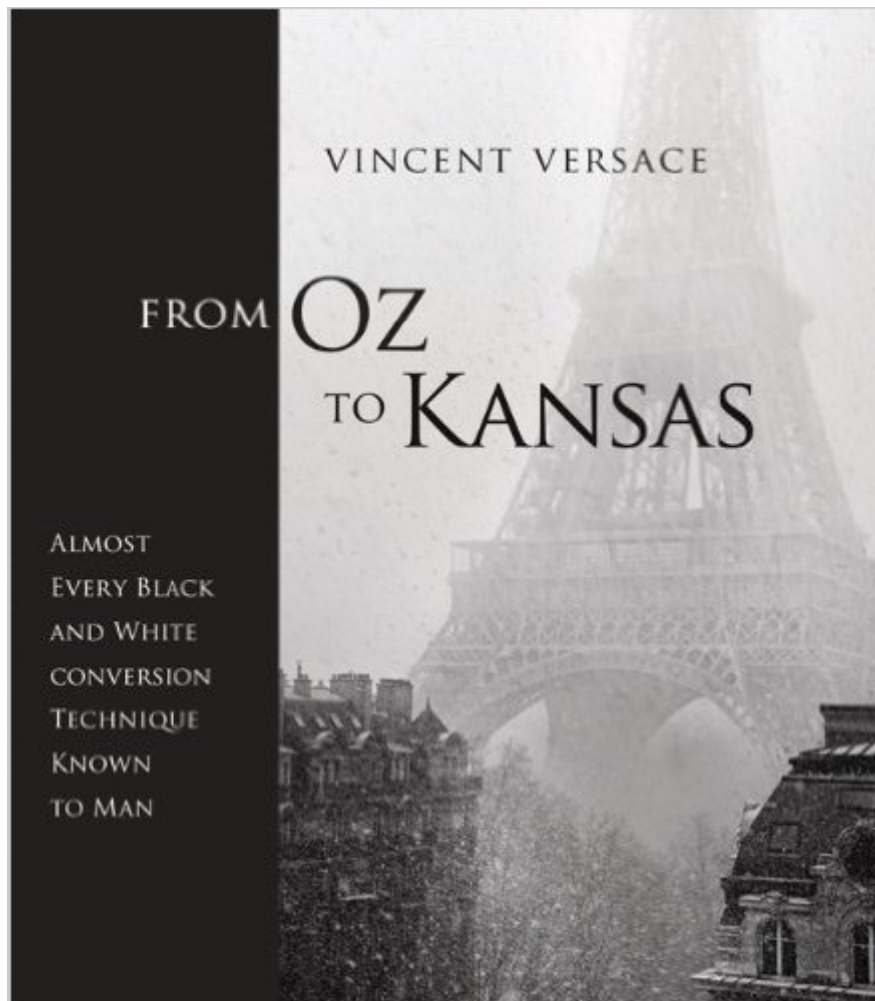


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# From Oz To Kansas: Almost Every Black And White Conversion Technique Known To Man (Voices That Matter)



## Synopsis

The ability to create a stunning black and white image remains one of photography's greatest and most aspirational skills. Being able to "see" in black and white is an enviable capability, and a well-crafted black and white photograph remains the finest of the fine arts. Master photographer Vincent Versace has spent his career teaching the art of perception and how to translate it into extraordinary black and white images. In *From Oz to Kansas: Almost Every Black and White Conversion Technique Known to Man*, Versace discusses digital black and white photography "with a nod to traditional film-based techniques. As Versace states, today the goal is "to use what was right and good about silver photography, leaving behind what was limiting, and use what is right and good about digital photography, while avoiding its pitfalls. This is what this book is all about." The reason you must learn "almost every black and white conversion technique known to man" is because, depending on the image "and your goals for it" "there are many paths you can take in order to arrive at your final destination. Working through Versace's techniques will give you the essential knowledge you need, as well as the ability to select the appropriate conversion technique for any image, allowing you to create a black and white image that best and most accurately reflects what you felt at the moment that you pressed the shutter. Foreword by Dr. Richard Zakia, Professor Emeritus, Rochester Institute of Technology Afterword by John Fraser, Chef and Proprietor, Dovetail Restaurant, New York

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I still remember the first time I attended one of Vincent Versace's classes at Photoshop World on his Black and White Conversion technique. Then, as now, I was blown away by his vision for the conversion as well as his approach. So much so, that at the next three Photoshop World's that I attended, I always made a point to attend his class to get a better understanding of his approach and technique as well as try to pick up just one more tidbit. Now, with *From Oz to Kansas: Almost Every Black and White Conversion Technique Known to Man*, it's like having his seminar on my desk for reference anytime I need it. I've always been in awe of Vincent's photography. His color photographic art has always amazed me, but it's his black and white art that I believe he will be best known for years and years from now. His approach is like none other and I've been fortunate enough to sit next to some of today's best known photographers and Photoshop experts and watch their techniques. What is so refreshing about *From Oz to Kansas: Almost Every Black and White Conversion Technique Known to Man*, is that Vincent tirelessly explains not only the HOW of each black and white conversion technique, but more importantly, the WHY of each technique. In any pursuit, it is worth asking WHY. We should never just accept a technique because an instructor that we've paid to see says so. You may, in the end, decide on a technique that gives you the look you want at the expense of throwing away 2/3 of your image data. But you should make that decision KNOWING what you're doing, not just because someone told you or because the Photoshop Action you've downloaded does it. Vincent's book doesn't tell you that his preferred method for conversion is the best. Hardly.

As other reviewers have pointed out VV knows his stuff: the book is chock-a-block with technique, theory, wise quotes and philosophy. The techniques are explained in minute detail as are the whys and wherefores. And for me therein lies the rub, and I do think there needs to be some down to earth counterpoint to all the glowing accolades here. I found it needed too much effort to get past the deep and meaningful stuff that I was left feeling that there must be an easier way to glean the meat of the technical know-how. I had a similar problem with his previous book, and as detailed and intricate as this one is, there are only so many hours in the day and it will take quite a few to sift through that much information presented this way. Some of it looks like slightly pretentious padding or a self justifying attempt to set himself above other writers on technique. If you want to read a book on how to be true to your own vision, or how important it is to dare to experiment, or what Albert Einstein had to say that's (just about) relevant, or to see any more of the sort of quotes that are found so ubiquitously on Facebook (and eagerly illustrated with VVs personal philosophy) then you

might enjoy those digressions, but frankly George DeWolfe does it much more succinctly and less intrusively in his book on printing. If you are in fact interested in the philosophy of the thing I recommend the likes of Roland Barthes, Susan Sontag, John Berger or any of the many others who devote whole books or essays to the subject rather than interspersing it with distracting techniques, and who do it far more justice.

`From Oz to Kansas: Almost every black and white conversion technique known to man' is nine chapters of Versace's passion to discuss, teach, quote, and inspire the reader about photography and to provide guides on how to optimally use the digital darkroom to create black and white images. This book is a repository for black and white information for the technical, the intellectual and the artist. It is amazing to read and to be entertained by his writing style, how-to screen shots, rich illustrations and timely quotes from Einstein to Haas. I found that my own creative workflows were challenged and a new inquisitiveness was engaged in revelations based on a master artist's fundamental knowledge of the digital medium. The how to of his why is your pathway to exploration, and to quote Jay Maisel, 'Think in terms of revelation'. Here is a sample sentence of a Versace term called Chromatic Grayscale, 'Everything on your journey toward understanding the art of science and science of the art of creating a chromatic grayscale image from a full-color one is about to be applied in this next technique'. There is a section on dynamics range, the zone system, exposing to the right ..But Vince has put them all in a comparison context of a historical baseline to today's current technology. You are not reading a book released based on last years technology. This book is replete with an early adopter's technology understanding of D4 hardware and CS6 software. Vince goes thru the history of digital black and white conversions, when to use and not use desaturation, what the impact and limitation of LAB conversions are. It's really amazing to find out what your current B&W conversion is really doing to your image and why that B&W look has eluded you.

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