

Total time:  
4-6 hours



Difficulty Level: Very easy

#### Skill Points:

- Using Selective Color to improve a composition
- Learning the difference between Selective Color and Spot Color
- Shooting and completing a Selective Color portrait session

# SELECTIVE COLOR

## HOW TO USE IT PROFESSIONALLY



Selective color is a feature in some digital cameras or it is a post-production technique. Selective color is NOT spot color. (See the Spot Color Action Card.) Selective color combines monochrome tones, along with colored hues, in different portions of the same image.

**KEY LESSON:** Some cameras allow you to use a “Selective Color” setting. We do not recommend this, as it takes the creativity and fun out of the process, and limits your end result. If you have no other option, then by all means go for it. **The single biggest lesson here is selecting the right subject for the technique.**

**EQUIPMENT:** Any camera including mobile | Any lens | Photo Editing Software

### SAMPLE PHOTOGRAPHS

#### Wrong and Better

- 1- This is a very amateur looking attempt at selective color. All of the monochrome areas in this image have disappeared, and they don't provide value to the image.
- 2- This is a better example. The selective color was used to enhance the features of the model and props that the photographer wanted you to take direct notice.



1



2



3



4



5

The photographer had an interesting idea of combining the model and the graffiti. It's clever. However, the model is lost in the busyness. This is perfect for the selective color technique.

- 3- Select the model using any of the myriads of selection tools available today in virtually any software package- even mobile.
- 4- Reverse the selection, isolating the model from the background. Make sure that your edges of the selection are clean, so that there is no bleed from one section to the other. This is known as leaving artifacts.
- 5- Convert the background to a monochrome black & white. If you're unsure on B&W conversion- Photzy offers an in-depth Premium Guide on that subject titled: **Better Black & White**. The model now stands out from her background. However, the theme and the idea behind the shot are not only visible, but also enhanced.



### ACTION ASSIGNMENT!

- 1- Organize a photo shoot similar in content to the example photo (model & moto).
  - Place your model in front of busy backgrounds. Make sure that the background is pertinent to the story you are trying to tell about your model (as in the example)
  - Create a number of different shots, in different locations, as some will likely work better than others when you get into post-production.
  - Edit your photos into selective color following the guidelines above. If you're unsure on how to make a selection- there are many free tutorials- or you can check out the Photzy publication, “The Next Step To Perfect Photography: Understanding Masking In Post-Production”.

### HOW DID YOU DO?

- Do your finished photographs reflect a professional use of selective color?
- Were you able to make a clean selection of your subject without leaving artifacts?