

# HORIZON NEWS #59

IMAGES, THOUGHTS AND NEWS FROM HORIZON PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

*“Vision is the art of seeing the invisible.”*

Jonathan Swift

## Wide-Angle Reality Distortion

Steve Gottlieb

How do you see what's invisible? In photography, one way (among many) is to distort reality by using a wide-angle lens. They're not just for capturing a large swath of what's in front of you. They also can render foreground objects disproportionately large—they create the illusion that background objects are further away than they appear. They transform what the unaided eye sees so, in a sense, you're seeing what's not there. Here are three very different—and very superior—examples taken during 2013 workshops.

Using a moderate wide-angle (about 28mm), **Cathleen Newberg** took this shot of me in the middle of Odessa, Delaware's main street. (Having someone watch traffic is advisable so the photographer can concentrate on the work at hand.) Observe how my head seems way bigger than my feet...and, similarly, how much wider the yellow line is in the foreground than off in the distance. A much wider angle lens would have exaggerated this affect substantially.

**Terry Mainguy** photographed what must have been, in the mid-1800s, the world's smallest train station ticket booth, located in old New Castle, DE. The wide angle lens makes the foreground fence posts appear about the same height as the booth itself; in reality, they are less than one-third that height.

**Esther Stephens'** wide-angle shot, taken in Seligman, AZ during Horizon's 2013 Western Adventure, made the Chevy's hood dramatically angular, a sort of "reversed streamline" look. Two other details to note: chrome bumpers appear blue because they are reflecting the blue sky; and star bursts appear in the bumpers, a consequence of photographing a specular highlight with a small aperture.



# Photography: Springboard into History

Ray Hull took this picture of a small house in Arizona (or was it California?) during our 2013 Western Adventure. Ray said this was his favorite shot from the trip. Perhaps that was because it combines seemingly opposite qualities: peacefulness and energized composition. AT the time, Ray thought that the house was the kind that was once sold through a Sears catalog—they sold the materials, you built it yourself. (You thought that started with Home Depot and Lowes?) Internet digging by Ray turned up this page in an old catalog. (Apparently, this house originally cost exactly \$1,097.00; even early retailers set prices that felt lower than they were.) Understanding the provenance of this house—or any subject—adds a new dimension to pictures, don't you think?



FOUR ROOMS AND BATH

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**The Living and Dining Room.** From the study porch, 13 feet by 8 feet, a sliding door opens into the modern combination living and dining room. Size of this room, 10 feet 8 inches by 17 feet 8 inches. The front part is used for living quarters and the part near the kitchen door is used for dining.

**The Kitchen** is 8 feet 8 inches by 7 feet 2 inches. It has space for sink, range, table and chairs placed along with shelves. A double window provides light and ventilation. Immediately outside the kitchen door, in the rear entry, is space for the ice box. Here stairs lead to grade door and basement.

**The Bedrooms.** The front bedroom opens from the living and dining room. The rear bedroom and bathroom are entered from an open hall, right off the

Can be built on a lot 25 feet wide

Many images in my new book, *FLUSH: Celebrating Bathrooms Past & Present*, sent me delving into history. The book's text includes off-beat, interesting facts about outhouses, toilets, toilet paper, and such, as well as historical information about specific places. (Did you know George Washington built a three-hole outhouse? That meant the father of our country must have often shared up-close and personal time with Martha, the kids and assorted guests.) Bathroom history, at least to me, is absolutely fascinating. I've built up a small library of bathroom books—and it's fun to now share what I learned. SG



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- >Lou Manna, one of the greatest food photographers, sharing secrets about how luscious food shots are taken.
- >Joe Edelman offering techniques that make his Glamour and Fine Art Nude photos among the best you'll ever see.
- >Roman Kurywczak explaining how to take stunning landscapes...at night.

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