

Artistic Photo Techniques

Bosque del Apache and the Ladd
S. Gordon Waterfowl Complex near
Socorro, New Mexico













High Key Photography

A high key photo is one that isolates the subject against a pure or almost pure white background. This type of image often looks ethereal or graphic. The image has minimal shadows. This technique often eliminates distracting objects creating a simple, elegant images.





How to achieve a High Key photo:

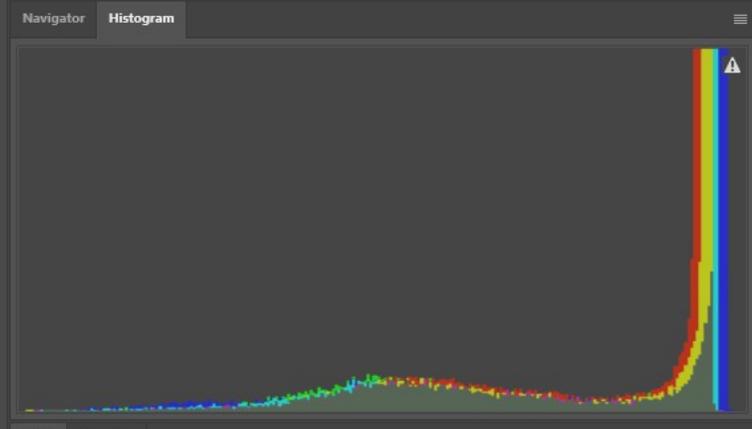
- High key photography works out best on a day that is overcast, misty, or where the sun is not showing up in the sky, but the sky is still bright. This technique also works for snow or water backgrounds.
- You should choose a subject that is darker than the sky, water, snow or other background. Backlit is best but just non-directional light.
- Shutter speed should be what is appropriate for the subject.
- f/stop should be wide open to let in light.
- You need to be able to over-expose by 1/3 to 3 stops depending on the subject. You can do this by using a positive exposure compensation or if you are in full manual by changing the ISO.

The image shows a Photoshop workspace with a central canvas displaying a photograph of a bird standing in water, with its reflection clearly visible. The interface includes a top menu bar, a toolbar on the left, and several panels on the right. The 'History' panel shows the current document and an 'Open' action. The 'Properties' panel is set to 'Canvas' and shows dimensions of 3.96 in by 5.13 in at 300 pixels/inch resolution. The 'Layers' panel shows a single 'Background' layer. The 'Histogram' panel displays a color distribution graph. The bottom of the screen shows the Windows taskbar with various application icons and a system tray with the date and time.



History

- DSC_3689 11 x 8.5-2 fix.jpg
- Open



Color Swatches

Brush Settings Brushes

Character Paragraph

Tool Presets

Libraries

Glyphs

Properties Info

Document

Canvas

W: 3.96 in X: 0 in
H: 5.13 in Y: 0 in

Resolution: 300 pixels/inch
Mode: RGB Color
8 Bits/Channel
Fill: Background Color

Rulers & Grids

Inches

Guides

Quick Actions

Layers Channels

Kind: [icon] [icon] [icon] [icon] [icon]

Normal Opacity: 100%

Lock: [icon] [icon] [icon] [icon] [icon] Fill: 100%

Background



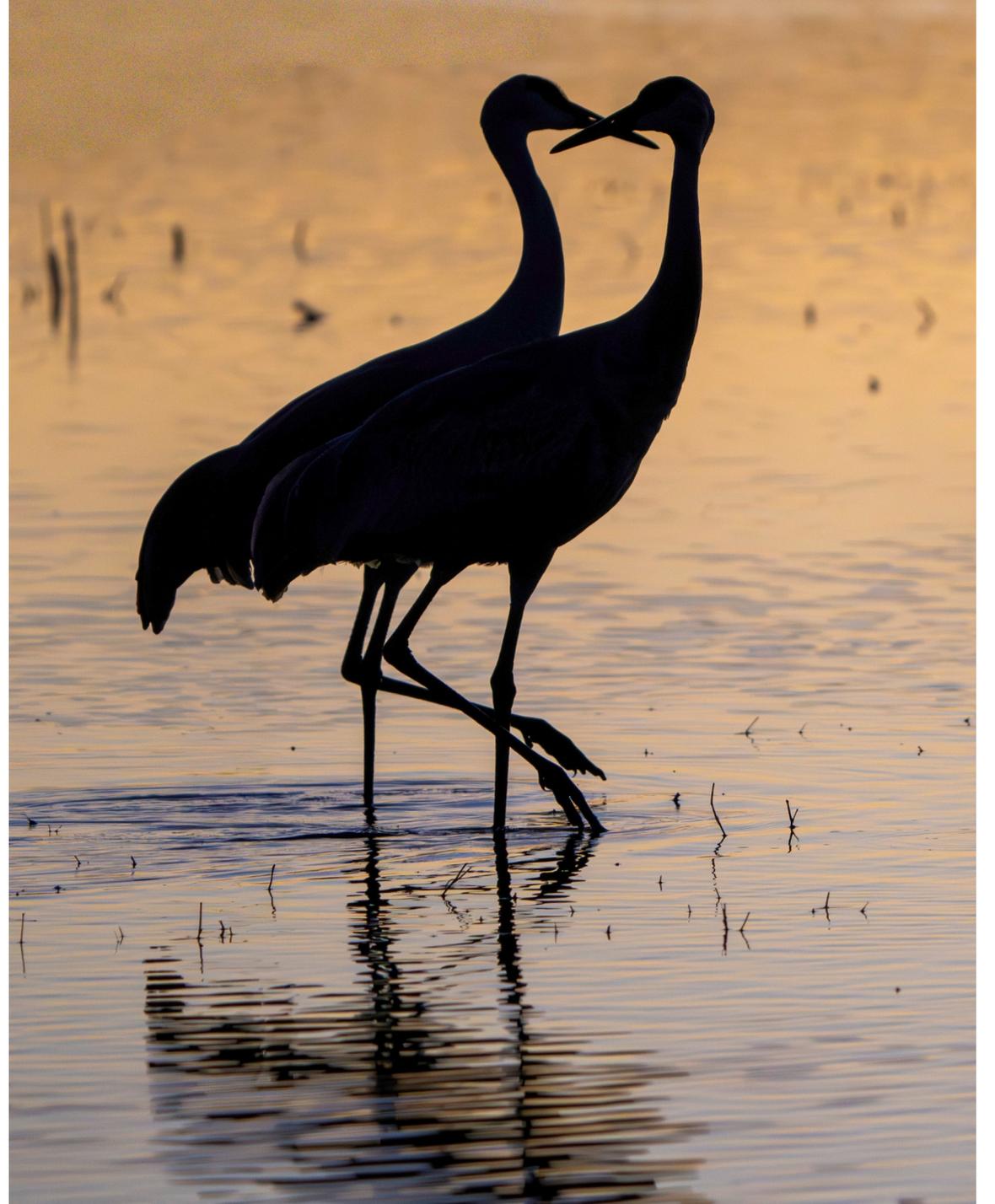
- 600mm
- F7.1
- 1/2000
sec
- ISO 3200



- 315 mm
- F5.6
- 1/1600 sec
- ISO 6400

Silhouettes

- Silhouettes are images where the main subject is allowed to go black and is usually done with bright colorful backgrounds. This type of photography is often done at sunset or sunrise with animals that have interesting or distinctive shapes.





How to take silhouette images:

- Stand so your subject is backlit and is darker than the background.
- f/stop: shoot with a wide aperture
- Shutter speed: use what is appropriate for your subject. High shutter speed for moving animals or objects, slower for more stationary
- Expose for the background
- ISO –you want to adjust the ISO so that the subject is under exposed. Use a negative exposure compensation or if you are in full manual, use ISO to get the subject black





Slow-shutter panning

- This is a technique to artistically capture movement. The goal of this technique is to keep the animal's eye in focus or close to focus while creating motion blur in the image. This technique works best if the background is busier so that there are interesting streaks in the image. It also works better if the animal/bird is moving more or less horizontally across your field. To get the best results you need to keep the subject as perfectly as possible in the center of the frame.

Settings for slow-shutter panning

- Shutter speed: 1/15 to 1/30 for slower moving birds/animals, 1/30 to 1/60 for faster moving birds
- f/stop should be at the highest setting (largest number) possible, depending on the light
- ISO should be the lowest setting possible depending on the light level. You may have to set a limit if you are using auto ISO
- Image stabilization on 2 for panning if your lens has this setting
- It is usually best to try this with a tripod or monopod
- This is a low success rate technique so be prepared to throw away a lot of images









Intentional Camera Movement (ICM)

- ICM is a technique used to create abstract, painterly or textured images. These images are created by using long exposures and moving the camera in different ways to blur the images.
- Start out using a shutter speed of 1/5 of a second and increase or decrease the exposure until you get the kind of image you want.
- f/stop should be as high as possible (small aperture) so the ISO is between 100 and 500
- Turn off the image stabilization
- This technique is mostly unpredictable, so the success rate is low













Re-imagining exposures

- One of the last things we did was to try intentionally over or under exposing photos to create new scenes or to capture mist or other atmospheric effects. We did this one evening at a river landscape spot. It was almost dark—well into the blue hour and we shot landscape photos on a tripod using 1 to 2 second exposures. The result surprised me.





Capturing Atmosphere









Final assignment

- The last day we went out to shoot my instructor asked me a question: What kind of image do you want to capture today? I thought about this a bit. We were at Bosque del Apache, and I knew there were mostly Snow geese here. I also knew that the flight deck we were shooting from faced almost directly into the rising sun. I decided that what I wanted to capture was the droplets of water coming off the geese's feet as they took flight. They would be backlit and would look golden.









Thank You