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Introduction

Of all forms of photo-art, platinum/palladium prints are considered to be the most luminous, enduring and rare. Nothing else looks or lasts like a platinum/palladium image. Its ethereal luminosity and three-dimensional appearance is due to its enormous tonal scale. This process was initially embraced by the Pictorialists and later by such artists as Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Steichen Frederick Evans, Robert Mapplethorpe and Irving Penn. Today it is enjoying a well-deserved renaissance along with other antiquarian processes.

Most platinum print-makers work with a unique mixture of platinum & palladium to achieve the desired warmth and colour in their prints. Rarely are prints made with pure platinum but some printers are making pure palladium prints which seem to be growing in popularity.

Please note: to keep material costs affordable this introductory workshop will use palladium to teach the process. It has the same properties as platinum and both metals can be readily mixed together to create the coating emulsion. While the workshop will not use platinum, participants will learn how to mix the two metals to control warmth and colour.

Workshop Objective

The primary goal of the workshop is to learn the palladium print-making process and how to overcome basic problems encountered in doing so.

The workshop will be delivered in two parts:

- **Part 1** will provide an overview of the history of platinum/palladium printing, an introduction to the process, the chemistry, selection of papers, mixing platinum with palladium and step-by-step instructions on how to make enlarged digital negatives suitable for palladium or platinum/palladium printing.
- **Part 2** will be the guided "hands-on" learning portion of this workshop and will provide participants with the opportunity to apply the techniques discussed and make palladium prints from their own negatives (either digitally enlarged or in-camera).

Heavy emphasis will be placed on hands-on printing by participants of their own negatives to learn and practice the coating and printing process. As a result, the workshop is limited to a maximum of 6 participants to ensure that all those attending

have adequate one-on-one instruction. At the conclusion of the workshop, participants will have developed the necessary skills to continue printing on their own.

Course Outline and Itinerary

Part 1: Virtual (2 hours) October 6, 2021 6:00 – 8:00 PM

- An overview and introduction into the history of the process;
- A discussion of the tools and techniques including coating brushes, light sources, contrast control and chemistry options;
- How to mix platinum with palladium to control warmth and colour;
- Selection of paper for palladium and platinum/palladium printing what to look for and a list of currently available suitable papers;
- Best places to source the platinum/palladium print-making chemistry;
- Step-by-step instructions on how to make enlarged digital negatives for palladium and platinum/palladium printing; and
- Mounting and presentation options for the final print.

Part Two: In-Person (7 hours) October 16, 2021 10:00 – 5:00 PM

The workshop will begin promptly at 10:00 AM to ensure the maximum amount of time for “hands-on” learning.

- Meet and greet and an introduction to darkroom safety and wet-darkroom procedural consideration;
- Some examples of platinum/palladium prints;
- Orientation to the workshop facilities including the palladium printing set-up;
- palladium print-making demonstration; and
- Hands-on learning (participants work with their own negatives with input and assistance from the instructor)

Workshop Requirements:

- Workshop participants will be provided with all the chemistry, paper and tools, they require to make palladium prints;
- Workshop participants should bring paper towels or sheets of blotting paper to take their wet-prints home;
- Workshop participants must bring their own negatives with them for printing as none will be supplied; and
- Please note the following with regards to negatives.

Palladium print-making is a contact printing process so the size of the negative dictates the size of the final print. Workshop participants should therefore bring large format negatives either digital or in-camera for printing, 4x5 to 5x7 sizes are highly

recommended. Medium format (6x4.5, 6x6, 6x7mm) or small format (35mm) negatives should be converted to digital negatives¹ and enlarged to no more than 5x7 or 6x6. Gallery 44 offers printing of negatives for the workshop on Pictorico paper. Details and pricing can be found here: <https://www.gallery44.org/production/digital-printing>

¹ Converting film-based negatives to digital negatives can be done using the step-by-step instructions provided during the first part of the workshop.