

# Photo Silly Advanced

Monday, March 12, 2012



## #1 Your Mood: Relative Brightness

Welcome to PSA. In this class we are going to investigate more ways to get our photography to express our thoughts and feelings.

And we are going to talk a lot more about light. Today I want you to think about relative brightness. This term refers to how bright something is in the image only relative to other parts of the image and not necessarily how bright it is in reality. Think about your photo almost like a painting where you have to decide every color and tone that is going into it.

To think in this way helps us to move away from the idea that there is a correct exposure and into a relationship with our images in which we decide how bright or dark things are based on how we feel and what we want to express.

Here is an example of making a deliberately underexposed image in order to create a specific mood. I was trying to capture the stark loneliness of the Arizona desert.



For me the “correct” exposure (below) just didn’t reflect the way I felt standing out there. The dark exposure increases the drama and color in the image and brings it closer to my actual experience.



Your assignment is to find two different settings (places or landscapes) and create an underexposed image in one and an overexposed image in the other.

Try to create two images that have strong mood and feeling that is consistent with the setting and also with how you feel in that setting.

The best way to approach this task is to walk around and see how different environments affect you. Don’t go looking for a “shot.” Just think about how you feel. Do certain scenes trigger memories? Does the setting make you nervous? Happy? I think our eyes record the character of light the same way we record smells and certain types of light can bring out strong feelings.

Once you have found a scene or setting and have identified your feelings about it, try to capture it using brightness to reinforce your mood.

This is usually easier early or late in the day because the light tends to be more dramatic, but that is not a rule. Every type of light has its effect on us and that is what we are after.

Do you remember your Exposure Compensation? This is the easiest way to darken or lighten your image. Push it all the way to +2 or -2 (or farther if you can). If you have manual control, try going 4-6 full stops over or under. As with all assignments, shoot a bracket. That is, take several shots across a range of exposures so you have some options to choose from.