

Artist Statement 2003

By Adrienne Read
"Inside/out"

We all have demons inside of us that are confronted by the people, places and things around us. These things seem ordinary in their existence as we walk down the street, turn down an alley or even look out our window. I drive in my car for hours every day wondering if people see the same things I do or the bigger question really is, are they aware of it? That seems to be the question in our generation. We are all much more aware, but what does that amount to? I was looking at a mural the other day like I look at most art, like I look at life, and there was something about fear, pain, heartache, something beautiful too, even something strong. Every sense was touched. Does it mean that we do anything about it? Or do we just let it hang over us. Are we affected? I asked myself that question for many years and started taking pictures. I decided that I am at odds with middle class convention, but I am also at odds with the "demented artist syndrome". I was listening. I would like to think life is about balance, but not in the way people think- we are vehicles doing a little defensive driving.

My life, many times, has been about chaos, now it's just about living, breathing, and walking down the street with intention. The intention in my photography is to take you down the street with me, turn down some alleys and cross a few dimensions into prevailing economic and social conditions that heighten our awareness. Can we pay attention to what's ordinary and boring in contrast with the exceptional and perfect and realize on a deeper level that it all matters? If it does, than maybe the ugliness, the pain and the suffering that we all go through will seem valid too. As affected as we are by everything outside of us, the passion for life as human beings has to bring about a change on the inside of us.

This show is dedicated to my mom, who taught me to see things beyond the surface and to know people just as they are, no different than myself. Though I miss her dearly, she gives me the strength and character to be who I am today. She always said she wanted to be in the darkroom with me when I finished it: she's with me in spirit and in peace.