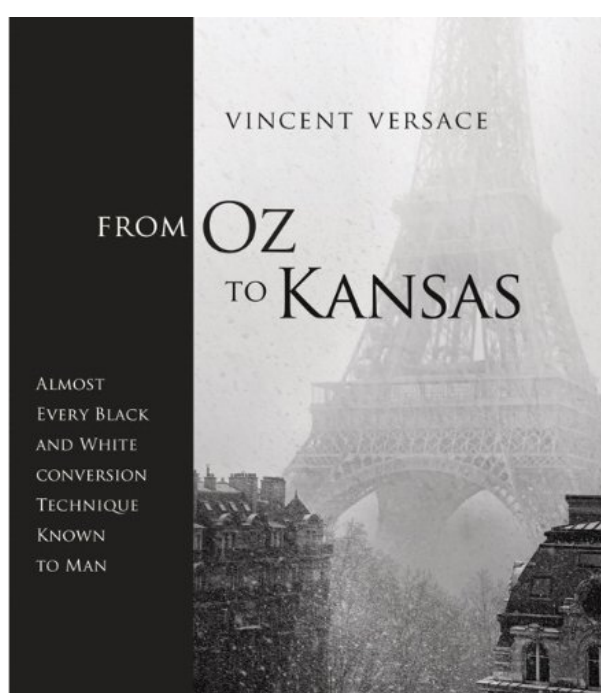
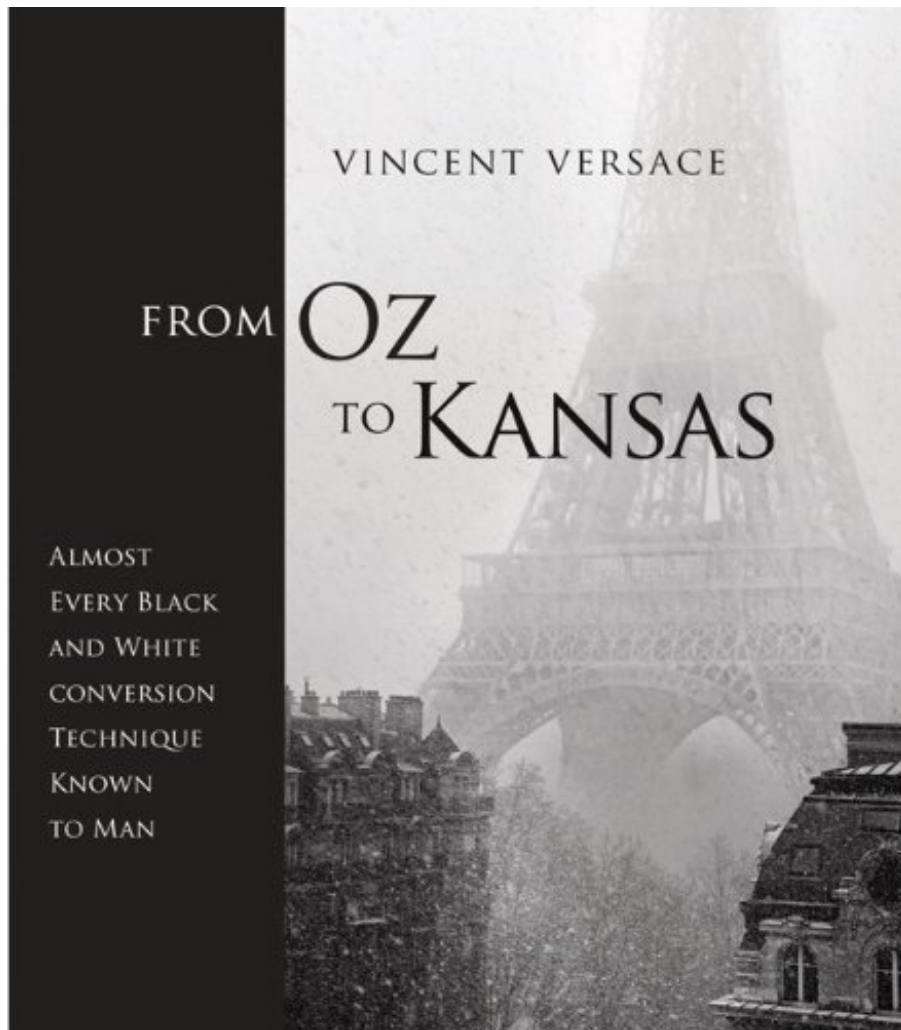


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## About the Author

Vincent Versace is a recipient of the Computerworld Smithsonian Award in Media Arts and Entertainment, the Shellenberg fine art award, a four-time nominee to the Photoshop Hall of Fame and is the author of the best selling book Welcome to Oz, the first edition of which was chosen as Shutterbug magazine's best how to book of the year. Versace is a member of the Epson Stylus Pros, a Nikon Legend Behind the Lens, an Xrite Colorotti, Lexar Elite Photographer, and an American Photo Magazine Mentor Trek and Master Class instructor.

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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

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## Features

- Used Book in Good Condition

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the Shellenberg fine art award, a four-time nominee to the Photoshop Hall of Fame and is the author of the best selling book *Welcome to Oz*, the first edition of which was chosen as *Shutterbug* magazine's best how to book of the year. Versace is a member of the Epson Stylus Pros, a Nikon Legend Behind the Lens, an Xrite Colorotti, Lexar Elite Photographer, and an American Photo Magazine Mentor Trek and Master Class instructor.

Most helpful customer reviews

24 of 26 people found the following review helpful.

Another Educational and Inspirational title from Vincent Versace

By Mike Wong

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. Instead, his book lays out for you, how you use each conversion method, along with why and when you should consider it.

This book is about helping you, as a photographer interested in Black and White as your art form, becoming better at achieving your vision.

Vincent says in the Last Words section, "To reiterate - technique does not define your image; you define it. Once you have determined that definition, then you decide upon which techniques best suit the requirements that you have for that image so that it expresses your voice."

If you are a photographer who is searching for a way to better achieve and reach your vision, then I highly recommend adding this book to your collection. You will not be disappointed. Your black and white prints will be better as a result.

20 of 23 people found the following review helpful.

Useful but could be laid out better

By Digital-Finger

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.

Obviously what he's trying to emphasise here is that technique alone is not enough, and you need to know when to apply what technique etc, but if you're buying a book subtitled 'almost every black and white conversion technique known to man' then any of that stuff should be superfluous or self-evident.

He does explain in detail how to use techniques which certainly are useful, but I question whether, once the veneer and waffle is stripped out from this book, it is any different to any other on the topic. I don't think it is. Nor do I think he fulfills his claims: there are other methods which he doesn't mention, AFAICS, the most useful of which IMO is a method taught by Martin Henson, who doesn't have a book but does have a DVD and who is refreshingly unpretentious and down to earth) There's only one technique ( the last one) I didn't know in the book, which is enough to make it worthwhile for me, but the rest could still have been enjoyable were it not so ponderous. Also Jeff Schewe's teaches a different method in his book the digital negative, even though it is very close to the last one VV teaches.

Frankly I could do without all the philosophy and theory and would rather have just the nitty gritty in a more accessible form, though I appreciate that all the info in there is basically good info - but I can't help wondering whether there might have been a way to separate the theory and philosophy from the practical aspects. Probably not, if VV was going doing it.

Perhaps I would prefer this info to be presented in an alternative medium like a DVD (Video), where you could pick chapters stripped of the theory and philosophy, I do understand that the style of this book is integral to his personal vision and that it has its place; Im not arguing that it shouldn't be there at all, just that in the book the techniques feel weighed down rather than expedited by the theory and philosophy and notes and asides.

I found the screenshots too small to read, fortunately I know what they refer to already but someone new to this might find it very irritating. Also he really should get a better proofreader.

I do admire VVs work and his expertise so as far as this book's concerned it could be said simply that his

writing style just isn't for me and leave it at that, I accept he does have a lot of really good technical know how in there too, and the book is worth it for that; I just question though whether it couldn't be presented in a more digestible form. I would still recommend it though but with the above reservations.

NB:

The download page is hard to find if you miss it first time. In the book he gives the link for downloads (one assumes at the time) as his website - so that's where I expected to find the downloads page - but no - you have to subscribe, which APPEARS to be about providing you access to the site and (you assume) the content mentioned in the book, and yes the email confirmation will then grant you access to his site, but whoa - you just missed it!

Thus looking on his site for the downloads is frustrating as not only is the link to the downloads not there, (AFAICS) but the link on his site- to his new book -doesn't work, it takes you instead to his old books. The text for the links is tiny- so I tried it four times just in case I had missed the url they are so tiny.

Go back to the confirmation email for subscribing and check out the link at the bottom of the subscription confirmation. THAT is where the downloads page is hidden. Great if you like games but not so much fun otherwise.

Also much of his site appears to be Flash based and Vincent appears to be using a Mac (in the book) so you'd think he'd know better than have his site Flash based.

This probably doesn't matter that much in the event, as I doubt the free plug-ins will work on a PPC Mac and the actions I can create myself easily enough, but it is frustrating that the link in the book for downloads is not clear or specific enough

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

Vincent Versace - From Oz to Kansas

By Ed Fritz

`From Oz to Kansas: Almost every black and white conversion technique know 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. Your journey of education ends up in Chapter Seven, where he provides you with the keys to Kansas, How to use RGB channels separately on a channel mixer and adjustment layer.

The book also provides links to free NIK plug Ins, which work with Vincent's free actions, and downloadable ZIP files of his Images to practice workflows. In the end, this book is a practical guide for all levels of photographers and it should become the definitive book on digital B&W and conversion techniques.

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