

PHOTO IMPRESSIONISM

DeeAnn Stephens requested a lesson about impressionist photography. After discussing this, we came up with a couple of definitions:

1. Photograph splotches of color to convey moods.
2. Create photos that give an impression of a feeling.

Also, I think these photos should also be somewhat unreal.

Based on these definitions, we should discuss techniques used to create images that are more or less removed from reality. Perhaps they are images that you can not see with the naked eye, or perhaps they are scenes that you would not normally notice without first recording them as a photograph. They may be abstracts or they may make you wonder what they are. Interpretation of the images may vary, so impressions can also vary.

There are hundreds of techniques that can be used to create such images. Some can be created in the camera (film or digital). Others can be created after the photo has been taken by manipulating the image digitally (PhotoShop, etc.) or in the darkroom. These techniques are limited only by your imagination.

Many of these techniques overlap each other. For example, one of my favorites is photographing moving water. Generally, this technique includes reflections, long exposure, and creative light and shadow. Another is photography through translucent objects, which often results in distortion and diffusion. Some techniques require special equipment, such as wide angle lenses, close-up lenses, filters, or digital software.

A partial list of impressionist techniques:

- Take close-ups to isolate objects or make them hard to identify
- Use single color filters
- Use special effects filters
- Try image distortion
- Take multiple exposures
- Use long exposures to capture movement, and “pan” the image
- Use creative light and shadow, or backlight to simplify the image
- Use a wide angle lens to create exaggeration of image elements
- Take pictures of reflections
- Photograph moving water
- Diffuse the image to soften it by photographing through translucent objects
- Add intentional flare as a creative element
- Use an unusual light source
- Zoom the lens during exposure
- Use intentional out of focus or selective focus
- Take photos in unusual light or atmospheric conditions
- Find colorless or single color scenes
- Find an unusual viewpoint
- Find a strange object
- Manipulate the image with digital software or in the darkroom
- Combine photos in a montage, slide sandwich, or with digital software
- Use your imagination to invent something new