

The “Sheldon Method” ©2019 For Picking A Photographic Paper

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A. Understand paper:

Paper can generally be broken down into the following coated surfaces.

(Glossy, Lustre, Pearl, Semi-Gloss, Satin) & Matte

The first 5 are generally resin coated (RC) and are used with a Photo Black ink setup and the Matte papers are generally used with a Matte Black ink.

The paper base is generally either Alpha Cellulose (normally wood pulp or rice based) or Rag which is cotton based. All surfaces can be made from either base and generally the name will mention “Rag” if it is made from cotton. All others can be presumed to be Alpha Cellulose! Sometimes they can be a blend of both bases.

Texture: Smooth, Stippled, Textured
Weight: 70gsm – 500gsm

Tone: Bright White, Natural, Metallic, Toned
Stiffness: Rigid – Flexible

B. Evaluating an image:

Consider images as two extremes. Let us give them attributes as Masculine to Feminine!

Masculine could have deep tones, hard contrast, defined shapes and gritty type images whereas Feminine can be pastel coloured, soft toned, delicate composition and generally lower contrast.

The scale could be 0-10 where 0 is Masculine, 5 could be either, and 10 would be Feminine!
The actual sexuality of the subject does not play any part of this in evaluating the image!

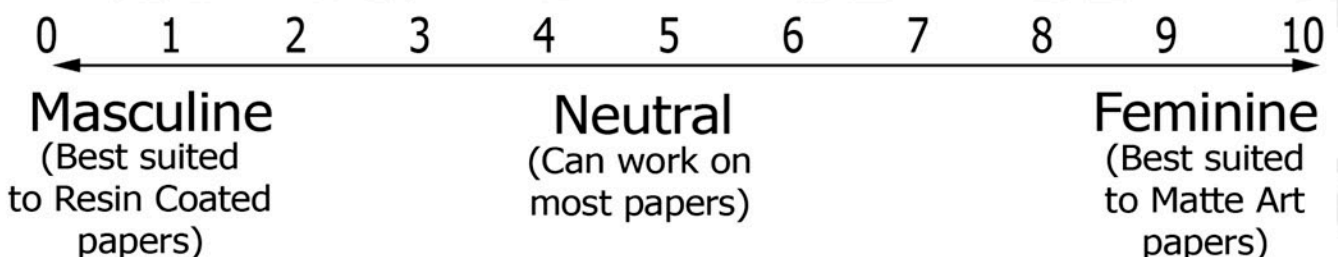
C. Score your images and choose a paper!

Masculine images with a 0-3 score suit Resin Coated papers.

Feminine images with a 7-10 score work well on Matte Art Papers.

Images scoring 4-6 can work well on both papers!

Images with natural texture work well on textured papers whereas soft subtle images work best on smooth. Texture is often perceived by the brain but missed by the eye in the printed image and we often see an image that really works because of this principle. Images with natural reflections such as chrome and water reflections work well on glossy, metallic surfaces and images that convey warmth work on natural or warm toned papers.



Like all rules in photography they can be broken!

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