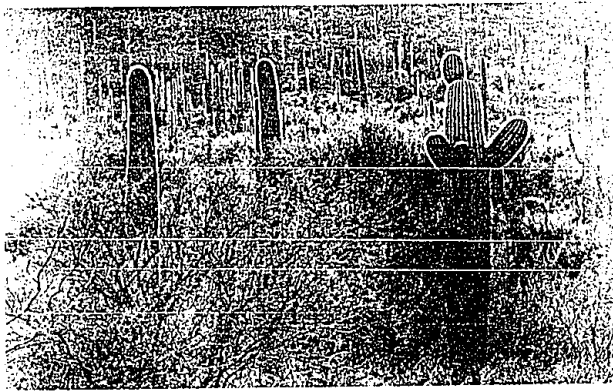




photography
Monte Nagler



Late afternoon back-lighting gave Monte Nagler the opportunity to produce this dramatic photo of Saguero cactus. Notice how the bright edge around each cactus gives the picture important "depth."

Short shots

- Photorama USA, Detroit area photo trade show will take place Saturday and Sunday, April 27 and 28, at Dearborn Civic Center, 15801 Michigan, Dearborn. For information, call 884-2243.
- Monte Nagler's exhibit at Pelletier Gallery of Ann Arbor continues through May 15. For information, call 761-5305.
- Beginning photography class will start Monday, April 29, at The Community House of Birmingham.
- Bill Wilks, manager of Birmingham Camera, will teach the 7:30-9:30 p.m. class. For information, call 644-5832.

Use backlighting to add drama

How many times have you been ready to take a picture only to find yourself inadvertently moving your position to get the sun blasting directly into the subject? Unfortunately, many photographers are under the false impression that full, frontal lighting is a must and that they must take advantage of every light ray available. The result is pictures of squinty-eyed people with harsh shadows in their faces. These unflattering shots frequently end up forgotten in the bottom of a drawer.

FULL FRONTAL lighting is, of course, not necessary. On the contrary, doing the reverse — a complete 180 degree reverse — and placing the sun behind the subject can give pleasing and often dramatic results.

Backlighting creates a bright edge or rim around the subject. It tends to separate it from the background. Backlighting, especially when shining through a soft mist or filtering through trees, will produce sparkling and translucent results.

Remember to shield the lens from the direct rays of the sun. If you don't, internal reflections and glare may be recorded on the film.

Using a lens hood or shading the lens with your hand will solve this potential problem. When photographing people using backlighting, you must pay special attention to exposure. A bright background will tend to trick the camera's meter and you'll underexpose the picture, resulting in too dark a subject.

TO OVERCOME this, move in close to your subject and take a meter reading. Then, move back to your original position and use this reading to expose the shot.

Remember, too, that "fill-in" flash will add sparkle and life to your subject's face while maintaining all of the advantages of backlighting.

Proper exposure for using "fill-in" flash is easy to obtain. Double the guide number of your flash unit and divide this number by the pre-determined f-stop of the scene to be photographed (make sure the shutter speed is correct for flash synchronization).

The answer will be the number of feet you should place yourself from the subject to get a pleasing "fill-in" effect.

In my next column, I'll take backlighting one step further and tell you how you can easily obtain truly dramatic backlit photographs that will bring you acclaim from your family and friends.

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