

Book Review

Focus on Lighting Photos

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Excellent photographs gain much of their impact from the way the subject is lit. Focus on Lighting Photos is a unique how-to book that includes many pictures and diagrams. It demonstrates how light can be used to create the mood that the photographer wants to project. This is the latest of six books in the 'Focus on' series about photography.

The first half of the book looks at different methods of putting light on the subject. Different ways of controlling the direction, intensity and color of the light are thoroughly covered.

The explanations are easy to understand. Concepts are demonstrated by series of photos of the same subject with different lighting. Diagrams supplement the written explanations. I find the use of progressively more intriguingly lighted pictures, of the same subject, very helpful. That technique enabled me to understand concepts better.

In the latter part of the book, the authors focus on methods for lighting diverse subjects. They deal with people, metal, glass and motion. The chapter on lighting for portraits goes into some detail on types of equipment.

They discuss how to make some of the tools yourself.

The target audience is hobbyists. Fil and Robin emphasize that you do not need to spend a lot of money on photo equipment. Once you have a camera and a flash, you can shoot fine photographs with only a few other tools. In fact, they recommend borrowing or making your own items until you find yourself using them enough to justify buying.

Focus on Lighting Photos seems to be geared for readers who are somewhat familiar with photography in general. I would say intermediate level. However, there is a very good glossary of the photo terms used. If you have not taken a photo class, it is fairly easy to follow along.

The writing style is informal, clear and precise. I really enjoyed Focus on Lighting Photos. The techniques it presents are exciting and inspiring. It is a fairly easy read.

Focus on Lighting Photos

Hunter, Fil and Reid, Robin

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