

GHOST RANCH
Black and White Darkroom Photography
October 5-11, 2025
Kent Bowser and Margs Musson

Welcome Letter

Ghost Ranch's darkroom is well ventilated with five enlarger bays. The enlargers can accommodate 35mm to 4"x5" negatives. For those of you who want to spend maximum darkroom time, you may forego hiking/group shoots and utilize the darkroom overnight.

October typically has warm afternoons, and cools down at night. Rain is possible. Check the weather forecast for Abiquiu, NM just before you pack. Bring clothing to dress in layers and a jacket for the evenings, a rain shell or poncho, and a pair of shoes or slippers for the darkroom. Sunglasses are **absolutely** necessary to quickly adjust from the bright desert light to darkroom conditions, and again when you go from the extreme dark back into the brilliant light. Bring sunblock and a hat with a broad brim and chin strap. Don't forget water bottles and medications. Your smart phone can function as a flashlight, a compass, an alarm and a watch (if your phone doesn't have these functions, bring the associated equipment).

Bring your 35mm and/or medium format camera(s). Test them if they haven't recently been used. Also bring a tripod with cable release, orange or yellow filters for your lenses, UV and/or skylight filters, four or five rolls of Kodak T-Max 400 (TMY) film (or more if you like to shoot a lot), a small red LED pinch light for the darkroom, extra batteries, a lens brush, microfiber lens cloth, and a camera bag (backpack) that has room for food and extra clothing. If you don't have your camera manual, find it online.

Bring a notebook for class notes and a small pad to record camera settings in the field. Hand check your film in the airport (if they let you), or mail it to Ghost Ranch a week before you leave, attention to yourself/B&W Darkroom Photography. You will be provided with 5x7, 8x10, and 11x14 fiber base paper, all chemistries, and negative sleeves.

Have a good idea of what you want to shoot on our hikes, which will typically be either morning or afternoon. Be prepared to walk 5 or 6 hours with equipment. Review literature and articles on the great Southwest tradition of black and white photography in your library, online, in museums and in galleries. Two suggested, but optional, texts are Horenstein's Beyond Basic Photography, and Angela Faris Belt's The Elements of Photography (2nd ed.).

I'm looking forward to meeting everyone for an exciting time during a spectacular time of year. Please do not hesitate to call with questions.

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B&W DARKROOM PHOTOGRAPHY

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Tentative Schedule (May change to work with other scheduling needs/wants)

Sun	Morning	10/5	Arrival, meeting after dinner
	Afternoon		
	Evening		
Mon	Morning	10/6	Camera work lecture
	Afternoon		Shoot and develop film
	Evening		Slide lecture, develop film
Tue	Morning	10/7	Printing lecture & demo
	Afternoon		Shoot and develop film, print
	Evening		Contact sheet lecture, print
Wed	Morning	10/8	Critique
	Afternoon		Shoot
	Evening		Develop film, print
Thu	Morning	10/9	Shoot
	Afternoon		Develop film, print
	Evening		Critique, print
Fri	Morning	10/10	Tone & mounting demo
	Afternoon		Final show
	Evening		Clean darkroom
Sat	Morning	10/11	Departure