

## Fred Neveu: Seeing Beauty: A Lifetime of Landscape Photography

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*Seeing Beauty is a wonderful treasury of photographs with insights into the artist's process.*

Wisconsin-based landscape photographer Fred Neveu's retrospective collection *Seeing Beauty* illuminates his inspirations, process, and legacy.

Wildlife, human beings, and trains sometimes appear in these striking images, but their primary foci are natural landscapes. Some showcase Arizona canyons and Colorado valleys; there are also trees in Wyoming, waterfalls in Oregon, and notes about using a long shutter speed when photographing waterfalls to preserve a sense of motion in the final image. Two gorgeous photographs taken at the same place at the Grand Canyon, but with different lighting, are a quick, remarkable lesson in highlighting different natural features.

The images are organized into chapters based on their subjects' locations, with divisions for Utah and "Indian Country," for example. It's a logical, intuitive system of categorization. However, a few photographs are placed apart from their complete descriptive texts, requiring some page-turning to pair the image with its full story.

The photographs themselves demonstrate Neveu's stated aim: "Take time to see what makes each place unique." An aging barn on Mormon Row in Grand Teton National Park serves as a stark reminder of the temporary nature of human structures when compared with the immense mountains behind it. Another photograph, taken at Banff National Park in the Canadian Rockies, captures a wide array of colors at sunrise: blue water, green trees, the pink-orange of the morning sky, and the snow-white of distant mountaintops.

The text adopts a casual interview style, exploring Neveu's favorite subjects and locations, influences, and techniques. The questions and answers are embedded within full, elegant paragraphs that cover the emotional impacts of Neveu's work, as with his first views of Yosemite Valley. Humor is also present, as around his love of steam trains: "I'm a 'Ferroequinologist'... 'Ferro' for iron, 'equinologist' for horse-studier. I study iron horses."

Neveu's technical discussions are brief and accessible, as with his direct insights on the way that light strikes different surfaces. He also waxes rhapsodic about his old Hasselblad camera and describes taking great care in setting up photographs—choosing the right lens, having an eye for composition, and being patient for the right kind of sunlight. The result is a book that both collects images and serves as a testament to the photographer's love of his craft.

With reminiscences and tributes from teachers, mentors, friends, and peers, *Seeing Beauty* is a wonderful treasury of photographs that reflect the photographer's belief that "There is beauty all around you. All you have to do is see."

PETER DABBENE (January 19, 2024)

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