

Total time:  
6-8 hours



Difficulty Level:  
Challenging

#### Skill Points:

- Learning about the Litho Film Effect
- Discovering how to create it in post-production
- Developing the skills to evaluate a subject for the Litho Film Effect

# THE LITHO FILM EFFECT

## TO REACH NEW LEVELS OF CREATIVITY

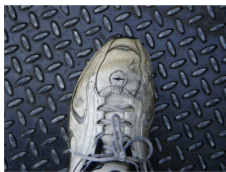


Back when film was more popular, there was a creative option called "Litho Film". Litho is a black and white orthochromatic film with one very distinct characteristic: when processed with a particular developing agent, it only reproduces **black tones and white tones. There are no middle tones.** The resulting images can have a striking graphic effect.

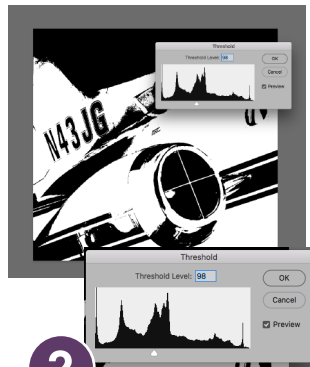
**KEY LESSON:** We can digitally recreate the Litho Film effect. If you have Photoshop this is quite easy. Open your photo, navigate to the Image drop-down menu, select Adjustments, and select Threshold. If you do not have Photoshop, you can still recreate the effect in other programs. It just takes a bit more work. **Images that already have high contrast, and strong dominant shapes, lend themselves well to this technique.**

**EQUIPMENT:** Any camera including mobile | Any lens | Post-processing Software

#### SAMPLE PHOTOGRAPHS



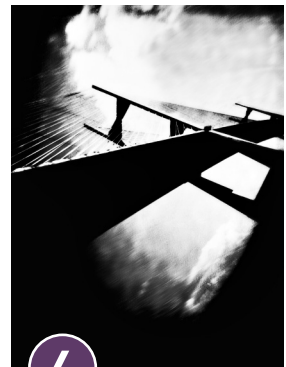
1



2



3



4

**1-** This example shows you how the Litho Film Effect can bring some visual interest to a mundane shot. Depending on your process, you may not be able to eliminate ALL of the middle tones.

**2-** The Threshold Adjustment, within Photoshop, quickly and easily reproduces a true Litho Film Effect. By moving the Threshold Level slider, the software determines how much of the original image file will be converted to black... or white.

**3-** Use any editing software you have. Set the color saturation setting to zero. Set the contrast adjustment to maximum. Adjust the brightness level up and down – stop when it looks close to your desired outcome. Adjust the black and white points using levels (or an equivalent). It now becomes a game of modifying these settings until you achieve a desired look!

**4-** If you're out shooting, and you don't have the best light, the Litho Film Effect can save the day. Interested in Abstract photography? **See the Abstract Action Card**, this technique lends itself well to this genre. Don't be afraid to go crazy with creativity.



#### ACTION ASSIGNMENT!

- 1-** Organize a photo shoot where you will go in search of subject matter that you believe will make interesting Litho Film Effect photos. Create at least 10 different photos with 10 different subjects. (Developing an eye for this technique takes time.)
- 2-** Organize a portrait session with a friend or family member. Contrary to normal thinking- use the harshest most highly contrast producing light source that you can. Study the contours of their face and body as you light them. Remember, you will have black tones, and white tones, with little or no tone between. So, shape is important. (Study the woman portrait above). Shoot at least 10 different portraits while changing the lighting and the angle.
- 3-** Go into your post-processing session and create a Litho Film Effect with all 20 images. Use whatever method you have, or even try different methods.

#### HOW DID YOU DO?

- Did all of your chosen subjects in Action Assignment #1 work out well in the Litho Film Effect? Or, did you discover how some subjects work better than others?

READY! SET! GO! **ACTION CARDS**  
**STRETCH GOALS: LITHO FILM EFFECT**