

CREATIVE LIVING

Take on a new attitude when you decide to take photographs

FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHY



MONTE NAGLER

We all know that a champion athlete has to mentally prepare himself for the challenge of what will, it is hoped, be a peak performance.

In photography, this same theory applies. We have to emotionally prepare ourselves, too. And a large part of this is getting into the state of mind that you are no longer going to be taking snapshots; rather, from now on you will be making photographs.

Here's how you can go about making this shift and developing a new attitude about your photography.

First, slow down. Don't rush into snapping your shutter. Leave your camera in its case as you begin to study your subject.

Ask yourself how best you can portray the subject. Should you move in tight or keep your distance? Is one camera angle better than another? Is early morning or late afternoon light better to enhance your image? Perhaps a greater focal length lens will add greater impact.

Are you beginning to see what is happening? You are starting to go through a conscious, planned-out thought process to produce a photograph that says it all about the subject. You see, you're starting to make photographs, not take snapshots.

Let's go further. Use all the depth-of-field available to you.

Did you know that your normal 50mm lens will give you a depth-of-field of 7 feet to infinity? So next time you're shooting scenery, take advantage of this.

Rather than snap just the mountain in the distance, carefully study the scene for foreground objects, such as that pile of boulders that will give a "foundation" to your composition or those tree branches that act

as a perfect "frame." How about the stream or fence that "leads" you into the scene? These techniques will shift you into the "making photographs" mode.

You'll often want to place the subject off-center to add a dynamic dimension to your photograph. Consider the use of filters to enhance a blue sky, add some color to a dramatic sunset or add a "starburst" of excitement.

Once again, the planned out, well-executed thought process is at work — you are making photographs, not taking snapshots. See how it works?

Remember, also, that you are an artist creating a beautiful image. "See" with your feelings and emotions and keep in mind that it is you making the photographs, not the camera.

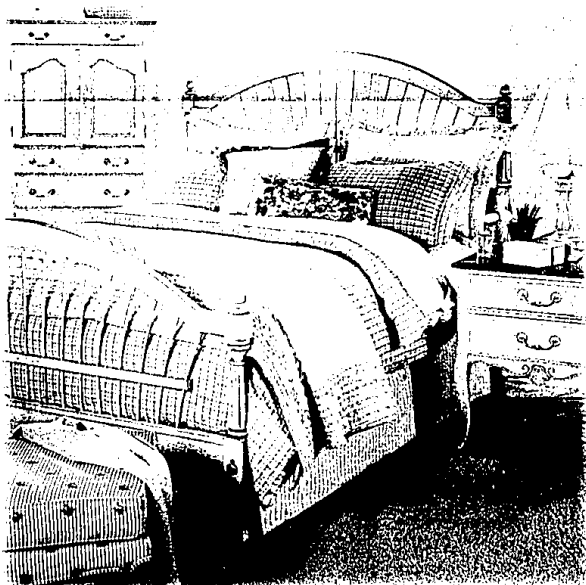
Monte Nagler is a fine art photographer based in Farmington Hills. You can leave him a message by dialing (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. His fax number is (248) 644-1314.



Dramatic composition: Monte Nagler had "making a photograph" in mind in this image from Telford, England. Careful composition and the right time of day produced a photograph full of impact and drama.

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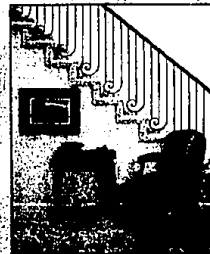
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