

H A S S E L B L A D[®]



LANDSCAPE
PHOTOGRAPHY

LANDSCAPE

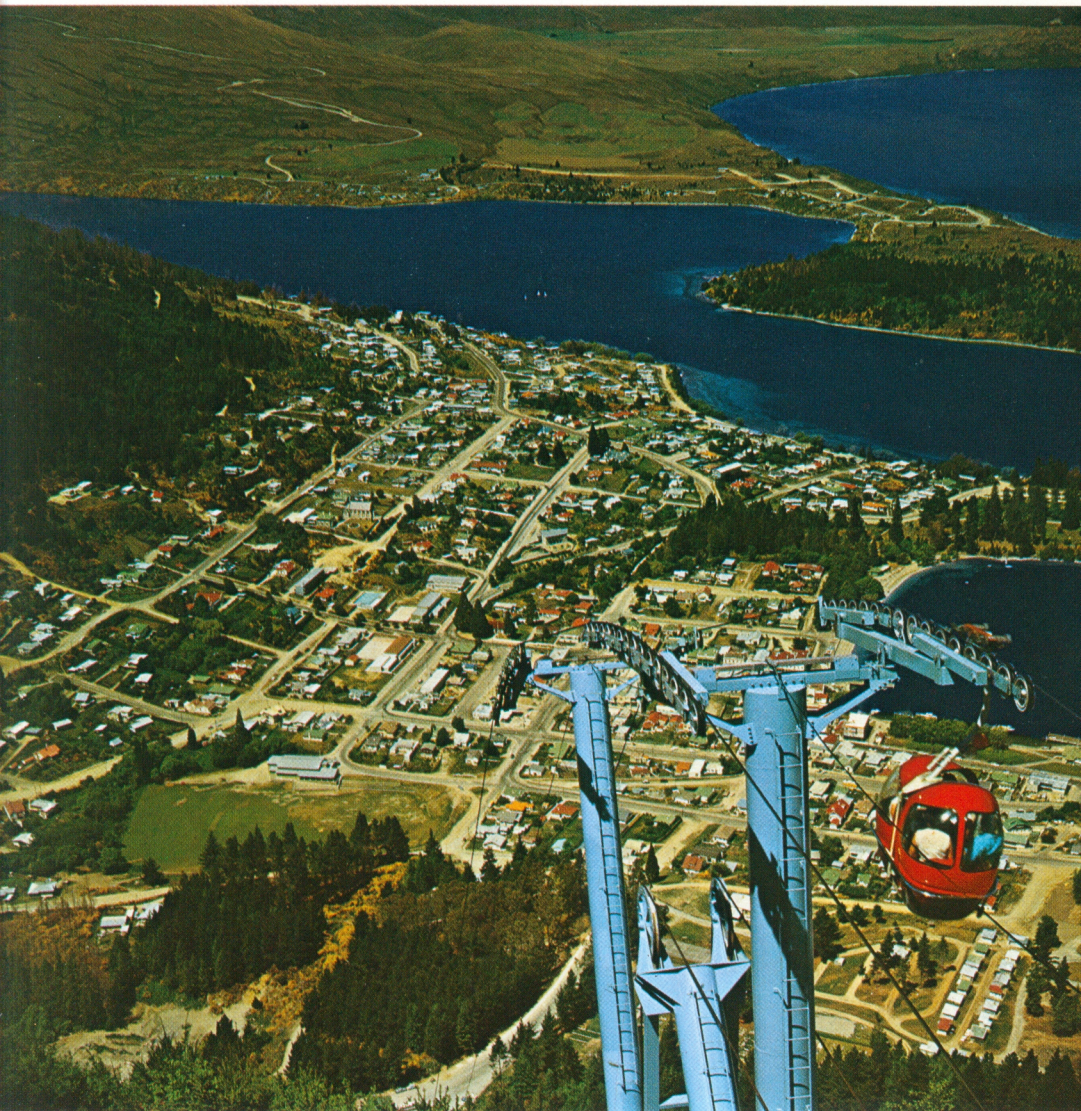
Are most landscape photographs taken because the photographer (amateur or professional) suddenly came across a wonderful scene and felt inspired to record it on film? And does the person who sees the photo afterwards get the same feeling of pleasure? A print, or a projected transparency, does not impinge upon all the senses which are used to "experience" the actual, living landscape. The reproduced landscape (such as a photo) has to be "experienced" by the eye.

The purpose of the landscape picture is to create a similar emotional impact upon the neutral observer who sees through a picture what the photographer actually saw in reality. Here we are concerned with a question that involves both the psychological response to a visual impression and the photographic technique employed to convey that impression. If we start by recognizing man's ability to experience deep sensations and the fact that landscape photography has to be stud-

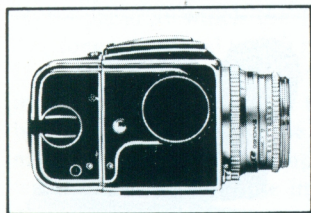
ied, we will be able to make effective use of our photographic equipment and techniques to accomplish our purpose. The personal experiments which the budding landscape photographer makes and his growing ability to interpret scenes in a proficient, pictorial form will then be based upon a solid, practical foundation.

In order to enjoy landscapes, in Nature or in a picture, we must have a deep feeling for Nature. This artistic, spiritual quality is based upon a profound interplay between the eye and the intellect—between knowledge and feeling. If the landscape photograph is to succeed in its purpose, this combination of emotion and experience must be achieved through a "picture language" which we can grasp.

When the principle which governs "perception" is studied (to extract the important guide lines in photography), two aspects are seen to be of prime value: we can call them "extent of experience" and "overlapping".



Cover photo: Pedro Luis Raota. Photo above: Ray Halin



The Hasselblad 500C/M, heart of a photographic system constantly being renewed with accessories to enhance its versatility! A wide range of functional accessories makes the Has-

selblad especially suitable for landscape photography.

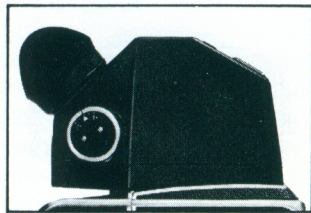


Photo: Jens Karlsson

The meter prism finder shields the focusing screen from extraneous light and provides an unreversed image.

This type of viewfinder makes it easier to follow

moving subjects. The EV scale in the meter prism finder also provides information on the correct exposure.



Values and Intensities

This working phrase is used to cover the wide range of skill which the landscape photographer must acquire in order to get good pictures, skills such as the ability to appreciate the subtle, shifting scale when the elements in a landscape are viewed at various distances, the ability to distinguish details and to limit sharpness, and the ability to judge the effects of light and color on objects near and far. An understanding of the values and intensities involved helps the photographer to decide on the correct lens, the best lighting and the best pictorial composition.

Scale

If we are already familiar with the size of the elements in a landscape, this knowledge helps us to get an idea of its depth. We all tend to rely on preconceived notions about size, especially when men, women or children are depicted. If a child and a grown man appear the same size in a picture, our instinct tells us that the child is nearer than the man. The landscape photographer must always keep this fact in mind. He must expect that people tend to believe what they instinctively "know" and not what they actually see. For example, if a child and a man happened to be physically the same size, the photographer should arrange his composition to create the impression that the man was farther away.

Sharpness

To the eye, the nearer of two identical objects appears sharper and more distinct than the one farther away. But when working with a camera, the photographer can, by his focusing, decide which of the two objects is to appear sharpest and can have a gradual loss of sharpness in, front of, and behind the object-plane at which the lens was focused. The longer the focal length plus the larger the *f*/stop used and the shorter the photographing distance, the shallower the depth of field becomes. By exploiting the degree of sharpness which the landscape photographer wishes to produce in the important parts of

his picture, he is able to produce an effect of space and depth.

Landscape painters traditionally put the greatest emphasis upon foreground objects by painting them sharply and with a wealth of detail, the degree of detail declining towards the background. Photography has no such tradition. The camera "artist" puts his zone of sharpness at any depth in the picture to bring out the part of the landscape he wants to emphasize. The only difference between the two methods is that in the latter technique, the part of the picture which is to attract the eye (and arouse appeal) can easily be established by focusing sharply upon the equivalent area in the landscape. Sharpness in the rest of the picture then falls off in front of and behind this plane of focus. Using this technique, the photographer directs the attention of the person viewing the photograph to the sharply-focused area with its center of interest.

Light and Color

A similar effect is given by the concentration of light. As we all know, light is strongest at its source. Light concentrated onto the important part of the picture leaves the other areas in darker tones, and allows the brightly-lighted area to produce a corresponding depth effect. The observer gets the impression that the brighter area is nearer.

Two visual effects are at work here: in one, the bright parts appear to be closer than the dark parts; and in the other visual effect, elements in the distance are recorded in lighter tones because of aerial perspective. It would seem that we have to deal with two conflicting effects here but we do not have to observe them too literally. Instead, we should take the liberty permitted every artist to depict any scene in any way we wish to bring out its particular charm.

In this connection we can learn much from what Goethe once said to his friend Eckermann when he noted that the lighting was inconsistent in an engraving of one of Ruben's paintings: "Most objects in a landscape

seem to be illuminated from the front and they always seem to present their brightest side to the observer.”

This seemed to be particularly true in the case of this painting, where the light falls upon a group of workers against a dark background. This contrast is created by a large shadow from a cluster of trees falling in the direction of the observer. But the effect was really the opposite to what Goethe saw, because in the scene that Rubens painted the light came from two directions. “This double lighting is artificially created by the artist and contrary to Nature,” said Goethe, “but though it is not natural, I must say that it looks better than real life . . .”

Even if we cannot improve on Nature in our landscape photographs, we can at least make use of graphic arts techniques to improve our photographic effects, especially in lighting and in processing our negatives and prints.

Aerial perspective is also concerned (but in reverse) in the remarks on values and intensities. The farther away an object is located, the hazier it appears—and this effect is immediately recorded on modern black & white or color film. When trying to create an effect of depth and space in landscape photos, it is therefore questionable whether aerial perspective should be eliminated by using filters. Pictures taken through a filter look decorative but flat, and they give a very misleading impression of the depth in the original landscapes. On the other hand, if the UV radiation is too strong, the effect of aerial perspective becomes too violent and the details in the far distance are completely lost. In such a case one can compromise and use a filter.

Overlapping

To create depth by overlapping simply means to use figures or objects to emphasize the relation between the various depths in the landscape. The landscape photographer must consider this point after he has decided on the main subject in the picture. It is important for a photographer to know how to overlap the main elements (usually in the foreground and

around the center of interest) in the picture he is composing, because the camera lens records all elements (figures, objects, and so on) within the depth of field with the same impartial result; i.e., the lens records practically all the details with the same sharpness. So the photographer must instead change the visual relationship between picture element and camera. By shifting his camera position, he is able to let one element dominate by virtue of overlapping.

As far back as 1866, Helmholtz observed how depth was often imparted to a picture by what was placed or “happening” at the intersection of two lines. In effect, he said “The fact that the outline of the frontal object does not alter its direction when it conceals the object behind allows us to distinguish between the two.”

It is important especially in black & white photography, where gray tones merge easily, to take careful note of how the various elements cut across one another.

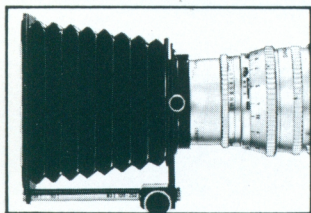


These simple diagrams of elements in juxtaposition will help to show how obvious it is to define position, and that optical illusions will occur if insufficient attention is given to the overlapping problem. The photographer can learn a lot from modern artists who, in two-dimensional paintings, produce an effect of infinite depth to the careful observer.

Technically, the photographer overcomes the overlapping problem not by shooting from the first and most convenient position, but by training himself to move around and looking at his subject from various positions to find better photographic angles. This brings up the question of which focal length lens to select for the shot. It will be noted that by viewing through the focusing screen, the positioning of the elements is quickly altered in perspective when moving around with a cam-



Photo: Jens Karlsson



Extraneous light is a nuisance. Uncontrolled reflections impair image brilliance and contrast, particularly in demanding back-lighting. The Hasselblad Professional lens shade effectively shades

the lens and guarantees rich, charming and high-contrast pictures.



era with a short focal length lens while the longer focal lengths produce only minor differences in positioning.

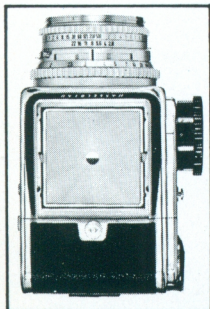
In any case, it is important to start studying the overlapping problem when beginning to work with a standard focal length lens.

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

A landscape is a part of scenery. Here are mountains and fields; water in many settings: lakes, rivers and waterfalls. And there are familiar scenes like the village church, and farmers at work around the seasons. But there is more to landscape photography than this. A landscape is a combination of land, sky, weather and light. Sunshine and storm, light and shadow, and the changes around the year are a constant source of inspiration to the landscape photographer who always sees something "new" in every view.

The landscape photographer composes his picture from this "raw material". With the aid of his camera equipment, and his skill in combining these various landscape elements in front of him, he produces a living picture. He must be able to select a good viewpoint and study the landscape to take advantage of the light best suited for his subject. He must also decide the best time of the year to make his pictures of a particular landscape.

Photo: Russ Lamb



The shallow depth-of-field with long focal length lenses makes accurate focusing especially important. Interchangeable Hasselblad focusing screens with a split-image rangefinder or a central grid facilitate focusing and provide images brightly illuminated from corner-to-corner.

Composition

How should a landscape photographer "position" the various elements within the setting of his picture? And how should he "arrange" his landscape in relation to the foreground and the sky?

To answer these questions, the photographer must study the light during the day in order to achieve the best effect. This would be the ideal way. But if he happened to be touring the countryside, then luck would have to play a part in the timing of his shots. In such a situation, the photographer would have to depend almost solely on his skill and be satisfied with a compromise. However, if practical, it would be best if the photographer refrained from shooting his final shots under poor conditions. Instead, he should take one or two snapshots (like an artist making a quick sketch) in order to remember the scene. He can return at a later date to work out the pictorial and technical problems at his leisure, and then make the final shots.

Center of Interest

In landscape shots, as in all other types of photography, the photographer must decide on the main interest in the picture. Every picture needs a center of interest to attract the observer's eye. In a landscape photo, the center of interest is usually at mid-distance but it can also be an element in the foreground.

The interest must be prevented from being led out of the picture. Straight, horizontal lines, such as fences, roads, waterways and the picturesque horizon itself, tend to divide the picture or to direct the eye out of it. A camera site should be chosen so that such lines instead lead towards the important part of the picture. Even if these lines cannot be led directly to the center of interest, they should be broken or hidden by some other element before they reach the margin of the picture. If this is done, a lot of their distracting power is reduced. One of the most useful ways of keeping the interest within the boundaries of a landscape picture is to frame it, partly or wholly, with dark foreground ob-





Photo: Bengt Sandin

The large, single-lens reflex image makes it possible to record the slightest change in a landscape, a subject often providing a host of rewarding experiences. The landscape photographer is often able to pick and choose among camera sites, times of the year, times of day and types of weather. His task is to transform his own perception of Nature into a photographic image. The Hasselblad system provides him with an almost unlimited range of options, almost unlimited opportunity to achieve that transformation and record the beauty of Nature on film.

jects. They will not dominate the picture but will help to prevent attention from wandering away and help to impart depth and perspective. A gateway, overhanging trees, fences, open gates, rocks, etc., are "natural" frames.

Cloudy or Clear Skies

Much of the effect in a landscape picture is provided by the character of the sky and clouds. The photographer should decide whether the sky is to be a main element in his picture or whether he should concentrate on the actual landscape itself.

Modern photographic materials help in landscape photography. There are films now which practically make it unnecessary to use a yellow filter to "correct" sky rendition, and the general rendition of blues has been vastly improved. Another point is the quality available today in enlarging paper. The white surface of such paper "translates" the sky part of a negative into a dominating area of white in a landscape print. Because the chalk-white sky attracts the eye to a much greater degree than the parts of the picture depicted in gray tones, the wealth of detail and the soft contrast in these tones suffer by the violent contrast.

The photographer must pay attention to aerial perspective and the recording of clouds and the sky. He must also try to record the dramatic interplay between the landscape details and the light since this helps to produce a convincing picture. A cloudless sky and an overall gray picture are both poor effects to be avoided. Light gives life and it is the light which has to be exploited as effectively as possible by photographic means in order to come up with a picture "full of life".

Sky tones are mainly corrected in two ways. One way is to correct blue rendition with a pale yellow *light balance filter* and the other way is to exaggerate the blue parts of the sky by using a *contrast filter* available in various colors and densities.

Figures in Landscapes

Landscape photos often have human figures

placed in such a way that the observer cannot decide whether the landscape or the figures, or both, were the photographer's principal interest. In a landscape photograph the human figures should not dominate the picture. If they appear at all, they should fit naturally into the scene and appear only as one of the elements in the landscape. Generally speaking, if it is possible to read the expression on the face of a person in the picture, the person can easily become the main subject. If that happens, the observer then has difficulty in concentrating upon the actual landscape and its principal interest. It is natural to include people in photographs of towns and cities, since it would look odd to photograph, say, a village or farm, without showing the type of people who live and work there. But even in this case, the photographer must decide clearly if it is the people or the landscape which is to be the main theme in his picture.

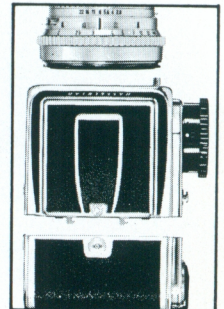
If the photographer remembers to subordinate the people in a landscape shot and to show the figures on such a scale that their presence gives dimension and force to the landscape, then the human figure is one of the most effective elements that he can use in his picture.

Camera Angle

The choice of camera distance, viewing direction, and camera height will influence the

Photo: John V. A. F. Neal

Longing to change lenses and magazines for different kinds of film is not much of a help on long hikes out in the backcountry. You've got to have them. With you.





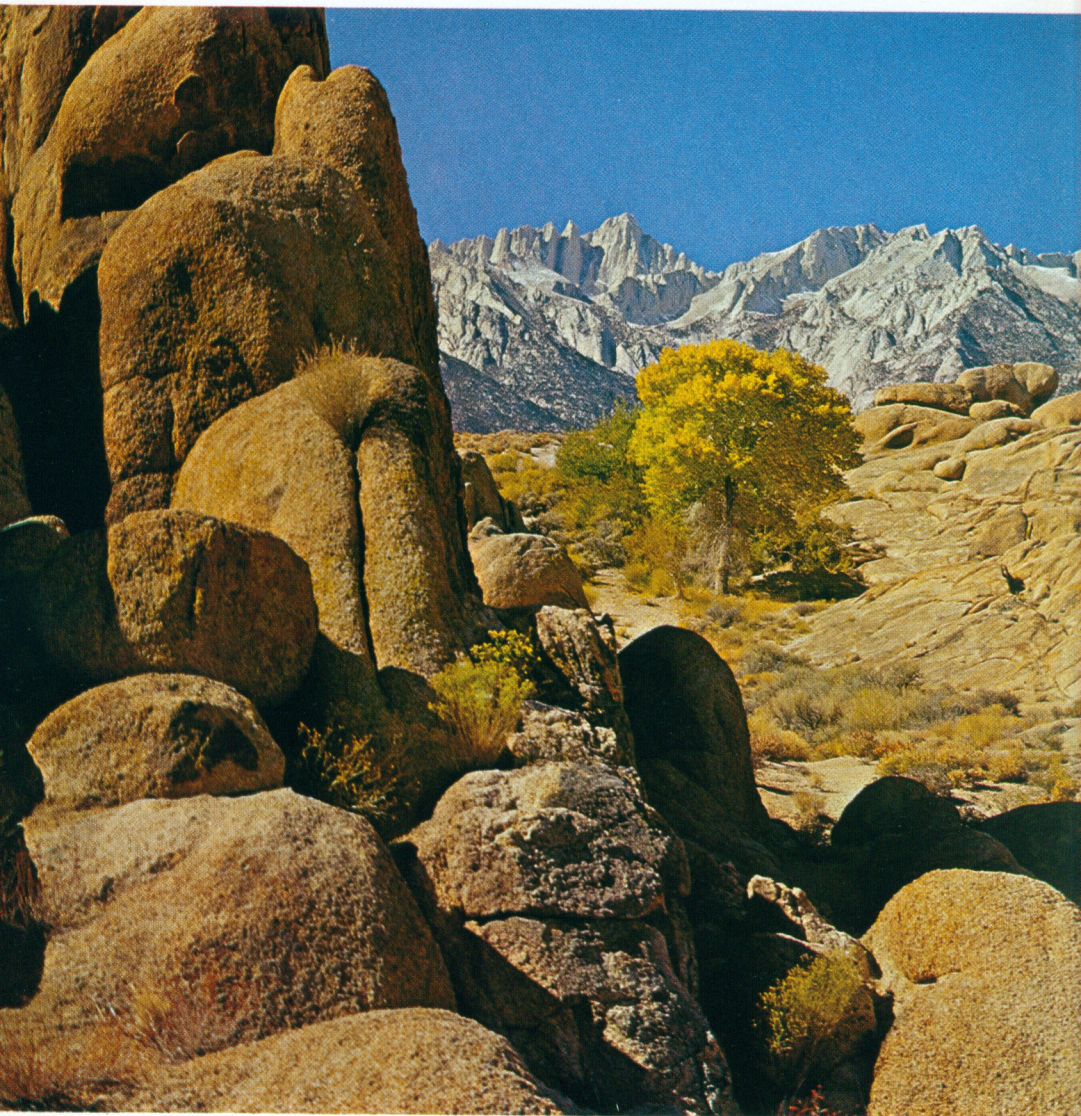
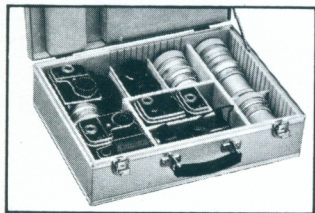


Photo: C. G. Maxwell



People who like landscape photography often enjoy traveling as well. The hammered aluminum Hasseblad case is the ideal means of transporting Hasseblad gear, whether on

a comfortable tour or out in rugged, backwoods country. The case features a weather-tight seal shutting out dust and moisture. The ideal case for the tropics!

pictorial effect of a landscape shot. Camera distance determines the scale and it is, therefore, the most important factor in the creation of the picture.

By moving the camera vertically the photographer can change the horizon line. By moving the camera horizontally, he can find the most suitable lighting effect by noting how the various elements "shift" and change as the camera is moved.

The light effect should be studied carefully when shooting down from a bird's-eye view. As a general rule, the light source should be low-lying in order to get the necessary texture and contrast. When the light falls flatly upon the scene, such bird's-eye shots often lose their sculptural effect.

Lighting

The lighting technique in landscape work is divided into the following three important factors: direction, quality and strength. Together, these three factors are to provide the dramatic effect needed in a landscape picture. There is no need for the photographer to accept the first favorable lighting situation he encounters. At times, he would be wiser to study his scene under different light conditions, and then elect to shoot when the light is best suited for the desired effect.

The season, time of day and the weather are important in determining the quality of the light. These factors influence landscape lighting. The best time of the day to shoot in summer or winter depends upon in what part of the world the landscape photographer is working. As a rule, a good time to shoot is when the sun is at an angle to the vertical in order to bring out the forms in a landscape, or when it produces long shadows imparting a dramatic effect. Avoid the time of the day when the sun is directly overhead; instead of long shadows, the sun then casts heavy, black spots at the base of the elements in the landscape. Practically the same effect is obtained when the sun is in front of the photographer, and the shadows in the landscape then loom heavily towards the camera. But such lighting

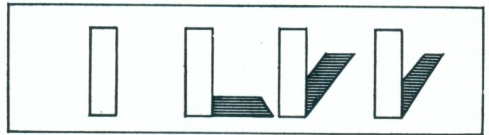
is useful if the photographer is trying for a vivid, melodramatic effect.

Shadows and Space

The foregoing shows how important shadows and their effects are in landscape work. Generally speaking, shadows are of two types: *object shadow*, which is the object's own shadow and which brings out the quality of the object and *cast shadow*, which determines the position of the object in relation to its surroundings.

The general tendency is to overrate the importance of cast shadows in photography. There is an element of psychology in this. Some primitive tribes believe that the shadow is a part of the man. The superstitious native refrains from going out in the open when the sun is overhead; he feels lost without his shadow. From this, he assumes that the shadow is associated with the body; a part of life itself.

The landscape photographer should keep in mind that shadows are necessary in his work, but they cannot be allowed to be distributed at random anywhere in the picture. The cast shadows in the simple "pictures" here will help to illustrate this point.



Note that a feeling of depth is shown convincingly only in the last picture. To secure depth, a certain amount of distortion, or exaggerated perspective is needed. A house against the sun looks like a cube drawn in perspective, but the shadow cast between the house and camera has an entirely different shape.

Without this distorted effect, we cannot get a feeling of space in a picture. Lighting and the shadow cast on the ground help the photographer to pick out the object, to note how

it is shaped, where it is located and its distance from the other elements in the picture. Consequently, shadows in landscape work form a subject which the photographer must understand and master by observation, practical experience and skilful use of his equipment.

Exposure

In open landscape photography the lens is usually stopped down to give maximum sharpness and depth of field. This means that shutter speed is the only factor that has to be varied. On a calm day, shots can be made at 1/30 or 1/60 s. But as soon as there is the slightest breeze, the shutter should be set at 1/100 or 1/125 s to avoid blurred leaves and bushes. On a really windy summer day, the speed to use is 1/500 s. If there are moving elements in the landscape, such as people, machinery or vehicles, no shutter speed slower than 1/100 s should be used. The direction of the light falling on the scene must be considered when deciding exposure. The exposure value indicated by the light meter should be reduced one step if the light is shining directly from the side, and two steps when shining directly towards the camera in order to preserve some detail in the shadows.

Photography is an art form where contradictory rules often apply. When photographing running or falling water, shutter speeds no faster than 1/250 s should be used or the water will look frozen. Here, blurred movement becomes an advantage because it shows action in the landscape picture.

Protection against Reflection

One of the landscape photographer's most important accessories, besides a carefully selected range of filters, is an adequate lens shade. Landscapes are often full of reflections which often reduce contrast in a picture. Always keep the lens shade on the lens when working, otherwise it can be forgotten when needed most. There are times when even the use of a lens shade is insufficient and when

troublesome extraneous light should be blocked by a book or a piece of paper, by the hand or an umbrella.

SEASCAPES

Good pictures can be made of the sea and the seashore. The light is usually good and many of the subjects provide the photographer with the material for interesting pictures. With the exception of a few points, the technique to use is about the same as in landscape photography.

It is however not as easy to grade the tones to suggest distance as in landscape work because the sea has much the same tone all over, becoming only slightly lighter towards the horizon. Large objects are usually required in the foreground, and boats or birds in the background. The photographer, too, must learn to make skilful use of his filters.

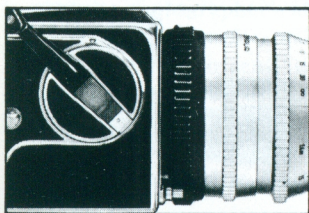
Reflections are often a great bother and may cut down the brilliancy of the picture. So the lens shade is the most important accessory to use here, not only as a safeguard against reflected light but also against sand and salt spray.

The photographer at the seaside has to be extra careful with his equipment. Sand and salt water must be kept out of the camera since they are harmful to both camera and lens. A single grain of sand can destroy the shutter mechanism; salt water corrodes the bright metal parts. The greatest danger is the salt spray encountered on a windy day at sea, so the lens should be protected by a filter. The camera can be kept in a plastic bag—an ordinary polyethylene shopping bag with a hole cut in it for the lens. Safeguarded in this way, the photographer can shoot pictures of pleasure craft, yacht races and motorboats at high speed from an open boat without trouble.

When his equipment is protected in this way, the well-equipped photographer will find that the combination of sea, beach and light will probably give him the best landscape pictures of all. When strolling along the seashore, the photographer should not ignore the coastal



Photo: Bertil K. Johanson



A landscape need not be restricted to epic views. A landscape can also be a microcosm transformed by photography into a new reality. Hasselblad extension tubes help the landscape

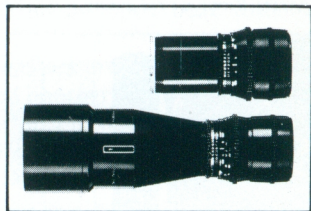
photographer to get up close to a part of Nature we often overlook.



Photo: Russ Lamb

Two new telephoto lenses have been added to the Hasselblad line: the 250mm f/5.6 Zeiss Sonnar Super-Achromat and the 350mm f/5.6 Zeiss Tele-Tessar. The former lens has been cor-

rected for all chromatic aberrations. Both of these modest-sized lenses are ideal for work in hill country.



flora and fauna all around, in the water as well as on land. Close-up shots of these charming forms of life provide both relaxation and information to the photographer. The beach offers excellent shots of spacious views as well as material for interesting close-up experiments. Close-up shots taken with the sun facing the photographer can give very dramatic results. It may be necessary to lighten up shadows with a reflector.

MOUNTAIN PHOTOGRAPHY

Technically speaking, mountain photography is very similar to seascape photography, but it broadly falls into two main categories. One, photographs of mountains and mountain scenery and, two, photographs actually taken above the tree line. Different techniques are required in both types of work.

Scale

The most important point to remember in the first type of mountain photography is to get the correct scale. If the perspective is faulty, a hillock in the foreground may appear as large as the mountainous mass in the distance. Better results are obtained when the viewing direction is chosen carefully. The photographer should try to take shots with the camera so that the highest mountain tops are also recorded at the highest point in the picture. To have the foreground "fall away" in the picture is not objectionable; it gives the impression that the shot was taken from the other side of a valley and it heightens the mountainous effect.

Telephoto Lens

The telephoto lens can be a fascinating tool for photographing mountain scenes. It may seem a heavy and unnecessarily cumbersome part of the photographer's alpine gear, but to the enthusiast it is well worth carrying along. With the telephoto lens, the photographer can often get excellent shots of mountain scenes unobtainable with standard equipment because of vast distances and often troublesome aerial perspective. But the photographer

will have to work with filters to eliminate some of the ultraviolet rays.

Light and Weather

Obviously the best conditions for the mountain photographer are a clear, sunny day with light clouds in the sky, but on the other hand the best pictures are frequently taken when the weather is far from calm. The insignificance of Man is intensified when the sun breaks out through storm clouds and when clouds sweep across the mountain tops. Early morning and late afternoon are also good times for mountain photography, especially when recording the pattern of snow drifts and the summer vegetation in the mountain valleys against a glacial backdrop. Side lighting produces the best modeling effects in mountain shots. As usual, back lighting gives dramatic results, while the light at noon, with the sun overhead, is generally unfavorable for this kind of photography.

IGNORE THE RULES—SOMETIMES!

A number of elementary rules and much practical advice have been given here on landscape photography. By working along the suggested lines, the photographer can master the techniques in this fascinating branch of photography. But there are times when even knowledge and training are insufficient. Much experience and luck, at times, are needed to get "that perfect picture" of a special scene or happening. At such moments, the photographer must handle his equipment instinctively and quickly before a change takes place.

A lively curiosity and a willingness to experiment can also lead to pictures of more than usual interest. Here, the key to success is to ignore the rules and work out new techniques; in short, to patiently chart your own course which 99 times out of 100 leads to poor results. But be determined to get that 100th shot—the picture so full of eloquence and feeling that it speaks for you, the accomplished landscape photographer, and conveys a sense of feeling to others, to your audience!

H A S S E L B L A D[®]



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Text: Tor Alm. Layout: Lars Gustafsson

Printed in Sweden Typografia Gbg E3016 III 5 73