



THE

LAST FRAME

DECEMBER - 2001

St. Albert Photo Club's Monthly Newsletter



St. Albert Photo club president Derald Lobay presents the St. Albert Inn's general manager Mike Mazepa with the club's 'Best of Show' photograph for 2000 during the club's annual Christmas meeting. The photo taken by Al Popil, will be added to the hall of previous winners near the banquet facilities.

POINT STANDINGS TO JANUARY

- Derald Lobay 7
- Al Popil 7
- John Van Veen 7
- Gary George 6
- Eric Klaszus 6
- Sieg Koslowski 5
- Maryann Peterson 3
- Debbie Tetz 3
- Doug Poon 1

MIRROR, MIRROR, HOW DO YOU SEE YOURSELF

Have you ever wondered why most people are seldom satisfied with photographs of themselves? How many times have you looked at a photograph of yourself and felt that something didn't seem quite right? This is a perfectly normal reaction and there is a perfectly sound explanation for it.

The feeling that something isn't quite right is compounded by the fact that photographs of everyone else seem perfectly standard and true to life. Don't get too concerned about these feelings, because you're not

alone. Other people looking at your photograph will usually find it pleasing and accurately depicted, while these same people will find fault with their own images.

Psychologists who have long known about this phenomenon refer to it as the mere exposure effect. Simply stated, the mere exposure effect is what causes the uncomfortable feeling we experience when our brains detect that the face we see in a photograph is not the one staring back at us in the mirror.

In other words, since left and right are reversed in mirror images (the images that we are accustomed to when observing ourselves), the face looking back at us in the photograph seems somehow different. In fact, from our perspective it is different. The image looking back at us is how other people actually see us; that is, the image is not reversed-to another viewer. Thus, we prefer the mirror image of our faces, whereas others prefer the natural version.

Does this seem confus-

ing? It really isn't! Look at the two photographs labeled A and B. Notice that each photograph is the mirror image of the other. Photograph A represents the image of the subject as it was taken by the photographer.

What does all this have to do with increasing your portrait sales? People are accustomed to observing mirror images of themselves. Therefore, a mirror-image portrait is going to feel more natural to the subject than a standard photograph. Common sense

January's Contest:
Insects

January's Guest Speaker:
TBA

Tech Tips:
Holiday Tips

February Competition:
Animals & Birds

HAPPY NEW YEAR



dictates that someone who feels good about his or her portrait will also be more prone to purchase the image.

Curious about the extent to which portrait sales might be expected to increase because of the mere exposure effect, I presented mirror-image proofs to twenty prospective portrait customers, while pre-

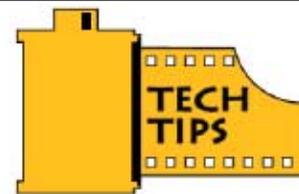
portraits of themselves, eighteen purchased a basic portrait package; sixteen of these eighteen customers placed orders for additional prints. Of the twenty customers who viewed standard proofs of themselves, sixteen purchased a basic portrait package; eleven of these sixteen customers placed orders for additional prints.

of customers who viewed standard proofs, and a 90% sales rate for the group of customers who viewed mirror-image proofs—a significant increase.

Surprisingly, there was a disproportionately significant increase in additional print orders from 55% for the group of customers who viewed standard proofs to 80% for the group of customers who viewed mirror-image proofs.

The next time you shoot portraits of a client have two proofs printed, one the reverse of the other. Show only the reverse-image portrait to the subject. The chance of making a sale from the reverse-image portrait is substantially greater than from the standard photograph. What about photographs of the subject that are to be purchased by relatives and friends? Pull out that standard portrait! This is the image others are accustomed to seeing.

The lesson to all this is, of course, if you want to increase your portrait sales then you would do well to know something about the psychology of photography.



HOLIDAYS



Light up your life naturally. Turn off the flash. A flash can destroy the mood and induce a “deer in the headlights” expression. Take advantage of natural light and holiday candlelight to add a new dimension to your photos.

Get a step up. Avoid shooting from unflattering angles. A step-ladder is great for getting above the subjects, especially for large group or family photos. You can easily see everyone from the higher angle, and the higher angle is complimentary to almost everybody.

Get close and personal Don't stand far away. When you think you are close enough, get closer. Filling the entire frame with the people you love creates the best holiday photos.



Photograph A is exactly how the photographer (and other people) sees the subject. Now hold photograph A in front of a mirror. Notice that photograph A now looks like photograph B, the reverse or mirror image. Photograph B is the image that the subject is used to seeing.

The mere exposure effect was supported by a study in which female subjects were shown two photographs of themselves: One a standard photograph (the original photograph as it was taken by the photographer) and the other a mirror-image photograph. The subjects were asked to select the photograph they preferred. To ensure the validity of the study, a close friend of each subject was also asked to indicate a preference. While most of the female subjects preferred the mirror-image photographs, most of their friends preferred the standard photographs.

senting standard proofs to another twenty customers. Of the twenty customers who viewed mirror-image

The results of this experiment yielded an 80% sales rate for the basic portrait package from the group

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