

## **Print and Online Portfolio Show**

Juror: Darius Himes

### **Juror's Statement**

The human experience is one of multiplicity and depth. The past century has seen the shrinking of the physical world through technologies which have made the most remote corners of the world accessible to all. Photography, which was born in an era of colonization coupled with unfounded but long-held theories of racial superiority and stereotyping has a history of reinforcing the notion of "the other." Through the work of working photographers today, such as the 15 selected for this exhibition, we now see this powerful tool used as a means of exploring and commenting on the varied experiences of people around the world.

The voices in this exhibition and its accompanying catalogue are diverse; some are engaged with quietly reflecting the world in front of the camera while others have approached their work as a novelist would. Social commentary is another approach while others have taken poetic license.

These portfolios attest to the fact that our world is one of increasing complexity. As we struggle to enter into an age of global maturity, the responsibilities of every member of the human race have deepened. For what else can heightened global interdependence and the potential for mass destruction or education truly signify? The human experience with its attendant range and diversity—from the humorous to the macabre, the heart wrenching to the uplifting—is the foundation of this volume.

It barely needs to be stated that there is an unmistakable power in photography. The Center for Fine Art Photography in Fort Collins has consistently striven to exhibit important work. Indeed, whether in speech or any of the visual arts, expression is by means of images. The proliferation of artists that are willing and able to communicate their life experiences, their visions of the world and their pleas for tolerance and change is unprecedented in the history of human civilization. It is something to celebrate and to preserve.

In an article in Artforum (Feb. 2005), Peter Plagens describes three types of art critics: goalies, who defend "good art", cartographers, who present us with an intelligible map of the terrain, and evangelists, trumpeting the work of the few who have hit their mark. My approach as juror has been to effectively embody these three types of critics. Based on the work submitted, a map is now laid before you; there are major constellations that adorn the universe of photography presented to you here.

Two portfolios in particular stood out: the work of Colleen Plumb, based in Chicago, and Derek Henderson, from New Zealand. Both of these artists have a sensitivity to their subject matter and to the conditions of light and space that reveal an attentiveness that goes beyond a mere intellectual curiosity.

In short, the goal of these artists, and by extension this exhibition and catalogue, have contributed to a vital conversation that must be encouraged and sustained by us all. The world around us is the ultimate prima materia. The photographers included in this have transformed the raw material of the world, impressing on it their hopes and loves, critiques and condemnations. Each image and each voice is one to listen to and ponder.