

1. PHOTOSHOP

If you're good with post-processing and manipulations, use it to your advantage. Get crazy with the adjustments, try some new Photoshop techniques, and maybe even a composite image.



2. TEXTURE

If texture is a big part of your subject, make it stand out and make it obvious. Match up the textures between your subject and your background. You might even try texturizing the entire photo for additional impact.



3. OVEREXPOSE

Blowing out the highlights or making a high-key image makes a nice soft portrait with kind of a light airy feeling. Another advantage of high-key photos is that the smaller details and defects are blown away, making the image look much smoother.



4. UNDEREXPOSE

A dominantly dark or low-key image will naturally draw your eyes to the lighter parts. These tend to have a grittier and harder look to them than the high-key images



5. BACK-LIGHT

Hair lights up like crazy when it's back-lit, so if hair is a big part of your subject make it stand out by placing your subject between you and a light source. You could also take this a little further and push the image to a silhouette



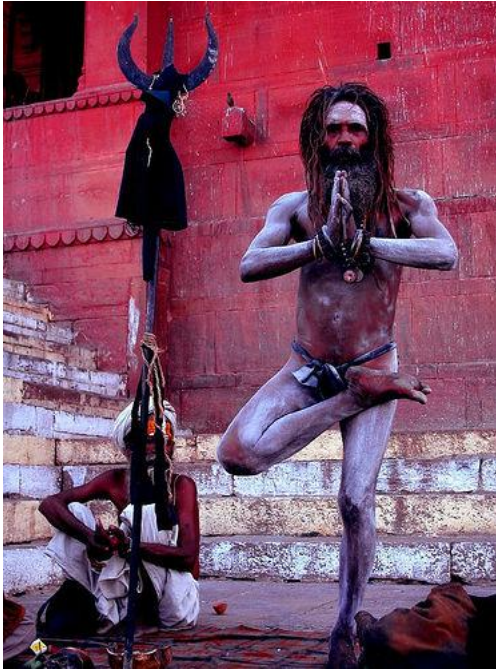
6. POSING

Get crazy with the pose and positioning — extra points if it looks uncomfortable. Not only with the poses, but also with your own positioning — shoot from different angles to achieve different impacts.



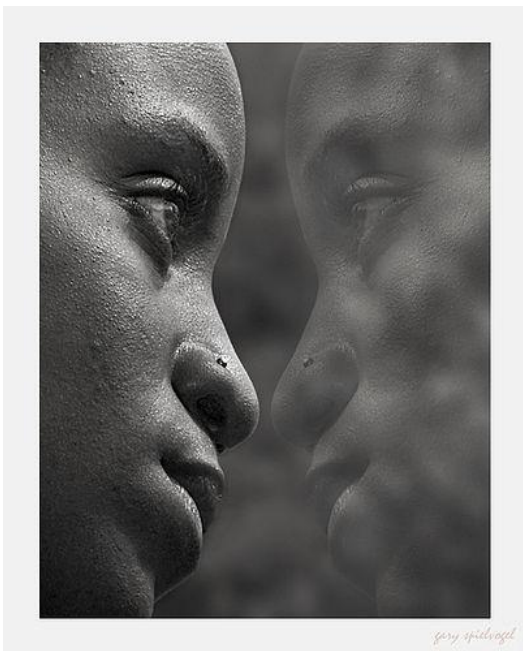
7. CULTURE

Capture the local culture — what's mundane to you is exotic to us. Culture is everywhere, even in your own town. Just image you're visiting from a different country — what things would then seem more interesting to you?



8. REFLECTIONS

Make use of different surfaces to add that extra dimension — windows, mirrors, and water are all very good reflective surfaces that give a different result and texture.



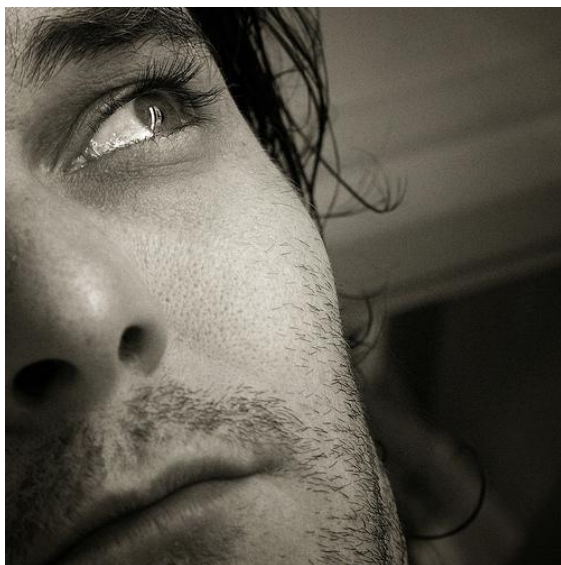
9. SHADOWS

Make the shadow an important part of the image. Sometimes the shadow can even be more prominent than the actual subject casting the shadow.



10. GET CLOSE

There's no rule against cropping out most of the subject's face. This draws more attention to the parts that are left in the frame.



11. (UN)FOCUS

Out-of-focus subjects can be more interesting than the in-focus subjects. It kind of adds some mystery to the image because you can't quite make out who that person is.



12. MOVEMENT

Use movement to show action, even if it blurs out the subject entirely. In cases like this, think of the person as a means of creating the subject rather than being the actual subject.



13. CAPTURE THE MOMENT

Catch somebody doing something they love, even if it's not staged. Street photography is one of my favorite genres because it captures life as it happens — unstaged and unposed.



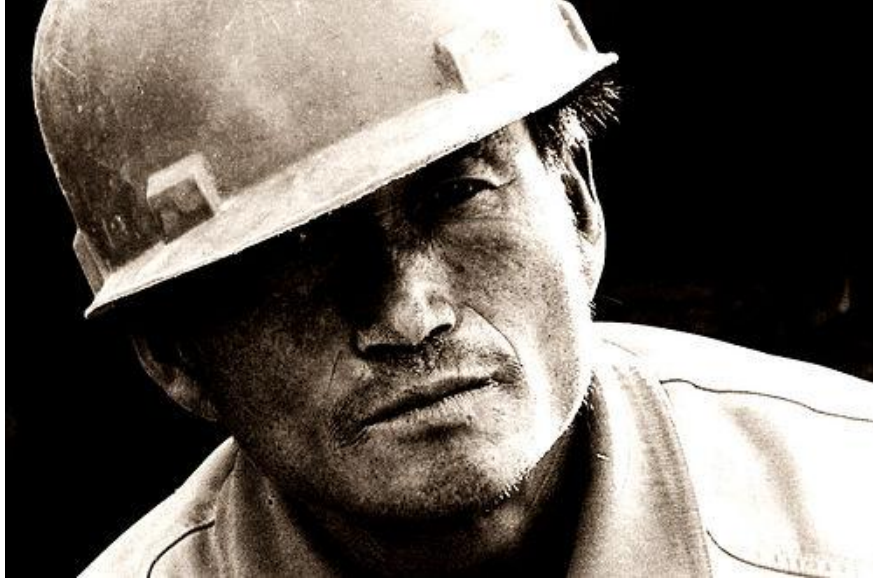
14. COLORS

Use vibrant and contrasting colors to draw attention to parts of your subject. This could be makeup, clothing, accessories, or whatever else you can get your hands on.



15. GET SERIOUS

Not all portraits need to have a smile, capture the serious emotions too. Some of my favorite portraits have no hint of a smile in them, and they're highly emotional.



16. PROPS

Use the props and tools around you to make the setting more interesting. Find things to place your subject in, on, under, around, etc.

