Charcoal Silhouette and Value Contrast for Scary Scenes

Topic reference / ordinary illustration



Ordinary topic reference. Hypothetical dimensions in the four tasks are supplied in their own text; this illustration is not their measured answer.

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Worked example / complete source key

On a hypothetical 20 cm by 25 cm sheet, plan a scary scene with one large dark doorway shape and a smaller dark figure shape. The light area is the wall around the doorway. Describe the value choices and the dark-to-light ratio.

Answer: Measure the sheet as 20 cm by 25 cm. Make a four-patch value scale. Choose the doorway and figure to be patch 4 (near-black) and the wall to be patch 1 or 2 (white or light gray). Place the doorway off-center, occupying roughly one third of the sheet area, and the figure smaller beside it. The dark shapes together cover about half the sheet, so the dark-to-light ratio is about one to one, but the dark mass is concentrated and the light area is broken up. Squint to confirm the doorway and figure still read as solid dark shapes. Check the silhouette areas against patch 4 and the wall against patch 1 or 2.