

Alec Soth's Archived Blog

October 20, 2006

Jerome Liebling

Filed under: [filmmaking](#) — alecsothblog @ 1:05 pm

In my post about [photographers who've made films](#), I neglected to mention [Jerome Liebling](#). Liebling taught at the University of Minnesota for twenty years. During that time he made several award-winning documentaries with filmmaker Allen Downs (Pow Wow, The Tree Is Dead, and The Old Men). But his lasting impact in Minnesota seems to have been with photographers.

After leaving Minnesota to teach at Hampshire College, Liebling appears to have stopped making films. Nevertheless, he had an enormous influence on a generation of documentary filmmakers at Hampshire, most notably Ken Burns. This influence is discussed in yesterday's [New York Times](#):

"The essential DNA of all my films issues from still photography," Mr. Burns said. But Mr. Liebling's influence on his work, he said, reached much deeper, to a personal and ultimately philosophical level that has guided many of his choices of subject and approach.

In this brief little [video](#) you can tell that Liebling is an excellent teacher. I nearly went to Hampshire College (my parents thought it was too hippie-ish). I can only wonder how my work and life would have been different if I'd experienced Liebling's influence first hand.

7 Comments

1. [...] alec soth – blog photographica, miscellanea, etcetera « Jerome Liebling [...]

Pingback by [alec soth - blog » Blog Archive » Friday Poem](#) — October 20, 2006 @ [1:22 pm](#)

2. Wow Alec, wonderful post and of Liebling... "all meaning accrues in duration — sometimes you have to just slow down and look." On point.

Comment by [Matt Niebuhr](#) — October 21, 2006 @ [12:09 am](#)

3. Interesting video thanks!

Still would very much like to see this video though:

From the 2point8 blog

'In October of last year, Soth gave a talk in San Francisco, and showed a video that quickly described his working style. Soth is shown trying to persuade a passerby to be his subject. There's snow on the ground, and Soth's trying to convince someone he's just met to stand still while he readies his camera.'

Make it happen!

Comment by Theodore Williams — October 21, 2006 @ [1:03 pm](#)

4. For some reason my blog software isn't allowing me to upload video. So I don't think it will happen. If you want to see the video, come to my lecture at the Memphis College of Art this Thursday.

Comment by [Alec Soth](#) — October 22, 2006 @ [8:14 am](#)

5. Would love to if I had £500 spare for the plane ticket

Comment by Theodore Williams — October 22, 2006 @ [3:21 pm](#)

6. Btw.
Could always upload it to glorious youtube (www.youtube.com) and paste the link here.

Comment by Theodore Williams — October 22, 2006 @ [3:25 pm](#)

7. did you see joshua lutz's post on liebling
<http://joshua-lutz.com/blog/>
he snubs ken burns pretty bad in it.
I love Burns and was sad to see the jab-but it makes sense
btw-i will be at your lecture on Thursday!
Can't wait.

Comment by Karen Winters — October 22, 2006 @ [7:02 pm](#)