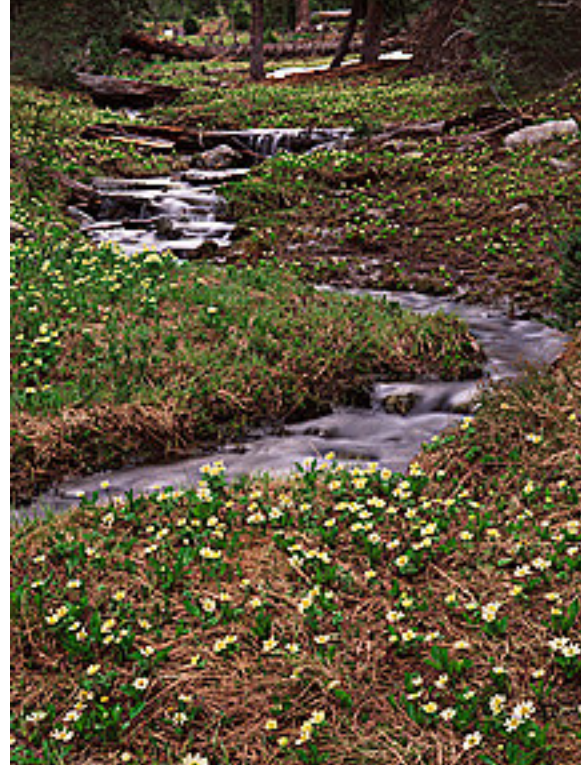


SCENIC WILD PHOTOGRAPHY

- SPRING, 2004 -

There's no denying it – Spring is in the air, in the rivers and lakes, the mountains and deserts, and the heart of every living thing in and around them. Days are getting longer, trees and flowers explode into colorful displays and everything flying, crawling, swimming, and walking, is restlessly seeking love, invigorated with passion and hope. It's undeniable – the quickening. As the world collectively awakes from its winter slumber, its heartbeat speeding, even the lonesome and reclusive cannot help but feel the yearning.



In the course of human events we indeed asserted our independence to some degree, but at the same time confined ourselves to buildings and offices for most of our waking hours. Spring is a time when I am grateful to have found a place where I can earn a living and still be close enough to wilderness that I can heed its call most days. I keep pace with the budding of trees, with the first flowers, with the mating dance of butterflies and birds, the descent of deer and moose to their Spring meadows, the return of the Sandhill cranes to their yearly nesting spot in the Uinta foothills, the gentle floral hints in the air and, as might be expected from a photographer, the subtle difference in light – the crisp, clear sunrises as the warm beams make their way through clear air (still clean from the winter storms, but will become more hazy as summer progresses), the deep gradients in the sky before dawn and after the sun sets.

Spring thunderstorms appeared early this year, still the snowmelt has hit record levels, quashing hopes for reservoir replenishment, and ushering yet another year or drought upon this beautiful desert. Yet, the lower of the mountain meadows are alive with early bloom and promise a spectacular alpine wildflower season in the months ahead. It's mountain time.

Guy

Print Special – 11x14 for \$30. 5 Available.

Having recently prepared a sample portfolio, I am left with 5 sheets of A3 Premium Luster paper. This size sheet will fit an 11x14 print and I'd like to use it up before mounting roll paper on my printer.

\$30 includes shipping in the US for the first 5 orders of prints this size. This offer is only extended to readers of this newsletter. If ordering online, please mention "*Spring Newsletter Special*" in the "Notes" box on the order form. You may also email me directly at talphoto@hotmail.com to take advantage of this offer.

Spring Workshop



Michael Gordon and I conducted our first group workshop earlier this Spring. Ten of us gathered in Boulder, UT and headed into the magnificent canyon country of the Escalante.

The desert greeted us with profuse colorful bloom, mild temperatures, and endless opportunity for exploration.

Days were spent hiking to scenic marvels, discussions of exposure and composition, geology and field ethics, and a myriad other topics. Nights brought us around the campfire, chowing on gourmet camp food, and exchanging stories and jokes.

Michael and I would like to extend a heartfelt Thank You to the best group of participants we could have expected. We sincerely hope you

enjoyed it as much as we did. Other than the wonderful memories, this experience also convinced us we should schedule more such workshops in the future. For anyone interested – stay tuned to this newsletter and our web sites for more information.

Michael's web site can be found at <http://www.mgordonphotography.com>

Legacy – Musings from a Night on a Mountain

Something about a night in the wilderness always puts me in a contemplative mood. Be it the clear air, the perfume of scented brush, the rustle of wind in the trees, the cry of a distant coyote, the sense of danger, the twinkle of a myriad stars, or the tapping of raindrops on my thin shelter, maybe all, I may never know.



As is often the case, my mind drifts beyond my own immediate existence in yet another futile attempt to

place myself in the grand tapestry of being, to pinpoint my coordinates in the many dimensions of the universe, known and otherwise, real, imagined, tangible, and spiritual.

What would this world be without me, without humanity, without this planet? Will it even begin to matter in the grand scheme of things? Will it even go noticed in the vast expanses of space and time? Probably not.

Is there a higher purpose? Perhaps. If only so far as my world is indeed mine - one man's interpretation based on as much guesswork as it is on fact.

Am I justified in trying to make this a better place (better being as subjective as anything else, I suppose), to make myself a better person (if in no one's eyes but my own)? Milan Kundera thinks there is no point, and makes a damn good case for it too. Is Being really so unbearably light? If so, why bother? Maybe I should cover my tracks, venture farther into the wilderness and find out once and for all how I measure up to its challenges, not on a short excursion, within walking distance of cars and roads and houses, but over time, fending for myself, not relying on my packed food and store-bought water. Can I make it? And if I cannot - will it be worth trying anyway to know the ultimate truth of myself, if only for a moment before expiring?

I am almost tempted, but something stops me. If I die now, what will I leave behind? Some photographs and memories in the minds of the few I dared come close enough to who care about me?

Maybe some day I will. Some day, after I write a book, after I have made a profound impression that will outlast those who know me in person. But why? Best not to think about it too much. Not now.

The flow of water below lulls me to sleep. The cool air slowly cleanses my body of residues from the make-believe world ticking away with a nervous, uneasy sputter, down there, six thousand feet below. Only one thing makes sense now. Peaceful sleep.

Intimate Landscapes



The term Intimate Landscapes is attributed to Eliot Porter, a pioneer of color landscape photography. You will likely find mentions of it in a wide variety of articles and books by any number of notable photographers, yet most are careful not to accurately define the term, and rightly so. Intimacy implies an emotional and personal context that any one of us may (and should) interpret and apply individually.

To me an Intimate Landscape is one that falls between grand scenics, drawing their power from sheer enormity and majesty of a subject, and extreme close-ups, relying on magnification of a subject, evoking interest from the mere fact that these sights are not often possible with or apparent to the naked eye.

The Intimate Landscape does not rely on interesting subjects or optical effects alone – it encompasses a relatively small number of elements and draws its power from composition - the arrangement of the various elements relative to each other and to the frame boundaries. Intimate Landscapes do not dictate subject scale, or specific perspectives or focal lengths. Like a floral arrangement or a haiku it relies on establishing structure and order and ulterior meaning from an arrangement of elements – a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. As such, Intimate Landscapes provide a fine-art photographer with great freedom to express his or her vision. The image does not rely on any prominent landmark or any one particularly interesting element. It's about the deliberate thought and insight of putting the elements together in that particular arrangement.

The Intimate Landscape relies on vision, rather than opportunity.

Intimacy is what makes such an image powerful – the photographer must experience and capture a scene in such a way as to place the viewer right there beside them, distilling and amplifying that which caught their eye and flared their creativity and made them want to capture and share it.

Intimacy can be achieved in a number of ways. One already mentioned is to simplify - reducing the image to as few elements as absolutely necessary, distilling the essence of what you, the artist, find most powerful about a scene. This can be an object, a line, a pattern, combination of colors, etc.

Next is avoiding the temptation to rely on "special effects", whether it's the distortion of a wide lens, the extreme magnification of a macro, or over-the-top digital enhancements. These are all good ways of generating impact, but not necessarily intimacy. Intimacy should rely primarily on vision, not technique, on communicating to the viewer what it was the photographer him/herself was moved by when they came upon the scene.



Limiting the frame to scenes that do not include the sky, and in general excluding large prominent elements is another useful consideration - keep the viewer focused, rather than wandering around the frame.

In an age of over-photographed icons, and an abundance of technically excellent yet repetitive portrayals of similar scenes and subjects, Intimate Landscapes are the photo-artist's opportunity to express original vision, to explore new ground, and to include more of him or herself in the image.

New Internet Showcase – Intimate Portraits of the Colorado Plateau

Most people are familiar with the grand sandstone monoliths, deep canyons, and lofty views of Utah's canyon country. While I would never shy away from opportunities to photograph such scenes when conditions are right, I find myself more drawn to individual elements that make up this magnificent country. To that end I created a collection of intimate landscapes of the region. You may access the showcase by pointing your browser to our web site (<http://www.scenicwild.com>) and clicking the image on the first page.

Your feedback is always appreciated!

New Southwest Photographers Forum

The excellent Nature Photographers Online Magazine (<http://www.naturephotographers.net>) has graciously created a new discussion forum dedicated to nature photographers of the Southwest. Whether you reside here or have an interest in the region, you may want to participate:

<http://tinyurl.com/ywpm�>

You may need to sign up for a free account to use the discussion forums.