

Light and Shadow- High Contrast Photography

Digital Photo • 2023/24

Do Now:

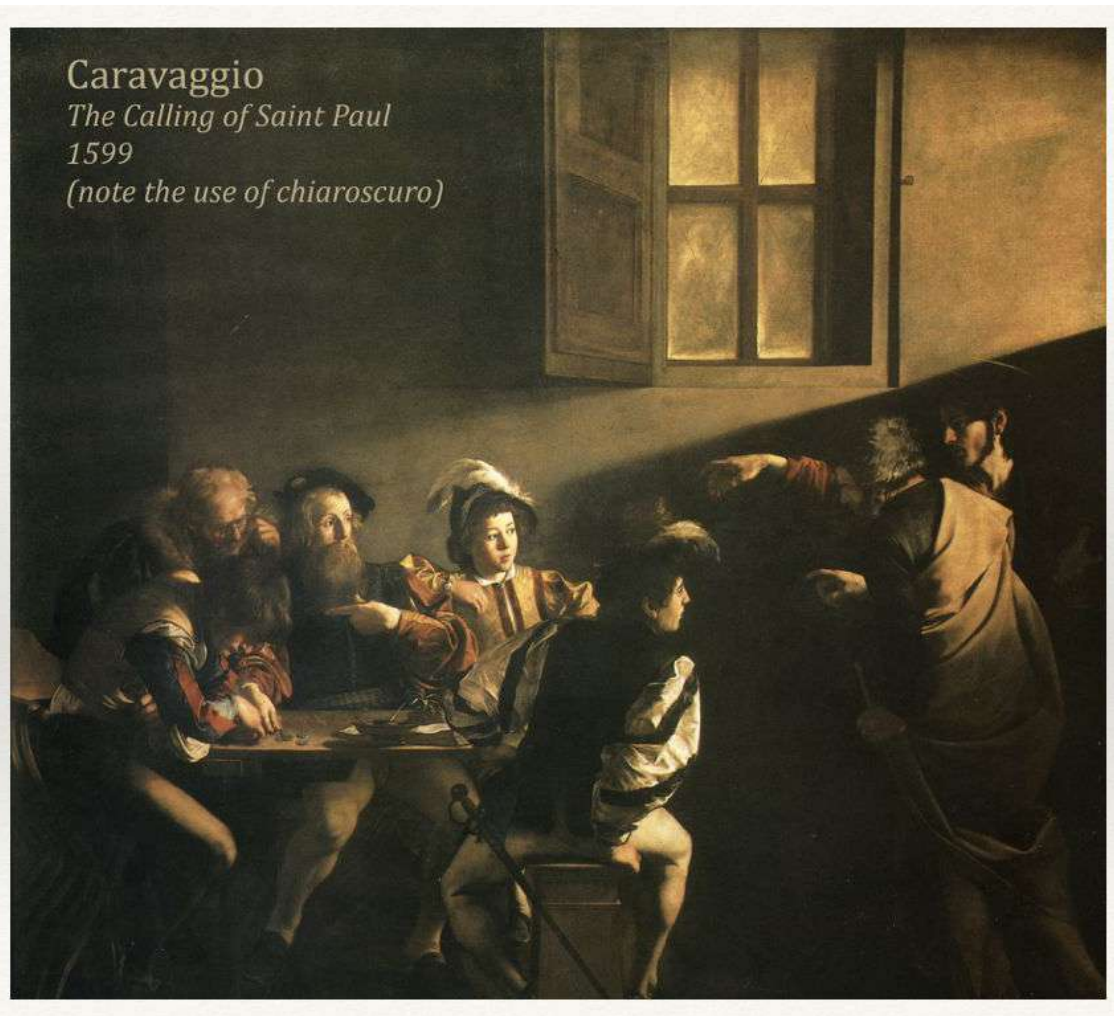
Do a quick Google search and figure out what chiaroscuro in art means. Find a few examples so that you can speak intelligently about it if I were to ask you a question like, “What, in your own words, is chiaroscuro?”

Chiaroscuro:

The treatment of light and shade in a work of art

NOTES:

Discuss how the light directs our attention from one subject to the next to slowly bring our attention to 'Saint Paul', who appears to gambling.





NOTES:

Discuss – The word ‘photography’ literally means ‘drawing with light’, and photographers are connoisseurs of light. In a typical high school photo, the light is uninspiring. It aims to make a photograph that is a ‘likeness’, but that has no personality. This type of photograph would makes your mother happy because it looks like you...

NOTES:

Discuss - But if you told your mother you were dating this guy...she would shriek in horror. This is the same student, but photographed with dramatic light. It is no longer a portrait of this person, it is an emotional and dramatic photograph of, well you tell me... What is going on in this photograph? What is this student showing us? What about the chains? (props can add alot to your story) How does it make you feel? Why? And how was it lit? (separate iPhone light under the chin. Creepy campfire story styled lighting)





NOTES:

Discuss - Creating high contrast lighting is not as difficult as it seems. How do you think this was lit? What light source did this student use?



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What other light sources do you have access to?

NOTES:

Discuss - What is this light source?

What is going on in this photograph?

Where is this person sitting?

Would it be comfortable to sit there?

What could be happening that would make him sit there?

If this was a movie scene, what is going on?

Remember, you are photographing light striking a subject, so you need a subject...



NOTES:

Discuss - Do not just photograph light bulbs. Some of you will. Remember this moment..

No.no.no.We are NOT photographing lightbulbs.



We are photographing light ON A SUBJECT...

NOTES:
Discuss -
What are
other light
sources you
can use?

Other ideas for lights?

NOTES:

Car headlights

Doesn't this
look ominous?



NOTES:

Discuss -
Candles CAN
work, but they
give off a lot
less light than
we imagine.
Why is this
photograph in
focus? What
did the
photographer
do to make it
in focus?



NOTES:

Discuss - A
shop light

Notice the
umbrella.
Adds a
strangeness to
the image





NOTES:

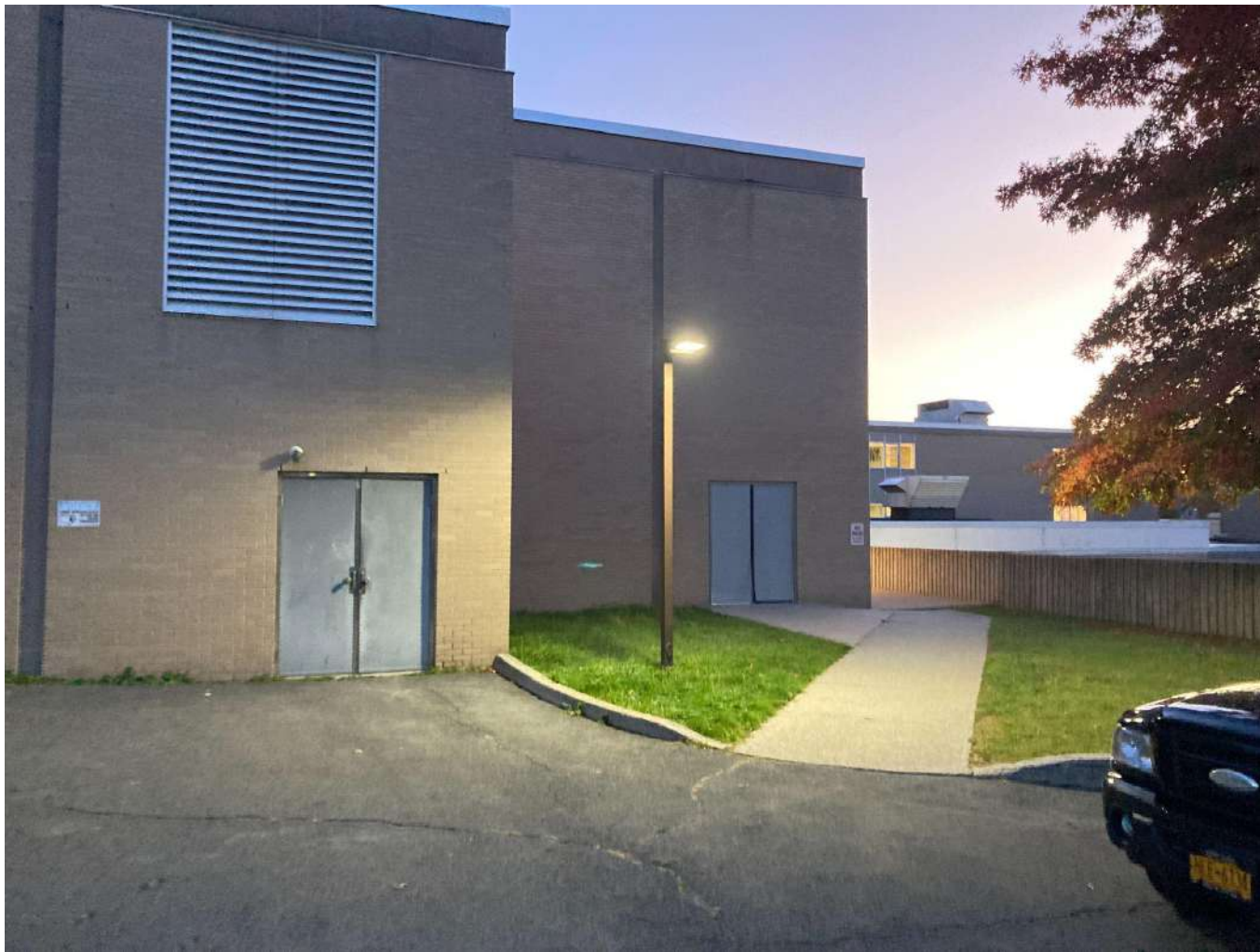
Discuss - simple flashlight from below

This student noticed the foreboding shadow being cast on the wall and shot panoramic to get it. It's as though she is possessed!

She also shot about 20 versions of this pose, but only one had this devilish glare. Good thing she shot a lot!



You don't have to work at home with your own lights. You can find locations with contrasty light...



NOTES:

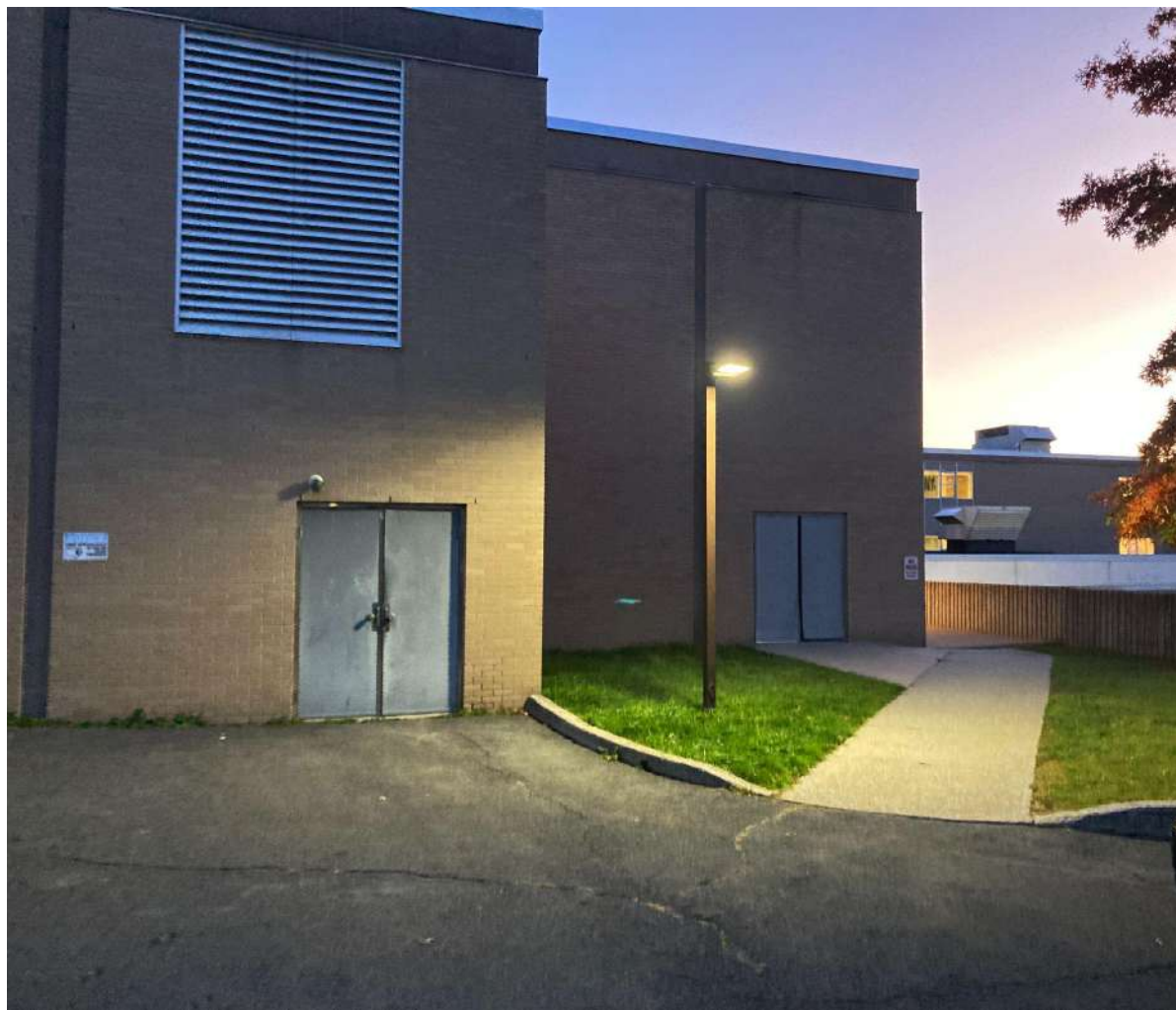
Discuss - I was walking into school this morning and I noticed the light. This spot would be perfect for a photoshoot. OF course it was 6:30am, so there's that.

It is a great location, but it is lacking what?

It needs a main subject. This is like a perfect movie set waiting for the main character to step on. What if someone was just stepping out from the corner of the building?

But it does not have to be a person. What if there was a spilled backpack laying on the ground? What story would that tell?

You could easily make 60 photos in this space...



You really must have a main
subject or focal point...

NOTES:

Discuss -

Although I love this shot, it really could use a main focal point... What do you think it could be? What could be added to the scene to make it more complete?





NOTES:

Discuss -
Again, your
main subject
does not need
to be a
person...

NOTES:

Discuss - But adding people does make it more relatable. You place yourself in the scene when you see a person in the shot. Why is that figure running down the alley? Are they coming towards us or away?



NOTES:

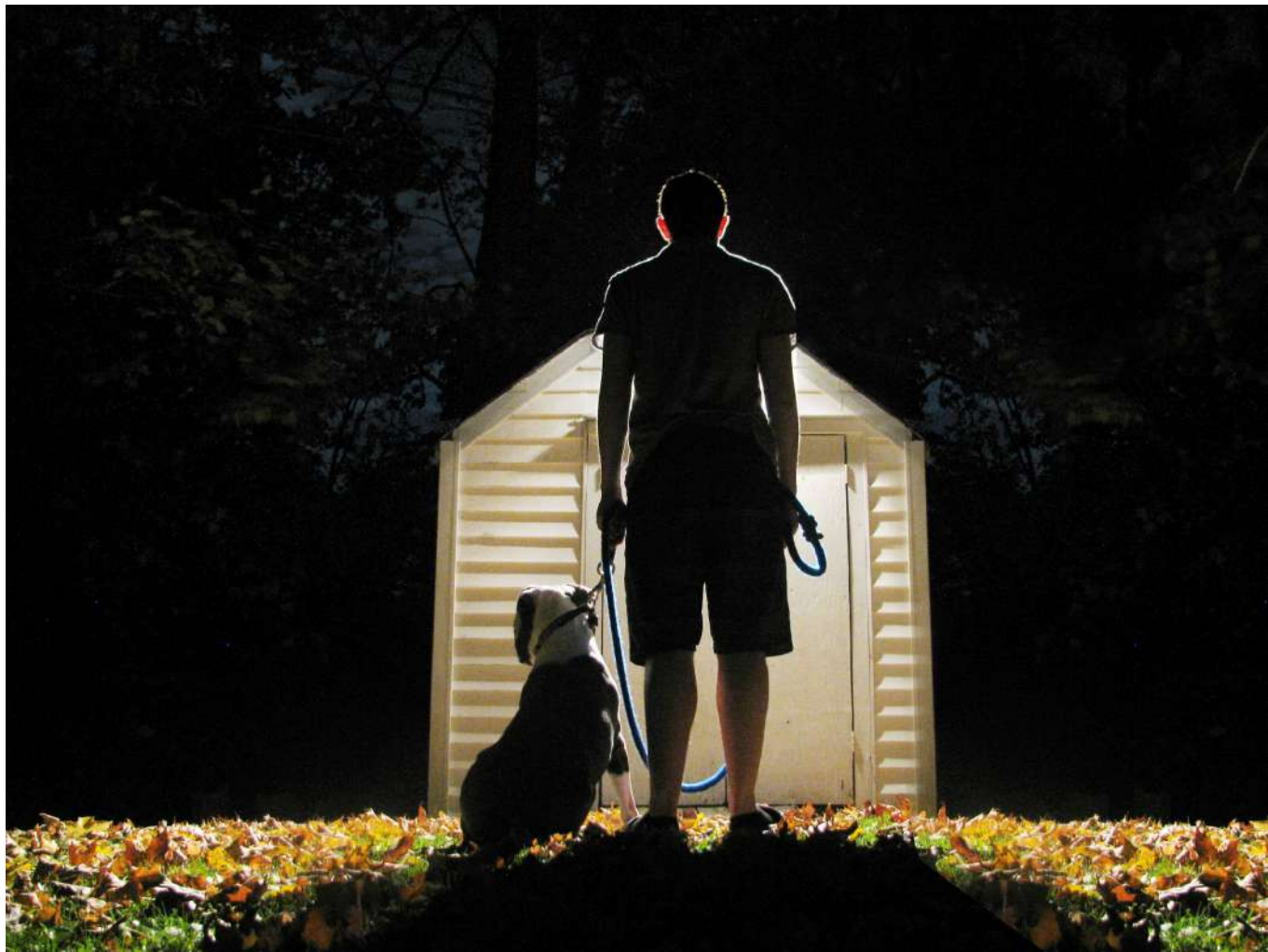
Discuss - Attention to detail! This student talked her brother into shooting outside at 10pm. The shots were fine, but she wanted to add a little bit extra. She talked him into letter her sprinkle him with the hose to make rain. Now this photograph is about dedication. The subject is willing to do whatever it takes to train.





NOTES:

Discuss - Always be on the lookout for photo opportunities. This student was walking with her dad when she noticed the contrasty lighting situation. She simply asked him to stand there. He happened to have on a coat and dress shoes...what do you think is happening in this shot? What would this movie be about?











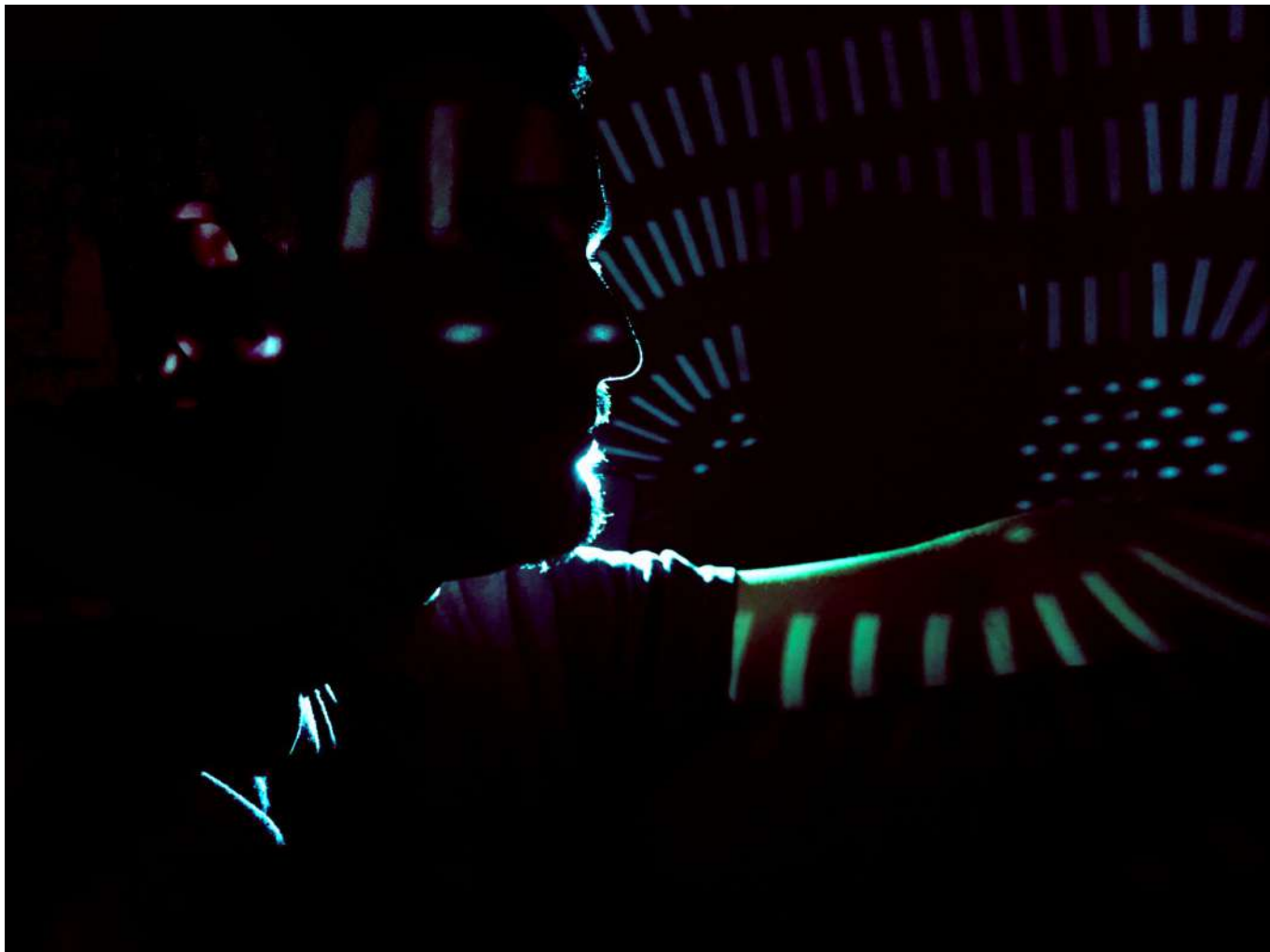




Just make amazing high contrast photos...









NOTES:

Discuss - This type of lighting is used in movie all of the time. Check out this scene and notice how high contrast light is used to build drama and intensity



Train robbery scene from The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward John Ford

NOTES:

Discuss – Even photojournalists are obsessed with the narrative quality of light

They Heeded Biden's Warning to Migrants. Will They Regret It?

President Biden told migrants to enter the U.S. legally. After surviving the jungle, a family is still waiting, 341 days later.



Federico Rios for The New York Times

Mango Street: Working with natural light and ugly locations...

I love this vlog couple. Their videos are fast, simple, bite sized bits of great information and ideas. Watch this video and see how they work with an ugly location and window light to make dramatic photos. And notice how many shots they take of each scene... Good stuff.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=brDpDnotOmo&list=PLiOLORAndOkJbOvxqmkKKALsOvH46mXOl&index=18&t=2015>

For Today: Brainstorming

- Use the Internet. Find 10 examples of high contrast photography that you like. Do not just pick the first 10 images that show up, choose ones that you find inspiring, photographs that give you ideas on what and how to shoot
- Paste all 10 into a Google Slides. On each slide, write a brief description of how the photo was lit: light source, light direction, light distance, etc.
- Think about what you might use to light your subjects. List 10 light sources that you have access to and could use
- Think about what subjects you could use that would work well for this. List 5 to 10
- Title the doc 'lastname high contrast moodboard' and submit it