



Thoughts for Expressives and Creators

By *Dion McInnis*

Tips and views from the writing, photography, speaking and experiences of Dion McInnis' aimed at helping artists, expressives and creators in their all-important work. Copyright 2005 Dion McInnis. All rights reserved. www.dionmcinnis.com. You can reach Dion at dion@dionmcinnis.com.

Don't Take It Anymore

Photographers, we have it wrong. We “take” photos, we “grab” shots and we “snap” away. All these words reinforce a unilateral creative experience when oft times we would do better to collaborate with our inspiration, whether it is a woman, child, pet, sunset or anything. A lot of creative types share our “need for speed.”

Years ago, I photographed a Special Olympics event and “took” a photo of a mother hugging her child tightly after a race. The child’s hat stated, appropriately, “prisoner of love.” At the clack of the shutter, the mother looked at me with an expression that said, “This is our moment, not yours.” The image was strong, and the lesson profound.

Granted, there are times when there is only an instant to react. More times than we realize, however, there are opportunities to work **with** our inspiration instead of simply observing it. Consider the artist with sketchpad at the café as he creates art from the inspiration of the woman six tables away. He draws without sneaking his work. She looks up, notices and perhaps flinches a bit. The artist acknowledged and there is a quick eye-to-eye understanding. She continues to read and he continues to draw. A collaborative relationship exists.

Our photographic process is so fast—a second to focus and a fraction of a second to preserve—that we tend to not take the time to work together with our inspiration, whoever or whatever it is. Don’t just watch the child, engage her for a range of expressions of her personality. It can be done in mere moments. Don’t just snap at the beauty of a sunset, feel its fading warmth and the gentle dusk breeze—both will help inspire the art you’re about to create, and it will stay with you as you perfect the image in the darkroom or on the computer.

Photographers, writers, dancers, architects, florists, musicians—all who create can benefit from “taking” less and absorbing more of that which inspire us.