TONING AND HAND COLORING

Black and White Photographs

TONERS – Why use them?

Aesthetic effect and creating mood

For many years, photographers have used toners to improve the appearance of their pictures and as an aid in creating a certain atmosphere that they may wish to convey. For example, subjects like portraits, sunlit landscapes and sunsets often benefit from warm brownish or even reddish toning whereas subjects such as snow scenes, seascapes and night views suit the use of blue toners.

Additional protection

Some toners convert or coat the silver image giving it greater resistance to damage from external contaminants.

Different overall print colour

Dilute toning baths can give prints with a different overall colour for some tastes.

Metal toners work well with virtually all types of photographic paper. They work by converting the original silver image to the ferrocyanide salt of a transition metal.

In the case of blue toning, with the right subject matter - the end effect can look spectacular. Good subject examples are seascapes, night scenes, and frozen winter scenes. The toning should be used sparingly however.

Blue toning intensifies (darkens) the print slightly, so start off with a lighter print than you would normally make.

Sepia toning converts the silver image to tones ranging from light to dark brown.

Sepia toning is a specialized treatment to give a black-and-white photographic print a warmer tone and to enhance its archival qualities. The metallic silver in the print is converted to a sulfide compound

HAND COLORING

Since the very first days of primitive monochrome photography, people have attempted to add colour by hand, to enhance the image. The first images were daguerreotypes, invented in 1839. It is thought that the first person to hand colour these with a mixture of gum arabic and pigments was a Swiss painter and printmaker called Johann Baptist Isenring, but many others followed. Originally, they wanted to make the image as realistic as possible and hand-colouring was the easiest way to achieve this. Techniques and materials varied in different parts of the world. Usually watercolours, oils, crayons or pastels, and other paints or dyes were applied to the image surface using brushes, fingers, cotton swabs or airbrushes.

By the 1860s, hand-coloured photographs were a well respected and very popular art form in Japan, pioneered by artists such as Yokoyama Matsusaburō - a painter, lithographer and photographer. He combined these skills to create what he described as "photographic oil paintings", in which the paper support of a photograph was cut away and oil paints then applied to the remaining emulsion.

One great advantage of hand coloured photographs is that they have a long shelf life - the pigments used have great permanence, and this archival quality has always played an important part in their popularity. However, in the mid-20th century in the USA, Kodak introduced Kodachrome colour film, enabling the world to enjoy full-colour photographic images for the first time.

OILS

Oil paint contains particles of pigment applied using a drying oil, such a linseed oil. The conventions and techniques of using oils demands a knowledge of drawing and painting, so it is often used in professional practice. When hand-coloring with oils, the approach is more often to use the photographic image simply as a base for a painted image. The ability to create accurate oil portraits using a photographic base lent itself to art crime, with some artists claiming to paint traditional oil portraits (for a higher price) when actually tracing a photograph base in oils. Therefore, the choice of oil colors is governed by the relative transparency of the pigments to allow for authentication of the photographic base.

ASSIGNMENT

Option No.1

Combine toning and hand-coloring in **one 8 x 10 print**. You will use a photo from a past assignment.

Option No. 2

Create **two 5 x 7 prints**. One toned print and one hand-colored print. You may use the same image or two different images.

Remember…

If you are going to be using the blue toner you should expose your print for a couple seconds less to produce a slightly lighter variation. And if you are going to be using the sepia toner you should expose your print for a couple seconds longer to produce a slightly daker print.