



‘Art to Life’

SHAUN VAN STEÏN

The photographic work of Shaun van Steÿn is enduring, capturing the raw essence of life in visual poetry. Shaun’s artistic expression results from a balancing of “inner and outer vision” with profound personal experience. His steadfast approach to exploring new and different ways of working the photographic medium, both in the *wet* dark room, and now in the *dry* digital room, supports each image.

Born in London, England, 1943, during the Blitz and a victim of repeated air bombing raids, his eardrums suffered damage. Challenged by impaired hearing in his early years, his heightened visual awareness commanded an extra sense of perception. Shaun had the luxury of experiencing life under extraordinary circumstances, growing up with such fascinating parents—his mother, Doorn van Steÿn, an accomplished actress and international ice skating star, and his stepfather, the well known actor Roger Moore. Beyond the celebrity and glamour, his parents provided him the great opportunity of adventure and travel, introducing distant cultures and languages, and indoctrinated him as a citizen of the world.

In 1955, Shaun moved to the young state of Israel, where he furthered his study of the visual arts. It was at this time he got his first camera, a Brownie, which used 120 film. Thus he embarked at an early age on a journey to capture unique imagery. His first photos in Israel included Roman archeological sites such as, Ceasaria, to the deserted Arab dwellings of Jaffa and various Kibbutzim. Eventually, this mission spanned the globe, taking him to iconic lands where he captured innovative compositions of light and subject.

His life continued in England, Spain, Guatemala and Canada, eventually moving to the United States. Shortly thereafter, he enrolled at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, DC, and studied fine art photography. During this time he created *‘Last Steps of Labour*, which won him his first major award in the international photographic competition, entitled *MILK (Moments of Intimacy, Laughter and Kinship)*. The companion book *‘Family’*, featured Shaun’s selected work, which shared pages with noted Pulitzer Prize recipients. This achievement, along with the support of his academic mentors, helped launch Shaun into a successful career as a professional photographer.

Shaun van Steyn's imaginative visual statements have graced a variety of national and international magazines, with photo assignments from major publications like American Heritage, People, Time, Washingtonian, and the Washington Post. One assignment led him to climb the antenna on top of the World Trade Center, which resulted in a remarkable photograph that received the third highest gross (\$11,500), in the history of the stock photo agency, which represented him. From this era, Shaun bridged into marketing his images through international stock photographic agencies.

An established Washington area photographer, Shaun van Steyn's eloquent work has been shown by a wide variety of galleries. His latest shows include a successful sold-out exhibit of *'Life to Art'*, at the Lombardi Cancer Center, Georgetown University, Washington, DC. Other major exhibits include *'Art of the Orchid'* at the Byrne Gallery in Middleburg, Virginia and an exposé *'A Question of Why'*, at the Krescent Moon Gallery.

Shaun had the honor of being selected last year and again this year to donate artwork *'Art for Life'*, the Whitman-Walker Clinic's annual art auction, held at the Organization of American States in Washington DC. Has also donated work to *'Shoes for Kids'* the MSCI Seraphim Foundation in Arlington, Va. His present donation is part of a group show at the Lombardi Cancer Center. He has received several commissions from Fortune 500 and other local firms and patrons.

Locally, Shaun is the Outreach Director of Falls Church Arts. In that capacity has initiated a plan to collaborate and share information with various art organizations in the Metro DC area. Shaun is a continual participant in local and regional art events. Selected works including large canvas prints have been featured in the *Falls Church Film Festivals held at the State Theater*. Also locally the *FCA 'Vision' and 'Verve' shows attracted large crowds*. The controversial (bound to cause a flap) *'Artist and War' summer* exhibit at MOCA in Georgetown DC was provocative. The *'Wise Guys Show'* at *The Galleria of Georgetown Optical at Dupont Circle* has a scheduled opening on Feb. 1st 2008. A full feature on him came out in the Oct. issue of *'Élan Magazine'*.



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