

Vivid and Dramatic Colours: Long Exposure Times & Artificial Light

This photo used an LED flashlight to selectively light small sections of leaves on the floor. To help narrow the beam of light you can put a six inch long piece of black PVC tubing or cardboard tube over the front of flashlight. This tubing also helps prevent stray light from causing *lens flare* into the camera lens. You then underexpose the ambient light (the light on the subjects without the flashlight beam cast on it) by one or two F-stops. Then you use a long exposure. Using your flashlight you can then “dab” bits of light here and there during the long exposure.

The intention of this type of photo is to create a dappled light effect – the spots of light you see come between the trees in the forest. The colours as a result of the long exposure time and artificial light become very different than the natural colours you see. The fall colours of leaves that you are familiar with become deeper and more saturated.

Without using Photoshop to manipulate colours and channels you can adjust your range of tones and hues in this way. The result is that it looks more natural and does not end up looking manipulated, photo shopped and digitized. (Because it wasn't!)

The lesson to glean here is that the more you are able to control your camera by understanding how it works and how to apply the settings the better your photos will be. *A really skilled photographer adjusts in camera NOT in software!*



This image was taken using a Canon EOS on a stable surface.

The exposure triangle was: ISO 50 with a 2 minute exposure time at f 16

A Streamlight Stinger was the flashlight type. (It's a really powerful concentrated beam flashlight!)