

Sculpting Beauty with Negative Fill

THE LOOK

A controlled beauty setup designed to create **contrast, contour and depth** while keeping the skin beautifully illuminated.

The lighting is intentionally built around **one large soft source + negative fill**, rather than adding multiple hard lights.



KEY LIGHT

Modifier: Top-Down Umbrella with Diffuser

Position: In front of and slightly above the model, angled downward

The large diffused umbrella creates a **soft, broad light source** that wraps around the face and gives smooth, flattering skin tones.

Because the source is positioned top-down, it naturally creates some shadow under the chin and along the sides of the face. This is where the negative fill becomes important.



NEGATIVE FILL

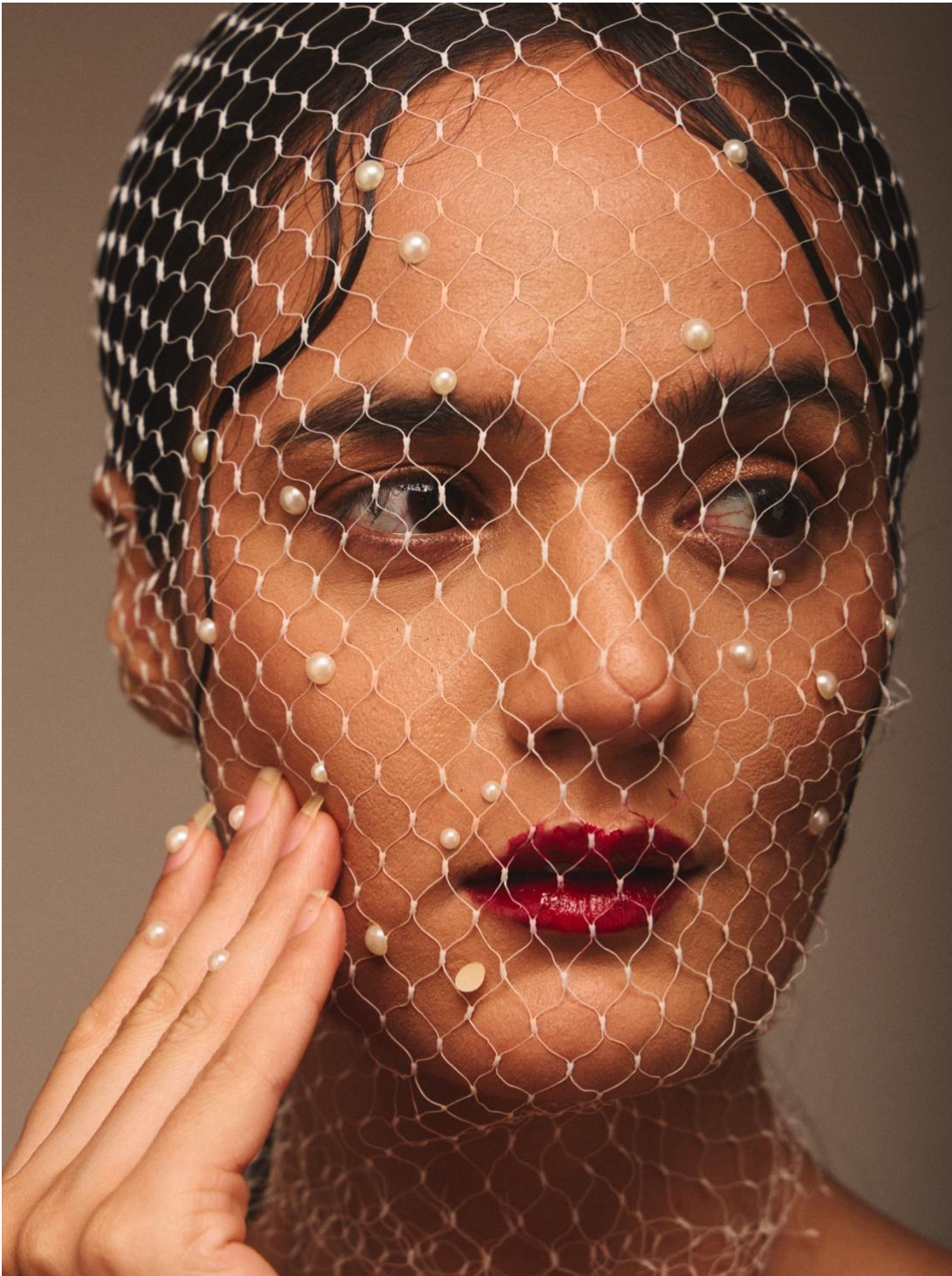
Total: 3 Black Negative Fills

Left + Right:

Two black negative fills are positioned behind the model on either side.

Their job is to **absorb the surrounding bounced light** and prevent the light from wrapping too far around the face and body.

This gives the image stronger side-to-side contrast and helps define the contours of the face.



Under the Chin:

A third black negative fill is placed below the model's chin. This prevents light from bouncing back upward into the chin and neck area, creating a **deeper, more controlled shadow** and giving the face more structure.



WHITE FILL

Total: 2 White Reflectors

One white reflector is placed on each side **in front of the model**.

These aren't being used to eliminate all the shadows. Instead, they provide controlled fill to **balance the contrast created by the negative fills**.

This gives us the best of both worlds:



Negative fill → Creates contrast

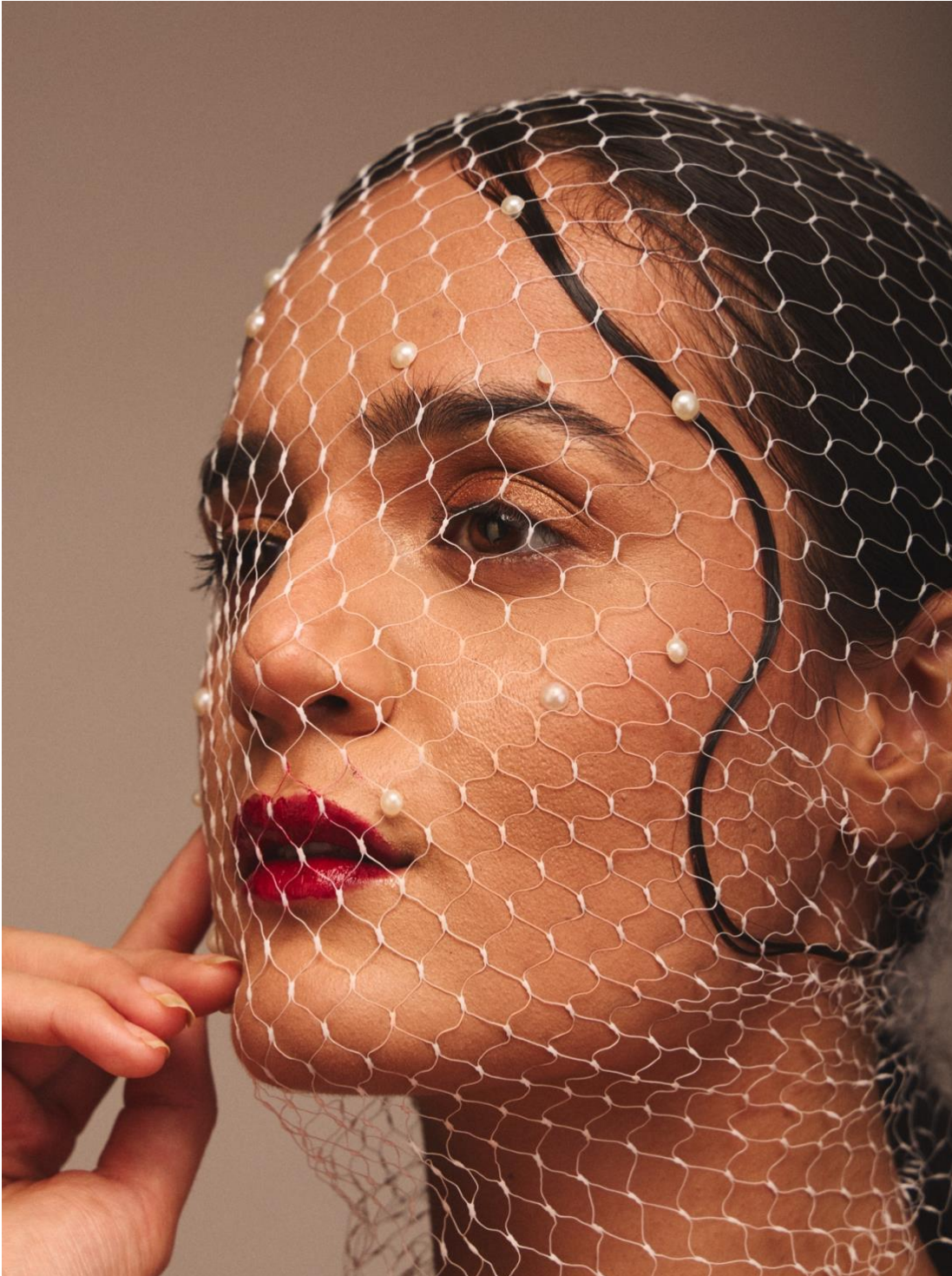
White fill → Controls the contrast

WHY THIS SETUP WORKS

The important part of this setup is that the negative fills are doing as much work as the light itself.

The umbrella gives us the soft, flattering base exposure, while the black flags stop unwanted bounce and sculpt the face.

The white reflectors then bring back just enough detail into the shadows without making the lighting flat.



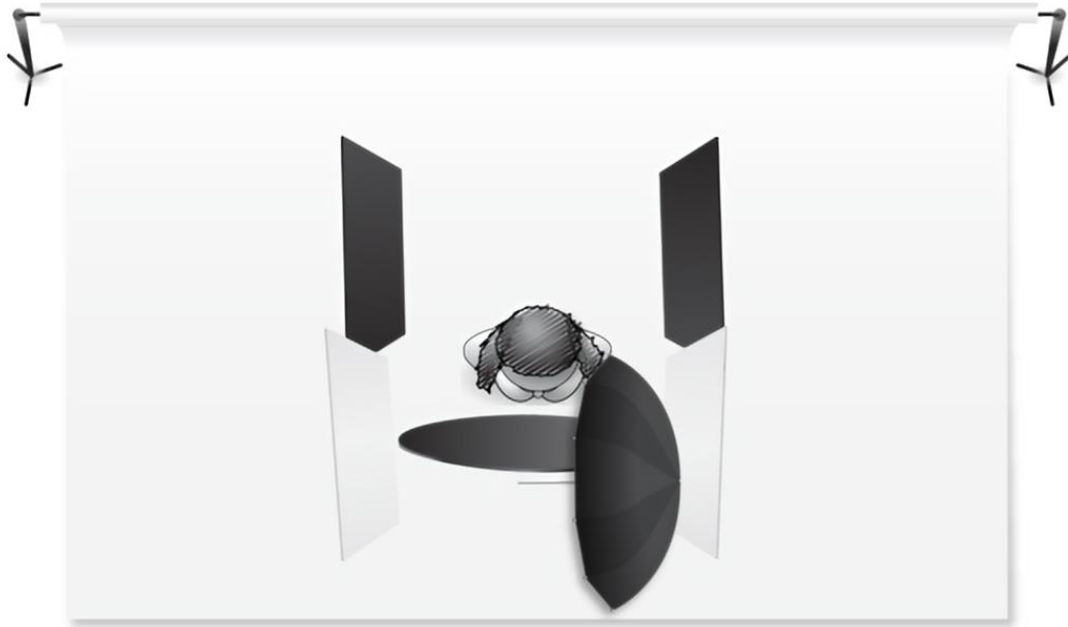
LIGHTING FORMULA

Top-Down Diffused Umbrella → Softness + Base Exposure

Black Negative Fill → Contrast + Contour

White Reflectors → Controlled Shadow Fill

Chin Negative Fill → Deeper Jawline + Facial Definition



Camera: Canon R6 m2
Lens: 24-105mm f/4
Shutter: 1/160
Aperture: f/9
ISO: 100


SetMyLight
by Siddology

rylights.com

KEY TAKEAWAY

Don't always add light to create dimension.

Sometimes the easiest way to make a face look more sculpted is to **take light away**.

Negative fill is one of the simplest and most powerful tools for controlling contrast in beauty and portrait photography.

