

Alec Soth's Archived Blog

August 30, 2007

Louisville lecture

Filed under: lectures and exhibitions — alecsothblog @ 12:12 am

Tonight, August 30th, I'll be giving a talk on my work at the Speed Museum of Art at 6pm.

Info [here](#) and [here](#) (and Jen Bekman thinks she has name spelling problems).

7 Comments

1. A small gallery once gave me a solo exhibition, sometime in 2004. 3 years later, their web site still says my name is Walter Pickering. We had a rocky relationship, so I figured why bother? But it still irks me.

Comment by Walker — August 30, 2007 @ 1:07 am

2. The moment finally arrived for the unveiling of my first big break into the world of book covers. The good folks at Random House had just sent me an advance copy of "Death of a Murderer" so I could get a jump on feeling good about the use of my photograph on the cover of the book by Rupert Thomson.

It was indeed exciting to see it, to run my hands over the slightly stippled paper, to realize that 37,000 copies of my photo would be out in the world soon – on shelves in bookstores, on lounge chairs at the beach, on nightstands in bedrooms and in libraries. When I opened the jacket to spend a few moments soaking up the joy of seeing my name in print, I saw that my name had been misspelled.

Now, this does tend to happen from time to time. Not GLORIA, of course. Van Morrison made sure no one would EVER misspell that name. You remember:

G-L-O-R-I-A GLORIA
G-L-O-R-I-A GLORIA
I'm gonna shout it all night GLORIA
I'm gonna shout it every day, GLORIA
Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah.

FEINSTEIN gets messed up a lot. I have received mail address to Feinstay, Finsterwald, Feinburg, Feingold, Frankenstein and Finestine, just to name a few. I've gotten used to saying on the phone: it's F as in Frank and yes the E goes before the I both times. (And, no I am not related to Diane OR Michael.)

But misspell BAKER? How in the world could that have happened? It's a common word, for goodness sake. We have all spent time or at least know someone who has spent time in the kitchen making cookies and cakes, haven't we? It's only five letters, frequently used ones at that. It's even a word that is spelled pretty much the way it sounds.

How does it become BACKER?

The photo on the jacket of Death of a Murderer was taken by her: Gloria Backer Feinstein.

Turns out, my father tells me, this was actually the way our name was spelled before someone at immigration messed it up.

Comment by Gloria Baker Feinstein — August 30, 2007 @ 6:02 am

3. Surely I get super double credit for correcting the spelling of your name even though the press stuff had you as Alex? I admit when I first posted I let the misspelling get through but then I was like "wait a minute" and righted the wrong.

Comment by Michelle — August 30, 2007 @ 7:41 am

4. Mr. Sloth

You and that Beckman chick are awfully thin-skinned.

Comment by Jens Lekman — August 30, 2007 @ 8:30 am

5. Ahhh, Mr Soth, I feel for you.

Now, I think a name like Boyce is not that difficult. But I get it chewed up and spat out as all sorts of things. Boyd, Boys, Bryce, Boise, Joyce, Royce even Bounce, Bonce and Bunks (god knows how they managed to get the last one) have turned up on mail, or been used to introduce me to people

I had a legal document once that spelt my name three different ways, none of them the right one

And the crazy thing is, living as I now do in Hong Kong, where you could excuse mistakes like this, well, I have yet to get any mail from a local corespondent that tries a word salad on my name. Then again, I am getting used to being called "Mr David" a lot.

Comment by David Boyce — August 31, 2007 @ 2:52 am

6. I think this one definitely takes the cake.

Comment by Cary — August 31, 2007 @ 11:17 am

7. Cary – if I had a personally signed 'Decisive Moment', I'd change my name to whatever the hell he wanted to call me.

Comment by guybatey — September 1, 2007 @ 9:16 am