

# AMERICANStyle Photo Shoot Guidelines

## ■ FORMAT

**Digital:** RAW-with-jpeg setting preferred. Highest-quality jpegs or tiffs acceptable.

▶ **Original RGB files please.** Leave color correction to us.

**Transparencies:** Medium format transparencies preferred; 35mm are acceptable.

## ■ TECHNICAL

**White balance:** Check camera's lighting settings for proper white balance. Including an image that contains a Tiffen or



Kodak color control patch card is helpful for color correction.

**Bracketing:** Please bracket, but don't submit them all—one or two is usually enough. A too-dark image is both easier to color correct and contains more data than a too-light image.

## ■ QUANTITY

**Limit submissions to approx. 100-120 images** (150 if the shoot involves successive "action" photos of an artist at work).

▶ Please cull your images!

**Provide approximately 20-25 different "subjects"**

(Two or three options of a subject—e.g. from an angle, straight-on, vertical, horizontal—are useful).

**Portrait quantity:** The only "subject" we prefer more than two or three options for is the portrait shot. It's helpful if we have 6–12 images to choose from.

**Number of pics AS will use:** An 8-10 page feature will usually run 14 to 20 photos; a department from 6 to 12, depending on the topic.

## ■ COMPOSITION

**Vary the distance:** Provide long-range, mid-range and close-up shots. We want to "set the stage" with full-room shots as well as show interesting vignettes and individual items. Think about shots from unexpected angles. Frame shots to allow for bleed.

**Avoid extremely wide-angle lenses**—they distort the artwork too much.

**Shoot some subjects off-center**, leaving the composition empty or out of focus to one side. These types of images provide interesting layout options.

**For close-ups**, use a closed aperture for the most depth of field. The entire object should be in focus. An out-of-focus background can be acceptable in these instances.

## ■ SUBJECTS

**The collection and home are the stars:** Every interesting room that the collector is willing to show is fair game, from foyer to bath. Our focus is the craft and 2-D art, but interior design and architecture are important to tell the story.

**Items mentioned in the story:** The editor will provide a reading copy of the story (if available) before the shoot.

**Silhouettes:** Look for interesting art objects—unobstructed by other items—that might be good candidates for silhouetting. The entire object *must* be in focus.

**The view and surroundings:** Take shots that might not be directly related to the collection, e.g. the view out the window, the view from the deck, the flower garden. We welcome your artsy shots that are outside our scope, too.

**The structure:** If the shoot is at a single-family home, take exterior building shots. Provide at least one that shows the entire structure.

**Pets:** Don't always shoo away the pets. Let the cat stay curled up on the bed or couch, if the photo still works.

**For artist profiles:** Take a few "action" and portrait shots in the studio. If the work lends itself to a series of work-in-progress shots, take a dozen or so at different stages.

## ■ PORTRAIT SHOTS

**Background:** Look for interesting backgrounds that don't fight with heads/faces/clothing. Have subject(s) pose in two different spots.

**Poses:** Provide both close-ups and full-figure images. Try different angles if feasible. If it's a couple, position them so there's not much dead space between their heads. Have them trade positions.

**The family pet** is welcome to join the pose in some shots.

## ■ KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR POTENTIAL COVER IMAGES

**What:** An individual piece (or small grouping) of 3-D art or craft, more vertical than horizontal (but not extremely thin).

**Features:** Interesting shape, surface definition and/or color. An unpainted wood piece is an option if it's got a complex grain or is a beautiful (or funky) piece. A minimalist white sculpture isn't likely to be what we need. Think "would this grab attention on the newsstand?"

**Close-up:** Shoot the item close-up using a closed aperture for most depth of field—we need the subject fully in focus.

**Background:** Photograph the item against a flat, neutral background, like a solid color wall. Ideally, if the location can accommodate a set-up, the item would be shot sitting on and in front of a white or black seamless.