



photography

Monte Nagler

Color photo grabs; black-white lasts

Photographs are certainly an important part of our daily lives. They can be found in newspapers, on billboards, in our magazines or in a treasured family album.

Often we take photographs for granted, looking at the image only without considering the impact that color or lack of color can have on our senses and our interpretation of the image.

Today, I'm going to take a look at color versus black and white in hopes of conveying to you a better understanding of the differences between the two. Hopefully, your appreciation for both will be enhanced.

PERHAPS THE MOST significant difference is aesthetics.

When we look at a color photograph, what is the first thing that "reaches out" and grabs our attention? Color, obviously. Color is beautiful and is appealing to our senses.

It has a ring of familiarity and makes us feel at home in our colorful world. People are comfortable with color photographs because they reflect what is seen and encountered in our daily lives.

Black and white photographs, on the other hand, present more of a challenge, not only to the photographer, but also to the viewer. The subject is complemented and enriched by the tones, contrast, shadows, and textures that give a black and white photograph its "depth."

Most serious photographers prefer working in black and white because they feel they can better express themselves in this form. And viewer can bet-

ter get the photographer's message by the subtleties found in a good black and white print. You might say one's imagination is more stimulated by a black and white photograph.

ANOTHER DIFFERENCE between color and black and white photographs is the keeping quality. Most color photographs will eventually fade. Look at old family albums to see how the color has diminished.

And color pictures hanging on a wall will fade even faster because of constantly being exposed to light. Only expensive color processing methods such as Cibachrome or Dye Transfer will assure some longevity in a color picture.

Black and white photographs, properly processed, possess excellent properties and will retain a quality image for a very long time.

This is one main reason photography collectors favor black and white photographs. Obviously, if an investor is going to purchase a fine art photograph, he's going to want it to last.

COST IS ANOTHER difference in color versus black and white.

Whether you have your own darkroom or rely on your local drugstore or camera shop for processing, black and white will save you dollars.

So, next time you bring out your camera, tune in your photographic vision to some of the differences between color and black and white. Feel free to add a little color to your life. Or if you wish, add a little black and white, too.

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A mangrove tree in the University of Michigan Botanical Gardens has strong dark and light patterns and fine textures, making it an excellent subject for Monte Nagler's camera.



A leaf pattern has the kind of rich tones and deep contrasts that Monte Nagler likes. It, too, was shot in the U-M Botanical Gardens.

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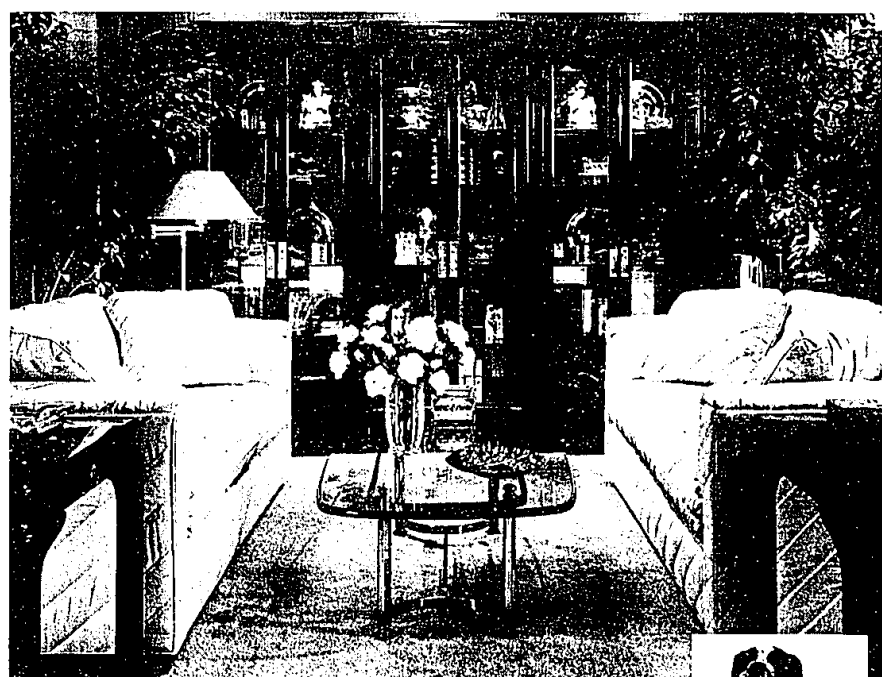
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