



photography

Monte Nagler

Bare trees open up new, stark views for photos

Don't think for a minute, because fall leaves and colors are gone, that trees become boring photographic subjects. On the contrary, trees are always fascinating and are a favorite subject for my camera no matter what the season.

In winter and early spring, trees offer a whole new appearance — one of starkness and boldness as bare branches reach outward and upward in dramatic, geometric, and sometimes romantic patterns.

Use a small enough aperture to get the depth of field you need to render both the foreground and background in sharp focus. The depth-of-field scale on the lens barrel, or your camera's depth preview button, will assure that everything will be sharp. Out-of-focus branches will spoil what may have been an exceptional shot.

Bare trees and branches can also be shot against the sky to obtain stark, graphic designs that often will display

the beautiful flowing patterns of nature.

BEGIN BY studying the composition in the viewfinder carefully to make sure there's a balance and flow to the elements in your picture. Try to get a certain "rhythm" in your shot.

Then, take your exposure reading off the sky, and the branches will appear as a design of black silhouettes. Tree silhouettes work especially well against a dramatic sunset or cloud pattern, too. If you desire to show some detail and texture in the gnarled branches, open up one or two f-stops and then take your shot.

GO OUTSIDE if it should snow.

The contrast between fallen snow and dark branches is dramatic and will reward you with many exciting pictures.

Whether it's an overall scene of bare trees in a field of fallen snow or an intimate shot of a single branch laced delicately with a few frosty flakes, you'll be glad you braved the chill.

So let your photographic knowledge branch out by letting bare trees and branches add a new and challenging dimension to your photography.

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A dramatic sunset was given more intensity when Monte Nagler shot it using a leafless tree in the foreground.



A globe willow tree's bare branches offer a startling view of nature's symmetry in this Monte Nagler photo.

Short shots

Columnist Monte Nagler will teach a beginning photography class series at the Farmington Community Center starting Jan. 19. He will also conduct a one-day workshop at the University of Michigan Botanical Gardens in Ann Arbor on Jan. 22. Phone the center at 477-8404 for registration information on both events.

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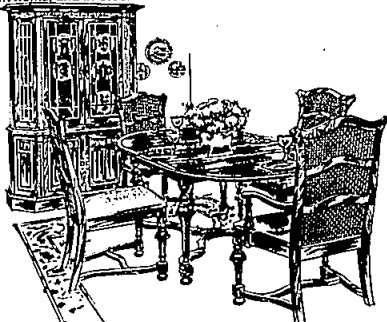
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