

Open new vistas, point your camera to the road

We've all heard the expression "hit the road." Well, by hitting the road with your camera, you'll be able to add new and exciting pictures to your photo album.

Whether it's a freeway, highway, or an endless country road, photographing roads will open up new vistas for you. Roads have tremendous visual potential and pictures of them can capture an incredible variety of moods.

And remember, as we travel from place to place, it's most always a road that gets us there. So why not photograph them?

Begin by studying different types of light and at different times of the day. Notice how a backlit road illuminated by a rising or setting sun will glisten and shine like an uncurling ribbon.

After a rainfall, a wet road will puddle trees and clouds that will add a mood to your shots no other weather conditions will do.

High angles and low angles will also add variety to your pictures. Climb a nearby hill so you can get a birds-eye view of a winding road or shoot from a low angle as the road undulates up the mountain.

As in all good photography, pay attention to depth-of-field so that



Placing the road off center made a much more interesting composition. Monte Nagler photographed this road in northern Michigan.

everything is sharp from front to back. You'll accomplish this by being sure to use a small lens opening.

I've always enjoyed photographing roads so that it appears the road is traveling into infinity.

Whether the road ends in a bank of low clouds or at the top of a hill, there's an element of unknown and mystique because the viewer wonders what lies ahead.

The country road shown here was taken in northern Michigan. Notice how I placed the road off center and waited for a vehicle to reach the very top for added interest.

So the next time you feel like hitting the road, do so! Just make sure your camera is with you.

Roads, quite literally, will take you and your camera to new and exciting places.

Monte Nagler is a fine art photographer based in Farmington Hills. You can leave a message for him at (734) 953-2047.

There are bad guys aplenty in new book

WHEN THE WOMEN COME OUT TO DANCE

By Elmore Leonard (William Morrow, \$24.95)

Like bad guys.

Well, maybe not real-life bad guys. Generally, what I'm referring to here are the bad guys in fiction. Specifically,

these days, the bad guys who intrigue me the most are those I find on the pages of Elmore Leonard's work. Who can forget that old "redneck," Bob Gibbs, of "Maximum Bob," for instance, or his low-life nemesis, the Crowe family? Or the murderous Orrell Robbie from "Rum Punch"? Sometime later, in "Tishomingo Blues," we had the juicy pleasure of meeting the creepy-crawly cigar-chomper, Arlen Novis, and several of his cohorts.



Victoria Diaz

Remember them? The bad guys in *When the Women Come Out to Dance* are sometimes not even bad, and sometimes they are not exactly guys, but girls.

In the lead-off story, cleverly titled "Sparks," we meet a seemingly ambivalent insurance investigator, as he checks up on a young, flirtatious widow who may or may not have set her posh mansion ablaze.

Maybe the best thing about this steaming story is Leonard's dead-on depiction of the sparks that fly, and the chemistry ignited between these two rather wayward souls.

In the title story, we're introduced to two frustrated females who investing to take the bull by the horns — investing in,

shall we say, a bit of home improvement. The glam Mrs. Mahmood wants to off her husband (who seems bent on getting rid of her, too, in a particularly brutal way).

Her obsequious Cuban maid, Lourdes, appears helpful at first, until a twist emerges in her own twisted psyche. The locale is colorful south Florida.

"They had dug out together as young men... Now it looked like they'd be meeting again, this time as lawman and felon, Raylan Givens and Boyd Crowder."

Thus begins "Fire in the Hole," one of the strongest, most well-developed stories in the collection.

Boyd, a Vietnam veteran fresh out of the penitentiary (he balked at paying his income tax), has organized something called "the East Kentucky Militia." This is "a bunch of boys wearing Doc Martens and swastika tattoos... all natural-born racists and haters of authority."

"(Lawman Givens calls them "serious morons")."

Seems Givens' ("Riding the Rap" and "Pronto") one-time girlfriend, Ava, has plugged her hateful hubby, Bowman, who happens to be Boyd's brother (stay with me here).

Looks like maybe she had an understandable reason for doing so, and Givens (who tends to view himself — in his heart of hearts — as a sort of cowboy hero out of old Western movies) wants to help her out, in more ways than one.

Thing is, he ends up needing some help himself.

On the pages of "Karen Makes Out," we're up-close-and-personal with a particularly charming bad boy, Carl Tillman. Many readers may think Carl a practically perfect match for our "hero," the hard-working U.S. marshal, Karen

Sisco (remember her in Leonard's "Out of Sight"?), but they will be forced to think again (regrettably by story's end).

Not all these tales are contemporary. Set amid a dusty, bloody landscape of the American Southwest, "The Tonto Woman" and "Hurray For Captain Early" take place during the 19th century.

One story seems misplaced in the collection. Though it's a compelling, exquisitely observed vignette, "Hanging Out at the Buena Vista" has nothing to do with felonies or misdemeanors of any kind, but, instead, provides a gentle, slightly wry look at two oldsters, making the best of their last days in a Florida retirement community. It's sparked by Leonard's famous "voice" and exquisitely convincing dialogue (not surprisingly, so is the entire collection).

Finally, Leonard's love for and knowledge of the movies provides further texture throughout.

His characters sometimes talk about or think on such celluloid luminaries as Jack Nicholson or Christian Slater or Dennis Quaid. One player seems to bear a resemblance to actress Linda Fiorentino, another to Harry Dean Stanton.

Occasionally, the characters "love" film stars, and/or they fall in love with individuals who remind them of film stars ("Karen remembered Christopher Walken in 'The Dogs of War'... at one time she was in love with Christopher Walken, not even caring that he wore his pants so high.")

Obviously, Leonard's low-key humor punches up the collection as well.

Victoria Diaz is a Livonia resident and writes about books, movies, theater and travel for the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*.

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PROGRAM
Schnittke String Quartet No. 4
Beethoven Quartet in G major, Op. 157
Schubert String Quartet in D minor, Op. 143

Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra
Denise Russell, Director
Catherine McFarrington
Alexander Neumeier and William Walton, Dedication

Thu 3/6 8pm
Walter Reuther Auditorium

Denise Russell, Director, was the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra's performance of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and conductor William Walton's *Second Symphony*, marking the first time the orchestra performed this work in the United States. The *Second Symphony* was performed here by two times.

PROGRAM
Walton Second Symphony
Mahler Symphony No. 4
Beethoven Symphony No. 5
Schubert Symphony No. 9

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