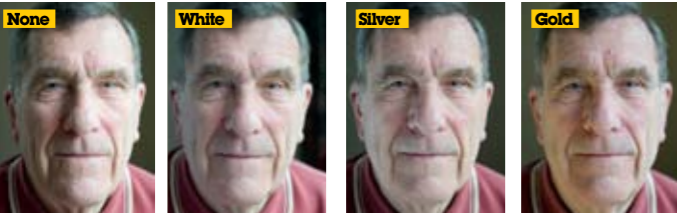
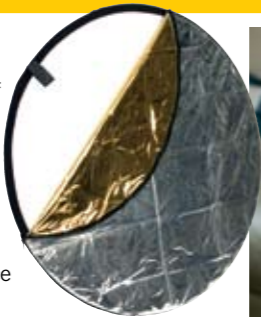


Technique watch

USING A REFLECTOR

When shooting a windowlit portrait, such as this, with your subject side-on to the window, one side of the face will be brightly lit, while the other will remain in shadows. This can create a very striking, contrasty look, but that's not always the look that you'll be after. A simple way to compensate for the uneven lighting is to use a reflector, to bounce light back onto the parts of your subject's face that are in shadows. Here, I used the *Digital SLR Photography* 5-in-1 reflector, and below, you can see the difference that each of the different coloured sides has made.



If you're sans assistant, ask your subject to hold the reflector. (They will feel the light hitting their face.)



1 First of all, I placed a stool by the window. It's important to choose the right place, taking into account where the subject's face will be. The trick is to ensure the light falls directly onto the face. I then set up my tripod and mounted the camera on it. I looked through the viewfinder to make sure that the camera was the right distance from Bob for the close-up shot I wanted.



2 Once everything was in place, I asked Bob to position himself in a comfortable pose. I set the camera to ISO 200 (the lowest native setting on the D700), with an aperture of f/2.8, as I just wanted to keep Bob's eyes and the front of his face in focus, throwing the background into a blur. I then took a few quick shots, and reviewed them on the camera's LCD screen.

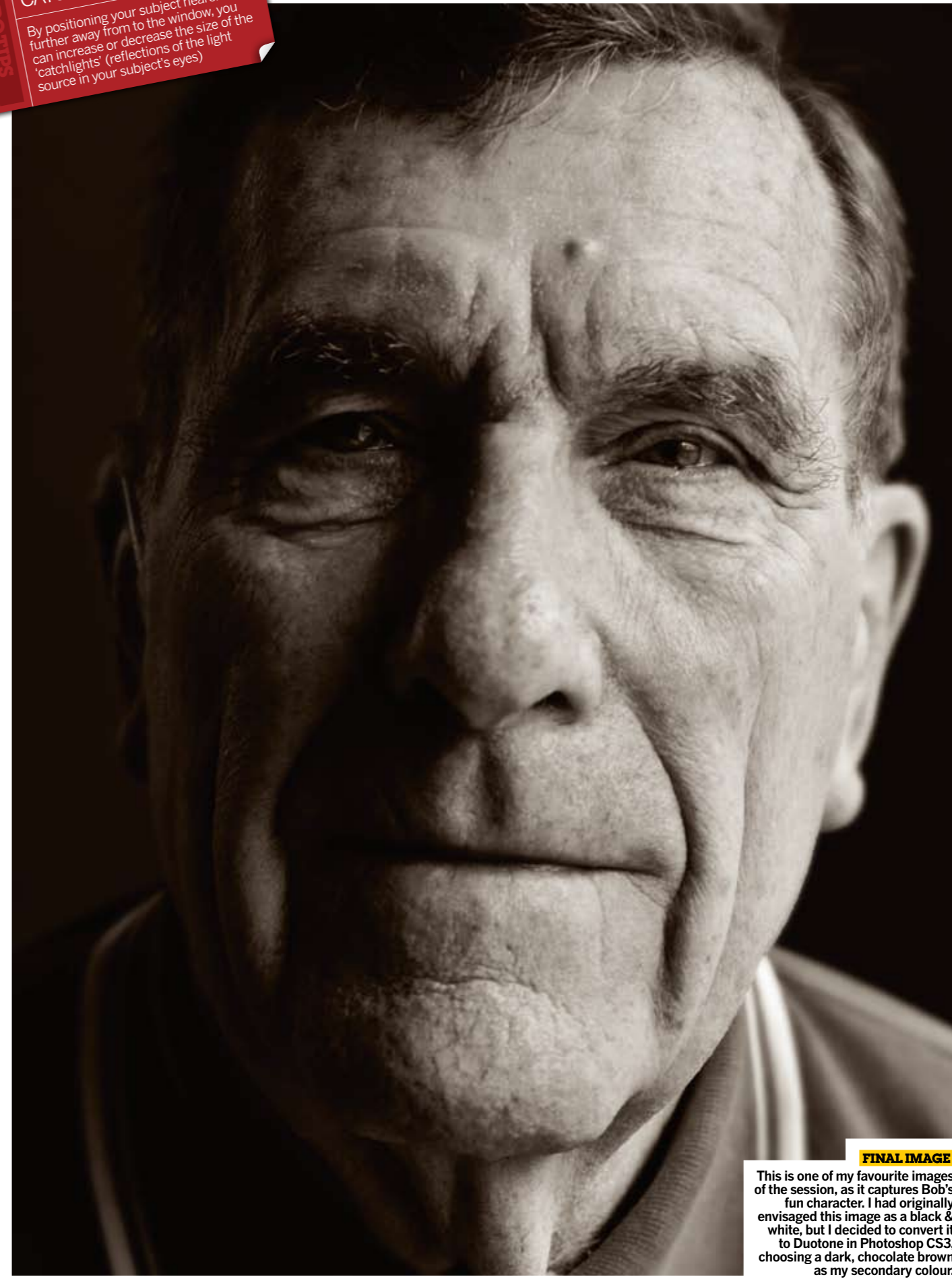


3 Because of the low light, I was getting longer shutter speeds than I wanted, which made any slight movement on Bob's part really show up. Some of his facial features were also slightly blurred, due to the shallow depth-of-field, so I upped the ISO to 800, and stopped the aperture down to f/5.6, to give me a faster shutter speed and to increase the depth-of-field.



4 I took a few shots of Bob, looking straight at the camera, but the images didn't fully capture his vivacious character; so I engaged him in conversation. Bob looks remarkably young for his 80 years, and has a great sense of humour, so by provoking a bit of emotion in his face, it showed up more of his laughter lines and added a bit more interest to the shots.

PRO TIPS
CATCH LIGHT IN THE EYES!
By positioning your subject nearer to or further away from the window, you can increase or decrease the size of the 'catchlights' (reflections of the light source in your subject's eyes)



FINAL IMAGE

This is one of my favourite images of the session, as it captures Bob's fun character. I had originally envisaged this image as a black & white, but I decided to convert it to Duotone in Photoshop CS3, choosing a dark, chocolate brown as my secondary colour.