

How To Become the **BEST LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER** in Texas

Below you will find a list of techniques that will help make you one of the elite LANDSCAPE photographers in Texas high schools! The process is not as important as talent, but hard work and a unique approach may be as important than skill. This idea is a new one on paper, but it has been working here at Trinity for a number of years. The more effort you put into it and the more talent you have or you develop, the greater your chances of success.

_____ Imagine daily what it would be like to be the very best in Texas! This is far more critical than you think!

_____ Start asking all friends what was the best landscape image they can remember seeing in Texas. Have them give you specific directions whenever possible. Better still have them mark the location on a map.

_____ When on vacation to a scenic locale, write ahead for information on the area. Most often you will find that they have sought to show the area at its best. Observe not only the angle from which the subject was shot, but also such things as time of day and season whenever possible.

_____ Scour the stock books for images that are especially dramatic for you. Many of the stock books, WestStock for example, indicate the location of the shot. Plan vacations or road trips around this information.

_____ Read everything (AND TAKE NOTES) you can by Galen Rowell, Jim Zuckerman, Ansel, and Bob Gibbons about lighting landscapes. A bibliography appears at the end of this sheet.

_____ SHOOT THE LANDSCAPE THAT NO ONE ELSE DOES! Each time you have a shot the judges rarely see you hold their attention longer.

_____ Be aggressive looking for unique opportunities. Does your parent work for an airline that gives "free" tickets to their employees? If so, wash some extra dishes, mow the lawn without whining, clean up a car or fill one with gas when you borrow it.

_____ Know your competition, i.e. watch the work of your peer group, but at the same time remember that you want to match your work to that of the pros.

_____ Whenever you are shooting with a pro, cross check your exposure to his or hers until/unless you are sure that your exposure is correct.

_____ Shoot every type of lighting possible given your options. Try to arrive at a scenic location in time to shoot a sunset there and stay over if the situation warrants it so that you may also shoot in a sunrise situation.

_____ Watch for predictable situations such as winter storms which have recently dumped six inches of snow on the ground where you plan to go. This could turn a nice image into a truly remarkable one, but be careful because it could also turn a good driving situation into a very dangerous one.

_____ Recognize the “fact” that in order to get better in landscape you must shoot with photographers who are superior to you in talent. Make it a point to ask those photogs who are better than you are to accompany you on some shoots.

_____ Remember that creativity can still occur in landscape photography.

_____ Be aware of other photographers who want to be great at landscape and share the interest; go on the road together, trade off developing favors, etc.

Working independently isn't always the best way to achieve a goal. Besides, almost anything is more fun when you do it with someone who shares the same interest.

_____ Your images are not what you'd hoped for??? It's happened to all of us and will again. Remember that National Geographic magazine photographers consider that getting 1 shot in 36 that stands out from the others is considered success.

_____ Postcards of travel destinations are superior ways to discover different photo

_____ As a rule, shoot the slowest film you can use given the situation. And, as a rule, shoot Fuji film before Kodak.

_____ As a rule, you will want the most depth-of-field you can obtain given the light and your film choice.

_____ It's always wise to:

- carry extra batteries
- vary your lenses
- bracket exposures
- use two bodies rather than one

_____ Shooting outside... be sure you have a large trash bag or two in the bottom of your camera bag to use in case of rain.

Muench, David or Marc, anything in print

Zuckerman, Jim; Techniques of Natural Light Photography, Writer's Digest Books, Cinn. OH

Gibbons, J. and Wilson, P., Night & Low-Light Photography, Cassell Books, London

