

SMFA Main Darkroom Policies and Procedures

Room: B011, B011A, B011B, and B011C

Studio Manager: Chris Maliga chris.maliga@tufts.edu

Hazard Level: Medium

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Overview

The main darkroom at SMFA is where black-and-white analog printing happens. It consists of two group darkrooms for printing, a finishing area, and a chemical mix room. The enlarging stations are equipped with everything you'll need to get started, and chemistry is maintained throughout the week. The finishing area in B011 is also where you can access film processing equipment.

Accessing the Darkroom

- The Darkroom is accessed via id card swipe at any time of day, except when classes are scheduled inside. A schedule of classes for the current semester is posted on the door of room B011.
- Because the Darkroom is a medium hazard studio, a student must complete a health-and-safety orientation before their id card will be authorized.
- Students who enroll in a black-and-white photography course will typically be given access to the Darkroom by the faculty member teaching the course.
- Students may also request access via the Photography Studio Manager.
- Once card access is granted to the Darkroom, it does not expire until the student graduates.

Equipment

- 14 Omega D-series enlargers, capable of printing from 35mm, 120, and 4x5 negatives
- 8 Beseler 45-series enlargers capable of printing from 35mm, 120, and 4x5 negatives
- Beseler and Saunders 4-blade easels
- Grain magnifiers
- Lenses for enlarging from various negative types
- Negative carriers
- Contact printing glass
- Vertical washers for prints up to 20"x24"
- Trays
- Enlarging filter packs

- Light table for negative viewing
- Burning and dodging tools
- Print dryer for RC paper

Materials

- Chemistry is provided and maintained throughout the week. Printing chemistry is made by Sprint Systems of Photography, diluted 1:9.
- Students must bring in their own paper to print on.
- If you wish to use a different printing developer from what is pre-mixed, contact the Studio Manager. Most currently available developers can be accommodated.

Staff

- Student monitors work in the Darkroom throughout the week. While you are encouraged to ask questions and inform the monitor if there are any issues, the monitor cannot print for you or teach any skills that you are learning as part of your class.
- You may use the Darkroom at any time there is not a class scheduled within, regardless of whether or not a monitor is on duty.
- Report to the monitor or Studio Manager if you suspect any chemistry has gone bad. There is a color chart in the finishing area that shows what each chemical should look like.
- The Studio Manager's office is in room B023. If there is no monitor on duty, please report any issues and direct any questions to the Studio Manager. If he is not in his office, you can e-mail him at chris.maliga@tufts.edu

Studio Etiquette

- There is no food or drink allowed inside the darkroom.
- Please plan your time carefully when using the Darkroom. Your prints will need time to wash after you're done making them.
- Do not add prints to a wash that's in progress. Your prints will contaminate the other person's, and the wash will have to start over.
- When you're ready to wash your prints, check with the other people in the darkroom to see if anyone wants to use the washer with you.
- Remove your prints from the drying rack within 48 hours. If the racks become too full, prints will be removed and possibly discarded.
- Do not turn on the overhead lights in the printing area unless you are absolutely sure that no one has any light sensitive materials out.
- There is no storage of artwork or personal items allowed in the Darkroom.

- If you run into any problem with your enlarger, easel, or other equipment, please inform the monitor on duty or the Studio Manager immediately.

Cleanliness

- Please allot 15 minutes at the end of your printing session for clean-up.
- Pick up and dispose of any paper scraps, including test strips.
- Do not leave prints in the washer. They will be thrown out.
- Do not leave any prints or test strips in the chemistry. The longer they sit there, the faster the chemistry will exhaust.

Safety Policies and Procedures

Ventilation

- The ventilation in the Darkroom is always turned on. If you suspect that it is not working, report it to the Studio Manager or TUPD via the emergency phone immediately.
- Do not work in the Darkroom if the ventilation is not on! Inform anyone else who is working in the Darkroom if you suspect the ventilation is off, and wait until it has been turned back on before resuming work.
- Signs that the ventilation is not working:
 - A strong chemical odor
 - Stagnant air
 - In some cases, a headache or dizziness

Chemical Spills

- If there are drops of chemistry on the floor, you can clean them up with a sponge while wearing gloves. Drips do not need to be reported.
- Report major spills to the Studio Manager or the public safety number on the emergency phone. Do not attempt to clean it up yourself.
 - Some chemicals are clear and don't have a strong odor. Do not assume that a puddle is water unless you are absolutely sure.

Chemistry Handling

- All chemistry stored in the darkroom must be in closed, clearly labeled containers. If you see a container of chemistry that does not have a label, report it to the Studio Manager.
- Active chemistry is used in trays that sit below the sink ventilation. Do not lift these trays above the ventilation air barrier, or lean in below the air barrier.
- Do not touch the chemistry with your bare hands. When moving prints through the trays, use tongs or wear gloves (or both!)
- If you are the last person printing, make sure to cover the trays with the plexiglass covers before leaving.
- Do not attempt to change chemistry yourself unless you have been trained and authorized to use the Chemical Mix Room in B011C.

- Only liquid chemistry is allowed to be used in the Darkroom. Powdered chemistry is prohibited.

Emergency Equipment Locations

- There is an emergency phone to the left of the main entrance to B011 when you walk in.
- There are two eye wash stations: one to the right of the print washing sink, and one inside B011C.
- The fire extinguisher is to the right of the main entrance to B011 when you walk in.
- The emergency shower is inside B011C.
- The SDS binder is to the right of the print washing sink.
- The spill control station is to the right of the print washing sink.