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Spring 2009

Key Learnings #8 – Unit 3 – Light

Handling High Contrast Situations

Your camera sensor is not capable of discerning a large difference in dark-to-light values in one scene ... as the human eye is. In extreme contrasty settings, something may need to be sacrificed. You either expose the highlights properly - thus sacrificing the shadow area to complete darkness - or expose for the shadows - thus blowing out the highlights to white. There are some things you can do to minimize this problem:

- **USE FILL FLASH.** Set your Flash settings on the camera to force the flash to fire, no matter what the ambient light is like. Check your owner's manual!
- **CHANGE TIME OF DAY.** Shoot your subject at a time of day when the light is less contrasty. Early morning and late afternoon might just be better, and ... the light is beautiful at these times.
- **REPOSITION YOURSELF.** You can change your position, or change your subject's position (or wait for the subject to move in the case of a lion). You should always look at different angles in any photography. You learned this back in the Composition unit.
- **USE THE INTERESTING SHADOWS** as design elements in your composition.
- **EXPLOIT THE CONTRAST.** You can use the contrasty scene as a design element in your composition! What about *black-and-white* to accentuate the contrast; or perhaps *silhouettes*.

When creating **SILHOUETTES**, there are some guidelines:

- Silhouettes are perfect opportunities when there is **extreme contrast** in your shot
- The subject to silhouette should be **opaque** (ie; if it's translucent, you don't achieve a true silhouette)
- The **background** should be very bright for a proper silhouette
- Use **recognizable shapes** to silhouette
- **Expose for the bright background**. For example, if you are shooting a silhouette against a bright sky, you meter so that the sky comes out properly exposed. As a result, the darker subject will come out black - silhouetted against the bright sky.

NOTES

A Great Photograph ...

- *Has a central theme or idea.*
- *Focuses attention to a single point-of-interest*
- *Simplifies*

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