

EDNA BENNETT

ROCKY POINT ROAD, EAST MARION, NEW YORK 11939

(516) 477-1126

March 23, 1974

Laura Gilpin
Box 1173
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87540

Dear Laura Gilpin:

For an up-dated, 1974, edition of my book NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY (Published by Amphoto), I would appreciate receiving a currently dated permission for publication of: Copy on Landscape Photography (pages 11-12-13) and the picture of Yucca, White Sands, New Mexico. Please check the copy and make changes you feel necessary.

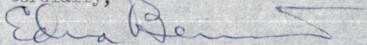
The new edition will be 8x10 format with color cover and insert. It should look good and hopefully sell as well as other editions.

From gleanings, here and there, you are still contributing to photography. I hope that all continues as you wish.

Please note address above. I moved from New York more than six years ago to live and work in my country home--high above Kong Island Sound. It is marvelous in all aspects.

Thank you for responding to my request.

Cordially,



Edna Bennett

LANDSCAPE—DESERT—SEA—CLOUDS

The landscape photograph has long been a favorite with a large number of photographers—from the salonist to the realist, from the vacation snapshooter to the camera artist. It seems to be the most natural thing in the world to take a camera along when going for a walk in the country, no matter what season of the year. In the spring, there is the awakening of growth—the growing green of new leaves, wild flowers pushing their heads up in the woodlands. In the summer, the warm sun casts its shadow across the open country, the dense foliage forms new patterns, the fields are full of wild flowers. In the fall, the torrent of color in the changing foliage presents a new challenge and the nip of autumn winds moves the cameraman's eye in another direction. In the winter, the stark, leafless trees command attention; a blanket of snow hides and reveals, shaping another kind of picture. At any season of the year, almost any time of the day or night, there are varied wonders to be put on film.

Many Approaches

Landscape photography can be approached from many angles—from the super pictorial to the ultra documentary. There are, however, fundamental principles which one should be aware of, no matter how the picture is to be used. As Laura Gilpin, one of the country's most able landscape photographers, says: "Landscape photography has many problems. Design is of utmost importance in this, as in all types of photography. Call it design, organization, composition, or what you will, it is the fundamental element in all photography. Achieving this in landscape photography is truly difficult, because you cannot rearrange the component parts of the photograph.

"It is by means of design, the scale of tone values used, and their relationship to one another that the idea can be expressed. The design must interpret the character, the lighting, the form and the texture. Thus, we work with the two fundamentals in photography—design or composition, lighting or tone value. Many people turn to landscape

photography with their first cameras because they think it is easy. Because they react to a "pretty scene" and want to preserve it on film, they fail to realize that what they are trying to do is to record the emotional impact the scene had on them. A mere snapping of the shutter, without regard for lighting, form and texture, will probably record the scene, but will not reflect the feelings of the photographer.

"One must learn to disassociate the reality from one's interpretation of that reality, in order to be creative in landscape photography. The ground-glass or the viewer must be used as an artist uses his drawing board—to arrange and harmonize the elements of the picture to fit the plan he has in his mind. Then, the camera becomes a tool with which the creative photographer can express his thoughts and feelings. The photographer uses rays of light, instead of drawing pencils, for his creative selection controlled through the camera lens."

Foregrounds Most Important

"Foregrounds are of the utmost importance, for they can make or break a landscape. Everything, emphatically *everything*, in the foreground must be used to lead the eye into the picture. To coordinate all of these elements means that the subject must be studied—sometimes for a long time before all the elements fall into place. The right lighting, one which separates the planes creating distance, is of extreme value. There are times when one comes upon such conditions unexpectedly, and must work very fast to get the effect. Other times, it seems an endless wait. I've even camped out for the night, just to be in a good spot for a sunrise picture.

"Really fine landscapes are very few and far between, but this field presents one of the greatest challenges to the photographer. One must be prepared to cover great distances, and expose a good quantity of film, in order to translate feelings into a visual image. True, the landscape photographer cannot rearrange his subject matter, but he can change the size and the placement of objects, either by shifting the position of the camera or by a selective use of lenses. Photography because of its ability to record unusual and fleeting effects, is more cap-

HIGH SIERRAS: EDNA BENNETT. *These giants were photographed by dawn light, using all the mechanical aids of a view camera to avoid distortion from upward shooting angle. Exposure on 4x5 pan film, one second at f/32.*

able than any other medium of interpreting the natural beauties of our land. The photographer must strive to use this wonderful medium to the utmost in combination with his own skill and vision."