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FOREWORD REVIEW ♥♥♥♥♥ PHOTOGRAPHY

Horse Photography: The Dynamic Guide for Horse Lovers

Carol J. Walker
Painted Hills Publishing (September 2010)
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If etchings on walls of ancient caves are any indication, humans have depicted horses in artwork for millennia, so it's no surprise horses and photography have been linked since the modern camera was invented in the late 1800s. Whether one's interest is in capturing horses on film or digitally, for business or pleasure, Carol J. Walker's book, *Horse Photography: The Dynamic Guide for Horse Lovers,* offers sound advice.

Walker, a lifelong nature photographer who has exclusively photographed horses professionally for a decade, uses 150 of her own photos to illustrate the breadth of excellent options for creating fine horse photos, as well as the potential for some not-so-great outcomes. Simple cures are offered for common mistakes, such as making the horse's face appear miles long or placing dark-hued horses against murky backgrounds. Other strategies cover more nuanced artistic errors such as catching the most awkward part of a particular gait, not adjusting for weather conditions, and letting poor angles ruin a horse's natural elegance.

Written with both film and digital photographers in mind, the text and illustrations cover the technical as well as technique, equipment along with aesthetics. Walker assumes readers have access to horses, or can easily arrange it, and that their purpose in photographing equines is more than casual, yet her pointers also work for the amateur who brings along something slightly more advanced than a point-and-shoot camera to the county fair or rural road trip.

Walker shares lesser-known tips about what to do before framing the horse in the lens—like planning when to shoot in order to capture different kinds of light at various times of day and season, recruiting a helper to keep the horse interested, and assessing the background. Her best advice, culled from her personal experience, centers around what to do when the shots are not turning out as planned.

"Ongoing adjustment is the hardest thing about photographing horses," Walker writes, but also one of the most satisfying, as her examples show. An advocate for doing most adjustments before clicking the shutter (though she encourages deft use of Photoshop for annoyances like removing a cluttered background), Walker offers clear, precise, and practical pointers.

Occasionally laced with anecdotes from her professional assignments, and concluding with a short chapter on photographing wild horses (the subject of Walker's previous book, *Wild Hoofbeats: America's Vanishing Wild Horses*), this slim volume will inspire and guide most amateur horse photographers, without saddling them with too much information.

LISA ROMEO (November 1, 2010)

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