

INTERVIEW ANSWERS FOR LA REVISTA MAGAZINE (MEXICO)

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1. Explain what you do in 5 words:
 - a. In the words of Salvador Dali I want to "systemize confusion and discredit reality."

2. How did you get started in photography?
 - a. I first became interested in photography as part of my involvement in community service projects. When I was 14, I spent a summer working on an Apache Indian reservation and took my little Brownie camera with me. In college I travelled in South America on another project, and camped across North Africa, finally with a 35mm camera (which was the precursor of the DSLRs of today). During my senior year of college, I started working professionally as a newspaper photographer with the ambition of becoming a photojournalist or an ethnographic filmmaker.

3. In your opinion, what makes photography an art?
 - a. There is nothing objective about photography. A photo, whether set up for the camera or simply captured, is a product of someone's unique perception and point of view. What always fascinated me about photography was that I could transcend the limitations of my own way of seeing, and could experience the world or the imagination of another person through their photography.

4. What sparked your interest in dance photography?
 - a. When newspapers sent me to cover dance performances I realized I was not only fascinated by movement, but I also preferred to be free of the responsibility of telling a story. Later, I became intrigued by photography's ability to stop time and reveal what the naked eye can't see. Dancers illustrate the passage of time, giving it substance and materiality. In my

pictures, time is stopped, a split second becomes an eternity, and an ephemeral moment is solid as sculpture.

5. What do you think is the biggest challenge in dance photography?
 - a. Finding and capturing the moment! Dance photography is an anticipatory art form. Dancers move so fast that if the photographer waits to see the image in the viewfinder before pressing the shutter he will “miss” the shot. Many photographers shoot with the continuous action function to maximize their chances of getting a good shot, but what they are doing is giving over their own “decisive moment” to an arbitrary timing mechanism! I don’t shoot with bursts; I shoot only one frame for every phrase that I have the dancers perform expressly for my camera. Then I ask them to repeat it, with additional direction on my part, many times.

6. What has been the most exciting moment for you in your dance photography career?
 - a. In 1992, when my first book, “Breaking Bounds”, was published in English, French and Japanese and I had my first solo museum exhibit at the International Center of Photography in NYC.

7. Can you describe what you do to get ready to shoot a dance performance?
 - a. I used to shoot dance performances in the mid 70”s and 80’s, but not since. The way I prepare for the shoots in my studio is to stay open to inspiration. The ideas come to me rapidly, especially after I begin the photo session.

8. Is there a particular dancer or company that you would love to photograph? If so, who, and why?
 - a. There is no particular dancer or company I would like to photograph because what excites me in photographing a particular dancer is not the way they perform choreography, but their ability to improvise and experiment with movement for the

camera. I am looking for an unpredictable moment that cannot be translated into a logical narrative.

9. What was the most challenging assignment you ever had?
 - a. After all these years I have learned to “roll with the punches” in terms of what happens on a shoot. I never studied photography, nor am I technically inclined. I rely on my assistant for technical support and help moving the lights. So I was a little concerned about going by myself to Beirut a few years ago to shoot a campaign of “bridesmaids” jumping on a trampoline to catch the bouquet. Another challenging assignment was photographing a dance company jumping on the sand dunes of Idaho. Despite the fact that I used to be a travel photographer, I haven’t shot outdoors much for the last 30 years, so I was a little concerned. But both shoots worked out great!

10. What is your dream project?
 - a. I have many dream projects. One has been to collaborate on a film and photography project exploring ritual dance in indigenous cultures around the world. Closer to home, I want to create installations of my photographs as moving projections, as well as projecting my images on water screens where they can “magically” appear and disappear.

11. Professionally, what’s your goal?
 - a. I am grateful to have already exceeded my dreams.