

The Black & White Fibre Base Gelatin Silver Process

This photographic process technique is a personal variation of the Zone System, originally created by Ansel Adams and Fred Archer, which involves pre-visualising the final image before exposure of the film. This way the whole creative process is controlled and mastered, from film exposure to the final print.

To effectively accomplish this, a large-format view camera Toyo 45 All is used, offering great control of shooting, as well as tremendous image quality, due to the size of the negatives (4x5in) and the excellence of the optics used.

Following the readings made with an external lightmeter on the different parts of the scene, each negative is carefully exposed, allowing for correct luminance and contrast of the subject.

The film used, Ilford Delta 100, is manually and individually developed in a special Pyro developer (PMK by Gordon Hutchings). Development time varies according to subject contrast and overall optimum conditions for the chosen method of printing.

The printing paper, Ilford MG FB Warmtone 255g/m², is processed with two developers: Kodak Selectol Soft and Kodak Dektol. The first developer favours highlights, and the second reinforces shadow contrast.

Prints are developed manually on double-weight fibre base paper and selenium toned. Selenium toning enhances the print lifespan in replacing silver salts by selenium salts, a more stable and resistant metal. Selenium toning also acts proportionally on the image colour, particularly with this sort of paper.

Finally, prints are air dried and spotted. Spotting allows removing small imperfections resulting in dust specks on the negative.