



CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY

## **Guidelines for Health and Safety Procedures (relevant to working in the Black and White Darkroom)**

### **Before Starting Work in the Darkroom and Turning Off the Main Lights**

- Make sure all work surfaces are clean and free of debris, litter etc.
- Put any bags or belongings away from these work areas.
- Remember the darkroom is a low light, and even no light, working environment. Be sure to store coats, bags etc. where they cannot be tripped over.
- Locate eye wash station.
- Do not take food or drink into the darkroom.

### **Correct Use of Chemicals in the Darkroom**

Most common photographic chemicals can be used safely if simple precautions are followed. The following safety tips are applicable to most aqueous chemicals used in black-and-white and color photography. Always read the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for a specific chemical before use.

- Always keep chemicals away from the dry benches and electricity.
- Do not touch electrical equipment, enlargers, timers etc. with wet or damp hands. This is one of the reasons darkrooms are built with a dry bench area, for enlargers etc., and a wet bench area, for chemicals, printing trays, developing tanks etc.
- Do not walk around carrying chemicals in printing trays, developing tanks etc. You can spill them and cause the floor to become slippery.
- Wear protective gloves and/or breathing mask if applicable, if not, avoid prolonged contact with photographic chemicals. If you have sensitive skin take special care.
- When printing use printing tongs. When you have finished, wash your hands.
- Take care not to put fingers in or near your mouth and do not rub your eyes. If you get chemicals in your eyes, via a splash or rubbing your eyes, use eyewash and seek medical attention. Take the chemical bottle, showing label, with you when you visit Doctors. Wearing goggles is a responsible preventative measure.
- If you have a cut or a graze on your hand protect it with a waterproof plaster. After you have finished working in the darkroom remove the plaster as it may have chemicals on it.
- Always wipe up any spillage right away.
- Always wash hands after using chemicals and before eating, drinking, or smoking.

### **When mixing chemistry:**

- Always wear safety goggles and gloves when handling and mixing chemicals.
- Avoid creating dust when mixing dry photographic chemicals. Use premixed chemicals if available. Wet mop any spilled dry chemicals.
- Use the least toxic chemicals available. Avoid cyanides, heavy metals, and developers containing pyrocatechol or pyrogallol.
- When mixing water and acid, always add the acid to the water to prevent violent splashing.
- Identify incompatible chemicals from information on MSDSs, for example which ones react violently and/or release fumes when mixed. Do not mix acids or bleach baths with developers or fixers - sulphur dioxide gas will be given off which can cause breathing discomfort, especially for asthmatics.
- When pouring chemicals take care not to splash.
- Dispose of chemical wastes properly.



CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY

## Health and Safety Waiver

This is an agreement on \_\_\_\_\_ (M/D/Y), between Gallery 44 and the following participant in the \_\_\_\_\_ workshop.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

The participant acknowledges and represents that he/she has read the safety information sheet on handling photographic chemistry.

The participant further acknowledges that Gallery 44 makes no representation or promise or warranty as to the safe handling of the chemicals or materials that any member/student of Gallery 44, including the Workshop participant, brings, or permits to be brought, on to the premises of Gallery 44.

The participant waives as to Gallery 44, together with its employees, directors and officers, all liability, expressed or implied, arising by law, contract or in negligence, for damages or injury connected in any way to the chemicals or other materials, including their use, that any participant/member, including the Workshop participant, brings, or permits to be brought, onto the premises of Gallery 44. The Participant agrees that this waiver shall be binding upon his/her heirs, assigns and personal representatives.

This agreement is dated \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature required for participants under 18 \_\_\_\_\_

Per Gallery 44 (Instructor – Print name & Sign) \_\_\_\_\_