



Silhouette Making  
the KODAK Way

# Photographic Silhouettes

*Reprint from Kodakery*

A "SILHOUETTE," unless we are using the term as fashion designers use it, to describe the outlines of an effect, usually consists of a uniformly dark image on a light ground. There are, of course, white silhouettes also, though dark ones are usually understood.

As the image in a portrait silhouette is void of detail the attention of the observer is forcibly drawn to its outlines, which are usually characteristic enough to disclose the identity of the person portrayed.

Long before the invention of photography silhouettes were

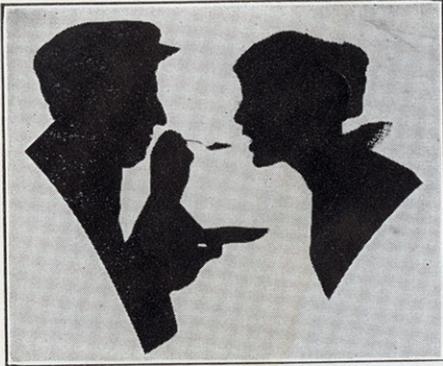
made by tracing the outlines of a shadow on the wall, or on a sheet of paper, and then filling in these outlines with dark pigment. Silhouettes were also made by cutting the shadow portraits from black paper with a pair of scissors. This latter method became very popular in the early part of the last century and many of the excellent silhouettes that were made at that time, especially those of our leading public men and women, are now preserved in museums. It is interesting, incidentally, to recall that the first sun prints ever made were silhouettes.

Photographic silhouettes can be made by any kind of light that is strong enough for making a negative, but the surest and easiest way of obtaining uniform results is to make the exposures by flash-light in the evening.

Two rooms, with a doorway between, are needed. The doorway must be wholly covered with a sheet of white cloth (a bed sheet is excellent) stretched smooth so no wrinkles can be seen. Wrinkles in the sheet will show in the print. The subject and the camera are placed in one room and the flash-light in the other. The subject is posed before the sheet, facing at a right angle to the camera. The face should be in full profile, so not even the lashes of the eye



A story telling silhouette



Trimmed image taken from full image shown at bottom of page

nearest the sheet will be visible when the subject is viewed from the position of the lens.

As shown by the diagram on page 4, the flashlight should be so placed that a line drawn from the center of the lens to the position of the flashlight would pass through the center of the sheet that covers the doorway.

Just before making the exposure all lights in both rooms must be extinguished and after the shutter is opened the flashlight is ignited, after which the shutter should be immediately closed and the lights in the room turned on again.

In making silhouettes reflections from the walls, pictures and furniture should be avoided. A doorway near the corner of a room is not suitable, unless the wall paper is very dark. White or light-colored costumes are also less suitable than those that are dark.

The negatives must be contrasty, so nothing but the shadow-like image of the subject will show in the print. Contrasty negatives

will be obtained by developing the films in the Kodak Film Tank for fifteen minutes, with two Tank Developing Powders, used at a temperature of 65 degrees. Tray developed negatives will be contrasty if developed with a double strength developer, until the background (as seen from the back of the negative) is blackened to the base of the emulsion.

The lower part of a silhouette negative should usually be masked in printing. The mask may be made of any kind of opaque paper, cut or torn to the shape desired. The mask may be laid between the printing paper and the negative, or held over the back of the negative during printing.

Opaque may be applied with a spotting brush (both of which may



A Silhouette Incident

Illustration at top of page suggests how this print may be trimmed

be had of Kodak dealers) on the back of the negative, for blocking out the image of anything that may show in the negative outside the area covered by the sheet. The outlines of costumes and accessories may also be modified by this method, if desired.

Silhouettes must be printed on contrasty paper, like No. 4 Velox. Soft paper, like No. 1 or No. 2 Velox, is not suitable unless the density of the background is extreme.

When the subject is placed 2 feet from the white sheet and the flashlight is ignited 5 feet behind the sheet, with the lens stopped to *f. 8* (U. S. 4) the following table will indicate size of flash sheet to use with the various sizes of cameras listed:



Strings suspend the balls.

$1\frac{5}{8} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$	}	1 No. 1 Eastman Flash Sheet.
$2\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$		

$2\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{4}$	}	1 No. 2 Eastman Flash Sheet.
$2\frac{7}{8} \times 4\frac{7}{8}$		
$3\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{4}$		
$4 \times 5$		

$4\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$	}	1 No. 3 Eastman Flash Sheet.
$5 \times 7$		

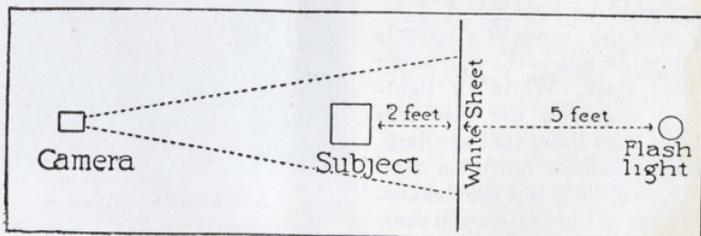


Diagram showing arrangements for making Silhouettes.



Fishing—Silhouette printed from a negative



Fishing—Silhouette printed from a positive

## Indoor Silhouettes

BY CARTOONIST BRADFORD

*Illustrated by the Author*

ALMOST all of us, at some time or other, have had the inclination to enjoy the fascinating pastime of making silhouettes. Perhaps we have even run the gamut from photographing a shadow thrown on the wall; but then—ha, ho, hum, too many of us have rested on our laurels.

And yet, silhouette pictures present endless possibilities and are a welcome novelty.

The room in which I was doing some photographic work was equipped with an electric arc lamp that had a large reflector. This gave me an idea. The wall was a white one, and, turning the arc light squarely against the wall I found I had a white background

of dazzling brilliancy. Now, I figured, if I could keep the lens side of my subject dark, and expose just long enough for recording the background, the subject would be so much underexposed as to make a silhouette.

I placed an ordinary kitchen table between the back of the reflector of the arc lamp and the camera and darkened all of the room as much as possible, excepting the wall on which the arc light shone. Then I focused the camera on the table, rigged up a long hose and bulb, to reach under the table, arranged the costume, fish rod and landing net, lighted a pipe and, just as I puffed out a cloud of smoke, stepped on the bulb. The shutter snapped at 1/25



The Smoker

of a second, the lens being at largest opening, *f.* 4.5, and I secured the result shown in "Fishing."

Observe this closely. To all intents, it represents a man fishing

outdoors from the end of a pier. Had I drawn trees and a water line on the wall the wisest camera sharks would have been at a loss to tell how this was made.

In "The Smoker" the lamp was turned to throw the highlight partly toward the subject.

The silhouette "Reading" was made as follows: A white sheet was tacked, so it would be free from wrinkles, on the wall. It was illuminated by two 75 watt nitrogen electric lamps. A large square of white cardboard was placed back of each lamp to reflect the light to the sheet and, at the same time, keep it from shining in the lens. The subject was placed about five feet back of the lamps. An exposure of 5 seconds, with stop *f.* 8, was given, but as the negative was under-developed it was intensified, in order to secure the necessary contrast. Observe the candle flame. Here's our old friend again, "double exposure" stunt. After the first exposure the sub-



Reading



Profile

ject steps aside, the lights are turned off, the candle lighted, the lens opened and a second exposure of anywhere from 5 to 10 seconds given. The longer exposure gives more of a halo around the flame.

Now as most amateurs have but small chance of access to an indoor arc light, in order to make this scheme available to all it is necessary to find some method of duplicating the performance by daylight methods. To him who woos Kodak results "all meat is flesh," and if we want a result badly enough to think out the solution we generally get it. Remember that, and your camera problems will vanish like mist before the rising sun.

The theory is this: It all depends on a white background that is much more strongly lighted than the lens side of the subject. That's the whole secret.

To secure this by daylight I

tacked white paper on one side of an old screen door, and, placing this outside and a few feet from an open window, with the top of the door leaning backward so that sky light would shine on it, I found that the daylight it reflected approximated the electric lighted wall, though it was, of course, weaker and the window opening made a smaller background than the wall. By darkening the room I had ideal conditions for my purpose.

An expensive or large camera is not needed; any camera will do. The silhouette "A Profile" was made with a Vest Pocket Kodak, with the lens stopped down to *f.* 11. The exposure was  $\frac{1}{2}$  second by the light that came through the window.

Notice the interesting white silhouette of "Fishing", made by printing from a positive instead of from a negative. To make a positive, place a negative in a printing frame in contact with an Eastman Process Film. This film is capable of giving great contrast—just what is needed in silhouette work.



The Process Film is much faster than Velox paper and, consequently, requires a shorter exposure. Try giving an "off-and-on" with a 25 watt electric lamp at, say, a distance of five feet. One or two trials will set you on the right road. The contrast developer that is recommended on the instruction sheet that comes with the film is ideal for contrasty results.

All silhouette negatives can be developed in the tank, but as great contrast is needed for making silhouettes the development should be 30 instead of 20 minutes when one tank powder is used and the developer is at a temperature of 65° Fahrenheit.

The prints must be made on a contrasty grade of paper. No. 4 Velox is just what is needed as we want all the contrast we can get in our prints.

There is much virgin territory in the land of silhouette making and I have only indicated, in a small way, its possibilities. With a Kodak as your compass your exploring trip should be well worth while.

*All the photographic materials described in this leaflet may be obtained at our store.*

**J. G. Ramsey and Co., Limited,**  
66 King St. W.,  
**Toronto**