

Use of a tripod helped Monte Nagler to think out and plan the composition and exposure of this winter pictorial.

Budget-conscious designer meets challenge

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Concepts in Farmington Hills, does custom formica work. Doyle had him create a step table about four inches deep to fit a narrow space. The three tiers match the purple, lavender and turquoise painting that hangs over the table. This painting, and others in the model, were created by Bloomfield Hills artist Mary Ann Hall. Doyle frames all artwork herself.

In the living room, the richly ornamental hand-painted pillows are another of Doyle's finds. Hand-painted fabric is very expensive if it's perfect, but if it's flawed, it can be very reasonable. She managed to find some that was less-than-perfect, and had pillowcovers made, turning the flawed side of the pillow toward the couch. In this room, Mary Ann Hall created two large abstract paintings in the pink, white and lavender tones of the pillows.

"THERE'S NOTHING like plants to make a house look richly decorated." Even here, Doyle goes the extra mile. Before visiting Elliot's, in Livonia, to buy artificial plants, she went to a greenhouse and studied the real thing, making note of how their branches fall. Then, when the artificial plants were in place, she bent the branches to imitate nature. "All they lack are brown edges along the leaves," Doyle noted.

The textured walls in the family room were achieved by applying a mixture of plaster and paint with a broom. The final effect is pleasing to the eye, and "not as messy as it sounds."

The dining room is a testament to Doyle's ingenuity and frugality. She bought plain white fabric for the chair seats and hand-painted it herself. "Any fabric can be hand-painted," she claims.

A van conversion shop was the source of raw material for the metallic gold-and-black placements. They cost less than \$2 apiece, and are selling for \$20 in better stores. "We couldn't afford custom carpeting, so I bought a square of the-roll, and bordered it with left-overs from the living room."

A square mirror, framed in black, looks very art deco hanging in a triangular direction. "I overheard one woman say, 'Now, where do you suppose they found a triangular mirror like that?'" said Doyle. "People just don't notice that it's hanging sideways."

THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE, Doyle used inexpensive wallpaper for borders on painted rooms. "It's the only way I can get the colors I want, and I can vary the width from room to room." In one of the bathrooms, a delicately patterned wall-

paper is hung horizontally around the room. It gives a more ethereal effect than the standard vertical application, gently leading the eye around the wall rather than up and down.

Even the elements complicated Doyle's life. Last summer's drought created a shortage of carpet in the United States. It seems that the South is a major source of carpeting, and that a great deal of water is used to rinse carpeting after it is dyed.

There was a shortage of water in the South, and therefore a shortage of carpeting. Designers were scrambling for in-stock carpeting from the previous year — Doyle included.

Green Valley homes are located in Farmington Hills, on Nine Mile Road between Halstead and Haggerty. For more information, call Debora Fischetti at 471-6920.

Log home recaptures best of bygone era

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When he heard of the house, Ronayne said he was immediately interested. "There is a growing interest in this kind of house and a particularly strong attraction, especially in this area, as evidenced by the

growing number beginning to crop up in the still-rural areas around here," Ronayne said. "Besides, we were looking for something to do in between our two big projects."

AS A RESULT, the winter was exciting, beginning with the delivery of

two semitruck loads of the logs — literally stacked sky-high — right up to the final finishing details that have turned the log structure into something of a showplace.

"We had no idea of the complications of building a log house," Ronayne said with a half-grin.

Authenticity in details perhaps set the house apart from other log houses, he said.

For instance, he said, "chinking" — the process of closing up cracks and openings between the logs — is very a key factor in the insulation process. In pioneer days, the grouting was sand-based. Today, it is a man-made product that blocks any possibility of air flow between the logs.

"Ours was done by husband-wife team who only do about 30 houses a year. They know what they're doing."

The size of the logs in the home are special too, he said. The logs — all hand-peeled — average 24 inches in diameter, with some as large as 36 inches. Normally, the diameter of logs used in similar homes is around 11-14 inches, but at the owner's request, larger ones are provided.

Hand-peeled logs are perfectly round in contrast to "kit home" type logs, which are machined-milled and flat on one side.

The logs are Michigan red pine and came from a Grand Rapids manufacturer, Maple Island Log Homes, north of Muskegon.

"Actually, the house is built twice.

Once at the manufacturer's site, where the logs are cut, hand-peeled and assembled to make sure everything fits. They are then marked and hoisted by crane onto trucks for shipping to the building site where they again are reassembled."

ONCE INSIDE THE house, people are "surprised at how modern the house really is," Ronayne said.

But there's one important throwback to earlier times. It's the floor-to-ceiling fieldstone fireplace, the focal point of the great room-living room combination as you enter.

That was done by a 75-year-old stone mason who lived nearby.

"He happened by one day and indicated he was interested in building the fireplace," Ronayne said. "And he did it all by himself."

The house has three bedrooms and two full baths and a partially finished basement, a two-car garage and a covered old-fashioned country porch that runs the full length of the house that just begs for a porch swing and log rocker.

It is open for viewing from 1-5 p.m. Sundays. For more information, call Ronayne or Lendum at 422-6030.

As for the optimism mentioned earlier, Ronayne doesn't all stem from his real estate projects. Some of it comes from his recent election as president of the Livonia Optimist Club.

Tripod's hidden advantages

In the past, I've written about the benefits of using a tripod when you photograph. You'll recall that one advantage is that it steadies your camera in a low light situation. This enables you to get the shot when hand-holding just won't work.

Another advantage is that a tripod allows you to shoot that waterfall using a long time exposure to obtain a feeling of movement and mood in your picture. No question, these are two major benefits that will really work for you.

Engle to conduct workshop

Watercolor artist Nita Engle will present a two-day workshop Saturday-Sunday, April 8-9, in the Radisson Plaza Hotel of Southfield.

Engle, who lives and paints in the Upper Peninsula, has done illustrations on commission for Reader's Digest and other periodicals. She is in demand as a book illustrator and conducts workshops and seminars

all over the country. The workshop will begin at 9 a.m. Saturday, continuing on Sunday until 4 p.m., followed by a social hour with Engle. For registration, call 669-4758.

The workshop is being presented under auspices of Creative Art Workshops, founded by West Bloomfield artist Christ Unwin.



photography

Monte Nagler

your shot more carefully. You'll find yourself paying more attention to your subject and getting to know it better.

You'll compose more thoughtfully and be more meticulous in determining correct exposure.

YOU WILL also be more observant of your surroundings and will find yourself taking fewer pictures. Remember, fewer photographs made carefully will reward you far more than many shots taken hastily.

Keep in mind that you're making photographs, not taking snapshots.

One of the best ways to accomplish this is to use a tripod and slow down.

Too often, beginning photographers will find excuses for not using a tripod — too heavy, too bulky, too expensive. Yet, in reality, many good tripods are available that are lightweight, compact and easily affordable.

In fact, think of friends and acquaintances that are advanced in their photographic interests. Almost without exception, they'll be tripod users.

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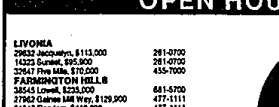
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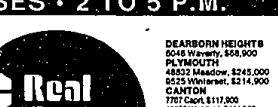
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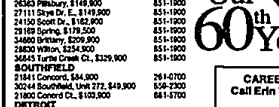
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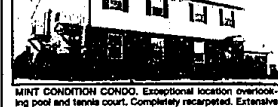
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