again, but by that time the sun had dropped behind the edge of the earth and the light was gone. The beauty of this photo is that it only existed for that brief moment in time.



Sunset Shadow

Philadelphia is great because the streets are exactly east-west and at sunset the light comes in at a very oblique angle. There is also extraordinary reflections off all the windows of some of these new glass office buildings. The third condition of this topic would be to shoot at night (see #2).

Extrapolation: Replicate the on-site lighting in a studio or controlled setting

Students will purchase one of those small hand-held LED lights to create shadows anytime or anywhere. That opens up a whole other way of shooting, to use Portable Lighting Outside of the Studio! Those little lights don't cost that much and since students are not paying for film anymore, these will be added to the equipment list for the class. e.g.

Flashpoint On Camera 160 LED Video Light, Dimmable \$42.95 (on special)

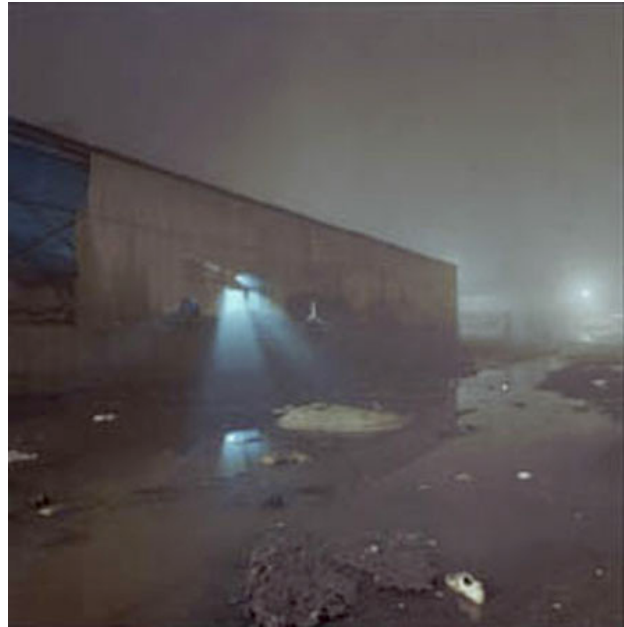
<http://www.adorama.com/FPVL160.html>A bunch more will come up at the bottom of the page, some even less expensive, but you want dimmable as well as portable.

- Topic: Shooting in (Un)Natural light

Using unnatural available light or portable flash or LED lights to create ambience



Tom Paiva



[Jan Staller](#)



John Divola <http://www.berk-edu.com/RESEARCH/JohnDivola>

- Topic: Shooting Nighttime Landscapes/ Cityscapes

Richard Misrach and David Graham, among others included on my Research Pages, are good examples. These are lit by hand-held flash in only certain places from specific angles. Misrach overexposes the flash sometimes to great effect. It is important to learn how to do something right, then how to do it wrong for dramatic effect! (like pushing film - totally wrong but totally cool!)



[Richard Misrach](#)



[David Graham](#)

- Topic: Movement at Night/ [Slow Shutter Speed](#)

Another example of shooting at night is Tokihiro Sato who does these with a flashlight. He came to TUJ once to lecture for our class. He is a nice guy. This gets into a whole other set of concerns, however. It is not just visual anymore, it is about the movement or activity required to make the shot. It can be come a study of movement, aka choreography. [Do you think about the appearance of the landscape or did you think to yourself, "OMG. How the heck did he make that?!"] The photo below took a very long time.



Tokihiro Sato http://www.tonkonow.com/tokihirosato_trees5.html



Vicki DaSilva <http://www.vickidasilva.com> is from Kutztown, PA,
Her husband is an electrician who built her a 6' long backpack powered portable fluorescent fixture.

- Topic: Shooting with Long Exposure And Hand-Held Flash



[Marc Cohen](#)

Another example of this technique is Michael Siede. He did the same thing but in color. He made 3 exposures for each shot at dusk - 2 sec, 5 sec, 15 sec, and popped off the flash somewhere in the middle of the exposure, held at arm's length away from the camera to generate the shadows.



Michael Siede

The photo below is from someone else (unidentified) in a Google search for 'long exposure with flash'. Most of the other photos were crap, so this topic has to be researched to avoid all the typical photo clichés.



- Topic: Self-Portraits with Desk Lamp at 3 feet

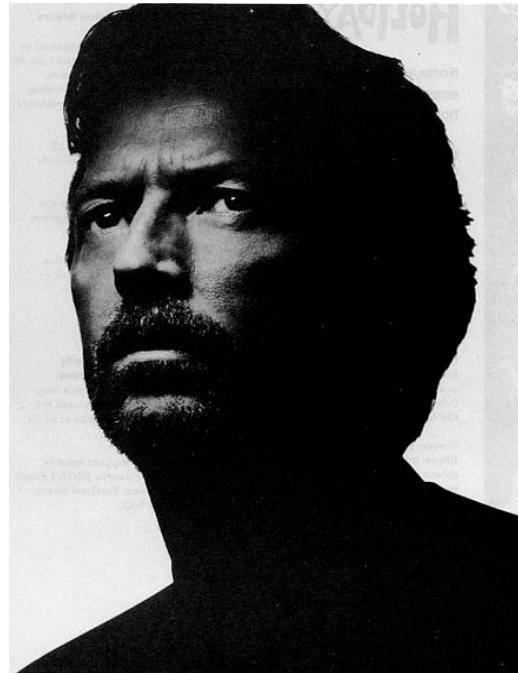
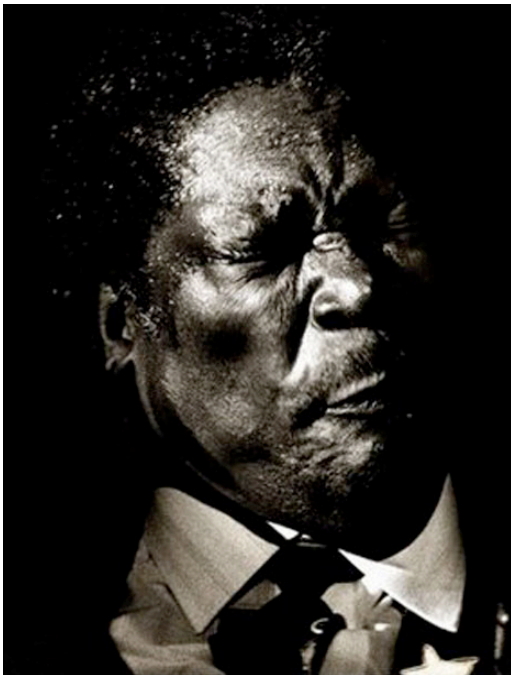
I have always had students include at least two self-portraits in every critique. I have this set of examples on my site and I often talk about using a Desk Lamp At 3 Feet. One of the problems with doing studio self-portraits is the lack of environment. When you sit in front of a seamless you lose all the personal information that is gleaned from a photograph of a person in a space. Students can shoot portraits or self-portraits in the subject's home and include the person's environment. They can be friends or strangers. Then we will learn to use the lights that are available or the small portable LED lights and Reflectors can be employed.

- Sub-Topic: Strangers at 3 feet

One of my first assignments was to shoot strangers at 3 feet. This means that photographer has to get really close to the subject which usually requires some kind of interaction. You cannot make candid shots that close. What happens in most shots was that the strangers just smiled at the camera and gave their typical 'camera face' pose. When the same photographers shot their friends and acquaintances the subjects eventually got bored with posing and the activity ensued got quite interesting and and contrived. The bottom line is that the pictures of friends look like strangers and the pictures of strangers looked like friends.

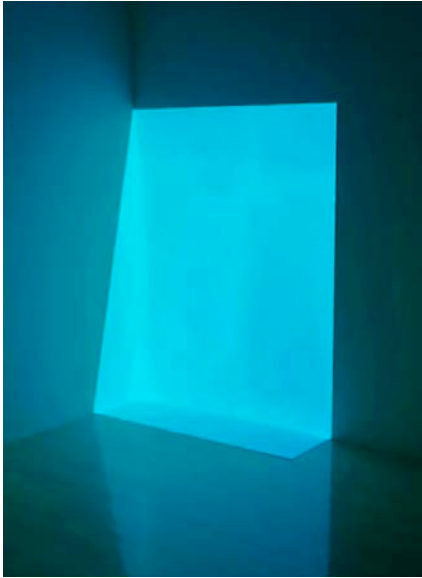
- Sub-Topic: Extreme Portraits

One great lighting guy is [Albert Watson](#) who does many PR and commercial shots. This leads to a discussion of the motivation behind each photograph. He also has a series of Jailhouse Portraits, shots of really violent criminals who also get a paragraph to tell their story. This is pretty intense but perhaps we could consider interviewing someone and emulate this. Watson's technique is extreme and really effective, and I do show this page for inspiration.

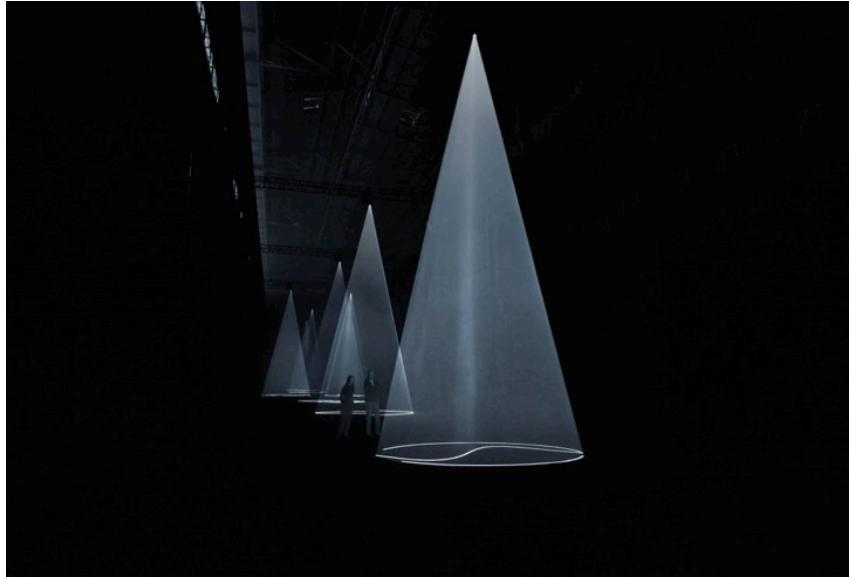


- Topic: Making Images Purely with Light

Photography means literally "making images with light". For that topic I have recently added 3 artists to the very bottom of my Research Pages that do pure work with light. They include James Turrell : illusory space, and Anthony McCall : light environments and Diana Thater : projections.



James Turrell : illusory space



Anthony McCall : light environments

- Sub Topic: Projected Images

It is possible to project Kinetic Photographs into specific environments. Kinetic Photos are moving just enough to not be still yet not so much as to become video.



Diana Thater : projections

I have some experiments with previous classes, some of which worked out okay.
http://www.berk-edu.com/DIMG_subsite/indexC4.html

On this page, the bigger picture plays the kinetic photograph, while the smaller shot shows the same image projected into a space on campus. This is a project that requires some thought so it should not be kept until the end. The projection space needs to be considered even before the photographs are shot.

In these examples no one even left the Tyler building. I wanted to see work like this installed in a stairwell in Fox School of Business or something! Even better would be the courtyard of City Hall, but...