

# Achieving Your Potential As a Photographer

Harold Davis

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREATIVE  
COMPANION AND WORKBOOK



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COMPANION AND WORKBOOK*

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## Acknowledgment

A special thanks to my wonderful workshop participants who have helped test and refine the concepts explained in *Achieving Your Potential As a Photographer*.





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Have you ever had the feeling that you were not being the photographer you could be? That you were not making the best photographs you could make? In other words, that you were not living up to your potential as a photographer?

I don't care whether you are a rank beginner, a serious amateur, or a seasoned professional. This is a feeling that we photographers have all had. My goal in writing *Achieving Your Potential As a Photographer*, and with the companion Workbook, is to help you be the best photographer that you can be—and to achieve your potential as a photographer.

This leads to a number of questions: What are the tools and techniques for achieving your potential as a photographer? What does it mean to live up to one's potential as a photographer? And, what is stopping you as a photographer?

Great questions! Let me tackle them more or less in order.

You'll find inspiration, ideas, exercises, and challenges in *Achieving Your Potential As a Photographer* that will help you become the best photographer you can be. I will show you examples, challenge you, and give you directions for precisely how to proceed. The creative Workbook that accompanies *Achieving Your Potential As a Photographer* in conjunction with the book itself makes up a "workshop in a box."

Some of this comes from me and work, and more about this later. But of course, the most contribution to your own work is your own contribution. I won't kid you: Following my examples, and doing the exercises, takes work. It takes work to become as good as you can be—but you can do it! Provided you really want to do it, and are willing to work at it.

As the old joke asks, "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" The answer is to "practice, practice, practice."

Sometimes people who think that organizational skills matter more than art and craft also think that we should strive for technical perfection in our work. Perfection is fine, but the perfect is the enemy of the good, and the quest for perfect all too often becomes a stumbling block to creativity. An imperfect image that conveys strong emotion will beat a technically "perfect" photo every time.

A related issue, if you are a serious amateur, semi-professional, or pro photographer, is making money from your photos. I've heard it said that making money from photography is more about business than photography. It's even put this way as a proposition: A mediocre photographer with great business skills will do better than a great photographer with lousy business skills.

I think this is total "poo-poo del toro." The truth is that making great images is far more important, and far harder, than having good business skills. Both creative image making and marketing require organization. But there the similarity stops, and making a creative,





