

Our World, and Welcome To It



Special Event:

Larry Towell in performance: readings, poetry, diary excerpts and music performed over slides of his work including images from 9/11 in New York.

Where: Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design; South Building, Room 328.
When: Sunday evening May 18 at 7:30pm. Admission is free. Co-sponsored by PHG and ECAID.

If Larry Towell is Canada's most famous photojournalist and you've never heard of him, what does that tell you? That was my position about a year ago when Presentation House Gallery (PHG) learned of a touring exhibition from the National Gallery of Canada of Towell's photographs from 1985 to 2000. I knew that the National Gallery wouldn't be circulating an exhibition by some unknown photographer, so I assumed I was the one who was a bit out of the loop. As it turned out, I was very much in the dark about one of Canada's national treasures: a photographer who successfully makes the viewer feel what it was like to be in his shoes.

Even though I haven't seen his business card yet, I have read that Larry Towell's card says 'Human Being' in the place where 'occupation' is normally found. The same article says that Towell is "one of those rare photojournalists who, like Robert Doisneau, travels reluctantly and only when the subject is very important to him." For a reluctant traveler, Towell seems to do a lot of traveling, over the past decade much of it to and in the Middle East.

Towell is the only Canadian member of the Magnum Photo Agency and is the most widely published photojournalist in Canada. Presentation House Gallery will have on its walls approximately eighty of his photographs, and copies of all of Towell's books will be available in a 'reading room' set up in the exhibition. With the awards, books and international acclaim, one might think that Towell was more or less born with a camera in his hands. But that is not the case.



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