

# Total IMAGE

April 2004

Newsletter # 1

## Why This Lens?

*Shelton Muller gives us a new perspective on lens choice in the field...*

Apart from their practical purposes, telephoto and wide-angle lenses are known for the change in perspective they create in your images. Simply put, telephoto lenses compress and wide-angle lenses widen, lengthen and exaggerate. These properties alone make them invaluable tools for seeing everyday subjects in a way the human eye never will, thus opening up your world of visual opportunity and subject matter.

Because either effect is desired, a photographer may opt to use a lens that, while not necessary for any practical purpose, becomes necessary to serve a creative one. The key is being able to predict the effect and choose the lens accordingly. Zoom lenses save much time in this regard and the new breed of lenses that range from 28 to 300mm can easily provide the photographer with many perspectives in one piece of equipment. Many photographers however prefer the sharpness of a prime lens and have learned to use them, knowing almost exactly what their effect upon the photo will be. Learn to foretell the results by understanding the properties typical to each focal length.

Another difference between lenses is the effect they have upon depth of field. This means that they can change how much of the foreground or background appears in focus in your photographs. Wide-angle lenses grant the photographer the idea of greater depth of field and telephoto lenses deliver a visual concept of less. These attributes also contribute to the reasons photographers select either. Once again, it may have nothing to do with composition or any other practical purpose. It may simply be that the photographer wishes to highlight or enhance different visual dynamics within his picture. It may be that choosing one lens over another will either reduce or increase depth of field.



Achieving a desired result may require choosing a lens and actually moving to a slightly different location. It may only be a few feet but there are advantages to this also. Choosing a different lens and moving to the different position so that the subject retains the same proportions within the image can radically alter the dynamics of the photograph. Suddenly an otherwise uninteresting image assumes an entirely different appearance and sense of scale, depth and dimension.

But there is much more to lenses than simply wide angle and telephoto techniques. There are lenses designed for specific purposes and even these can be used for various purposes other than that for which they were designed. By simply examining and understanding the creative potential inherent in your lenses you will see the greater photographic opportunities they offer.

***Make sure to get your copy of Total Image, Better Pictures or Photo News from your local participating photo retailer. The autumn issue is out now!***

***Want More Photo Tips?  
Go to [www.total-image.com.au](http://www.total-image.com.au) to receive this free photo newsletter regularly!***