

Reel Blog

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HN

Boult, Doug

meeting of the Professional Photographers of Canada convention to deliver another seminar.

He's been teaching at Sheridan College since 1968.

An underlying principle in his work is that getting to know the subject matter is as important as putting an image on film.

The idea is not perhaps unique or new. But it's a principle many photographers and artists fail to grasp. Boult can't comprehend how a photographer can take a portrait and yet not know anything about the subject.

"You have to see with all your senses. Get in front of the camera, too. Touch people spiritually, find out about them. If you don't, then you're raping an image. You've taken something that you weren't given."

Boult is also a firm believer that technical excellence is as important as the quality of the picture. "Too many people shrug off the technical aspect. The picture, they say, is more important. The photographer makes the image, the lab does the rest."

"But part of the image-making is done in the darkroom, where the photographer has complete control over the finished product. That's where it all happens."

Boult doesn't trust photo labs to produce the kinds of finished product he wants. He does it himself in a fully equipped darkroom in his basement. It's a far cry from the damask table cloth and kitchen table . . .

While he works in both black and white and color, the measure of a good photographer, he says, is in his ability to make black and white pictures. "To get a good sparkling black and white print — to transpose what you see in color to monochrome . . . that's what counts."

His work speaks for itself.

Boult is convinced that photography has a very long way to go. "Really, we're just making advances. I don't think we've even scratched the surface of photography as a graphic medium. Twenty years from now, we'll be laughing at how

crude things were back then."

He says he was lucky to have known so early in life what he wanted to do.

"I think as a result, I've matured enough to know what I'm not good at . . . and to stay away from it."

"And I'm lucky, too, that my work is bringing me some recognition. Recognition is necessary for all of us. I like to know how I stack up against the others. And I'm lucky that I can absorb myself totally with the things I get the most response to myself from."

He loves his work. Simply and plainly. As he puts it, he's having a love affair through the lens of his

camera. He loves being able to make pictures.

"I'm fascinated by the way people live . . . and I will always try to find out about people as much as I can . . . to the point of being nosey sometimes."

"Photography is a good way to express my feelings I have about pictures. It gives me a way to communicate."

"While I can sketch a bit, paint a bit, I can't do it successfully. Photography is the one way I can affect or impress others. It's a medium through which I'm able to satisfy my own yearnings."

He wears many hats. But he rarely takes off his photographer's hat.

