

# Black and White Darkroom Printing

Making a traditional black and white print in the darkroom is a rewarding experience. With this class as a start, you will learn the basic steps of making a black and white print using EcoPro darkroom chemistry. Note: other darkrooms may use other chemistry and thus, processing times will vary. Use the directions below as a guideline to printing in the NSAA darkroom.

## **Darkroom Printing: Materials**

Film, enlarger, developing trays, tongs, photo paper, negative holder, easel, grain focuser

## **Darkroom Printing: Preparation**

1. Gather materials and set up your enlarging station.
2. Place your film in the negative holder and place the negative holder into the enlarger.
3. Turn on the preview ("focus") light on the enlarger, adjust the height of the enlarger by unlocking it, adjust, and locking it again. Make sure that you don't force anything on the enlarger.
4. Focus your image on the easel with a grain focuser.

## **Darkroom Printing: Making a Test Strip**

1. Using a smaller piece of photo paper, place it on your easel.
2. Set the enlarger timer to 3 seconds. Cover your photo paper with a black mat board. Uncovering small sections at a time without moving the photo paper, expose each section with 3 second increments of light, repeat 5 times. The strip should range from 3 seconds to 15 seconds. Increased increments can be done as needed.
3. Test strips will be fine after 30 seconds of fixing. After fixing, rinse the test strip in water and place on a clean tray. Be sure to rinse and return the tray below the sink once finished.
4. Outside of the darkroom in natural light, examine your test strip for the best exposure.

## **Darkroom Printing: Processing After Exposure**

1. Develop for 90 seconds, agitate the tray gently and continuously. Pick up the print using tongs and drain until it doesn't rapidly drip. Do not mix tongs between chemicals.
2. Stop-Bath for 30 seconds, gentle agitation.
3. Fixer (Hypo) for 1 minute with continuous agitation.
4. Fixer Remover (Hypo Clear), gentle agitation – 1 min for RC paper, 5 mins for fiber.
5. Final wash in the print washer- 3 minutes for RC paper, 10 minutes for fiber paper.
6. Squeegee and dry on a drying rack.

**\*Note:** Photo paper is light-sensitive, open the box only in the darkroom with the red safelights on. Do not touch the chemicals with your hands and do not mix tongs between chemicals. If you have safety concerns, please ask your instructor.