

PAINTING WITH LIGHT

Lesson Plan - Photography (Grades 10-12)

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Pre Class Preparation:

- Practice! Do not 'wing this.' It's harder than it looks.
- Darken the room, no daylight, no lights.
- Test the exposure in practicing. What works best: a 30 second shutter; ISO 100 (or as low as possible); F stop will depend on the darkness of the room (try F10 or F 11 first).
- Practice this 5-8 times, changing your F stop first to get that accurate. Then try a few more times to perfect the lighting.
- Set up the flowers in the vase, and light it with your flash. Move the flash around, and go with obscure lighting. Bring emphasis on certain petals or leaves by painting them a few times. Then light the rest. The total time is 30 seconds.
- Take all images and enter into PS RAW, and then play with it. The steps found under 'How to:'
- That's it. Choose your best one.

Process:

- Teacher – Practice.
- Shut off all the lights, close any blinds, and work in a relatively darker room. If you have windows but no blinds, black out the windows with dark paper, cardboard, or blackout fabric.
- Set up a backdrop with the vase with flowers on it. Make sure the backdrop is a bit away from the floral arrangement and rid all wrinkles.
- Turn on the room lights and focus your camera manually. Set it, and leave it. If you use auto, go with that, but then go to manual so that the camera isn't continuously focusing while you are lighting the object.
- Set the camera at 30 seconds for shutter, starting with ISO 100 or 200, and choose an F stop that will work best with how dark the room is. Start with F10 and shorten the lens to 35 mm

to get better clarity. If it's too dark, lower your F stop; if it's too light, increase your F stop. Shoot RAW!

- Lighting. Take the flashlight, and slightly minimize the light source, as it maybe too powerful. You could use your thumb and fingers to minimize and diffuse slightly. Never have the light source point to the camera. Bring emphasis to parts of a flower or a leaf by painting over it a few times, "painting" the backdrop, and "painting" from below and on the side more so than above. You want it to look a bit obscure, and not top lit.
- Do this 5-8 times. It takes a while. Take 5-8 shots.
- Upload the image in Photoshop. The RAW format will show up.
- Play with the following sliders:
 - Color temperature (optional).
 - Exposure: Chances are you will have to really darken this to the point where you think, 'oh, that is way too dark.' No, it isn't.
 - Highlights: Increase those a bit.
 - Whites: Increase those until you see more of the image. This will give the image a more painterly effect.
 - Clarity: increase to your liking.
 - Vibrance and saturation: I leave these, and use levels to increase saturation.
- Open image, and adjust the levels to what looks best. I normally take the middle cursor throw it

Materials and Technologies:

Tripod

Digital 35mm Camera with manual settings and SD card

Dollar store flash lights, small. Smaller the better.

Dollar store flowers – fabric/plastic based, no shine.

Vase

Backdrop material, black or a darker color.

Computers and basic Photoshop

to the right and the far-right cursor, bring that closer to the middle to increase some saturation and contrast.

- Recrop to meet composition requirements.
- Students can also repaint the imagery by choosing the brush tool on the left side, and blend mode, soft light, then at the bottom left hand side, choose a swatch color they wish to choose, with an opacity of 20% or so.
- The lesson takes 3-4 hours. It isn't easy, but the results are worth it.

Criteria:

Composition following 1-3 elements of design.
 No hotspots – details in whites and blacks. Density great.
 Looks painted – not lit from above nor look as though it is lit with a regular light.
 Post production not over done or underdone. Adds to the image.
 Can see it published in a magazine, or close!

Options:

In Photoshop, using the brush tool, one could paint over the results with soft light blending and 10-25% opacity, whichever color you are wanting. Change swatch colors below, on the lower left hand side. One could repaint the whole image different colors.

Extensions:

Take creative risks: make an informed choice to do something where unexpected outcomes are acceptable and serve as learning opportunities.

Digital photograph (light painting photography) by Roy T., Grade 11, Gle-neagle Secondary, SD#43



THE BIG IDEA

What they will understand.

Growth as a photographer is dependent on perseverance, resilience, and reflection

Curricular Competencies <i>What they will be able to do.</i>	Concepts and Content <i>What they will know.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate active engagement in creating photographic images and resolving creative challenges. • Create photographic images for a specific audience. • Demonstrate safe and responsible use of materials, equipment and work space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of composition • Behaviors of light • Principles of light • photographic materials, techniques, processes, and image-making technologies, used in digital photography • Shutter speed • f stop-short lens depth of field • ISO • tripod usage