

Total Myth: The blacks and shadows in a tintype or ambrotype are going to be deeper and darker when you fix with Potassium Cyanide fixer rather than with plain Sodium Thiosulfate fixer.

Only in somebody's piss poor manual, or possibly someone on the net mouthing said piss poor manual, will you find such unfounded foolishness. The truth is the blacks and shadows will be just as black in a properly developed plate, fixed by either fixer. But, as everyone should know by now, the highlights will be noticeably brighter and warmer in a cyanide fixed plate as compared to a hypo fixed plate. Also, as everyone should know by now, the depth and brilliance of the blacks and shadows of a properly developed plate are governed by the plate itself, as much as anything. A baked asphalt paint japanned plate will have deeper warmer blacks than an aluminum trophy plate's cooler, slightly greyer blacks. An asphalt paint backed ambrotype or black glass ambrotype will have even deeper and richer blacks. Yet the trophy plates continue to rein supreme on the current wet-plate scene. Unfortunately, cheapness, ease, and convenience trump beauty, substance, and history, in these hip wet-plate times. This we also sadly know.