



## CHRIS NOBLE ART UNDER PRESSURE

There's a preeminent sense of landscape in Chris Noble's adventure photographs. A former professional freestyle skier, Noble's grace under fire lets him create graphically striking views in which man seems puny in the scheme of things. A case in point is his study of rock climber Merrill Bitter tackling a fissure-laced cliff in Utah's Indian Creek Canyon, a well-known haven for the vertically challenged (left). "It's one of my favorite places to shoot," says Noble, 38, who scrambled, ropeless, up a sandstone buttress to take the picture. "The rock has an organic quality that's really pleasing." Aesthetic judgment also figured in Noble's image of a Mt. Everest base camp (overleaf), taken during a 1987 expedition. It was created with a three-hour tripod-mounted exposure, hence the streaky stars, greenish cast, and faint diagonal blur of prayer flags. "I just set my watch," he remembers. "I was lucky the camera wasn't completely covered with frost by the time it was over." Weather prevented any climbers from making it to the summit that season, but Noble and three others set the high point—26,700 feet. "Getting that high on the mountain was a personal best," says Noble. "And the photographs were so strong, it didn't bother me that we couldn't reach the top." Indeed, the secret to Noble's success may be that there's no dividing line between adventure and photography. "I like it best when the two are seamless," he says.

© 1991 CHRIS NOBLE

