

Alec Soth's Archived Blog

April 23, 2007

Newton

Filed under: [editorial photo, quotes](#) — alecsothblog @ 4:13 pm

“Some people’s photography is an art. Not mine. Art is a dirty word in photography. All this fine art crap is killing it already.” Helmut Newton

- [Richard Lacayo](#) has a [good post](#) today on Helmut Newton

5 Comments

1. On the flip side:

"I'm a little foolhardy. Dangers of violence – rape, murder – are less frightening than making a living at fashion photography." Diane Arbus

Comment by [Alec Soth](#) — April 23, 2007 @ [4:25 pm](#)

2. I hate referring to myself as an artist. The word has certain connotations I'd rather avoid. Photography is a unique process of selection. You have the frame and the world! Szarkowski states – "It is today quite simple to make pictures that are as intelligent, cultivated, and original as the person who makes them..." and I guess this is where the "artistry" derives, through the photographer's sensibilities.
I'm a photographer and also teach part time as an adjunct. One of the hardest questions for me to answer is when someone asks, what do you do? "I'm a photographer". Then I feel as if I need to clarify that... well, I do it for personal reasons, I have a gallery that shows my work, I don't do weddings or commercial photography... I teach photography. My answer always comes off as a little vague and unclear. Sometimes it's easier for me to just say, I'm a stay at home dad.

Comment by [edward](#) — April 24, 2007 @ [1:45 pm](#)

3. I too get a little cringe sometimes when I think of myself as an 'artist'...it feels like a perk of photography is the ability to separate yourself from that word, but in the end I pay no mind to that feeling and leave it up to the talking heads to have discourse on that.

Comment by [Dan](#) — April 25, 2007 @ [12:40 pm](#)

4. What a BS! I bet Mr. Newton did not say that while he was a starving artist. That's easy for a famous people to say.

Comment by [yes](#) — April 28, 2007 @ [3:45 am](#)

5. I believe the "art" is simply feeling manifest in any human endeavor, be it creating a photograph or a loaf of bread. Like the saying, feeling is the prayer, I believe it's also what others define as "art"

Perhaps the photographer Bayard Wooten, said it best.
"To use a camera as a means of artistic expression, a certain quality of spirit must be brought to aid light & air" -Bayard Wooten 1926

Comment by [Bearz](#) — April 29, 2007 @ [4:24 am](#)