

Alec Soth's Archived Blog

December 3, 2006

more Bill Jay

Filed under: [critics & curators](#) — alecsothblog @ 1:40 am

A thought provoking interview with Bill Jay found on YouTube [here](#). The interviewer (cryptically named [appleport](#)) also has interviews with Christian Boltanski and Edward Burtynsky.

9 Comments

1. I think that's a pretty limited point of view he has on photography...There are more photographers out there than ever and that means a lot of people making photographs in very different capacities. He states that he'd like to see photography used for 'humanistic' endeavors, what does that mean? As a tool for reporting the truth about all that's wrong with the world (shhhhhh on the Sontag stuff)? There are loads of photojournalists out there. He says he'd like to see more journalistic type looking photographs made, isn't that saying then there is a certain correct aesthetic to 'journalistic photography?' I think that's a terrible thing to assume.

One of the best things I've seen in the past recent years was Alec Soth's addition to Magnum (This is how I first found Alec's work) and I thought: "YES!! Finally some journalistic photography that is not done with the 'tilted Leica look and Friedlander-esque compositions'" - It had expanded a photojournalism agency out of this rigid 'journalism aesthetic.'

Saying that 'All the photography being seen today is in galleries' makes no sense to me either, there has not been a reduction in the amount of photos being used in all aspects has there? There is the addition of photography to the realm where certain talented artists can get some decent money for a shot and sell something precious (a print, a whole other aspect he doesn't even think about really), not the reduction of photography in other places.

I think he was onto something about self-publishing, exemplified with this very blog, but I dunno, a great photographic print or nice photo book is a precious thing that feels amazing to have...again I think these are additions to what encompasses photography. It's 2 am...

Comment by [Dan Otranto](#) — December 3, 2006 @ [5:06 am](#)

2. ps- these interviews are great, thanks for the link

Comment by [Dan Otranto](#) — December 3, 2006 @ [5:08 am](#)

3. if you follow Boris Chan's* posts on pnet, it seems that photojournalism actually is in a slump. magazines haven't increased the day rate in over a decade. venues and support for their work are dwindling. Getty and Corbis are Walmarting the industry and lowering the photographer's cut. digital photography costs more, though it does have its advantages. many photogs have to take on corporate work to get by, which hurts or robs their creativity. it's nothing like the heyday of photojournalism and the big picture magazines.

* he has a bunch of usernames for different computers: boris chan, doris chan, boris c han, boris o'chan

Comment by [aizan](#) — December 3, 2006 @ [1:23 pm](#)

4. aizan,

I'm not clear on "digital photography costs more."

Something I find interesting about photography is the growing divide between different "types" of photography, such as "Fine Art," "Journalism," "Commercial Editorial," and "Commercial Corporate." I would definitely argue that photography has always involved similar areas, but, today, I notice a lot of people view photojournalism and fine art photography as two completely different things, many times lifting fine art to a higher form.

Wouldn't we all agree that they are part of the same medium, only focusing on different aspects of the surrounding world, therefore inherently the same?

Comment by [Ryan](#) — December 3, 2006 @ [5:27 pm](#)

5. apparently, the photographer could markup the cost of film, processing, and proofing, which the employer would then pay for. nowadays they don't get as much from digital capture fees. i think most have to do the post processing themselves, too. [see here](#). that was kind of a surprise.

Comment by aizan — December 3, 2006 @ [7:43 pm](#)

6. I still need to spend some time going through each of the interviews, but I'm pretty sure those Burtynsky interviews were done in conjunction with his "Manufactured Landscapes" retrospective.

Comment by [Todd W.](#) — December 3, 2006 @ [10:00 pm](#)

7. Fascinating article on a photographer now revealed:
http://online.wsj.com/public/article/SB116499510215538266-w6oLtTyb6LO2qIORvqxTV1PwiTM_20061211.html?mod=blogs

Comment by [Chris](#) — December 6, 2006 @ [12:54 am](#)

8. I made the two videos of interviews with Bill Jay, but, surprise, surprise, I am NOT Appleport. I was equally surprised myself tonight when I discovered these two videos posted on YouTube without my permission. This is not only a violation of common courtesy, but a violation of my copyright. I have asked Appleport to remove the two videos immediately, and am informing YouTube of Appleport's violation of their Policy of Use and of my copyright.

Anthony Mournian
Mournian@sandiego.edu

Comment by Anthony Mournian — June 2, 2007 @ [9:57 pm](#)

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Comment by Anthony Mournian — June 2, 2007 @ [9:58 pm](#)