

Alec Soth's Archived Blog

September 13, 2006

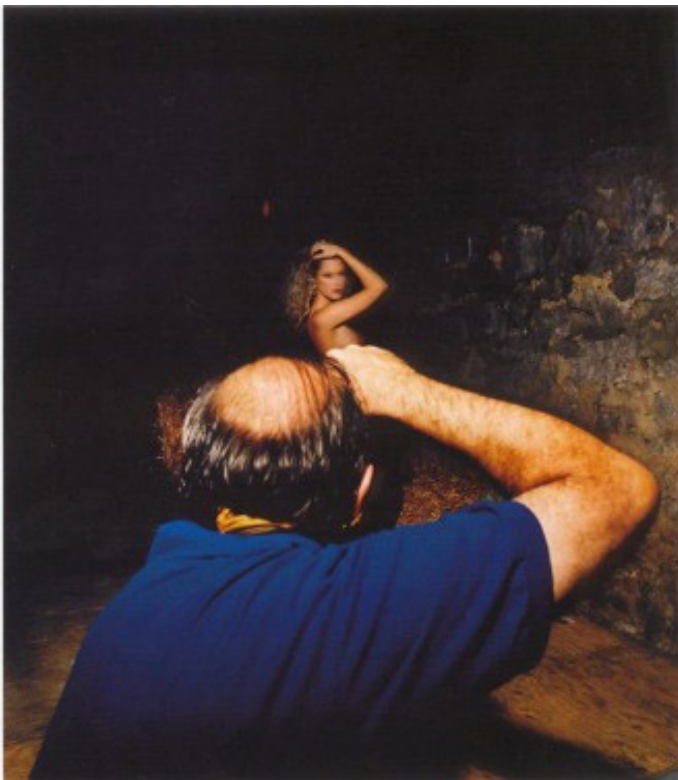
Professional vs. Amateur

Filed under: [vernacular & Flickr](#) — alecsothblog @ 10:55 am

Who would you rather be:



A professional (as photographed by an [amateur](#))



Or an amateur (as photographed by a [professional](#))

1. To me, pro photographer sounds like news or fashion photographer. Which i don't want to be...

But then i'd love to live from my photography, which could be seen as art (for the walls or books) but i don't think i can call myself an artist.

So now i'll just keep being a student in an art school and i'll see when i'm done with that.

Comment by [roland](#) — September 13, 2006 @ [11:36 am](#)

2. I'd go for being the pro. Those 'camera clubs' are scary things. I've seen it in parks in Tokyo. The brings so much equipment and they all have those reflectors that folds out with that cool hand movement. The party can even choose that the models wear their favourite manga-character outfits. If you take pictures of them while they are at it, they will look pretty confused.

Hers a link to picture of such session:

<http://www.rasmusriemann.dk/blog/?p=391>

Comment by [Rasmus Riemann](#) — September 13, 2006 @ [11:53 am](#)

3. I'm an amateur because no one will pay for my pictures but also I've read that if you look at the original etymology of that word being an amateur means engaging in an art (or a study or sport) with the primary motivation of love or passion for the activity, as opposed to money. Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Every artist was first an amateur."

Short answer: Even if I were given the choice I'd still be an amateur.

...Or am I taking this question too seriously?

Comment by [salishpark](#) — September 13, 2006 @ [1:46 pm](#)

4. Amateur! Sign me up! LOL

Actually, I never could bring myself to shoot that type of photography... for a variety of reasons.

Comment by [Steve](#) — September 13, 2006 @ [5:42 pm](#)

5. I'm still unsure who I'd rather be, but I went to a '[camera club](#)' event once – and it did seem very much an avenue for men to see scantily clad (or un-clad) women, and take photos of them. I guess I was surprised that really happens (although we hear rumors) and that the clubs often market to these people.

Needless to say, I have not since been back.

Comment by [Michael](#) — September 13, 2006 @ [11:25 pm](#)

6. [...] In a reply to my recent post, Professional vs. Amateur, salishpark writes: "I'm an amateur because no one will pay for my pictures but also I've read that if you look at the original etymology of that word being an amateur means engaging in an art (or a study or sport) with the primary motivation of love or passion for the activity, as opposed to money. Ralph Waldo Emerson: 'Every artist was first an amateur.'" [...]

Pingback by [alec soth - blog](#) » [Blog Archive](#) » [More on amateurs](#) — September 14, 2006 @ [12:04 am](#)

7. Alec, thanks for calling out Chris Verene!
He is one of my fav underrated photogs.
PS; Just got Niagara. Words fail man! Keep on keepin' on!

Comment by [jmgordano](#) — September 25, 2006 @ [12:07 pm](#)