

Dec. 12 1956.

Dear Edna Bebbett:-

Thank you for your letter. I started to answer it yesterday but the usual interruptions. I shall be perfectly ready to let you ghost write this article if I can see a draft before it goes in. So briefly here goes.

Landscape photography, particularly in the west has many problems. No matter what kind of a photograph I am making, design is of the utmost importance. Call it design, organization, composition, what you will, the fundamental of all pictures in any medium is design. Achieving this in landscape photography is truly difficult. You can't move something this way or that. This kind of work is what I call creative selection. The elements of the pictures are line, form, light, shade, mood, and subject matter and fitting the former to the latter. Foregrounds are of the utmost importance, they can make or break a landscape. EVERYTHING in the foreground must lead you into the picture. To coordinate all of these elements means studying a subject, sometimes for a long time until all ~~the~~ fall into place. The right lighting, one that separates planes, giving distance, is of the major importance. Sometimes one comes on such conditions unexpectedly and one must work very fast to catch such an effect. There is image quality to obtain. This in landscape work is almost impossible with a miniature camera. I use preferably an 8x10 view with a long focal length lens ( here in the west, where distances are great. Sometimes I use smaller cameras, 5x7 or 4x5, this all depends of the subject, the weather (wind) conditions and place. What I consider really fine landscapes are very few and far between. I consider this field one of the greatest challenges and is the principal reason I live in the west. I for one am willing to drive many miles, expose a lot film, wait untold hours, camp out to be somewhere at sunrise, make many return trips in order to get what I am after.

This is brief indeed, but perhaps it will start you off. Have you seen my show at the American Museum of Nat. History? They have not hung all the prints sent, so I do not know if the landscapes are up. Miss Beneker would show them to you I am sure if you will ask for her. There are two there that fulfill as nearly as I have been able the things for which I strive. Please excuse this hasty letter but am very busy right now and I must get this in the mail so you will have it Monday.