



National Geographic Simply Beautiful Photographs

Annie Griffiths

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National Geographic Simply Beautiful Photographs takes readers on a spectacular visual journey through some of the most stunning photographs to be found in National Geographic's famed Image Collection. Award-winning photographer Annie Griffiths culled the images to reflect the many variations on the universal theme of beauty. Chapters are organized around the aesthetic concepts that create beauty in a photograph: Light, Composition, Moment (Gesture and Emotion), Motion, Palette, and Wonder.

Beyond the introduction and brief essays about each featured concept, the text is light. The photographs speak for themselves, enhanced by lyrical quotes from scholars and poets. In the chapter on Light, for example, we read these words of whimsical wisdom from songwriter Leonard Cohen: "Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything. That's how the lights get in." And then the images flow, of light entering scenes through windows, clouds, and spotlights, from above, alongside, and behind, casting radiance upon young ballerinas and weathered men, into groves of autumn trees and island-dotted seas, revealing everything it touches to be beautiful beyond expectation.

To illuminate the theme of Wonder, Griffiths chose a wish from Andre Bazin: "If I had influence with the good fairy...I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life." This thought is juxtaposed with an exquisite vision in white, a frame filled with the snowy-pure dots and rays of a bird's fan tail. And on it goes, picture after tantalizing picture, alive with wondrous beauty.

When she created *National Geographic Simply Beautiful Photographs*, Annie Griffiths set two goals: to maximize visual delight, and to create a book unique in the world of publishing—one in which many of the photographs could be purchased as prints. She has succeeded on both counts. Many of these stunning images are available for order, and there can be no doubt as to the visual delight. You must open this book for yourself, and take in its radiant beauty.

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