

Whew, winter is finally over! Good Riddance!

A few days ago, a newlywed was in the store, lamenting that her ivory wedding gown always looks white in photographs; why can't it look the color it really is? She asked if we could remake the photos so that the gown would be ivory, and we explained that to do that, all the colors would shift towards ivory, including her face, the bridesmaids' yellow gowns and everything. (A custom lab could do it, but we're talking BIG money here.)

The real answer is that most of today's fabrics have optical brighteners in them. Disguising the colors of the dyes or pigments used for coloration. Photographic film (or a digital pick-up chip, for that matter) renders that color differently than our eyes see it. The color we see is not always recognizable by color film, so we have to accept it or pay a lot of money to have someone alter the printing technique to reconstruct a specific color.

This pertains to things other than clothing. It's not too difficult to imagine the same things happening to paints and stains as well. Stretch your imagination a little more, and realize that many fertilizers and lawn products alter the chlorophyll compound in grass to make it naturally "greener" to our eyes, but film gets fooled and renders a very artificial color. Sometimes we think the camera is a fault, or the processing lab, but, as duPont says "better living through chemistry".

When photographing flowers later in the spring, carry a piece of black cloth with you – about 18" square or thereabouts. Use this as a backdrop behind the flowers to eliminate distracting backgrounds and give more vibrancy to the blossoms. If it is at all breezy, remember that using your flash will stop the movement due to the wind. If your camera has a fill flash mode, be sure to use it. Also try avoiding shooting up or down at the flowers. Try to shoot from their level, or a little higher. (Remember that weed killers, fertilizers, etc. affect the floral and vegetative colors.)

If you want to shoot a pet, child or similar subject in the flowers, remember to get close, and be tight in composing your pictures. Think, "What is this a picture of?" and shoot accordingly. Having your cat's whole body as well as your neighbor's garage isn't nearly as exciting as your cat's head with blossoms by it filling the entire picture. Flash doesn't always work here, you could get eyeballs as red as the tulips!

Many of you might have seen the article, but photographer Steve McCurry (whose 1985 photograph of a 15 year old Afghan girl in a red shawl with burning green eyes) has tracked down and found the now 31 year old woman in eastern Afghanistan and has photographed her again. She's had a harder life than any

of us have, and will appear in this month's issue of National Geographic. We had the pleasure of meeting Mr. McCurry last month and were surprised to find he has a disabled right hand. Considering all his camera equipment was designed for righties, he certainly has overcome what could have been a major career impediment.

There are still a few seats available for our Digital Photography Evening on April 17th. A .pdf file about it accompanies this letter. To read it, use Adobe Acrobat Reader. If you do not have Adobe Acrobat reader, you may download it for free from the download section at www.adobe.com. It is the industry standard for transmitting documents over the internet. If you aren't using, you should be.

THIS JUST IN...

April 28, 2002 has been designated Worldwide Pinhole Photography Day! For more details, see <http://www.pinholeday.org/>. Also, a popular British magazine has just come online which is quite good. Find it at <http://www.photoshot.co.uk/>. Happy reading.

Jerry & Lynne