

Melissa Mannon Photography

Volume 2, Issue 11
November 2006

Cold Weather Portraits

by Melissa Mannon



How many family photographs have you taken outdoors in the cold weather? Do you find that most of your photo album is filled with images from warmer seasons? Consider pulling your camera outside when your kids are playing in the snow, you are cross-country skiing, or your family is hanging holiday lights. Cold weather portraits make wonderful memories.

As I write this, I am remembering a photo of me learning to walk in the snow. In the photo, my mother is wearing one of those big fuzzy hats that was popular in the seventies. It is the kind that pulled down over your ears, had pom poms under the chin, and looked like a soft fuzzy lamb. This image is one of my favorite childhood pictures. I was wearing a bright pink coat that matched the color of my nose and showed off my marvelous tight curls. (The same curls that are a bane to me now!) I don't think there are too many

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other snow pictures of me. Perhaps that is one reason this one stands out in my memory. But, just the same, it is an adorable image.

There are many reasons we may not want to

take pictures outdoors when the weather turns cold. One is that our fingers are too numb to press the shutter. We are concentrating on staying warm, dressing up for the weather, and not inviting frostbite. Another is that we may find winter wear unappealing for good "portraits". But good chil-



dren's portraits first rely on a child's expression or body language. A child having fun and just being a child makes the most appealing photo no matter what the attire. And as for the photographer's clothing, plan ahead as with any winter activity and you will be just fine.

(cont. next page)

MAA Gallery Show

This month I am showing alongside my fellow Manchester Artists Association members at the MAA Gallery. Come visit our show "Season Splendor" at 1528 N. Elm Street in Manches-

ter. There will be a public open reception on Thursday November 16th from 5-8pm. See www.manchester-artists.org/gallery/index.html for more information.



Special points of interest:

- See and comment on Melissa's new blog where each day she posts a new photo.

gardenportraits.blogspot.com

- It's Christmas portrait time! Flash photography is available. Call to arrange for a session in your home!



Cold Weather Portraits (cont.)



My daughter will remember her first taste of snow and her first snow angels because her daddy captured those moments with the point and shoot camera. I suspect we'll also document her first real sled ride, her first time on skis, her first snowball fight and all her other first time winter ac-

tivities too.

Though the "traditional" outdoor natural light portraiture season ends when the leaves fall, you may want to consider a non-traditional portrait session. Consider the portrait of my little friend Ella — the first image in this article. Her marvelous expression, the way her knit hat frames her face, and our playful frame make this portrait appealing. Picture this image taken a month later with a little pink nose and cheeks. How cute is that?!

In fact, I am hoping that it snows early this year so that I can create a non-traditional (outdoor/natural light) Christmas card with my daughter

playing in the snow.

Whether you hire a professional photographer or want to take your own unique snapshots, make sure that the outdoors plays a part in your winter photo album. You will document memories that will last a lifetime and maybe even make the cold a little more bearable with another fun winter time activity — photography.

Be the first one to contact me to set up an outdoor portrait session when the first snow flies in New Hampshire this year. The first person to set up a snow portrait session will receive a free sitting (\$100 value).

Garden Portrait Newsletter Tips



Garden photographer and writer Melissa Mannon is author of Garden Portraits Newsletter. Please send questions and comments to melissa@mannon.org. www.melissamannonphotography.com

- Your camera should work fine in cold weather. Protect against condensation when going from cold to warm by putting it in an airtight plastic bag until the camera reaches room temperature. Batteries will run down faster in the cold. Keep spares on hand.
- One of the biggest problems with winter pictures is getting snow to look white and not gray. A camera "reads" a scene as "middle gray," making the most dominant part of your picture a gray tone. With an advanced camera, this is easily remedied by overcompensating, opening up your shutter to let more light in. Your camera thinks it is overexposing the image, but really it is getting it just right. With a point and shoot camera, an exposure lock feature will allow you to compensate by first focusing on a dark area and locking in the reading. (See your camera's manual for assistance.)
- To stay warm, wear thin moisture wicking gloves. Wear a second layer of warm wool gloves. The kind on which the fingers fold so you can easily manipulate your camera's buttons are ideal. I also stick a pair of chemical hand warmers in each palm and in each waterproof hiking boot. Don't forget your scarf, hat, long underwear, and heavy coat.