Journal 3

Haven Roper

Darkroom

Coming into this class I had no experience with photography in a formal sense (aside form the common experience of iphone photos) especially film photography. The only perception I had of shooting film was eerie darkroom scenes in movies or looking at pre digital photos. I was excited for the whole process as the old, raw appearance of film photography really interested me. Nowadays people often attempt to recreate certain aspects of film photography in their digital images such as grain or a white border, so I was looking forward to doing it authentically.

By Thomas Hoepker

Shooting the film

To shoot the first roll of film my friends and I took an hour drive down the coast to Santa Monica to visit Bergamot Station, an art gallery we had visited as a class a few weeks prior, and the pier. I had some apprehension regarding shooting the film. Over the first few weeks of the course much of my development shooting digital photography came from trial and error by shooting immediately looking at the shot and adjusting my settings. But, with film I could not tell show the shot turned out. For the first roll I shot in program mode for the majority of shots only occasionally switching to aperture priority.


SANTA MONICA
MOUNTAINS NATIONAL
RECREATION AREA
Calabasas, CA

Developing Film

After shooting the film the next stop in the film photography process is developing film. My primary concerns associated with this step of the process was loading the film into the developing container because it all must be done by feel in a changing room box. We were able to do some practice in the light with practice film but ultimately just had to go for it with our shot film. The process went fairly smoothly then we just had to use the developer, stop bath, and fixer chemicals to produce the images on the film. Once this process was completed we rinsed the materials and dried the film.

First Glance
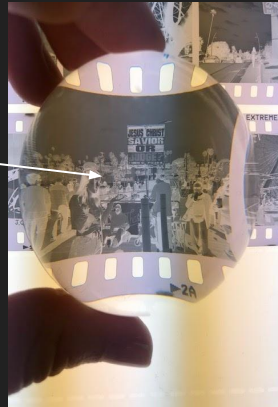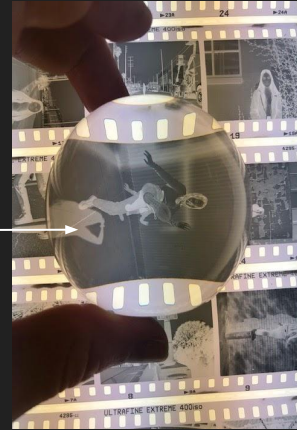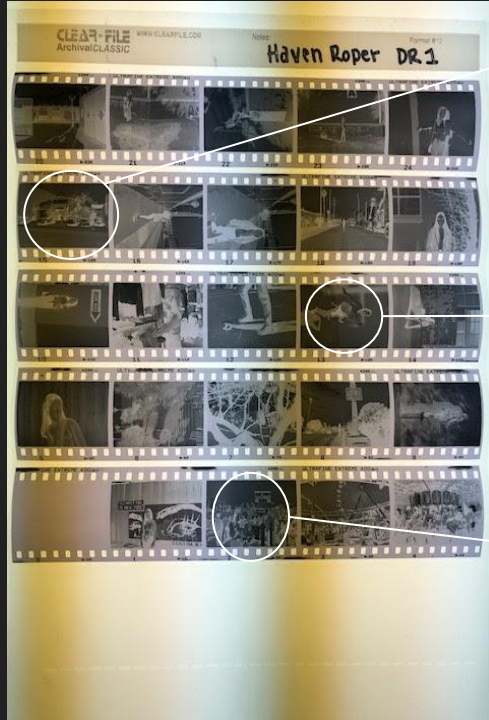
While it was a challenge to shoot the film with no immediate feedback of what the photos looked like I did enjoy the experience of viewing the whole roll of film at once. It was a fun way to reflect back on the day and relive the memories.

Making a contact sheet

The first step of the actual process in the darkroom is making the contact sheet. To find the correct exposure for the sheet we needed to first make a test strip. This process consists of placing photo paper under one strip of film, setting the light to timed exposure of 2 seconds, and alternating between moving cardboard across the photo paper and pressing the exposure. Once the exposure process is complete the strip must be placed in developer for one minute, a stop bath for 30 seconds, and then fixer for about two minutes. The strip is then used to determine the best exposure time for the contact sheet which is then made with a full sheet of photo paper.

Making a full size print

When making a full size print the same process of using a test strip, cardboard, and repeated exposures to find the best light for the image. The best light is determined by finding the section with the whitest white and darkest black. Once the test strip is complete, to assure that I was happy with the exposure I chose, I did a full test strip with that exposure. Once I was happy with my result there I exposed the full image. It was a very satisfying process to see my image come to life in its full form.

Lighting issues

For my first darkroom assignment all of the exposures that I chose were fairly low (only about 3-4 seconds), so when I was working on second darkroom assignment I was concerned when the images didn't appear to be dark enough until exposures of about 8 seconds. Because of this confusion I overexposed my contact sheet, but I solved the issue by simply darkening it in photoshop.

Editing in Photoshop
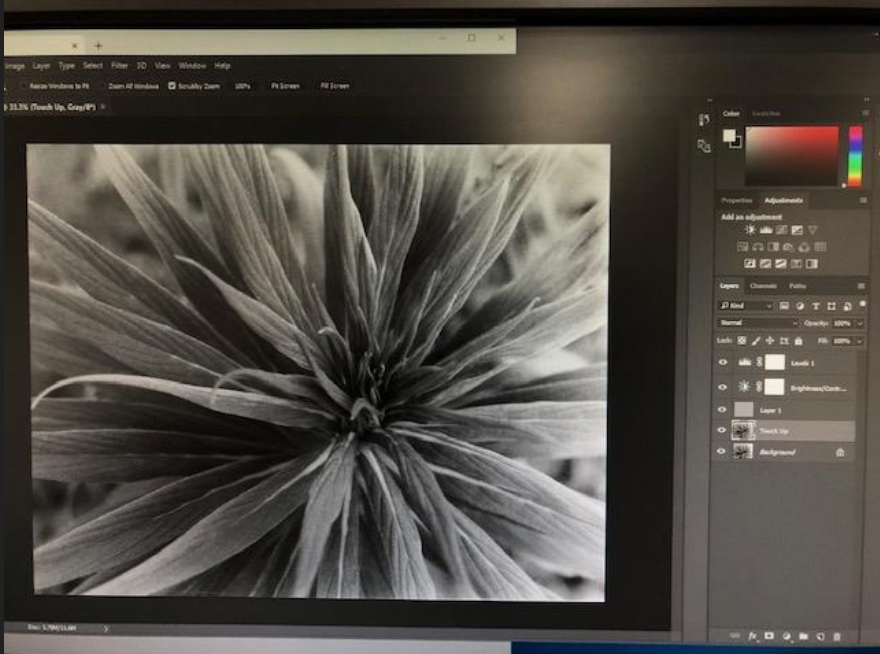
On top of the whole new processes of shooting film, developing film, and developing photos, I also had to familiarize myself with photoshop. The basic steps I took with each of my photos was first duplicating the layer, adjusting contrast, adding another overlay and then dodging and burning. This process was a lot of trial and error as occasionally the dodging and burning would not work or would be too sharp. The other main tool that I used in photoshop when working with film photos was the spot healing tool to help minimize the dots or any imperfection in the image.

Final Products

These images were the two products of my first Darkroom assignment. I am very proud of my work and also grateful for the opportunity to go down to Santa Monica to shoot. I was really happy with all the film I shot and the final products as I felt my create image was successfully executed. I am most proud of the carousel image (bottom) because I was able to adjust the camera settings to achieve blur motion, but still maintain lighting in the image.

February 7, 2020

Final Work
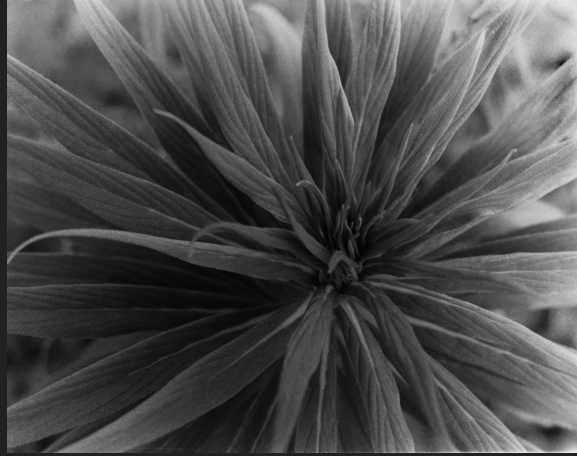
These images were the products of my second darkroom assignment. The plant photo (above) developed with few problems, but it did have an over-exposed corner which I edited in photoshop to bring back detail. The depth of the building photo (right) caused uneven lighting so I also had to do significant editing in photoshop to darken the front of the image.

February 7, 2020

Goals

In the future some things I would like to try and achieve in the darkroom are manual dodging and burning, using more manual settings when shooting, and also improvement in photoshop editing. While I did get a little better at navigating photoshop the lines of my dodging and burning are still somewhat obvious.

# Vivian Maier

My photos

Vivian Maier lived in New York City specifically the Bronx and France as a child with her mother. Her mother was an award winning portrait photographer. In 1956 Vivian moved to Chicago where she had access to a darkroom and private bathroom where she could develop her film. She struggled with times of poverty and much of her film piled up undeveloped. She passed away in 2009 leaving behind a large collection of work.
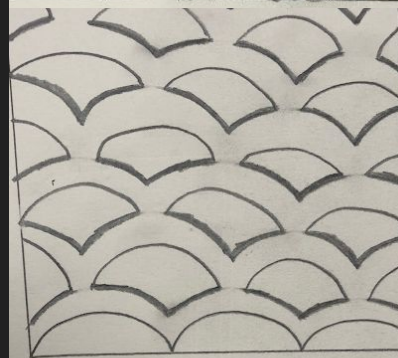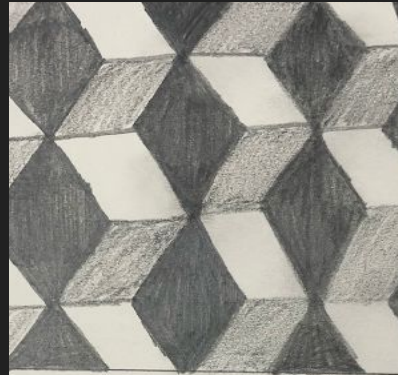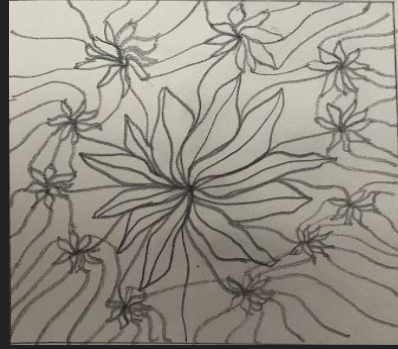

"About Vivian Maier." *Vivian Maier Photographer*, www.vivianmaier.com/about-vivian-maier/.
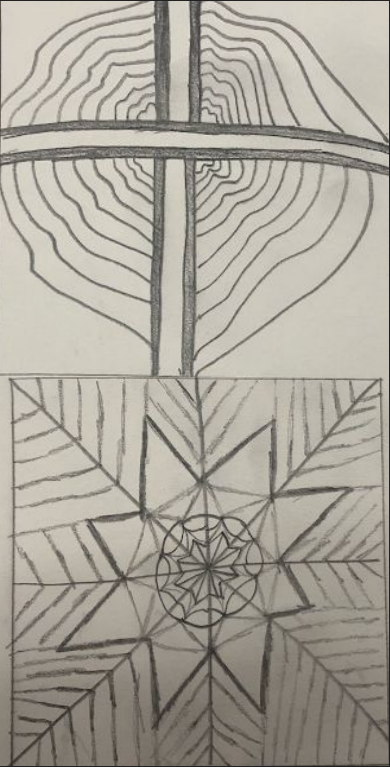
Zentangles

The first element of this art assignment is zentangle sketches. I enjoyed the process of these sketches which for me were equivalent to sketches I would do on the side of a homework assignment. I got to just put pencil to paper and see where it went.

Water color

Three types of water color technique used:

-Flat wash

     -coat of water and even layer of paint
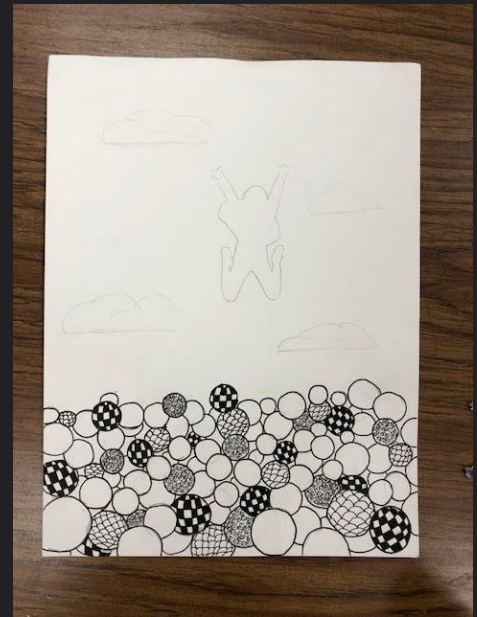
-Graded wash

     -coat of water and layer of paint on one side and pulled down to create and ombre

-variegated wash

     -coat of water and layer of two different paint colors on each side blended in the middle

Art Assignment 3

For this assignment my idea was to make an abstract ball pit. The only element of the original photograph that I kept was the subject jumping and the rest was filled in with small zentangles and all three watercolor techniques.