

VISIONARY ART

The Art of Bradford Scott Stringfield

Bradford Scott Stringfield knows how to use his photography skills to connect with his subjects in a special way.

"I take pictures of people, places, and things, but portraiture is my strongest interest," said Mr. Stringfield, 48, who began doing photography as a teenager. "It's what I love. I have chemistry with people, and photography brings out what I think of them as human beings. I have a skill for that."

Unfortunately, much of the work Mr. Stringfield had compiled over the years has been lost because of what he calls "a bad life. I couldn't keep up with it or save it," he said. When he was 19, Mr. Stringfield said he was hospitalized and diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and

substance abuse. He credits medication and attendance at "double trouble meetings"—those aimed at managing a mental illness and substance abuse—with keeping him clean and sober for the past 10 years.

His professional background includes fashion photography, including a very brief stint at Playboy as a photographer's assistant. "They needed an assistant right away. They were shooting an ad for the magazine that day, and I happened to be available," he said modestly. "It was just that one time." Additionally, he has worked for local modeling agencies and for the gay community newspaper in his hometown of Chicago.

Mr. Stringfield's work in photography includes being a part of a recent group exhibition called "Nature's Re-

silience" at the Fountain Gallery in New York. He also sold several pieces a few months earlier through a Fountain House benefit show. Most of his sales, however, come through street exhibits. "I sell my work on the street in SoHo—if the cops don't bother me," he said.

Mr. Stringfield used to do his own photo developing and even had a dark room for a while. Now he depends on commercial labs but hopes to change that soon. "I'd like to get a printer and do my own printing," he said.

In the meantime, Mr. Stringfield plans to continue shooting—and to try to have more exhibitions. "I'd like to have a show in the future," he said. "Maybe have a name for myself and my work."

—Deeanna Franklin



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Boy in Fountain, 2005

"This shot won an award. It's popular. One thing about children: They're predictable. Grown-ups are unpredictable. With kids, their movements are very easy to anticipate. Basically, it was easy to get this shot."



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Pigeon Study Two, 2005

"I was working as a street messenger when I took this. When I go to photograph something, I see what it can be as an image, and I see the composition. I frame the composition. I like to work with still lifes. The pigeon was still, and the composition was there, so I took the photo."



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Danger, 2005

"I took this in midtown (Manhattan). It was a very interesting shot. It's like a play on words."