



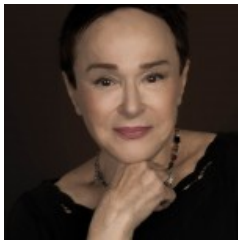
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SHIFRA LEVYATHAN, URBAN PHOTOGRAPHER, RAMAT-GAN, ISRAEL



EWW: What would others say about your work?

Shifra: I think if they looked at the bulk of my work they would notice the variety of subjects. People who know my work, tell me that even though I change subjects they recognize my style. They call it "the Shifra touch".

EWW: What comments do you have about your work?

Shifra: I noticed that my work reflects my moods and my life in general. When I am happy my work is colorful. When times are not so great like illness, or when my studio burned down no color in my work and the subject is nightmarish. But I always thought that applies to everybody.

EWW: Shifra, you describe yourself as an Urban Photographer. Can you elaborate a little more about what that description means?

Shifra: I find the city challenging, inspiring and exciting. I love the hustle and bustle, the constant noise and movement of the people. I am excited by the high-rise buildings in which movement is reflected constantly and I am touched by old dilapidated and decaying neighborhoods. My favorite pass time is to roam about in the city watching the people, trying to capture moments and movements and the atmosphere around me. The city for me is a dynamic being. It breathes constantly and has its moods: it can be sad and gloomy as well as happy and vibrant.

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EWV: What do you see as the difference between photojournalism and Photographic Fine Art?

Shifra: I think Photojournalism should reflect truth in all its aspects: the good, bad, the beautiful and ugly. I believe that in photojournalism there is no place for manipulation in Photoshop. Photojournalism is about reporting the News. It does not mean that the photographs could not be touching to a point of tears, or beautiful to look at.

Photographic Fine Art is a totally different story: I see my camera as a paint brush and the photograph as the canvas on which I add or subtract, change, and reshape as well as temper with colors. I photograph reality, but this fact does not mean I have to show it as such. As an Art Photographer I have the freedom to change it. I see my work more than a mirror that reflects the reality around me. When I work on an image I feel I am creating a new world – one that lives in my soul and imagination. It is my hope that the viewer will find appeal in this dialogue.

EWV: In your opinion, are there any elements of a photograph or piece of digital art that makes it a work of fine art?

Shifra: The discussion about art is centuries old. Plato and Aristo wrote about it, and ever since in the western world of Art History there is always a discussion of a sort about what Art is. It took a long time to regard Photography and Digital art as a part of the Art world. It took a long time to understand that manipulating with digital software is not merely pushing buttons: the Artist works very hard to achieve his vision

EWV: I have spent some time looking at your work. Do you have any style that seems that seems to repeat itself from one work to another, i.e. subject matter, color, composition, perspective, etc.?

Shifra: I work in "Bursts". I am obsessed with a subject until I use it to death, and then I move on to something new. You see, the city has so many aspects. It can be Abstract, Street Scenes, People, Portraits, Architecture and it even has Flora and Fauna. So in a way, the subject matter is the same – The City. What always seems to repeat itself in my work is the way I capture things i.e. – the composition. People working with me since I started taking photography seriously (2007)– tell me that they can recognize my style.

EWV: Is there a message you are trying to convey to the viewer of your work?

Shifra: Message is rather a big word, don't you think? I would like the viewer to find appeal in the dialogue between photography and art. I would very much like that those who see my work, feel touched by what I do and find beauty in it. As I said before, my work reflects my thoughts, my soul and my imagination. I definitely want it to reach out to as many people as possible.

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EWV: What do you see as major challenges for photographers and digital artists today and particularly in your country, i.e. equipment, new techniques, etc.?

Shifra: We are a modern country. We have all the equipment that all other modern countries have. The Internet is global and all is there to watch and have. I think that more and more people understand that Photography can be Art. More and more galleries display photography and definitely regard it as art.

EWV: What are the major challenges you see for photographers and digital fine artists, in terms of promoting their work and how do you see them meeting these challenges and particularly in your country.

Shifra: Well, success in the Art world has a lot to do with Lady Luck. In the hundred percent of the artist's success – his talent (which may be outstanding) is only a fraction, 10% of the success, 90% has to do with luck; the right time; the right place; and the right person that will cross their way. This is the key to success in a big way. Yet, I think that if you love what you do, that should not deter you. However, there is no doubt that if one has to make a living from Art, it can be very painful and very frustrating at times.

EWV: Are there any “must have” equipment/software that a photographer needs to have in order to be successful.

Shifra: I can't answer this question. In my humble opinion all you need is a good eye and imagination. And of course you need a good software to help your imagination come true. As for myself – I have good equipment, but I mostly use a small camera. I cannot carry a big camera. It is much too heavy, especially with its big lens. After about an hour I am ready to give up.

EWV: Is there anything else Shifra that you would like for people to know about you and your work?

Shifra: I would invite the people who are interested to know more about me, to please visit my website: www.shifrart.com

I am represented by Agora Gallery, N.Y, and my recent exhibitions can be seen

at: <http://www.ArtMine.com> <http://artisspectrum.com>

