



National Preservation Institute

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Digital and Film Photography of Cultural Resources

Seminar Overview

Understanding subject matter, composition, technique, and equipment are critical to a successful photodocumentation project. Review the use of digital and film photography techniques for mitigation documentation and for National Register nomination packages, with emphasis on survey work, presentations, publications, and the web. Compare camera formats (35 mm, medium, and large for film; 35 mm equivalent and digital backs for digital) and digital vs. film output and storage options. Discuss requirements for reviewing agencies and archival processes. Explore issues involved in contracting and supervising photographic projects.

Agenda

Day One

- Introduction: instructor's background and biases, what the participants want to get out of the seminar
- Understanding significance of the subject and the ultimate use of the documentation
 - Nomination packages
 - Presentations
 - Exhibitions
 - Publications
 - Stills for web and videos productions
- Requirements of reviewing agencies
 - Survey
 - Medium or large format

Approximately 60 percent of the day will be spent doing exterior photography of buildings, structures and landscapes using 35 mm digital and film formats, comparing how each camera handles, and reviewing the results from the digital and film shots on Day 2 of the seminar. Participants are encouraged to bring their own equipment. Traditional medium- and large-format equipment formats can also be discussed if there is participant interest.

- Equipment and output—digital vs. film
 - Hardware and software
 - Film types—black and white, color; darkroom processes
 - Digital output options

Day Two

- Interior photography and lighting techniques—digital vs. film
 - Natural
 - Natural augmented with strobes
 - Natural augmented with continuous lighting
 - White light and other balancing
- Review photographs from first day
 - Discuss camera technique in the field
- Processing and assembling final work
 - Archival processing for reviewing agencies and HABS/HAER
 - Issues of stability
 - Assembling package
 - Transmitting package/delivery systems
- Summation
 - Optional discussion topics, i.e., 4" x 5" photography for HABS/HAER documentation
 - Contracting for or supervising photographic projects
 - Original assumptions about photodocumentation vs. new knowledge