



– *The story behind* –

WORDS AND PICTURES: ERIK HATTREM

A large print



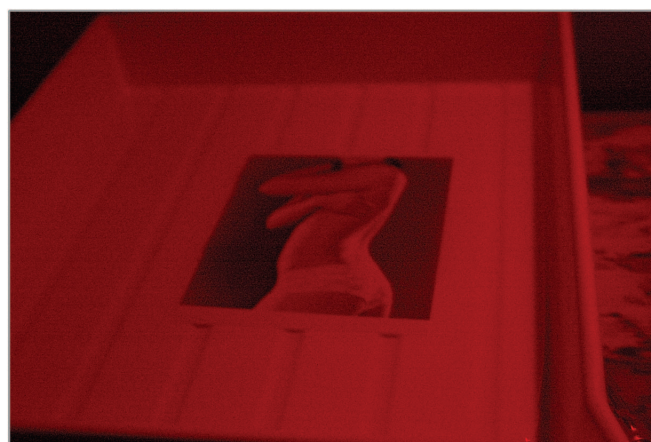
First of all, let me be clear on one thing. This is not a masterprinter tutorial, not at all. This is made just for sharing and perhaps inspiring some persons who really like to try B&W-printing. If you read this and feel for learning more, you can visit my website and use my public e-mail. I will then try to answer your spesific questions. Or i will recomend you some books from Bruce Barnbaum and Lynn Radeka. Two of the best B&W photographers and printers the world has hosted. One of Barnbaums words of wisdom is: – “Share as much as you can of your knowledge. Stay away from those who not are willing to share”. By sharing my methods i have recieved more, thats why i write this litle log-book from a session in the darkroom.

MOLDE (Norway):

Erik Hattrem erik@tmax100.com

The print on the frontpage of this PDF is the actual print i will talk about. The original negative was captured in august 2009 on Kodak Verichrome Pan 120 film. Developed in Rodinal 1:100 for 18 minutes. The photosession was in my studio. The large print is done on Foma Variant 311 paper in 50x60 cm size. After i developed, washed and dried the negatives i made contactsheets in very low contrast. 35 yellow on the wheel of my Kaiser colour enlarger. With a loupe i choose the best negative. Then i used compressed air to blow away small dust particles before it ended up in the enlarger. First i made a print sized 24x30 cm in contrast grade 2 on the same type of paper i was going to use for the larger print. Grade 2 on my enlarger is zero settings on the colour wheels. Im lucky to have a handle that switches the filters of. After developing in Dektol liquid 1+9, stop, fix, wash and dry i saw a picture who needed several improvements. First, more contrast to make her skin more shiny. Then some tonal compression on the backdrop. And at last her underwear had to be more bright.

To achieve the look i wanted, i had to make a mask. Off course i could use dodge and burn. But dodging blondes on underwear is to tricky for me. And with a High Light Mask (HLM) i would also be able to brighten the glowing high lights on her skin a bit more. It does also increase the contrast in a fashionable way, in my opinion. I made the HLM by first making a interpositive. That was made by contactprinting the original negative emulsion to emulsion in register on Ilford Ortho 4x5" sheet. Developed in Dektol 1:20 in one minute. Stop, fix and rinse. After drying i washed it in film cleaner and dusted it with compressed air. Then i made the HLM by contactprinting the interpositive emulsion to emulsion on another sheet of Ilford Ortho 4x5". I do also use Macho Ortho for this process. This day i used Ilford beacause i know the response of that film better. It was important for me to make a negative mask with density only in the lightest areas. It didn't work perfect on the first try, so i tried again with more diluted developer. But then i got very thin mask. So i used the first one i made and bleached it down a bith with Ferro Cyanid.



The first 24x30 in the fberbath.



The interpositive lying on a sheet of paper in reflected light.



The interpositive in fluorescent transmitted light



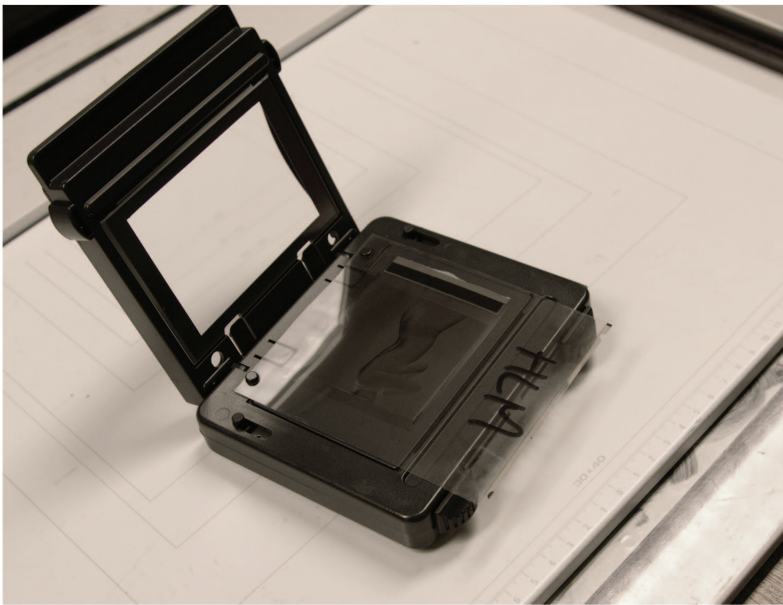
After bleaching and inspection of the HLM, i put it in register with the original negative. When the HLM is lying over the original negative, as you see on the pictures, the HLM is a negative with density only in the highlights. It will act like dodging precise down on the micron. This means more precise: Lesser light is coming through to the paper in the areas you want to be bright. But the light passing, is passing through in the right contrast grade.

The next thing to do, is making a new 24x30 cm print on Foma V311 and compare to the straight print. And yes, the right improvement was there. Now it was time to enlarge!

First i cut off some teststrips from the large paper and exposed them under a Kodak projection print scale. After Developing, stop, fix, wash and drying it looked like the picture on this page.



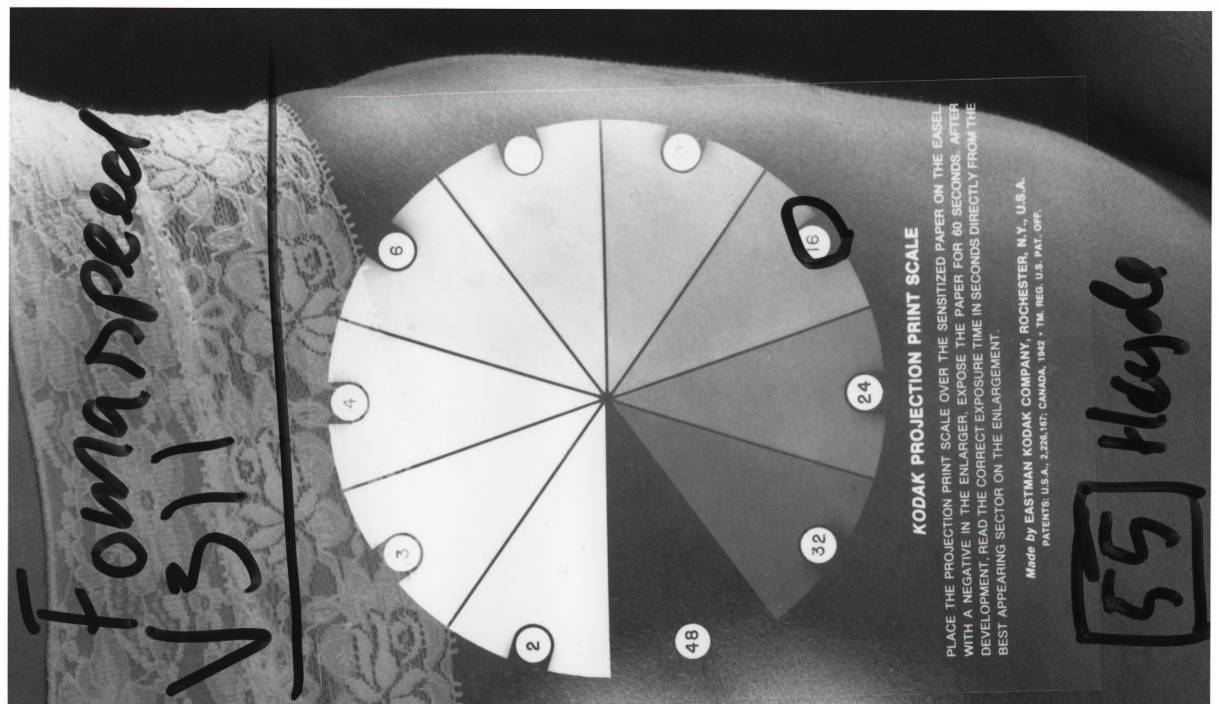
Placing the original negative and the HLM mask in the enlarger.



The original negative is under the HLM in perfect register. Both are sandwiched emulsion down.



The final 24x30 cm test print with mask. Not yet burned in edges and dodged in the center.



Kodak projection scale shows me that 16 second of base exposure is the way to go. Sure, you can use the step wedge way!



The final print was done with 16 seconds base exposure with the mask. 10 magenta on the contrast wheel. Under the base exposure i dodged her arms, torso and butt for 5 seconds with a circular dodging tool. The center behind her back was also dodged with my fist at the same time. So i had to use both of my hands. At last i switched of the handle conected to the colour wheel so i had zero settings and contrast grade 2. Then i used a long soft edged rectangular cardboard to burn in the edges of the print. After stop, fix, wash and drying, the print was reprinted so i had two of them. Both is now mounted on a poster holder in the street outside my Studio/Lab. And yes, people are stoping by and asking about the sexy girl on the print. But the main question is what kind of DSLR i used, what filters i used i Photoshop and how i converted it to greyscale, Is it printed on a Epson Ink Jet, and what is the colour version looking like? Now i can give the them URL to this PDF.

Equipment used: Hasselblad 500C | Sonar 150 f/4 | Kodak Verichrome Pan rated @64 ISO | Roidinal | Ilford stop/fix | Dektol | Kaiser enlarger VCP 7005 | Ferro Cyanid | Ilford Ortho sheet film| patience and love for the handcraft of photo and printing.



The final prints are drying in my studio



The prints used as commercial posters for my photography, printing service and studio in Molde, Norway

For more info or contact, see:

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