

FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHY



MONTE NAGLER

Make lighthouse photos shine

Everyone loves lighthouses. They possess an almost magical attraction that captivates all of us. Perhaps this is why they've always been a favorite subject for both professional and amateur photographers.

Photographed with thought and care, lighthouses can reward you with strong and satisfying pictures. Good lighthouse photographs begin by carefully studying the lighthouse itself and its surroundings. Is there a photogenic cove you can place in the foreground or perhaps a piece of driftwood or pile of rocks nearby you can use as a foundation in your composition? Can you get into a camera position to include whitecaps in the picture to add a dramatic touch? Or is there a tree or two that can serve to "frame" the lighthouse?

In other words, spend some time thinking and planning out your picture so that you can produce a photograph with strength and stopping power, rather than just taking a snapshot.

Time of day

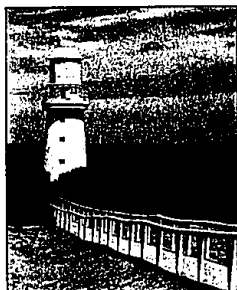
Decide what time of day might be best for your shot...a sunrise, sunset or even a night picture. What kind of weather would work best...a blue sky day with white, puffy clouds or a stormy day that will drama and mood your photographs?

I waited for a dramatic, early morning sky to take this photograph of Cape Otway Lighthouse in southern Australia. Careful composition, a wide-angle lens and a red filter all combined to help produce the exciting lighthouse photograph shown here.

As in all good photography, pay close attention to depth-of-field. It was important in this shot to get everything sharp and in focus from front to back. Most often, all it takes is a small aperture to do the trick.

Lighthouses, over the years, have guided mariners to warmth and safety. Now let them be your guide to making strong additions to your photographic portfolio.

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.



Beacon: Monte Nagler combined time of day, careful composition and a red filter in this photograph of Australia's Cape Otway Lighthouse.



On stage: Dressed in colorful costumes, Irish dancers show off their fancy footwork in a scene from "Riverdance - The Show."

It's like a dream Local dancer gets a kick out of 'Riverdance'

BY KEELY KALESKI WYGNONIK
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Life on the road with *Riverdance - The Show* is pretty cool. "It's an incredible experience to get paid," said Michael Belvitch, 20, a Plymouth resident who's been touring with the show since June of 2000. "You get a feel for all the different regions of the country, stay in nice places, and make a lot of friends. It's kind of dreamlike."

Belvitch and the rest of the cast will be in town next week to present the show at the Fox Theatre.

"It's like a variety show," said Belvitch. "It's the story of the Irish people and their immigration to America." While high energy Irish dancing remains the focus, there are also tap, tango, and Russian dancers, singers and musicians.

"For the finale we do a number together," he said. "It represents the American melting pot."

To help keep things fresh and interesting, the cast was outfitted in new costumes in January 2001. There's also a new number in the second act. During the show Belvitch will change costumes six times. Because there isn't always time to run back to the dressing room there's a quick change booth on both sides of the stage.

Belvitch said the tour has been going very well, and he's still enjoying it. "Time goes by really quickly." The troupe travels to a new city every week, the most they've stayed in one place is two or three weeks. A highlight was visiting Mexico City this January.

"It's so different there - the lan-

■ "You get a feel for all the different regions of the country, stay in nice places, and make a lot of friends. It's kind of dreamlike."

Michael Belvitch
— Plymouth resident

guage, the people," said Belvitch. "We got to tour around quite a bit."

Life on the road can be lonely. Belvitch got to come home at Christmas and in July. He spent Thanksgiving and Easter away from his family.

"It's important to have good friends," he said. "The cast becomes like a family."

He's been doing Irish dance since he was eight, and never guessed he'd make it part of his career. After seeing the O'Hare dancers perform at Fall Festival in downtown Plymouth, his mom enrolled him in the school.

"I liked it from the start," said Belvitch. "I liked the kids in class, but what I really liked was going to competition. I'm very competitive and wanted to get better."

Prior to joining *Riverdance*, Belvitch won seven Midwest, two North American, one All-Ireland, and two back-to-back World Championships for Irish dancing. He has appeared with many symphonies throughout the country.

This fall he'll begin working on his bachelor's degree in liberal arts at the

Show celebrates Irish dance, music, and song

Composed by Bill Whelan, produced by Moya Doherty, and directed by John McColgan, *Riverdance* is a celebration of Irish music, song and dance, which focuses on the evolution of Irish dance, as well as its similarities with, and influences on, other cultures.

Whelan won the 1997 Grammy Award for "Best Musical Show Album" for his original music and lyrics for *Riverdance*. The show had its world premiere at the Point Theatre, Dublin, in February 1995, where it opened to unanimous critical acclaim.

There are presently two productions of *Riverdance* touring the world. To date, more than 12 million people worldwide have seen the show, in addition to some 6.5 million people who have purchased the video versions of the show.

Riverdance - The Album, on Celtic Heartbeat/Universal Records, has sold more than two million CDs worldwide and is certified Platinum in the United States. For more information visit www.riverdance.com

RIVERDANCE-THE SHOW

When: Eight performances, Tuesday, April 30 through Sunday, May 5. Curtain 7:30 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday and Sunday, 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, and 2 p.m. Saturday-Sunday

Where: The Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit

Tickets: \$18 to \$68, call (248) 433-1515. For more information, call (313) 474-6611 or visit www.OlympicEntertainment.com

University of Michigan. "It's always been a goal of mine," he said. "I've done this, and I worked hard to be in the show."

His advice to dancers hoping to get cast in *Riverdance* is simple - "commit yourself, you have to work really hard to achieve your goals. You have to practice everyday, you can't do something half-way and be successful."

If you're one of the few people who hasn't seen *Riverdance* on TV or live, Belvitch highly recommends it.

"Everyone seems to like it," he said. "I was just absolutely awed by it the first time I saw it. You don't have to know anything about Irish dancing, just come, sit back and enjoy it."

COMMUNITY THEATER

ON STAGE

What: SRO Productions presents *How the Other Half Loves* by Alan Ayckbourn

When: 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday, May 3-19

Where: At the City of Southfield's historic center, The Burch, in a renovated 1854 church on the northeast corner of Civic Center Drive and Berg Road.

Tickets: \$10 adults, \$8 students and senior adults, call (248) 827-0701, general seating

BY KEELY KALESKI WYGNONIK
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If we are truly still in a recession, which a lot of people believe we are, then you might want to treat yourself to an evening of laughter.

"Your stomach will hurt from laughing," said Barbie Amann of Farmington Hills, executive producer of SRO Productions which is presenting Alan Ayckbourn's *How the Other Half Loves*. Amann describes the show opening Friday, and playing weekends through Sunday, May 19, as an "over the top farce, a big comedy."

The play takes place in 1971. Three couples are tangled in a web of lies, infidelities and misunderstandings. "It's comical, absurd," said Amann. "It's about how

three couples cope with rumors of, or having affairs. There are two different households shown on stage and they're all mixed up. The actors walk all over the stage. If it were a movie the camera would pan back and forth between both households. It's like having a window into each house, or a sliding door that's constantly opening and closing."

In between laughs, the audience watches as events unfold concurrently in the living room of a middle class couple and the drawing room of an affluent couple.

The most famous scene is a dinner party in which two couples arrive at the same time to dinners on the one set representing two dining rooms in two different houses on two different nights.



Cast: The cast and director of "How the Other Half Loves," takes a break after rehearsal. Pictured (left to right, back row), are Genevieve Terry, Don Bell, Erik Carlson, Jeff Weisserman, and Mike Megerian. Front row, seated, Karen Novak, Vicki Briganti, and Amy Weiland.

Please see THEATER, B7