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The Women of Guatemala City

Statement:

I am a documentary photographer, filmmaker and visual anthropologist, as well as street photographer, in my day-to-day practice.

I am currently working on a photo book project about Guatemala City, with a focus on Guatemalan women who appear publicly and quietly on the city streets, parks, markets and other places throughout the city.

Guatemala City has a reputation for being unsafe, particularly for working women who must travel in the city on a daily-nightly basis. There is a high index of poverty, crime and large number of slums and sub-standard living environments and much subsistence need in the heart of this city.

The city is also underrepresented visually in the media; very few outsiders, such as tourists visit the city, who are often cautioned by local officials not to remain in Guatemala City.

The city has been the locus of numerous historical political conflicts rising from the period of armed political struggles in the city center itself, originating in part from Guatemala's 30 year civil war which officially ended in 1996, however the memories, which are still visible, palpable on city walls, serve to add an eerie feeling of noticeable anxiety and fear when walking the streets at any time of the day or night.

Knowing about this past history, I assigned myself this project as a way to explore visually and get to know close up, in a local and intimate manner, this city and to photograph mostly women whose day to day life, work, livelihood, and circumstances force them onto the streets of Guatemala City.