

FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHY

Give photographs center of interest



MONTE NAGLER

Many good pictures you see aren't the result of a fortunate accident or taken by chance. Most often, they have been planned and created by the photographer.

How do you create strong pictures? Begin by learning good techniques of composition, which include choosing

an effective center of interest for your shot.

For example, have you ever composed a photograph in the viewfinder only to realize that something just isn't right? There's an element missing that if included will give your shot special impact.

Perhaps it's the sunset picture over the lake that just doesn't make it until you include the silhouette of the lighthouse in the viewfinder. Or maybe it's the landscape that lacks impact until you place the dramatic mountain peak in view.

You see, including a center of interest can turn a weak composition into one that's strong in viewer interest.

Avoid placing your center of interest in the center of the picture. In the center, your shot may look static and uninteresting. Use the "rule of thirds."

When you divide your scene into thirds both vertically and horizontally, the dividing lines intersect in four places. Any of these intersections provides a pleasing position for your center of interest.

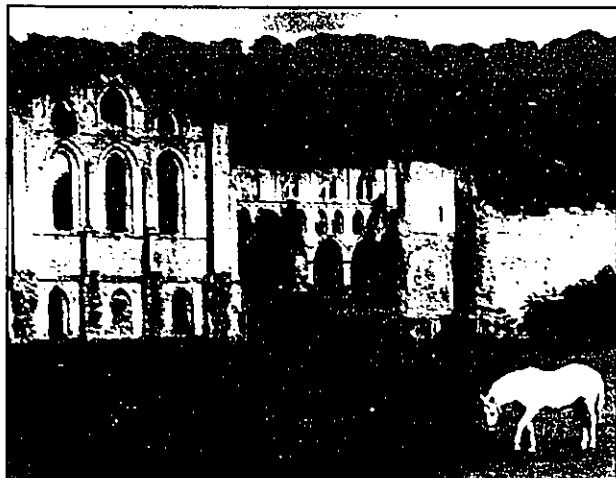
"Framing" techniques and "lead-in lines" that I've discussed in past columns also help add special impact to your main subject.

On a recent trip to England, I visited the historic Rievaulx Abbey, built more than 1,000 years ago. The composition was good, but something was missing. I needed a strong center of interest.

My prayers were answered when a white horse (the ideal color) walked into the viewfinder. Notice how the horse becomes the center of interest. I placed him in the lower right "third" and made sure I used a small aperture to render everything sharp and in focus. What resulted is a captivating picture with the flavor of Old England.

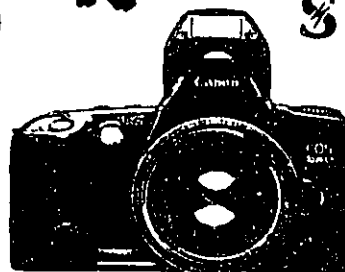
Using a strong center of interest can improve your photographs dramatically.

Monte Nagler is a fine art photographer based in Farmington Hills. You can leave him a message by dialing (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then his mailbox number, 1873. His fax number is (810) 644-1314.



Horse sense: The white horse adds a strong center of interest to Monte Nagler's photograph of England's ancient Rievaulx Abbey.

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