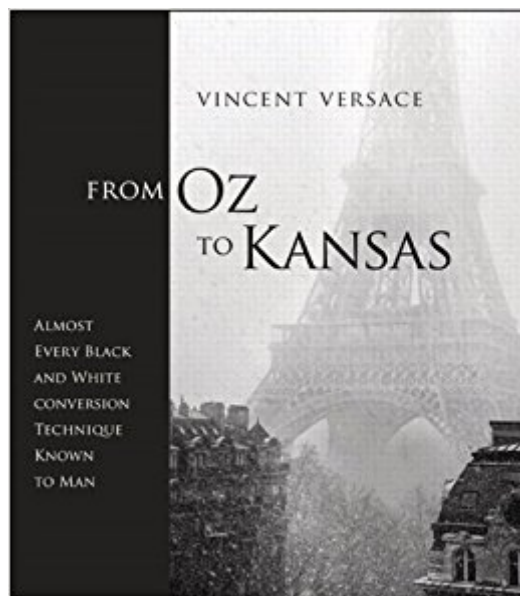




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From Oz To Kansas: Almost Every Black And White Conversion Technique Known To Man (Voices That Matter)



Synopsis

The ability to create a stunning black and white image remains one of photography's greatest and most aspirational skills. Being able to "see" in black and white is an enviable capability, and a well-crafted black and white photograph remains the finest of the fine arts. Master photographer Vincent Versace has spent his career teaching the art of perception and how to translate it into extraordinary black and white images. In *From Oz to Kansas: Almost Every Black and White Conversion Technique Known to Man*, Versace discusses digital black and white photography "with a nod to traditional film-based techniques. As Versace states, today the goal is "to use what was right and good about silver photography, leaving behind what was limiting, and use what is right and good about digital photography, while avoiding its pitfalls. This is what this book is all about." The reason you must learn "almost every black and white conversion technique known to man" is because, depending on the image "and your goals for it" "there are many paths you can take in order to arrive at your final destination. Working through Versace's techniques will give you the essential knowledge you need, as well as the ability to select the appropriate conversion technique for any image, allowing you to create a black and white image that best and most accurately reflects what you felt at the moment that you pressed the shutter. Foreword by Dr. Richard Zakia, Professor Emeritus, Rochester Institute of Technology Afterword by John Fraser, Chef and Proprietor, Dovetail Restaurant, New York

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Customer Reviews

I highly recommend this book to serious students of photography looking to better understand what goes into a great photograph and what approaches can be used to produce the highest quality chromatic grayscale (B&W) images. I took a class with Vincent Versace in July 2015. I bought Oz 2.0 and Oz to Kansas to familiarize myself with his approach, style, etc before the class. I was particularly interested in the B&W work since, like most of us of a certain age, I got started with B&W film photography. I liked what I was reading and began to play with the photos and the techniques he was teaching. As a heavy Lightroom user I did lack the Photoshop knowledge and skills to implement many of the techniques Vincent was presenting - I did not have the recommended skill level to put into practice what he was teaching. With class, and much practice on my part using the book as a guide I am now beginning to "get it". The techniques taught are technical in nature and Vincent does get heavily into his approach to photography in the book. Those thoughts caused me to rethink my approach to photography and what I wanted to accomplish with my work. As I evolved in my skills and understanding, the book became easier to understand and the lessons became better training examples for me to practice and understand what I can do with these approaches and using them on my own photographs. The book is a goldmine of information and I glean more knowledge with each re-reading. I do read sections again before starting a session with a few photos. I keep the book available on Kindle sitting next to my Mac as I work on my own photos. I have tried the different approaches on a single photo to see which ones I am most comfortable with and which ones might work best on a particular photo. The explanations of theory and the background on the physics of light, where the information lies within the digital file and how to plan your way through a conversion have not only changed my approach to processing and how I plan and take the shots in the first place. The discussions about artifacts and how they can multiply through a series of edits hit home as I began to closely examine many of my existing photos. I used to look at a B&W conversion as a way to salvage a usable shot from a less than stellar color shot. Boy, do I look at the world differently now. Chromatic grayscale is a desired endpoint for many photos and getting to such a quality product is much easier if you start with a

quality color image. This is a key point of what Vincent is teaching and the point is well made in this book. Work through the lessons on the supplied photos and then on your own, use the book as a constant reference. It works. It isn't easy but it has been so totally worth it. I will gladly gobble up any new books from Vincent and surely hope to take more classes with him in the future.

As creatives we are all striving to fulfill our own form of perfection. The end result of our endeavors may not resonate with everyone, but as Mr. Versace points out, it needs to resonate with the creator, another words you! This book has radically changed my approach not only to black and white conversion, but also to how I consider my subject. One can choose to contradict theory and fight suggestion in an attempt to prove a point, but the art of reading and absorbing and learning seems to be dying. If you can allow yourself to be taught there is so much to learn in this rare gem. That someone, namely the author, has taken so much time to study and help each of us is astonishing to me. There will be times when a fleeting feeling of frustration flares as you come to terms with the more tricky concepts, but that is most certainly part of the creative process. I have found a poetry in my work that has for some time been sadly lacking and I have Vincent to thank for that. Don't buy the book and leave it on the shelf, delve into it and allow it to take you. "Choose to be open to everything that you do; to every moment that you live, because if you move through the world of photography this way, when you see the moment, its poetry will whisper its name and the pictures that you see will take you." Vincent Versace

Truly a great book. At one level this book delivers what it advertises. However, it provides the reader so much more: An in depth understanding of Black and White images from a technical point of view. How to analyze and "develop" your Black and White images. How to make your images reflect what you are trying to say. A great guide to valuable Photoshop techniques that can be used on any image. Worth the price alone. A good introduction to NIK/Google SilverEfex Pro. NOTE: Techniques require Photoshop and NIK/Google SilverEfex (Chapter 7/8). There is no reference to other Adobe or Apple software tools. Since it was published some of the links in this book and the corresponding site are no longer valid. Including the sample NIK software. The PS Actions on the website work with PS CS 6 and some earlier versions. I cannot confirm they will work with PS CC. My suggestion is that you buy the book and perform the exercises through Chapter 7. If you like what you see, go to the Google site and purchase the NIK software Suite. At \$150 it is a bargain. Lastly, this is an intense book. You will get more out of it by taking your time and performing the exercises. You will definitely want to read it more than once.

Possibly the best book on converting to BW with such flexibility and precision that any vision you might have for an image when you start is doable. Goes way beyond just desaturating or using BW module in Lightroom. Vincent is a true artist and you will learn here not just the technical aspects of advanced converting, but also a lot about his artistic process. Well worth the investment and will surely help you create true art, not the over-sharpened, overly contrasty, painful to look at excuse of "fine art" BW images that the internet is flooded with nowadays.

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