

Holiday Card Realization Arrives

By IRVING DESFOR
AP Newsfeatures

With the arrival of "Photography Annual 1979" comes the realization that 1978 is on its way out, that it's time to work on our personal photographic holiday cards and finish up this year's vacation albums, negative files and pictures.

That must all be tidied up before starting afresh on the clean, blank pages of the New Year.

With that good resolution to placate consciences, the chores can be put aside long enough to browse through the 17 portfolios in the Annual gathered by the editors of Popular Photography for the Ziff-Davis publication.

The issue spans a diverse range of viewpoints, from a six-year study of carnival personalities to a spiritual conception of the female form, and from the pick of the year's press pictures to the bizarre trend in color pictures.

Editorial director Arthur Goldsmith, who worked on his first Photography Annual in 1952, compared it with the latest publication.

"How much photography has changed," he said, "...and how little things have changed!"

In 1952, photography was influenced strongly by pictorialists, photographers who went in for "art for art's sake," beautiful pictures that followed the rules of good paintings. The annual featured mostly strong individual pictures.

In 1978, photography is influenced greatly by a different kind of "art for art's sake" photography, much of it originating from contemporary academic teachers with emphasis on abstract expressionism and schools of minimalists and conceptualists. Their work is said to be fresh, different and innovative. Now only portfolios are shown, no individual pictures.

Personally speaking, perhaps I'm a bit old-fashioned.

Much of the new expressionism leaves me bewildered and searching for a hidden message. The subject matter often seems pointless and insignificant, the cropping is cruel in the way heads, limbs and bodies are cut off at the edges and finally, why they are printed is another mystery.

There's some of it in "Photography Annual 1979," but fortunately it's at a minimum. I find no pleasure, message, or significance in a view of a cropped-off propane tank with leaf shadows, or of a woman's back with her head cut off and cropped at the waist to show only protruding shoulder blades.

Now listen to the photographer's explanation when photographing such subjects: "Somewhere en route from the real to the surreal, a mindless, wordless state takes over that connects me to my creative center, and the photographic medium becomes a vehicle for intuitive response, allowing insight past the surface of things."

I looked again at the round, spotted blob (propane tank) and the shoulder blades and I fail to see the insight or the intuitive response. But it must be my failure as a viewer, not hers. After all, she did get them published.

I did respond, however, to Randal Levenson, who has been photographing carnivals for the past six years. He became friends with the sideshow people and photographed them with respect and dignity. When not working in carnivals, he taught the fine art of platinum printing at seminars in Harvard, McGill University, the University of Toronto and other schools.

Levenson is an example of many photographers pursuing documentary work aided by grants from corporations and institutions in the hope that their

efforts eventually will be published as a book.

Mary Lloyd Estrin is a photographer with a personal commitment, but without a grant.

She spent two years photographing people in her home town of Lake Forest, a Chicago suburb. She started the project for a photography course while a student at the Illinois Institute of Technology. Now living in California, she is finishing the documentary project for publication this coming spring by the New York Graphic Society. Her people in their home surroundings are believable, authentic and neighborly as we visit with them visually.

Another portfolio that brought a pleasurable response was by Harold Feinstein, who photographs nature subjects in his Vermont summer home and who teaches workshops when he returns to his New York City studio loft. His studies of plants were made while lying on his back and holding the objects against the sky to get a beautiful backlight effect.

Still another enjoyable highlight of the Annual is the portfolio of British faces by Jürgen Schadeberg, a London-based photojournalist and teacher. All of them are full-face portraits in which the head is isolated by a black cloth so that nothing else shows. The results make a fascinating composite portrait of the people in a small English village from babies to adults.

For "Best of the U.S. Press," the editors have selected a dozen prize-winning pictures from the most important photojournalism competition held annually by the National Press Photographers Association and the University of Missouri School of Journalism for their Pictures of the Year Awards. They are excellent examples of sports, feature and news coverage by the press, telling each story succinctly and graphically in a single exposure.

As usual, technical data and background information on all of the Annual's photographs is provided in a section at the rear of the magazine.

'The Sting' Heads Niensens Ratings

NEW YORK (AP) — ABC brought the Oscar-winning film "The Sting" to television and could hardly have asked for more. The movie was the highest-rated prime-time program during the week ending Nov. 5, figures from the A.C. Nielsen Co. show.

ABC, in fact, listed six of the week's 10 most-watched shows and checked up its sixth week as No. 1 in the networks' ratings competition. The season is eight weeks old.

"The Sting," starring Paul Newman and Robert Redford, had a rating of 31.9. Nielsen says that means of all the homes in the country with TV, 31.9 percent saw at least part of TV premiere of the box-office smash.

Two of ABC's top-rated regulars, "Three's Company" and "Laverne and Shirley," trailed "The Sting," although "Laverne and Shirley" had to share third place with CBS' "60 Minutes."

Indeed, CBS had four shows in the Top 10, and perhaps as significant as ABC's continuing grip on first place was CBS' second straight runnerup finish after

five weeks in a row in last. "Little House on the Prairie," tied for 10th with a CBS special, "Puff the Magic Dragon," was NBC's best show of the week.

ABC finished the week with a rating of 22.3, followed by CBS at 17.2 and NBC at 16.9. The networks say that means in an average prime-time minute, 22.3 percent of the homes in the country with TV were tuned to ABC.

NBC had three of the five lowest-rated shows, No. 57 "Lifetime," No. 60 "Project U.F.O." and No. 61 "Who's Watching the Kids." ABC's "Hardy Boys Mysteries" was 58th, CBS' "People" 59th.

Here are the week's top shows: Sunday Movie—"The Sting," with a rating of 31.9 representing 23.7 million homes, and "Three's Company," 30.5 or

22.7 million, both ABC; "Laverne and Shirley," ABC, and "60 Minutes," CBS, both 27.6 or 20.6 million; "Mork and Mindy," 27.3 or 20.3 million, ABC; "M-A-S-H," 26.6 or 19.8 million, CBS; "Charlie Brown and the Great Pumpkin," 24.5 or 18.9 million, CBS; "Happy Days," 25.3 or 18.8 million, and "Taxi," 25.2 or 18.7 million, both ABC, and "Little House on the Prairie," NBC, and "Puff the Magic Dragon," CBS, both 24.6 or 18.3 million.

The rest of the Top 20: "Charlie's Angels," "Eight is Enough" and "Barney Miller," all ABC; NBC Theater—"Summer of My German Soldier"; "All in the Family" and "Alice," both CBS, and "Soap" and "NFL Monday Night Football," both ABC.

Chalked String Is Most Accurate Way To Find Center Of A Room

By ANDY LANG
AP Newsfeatures

There are times when it is necessary to find the center of a floor, most especially when preparing to install resilient tiles. While there are several ways of doing this, the professional and accurate way is with the use of a chalked string.

You can coat a string with ordinary chalk or you can buy one all set to use. Begin the measuring procedure by marking the centers of the two end walls of the room, using only the main dimensions and ignoring irregularities of contour. Connect these two centers with the chalked string, held taut by attaching each end of it to a nail driven slightly into the floor at the two points you have marked.

Be sure not to drive the nails too deeply, as they should extend about one inch above the floor. If the string is tight enough, it will leave a chalk mark on the floor as you snap it with your fingers. Do it more than once until it "takes" properly.

Now do exactly the same thing on the two other opposite walls. The place where the chalk lines meet will be the center of the room for your purposes. The lines should be at an exact right angle for the proper placement of the starting tiles. To be sure that it is,

measure 4 feet from the intersection along one line and make a dot. Then measure 4 feet along the same line but toward the opposite side wall and make another dot. Now measure 3 feet from the center along a line going toward an end wall and make a third dot. When you measure the distance between dots 1 and 3, and between 2 and 3, each should be 5 feet. If they aren't, you have made a mistake somewhere.

Sound like a lot of trouble? It isn't. The entire test won't take more than a couple of minutes and it's good insurance against an error that might throw everything out of line. (For the technique of installing resilient floor tiles, send for Andy Lang's floor tile booklet to Know-How, P.O. Box 477, Huntington, N.Y. 11743, enclosing 35 cents and a long, STAMPED, self-addressed envelope.)

Once you know the chalk lines are accurate, begin at the point where the chalk lines meet and lay uncemented tiles snugly in two rows, one to a side wall, the other to an end wall, stopping in each case when a full tile will not fit. Measure the distance between the wall and the last tile in each row. If the distance is less than 2 inches or more than 8, move the chalk line opposite that wall 4 1/2 inches closer to it. Repeat this procedure on the other row of tiles.

Not only are you now assured that you

will have borders of equal width, you will find it much easier to cut and place the tiles against the walls.

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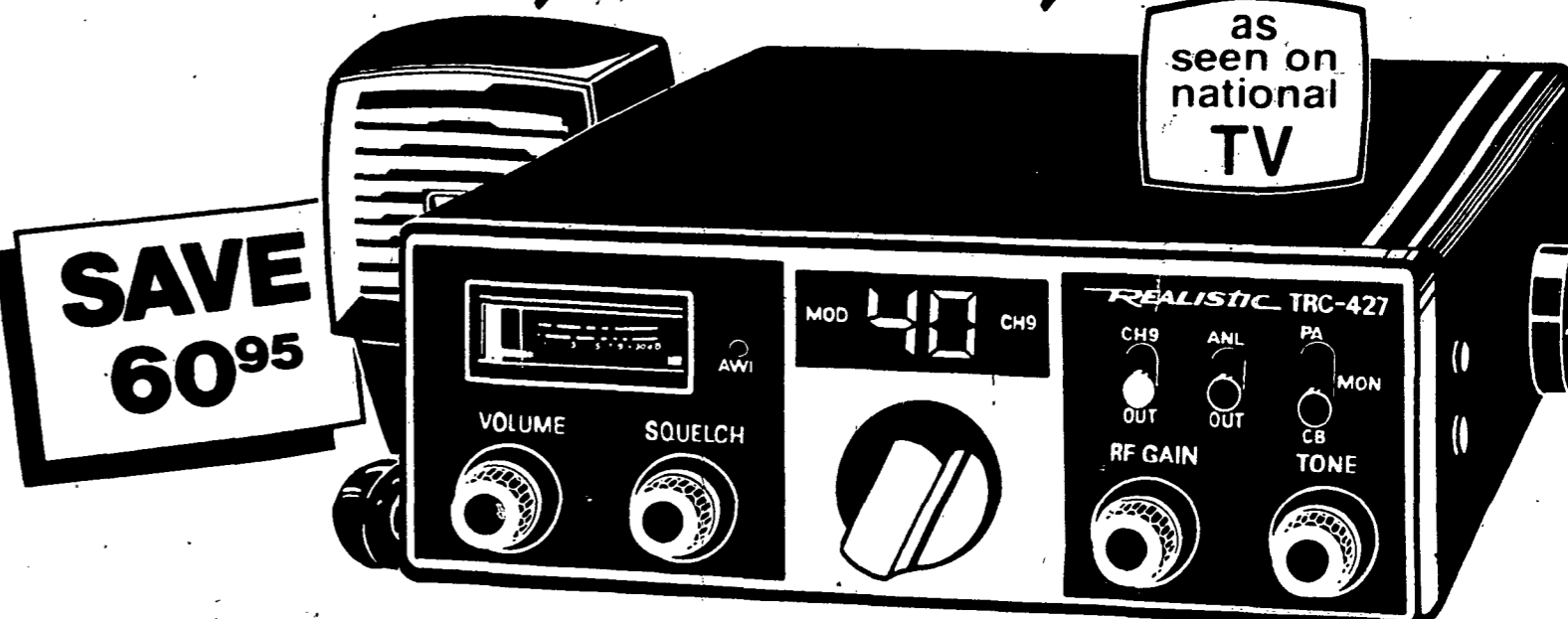
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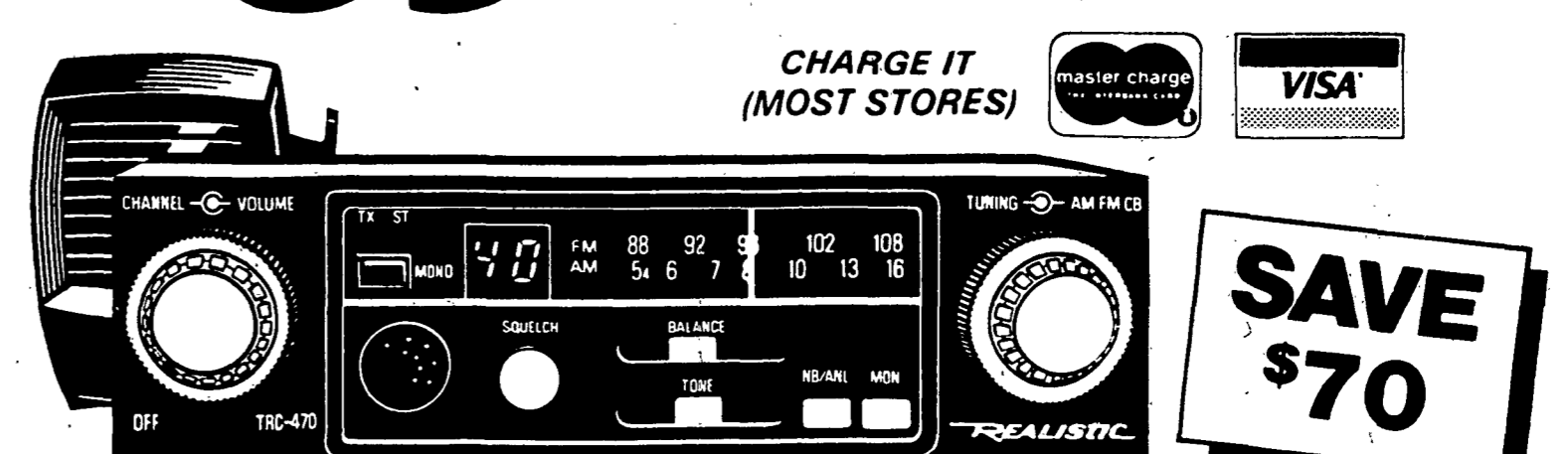
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