
PREFACE

by Tom Till

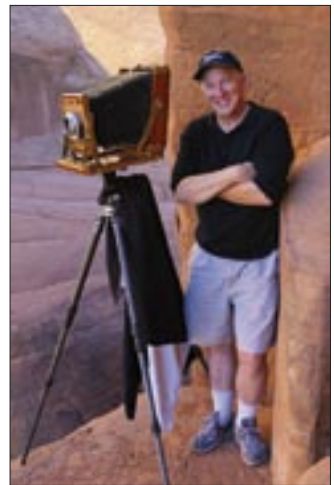
I've often said that the Colorado Plateau is a place where two divergent forces, the world's best light and the world's most interesting landscapes, seamlessly combine to create a photographer's paradise. Having been lucky enough to travel worldwide in pursuit of landscape and nature imagery, and also lucky enough to have lived my entire adult life in canyon country, I believe I have the standing to make such a claim, although anyone who has spent much time here knows my words to be utterly true.

As I looked at the places mentioned in the text, I was flooded with a lifetime of memories of the great times I have had exploring, hiking, jeeping, river running and making photographs in the Four Corners area. I was fortunate, beginning in the 1970's, to be one of the first photographers to visit the Subway in Zion National Park, to cruise around the White Rim in Canyonlands without a permit, and to be the only photographer in Antelope Canyon for weeks at a time.

Photographers coming to the area now have a challenge I never faced in those early years: other photographers. Over the decades serious photography has become one of the major activities pursued by visitors to the region. As such, we have an increased responsibility to leave the land as we find it, behave ourselves around other photographers and visitors, and place the integrity of the land above our desire to create images. After you leave this magnificent place, you can also provide a valuable service and help insure its survival as a viable ecosystem by supporting national and local environmental groups who lavish a great deal of needed attention on the preservation of our spectacular deserts. These groups include The Sierra Club, The Grand Canyon Trust, The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, and The Wilderness Society.

I congratulate Laurent on the fine work he has done with these books, on his own wonderful photography, and on his mission to give many other photographers a forum for disseminating their great work. In this regard, he is unique among established western landscape photographers.

Photographing the Southwest will be a helpful tool for me when I return to many of my favorite haunts in the future, but I'm also glad that an infinity of canyons, arches, ruins, springs and secret places have been left out of this book. These places are the true heart of the wilderness desert southwest. They are available to all who push a little beyond the established scenic hot spots, and all who are willing to risk equipment, creature comforts, and at times, life and limb. It's all worthwhile in pursuit of the magical light that calls us onward around the next bend of the canyon.



Tom Till