

Rick Albertson is a retired freelance documentary photographer and video producer. During the latter half of his career Rick photographed assignments in Asia, Africa, Central and North America for Christian non-profit organizations. He earned a BS in Radio and Television Production and a MS in Instructional Systems Technology from Indiana University. Prior to working as a photographer, Rick was a small business owner and communications consultant, and for a short time served as an adjunct professor in the Design Art and Architecture Program at the University of Cincinnati.

While traveling regularly overseas Rick served as a board member of Child Hope International, a small ministry serving abandoned children in Nepal. In recent years Rick also served as a member of the management team of the Southern Africa HIV/AIDS Collaboration working with high school students in Soweto, Johannesburg, South Africa. His promotional videos helped raise awareness of these organizations.

Since retiring Rick has pursued creative personal projects including recent street photography in Baja Sur, Mexico, during a solo motorcycle trip the length of the peninsula. He also enjoys writing, speaking, teaching, and playing bluegrass music.

Rick and his deceased wife, Nancy, bought a cabin in Wrightwood, California, in 2008, while living in Colorado, and later moved there full-time to be close to family and grandchildren. They then built a modern home that Rick designed, with a magnificent view overlooking the Swarthout Valley in the Angeles National Forest of the San Gabriel Mountains.

Rick's and Nancy's son, Andrew, is the founder of Foreign Policy for America in Washington, DC. Their son, David, is a professor at the University of Southern California and lives with his family, including their three grandchildren, in Los Angeles.



Documentary Portraits is a retrospective of Rick's 15-year career as a documentary photographer on assignments in Asia, Africa, Central and North America for non-profit organizations. The 10"x10" limited edition coffee table book features 50+ black and white photographs, each accompanied by the story behind the image. The 110-page hardback book is produced from the very finest of materials with beautiful printing and covered with an attractive laminated dust jacket. **\$95.00**

RickAlbertson
DOCUMENTARY + PHOTOGRAPHY

www.rickalbertson.com

Wrightwood Arts
presents an exhibition of
Documentary Portraits

Children in Need of Hope

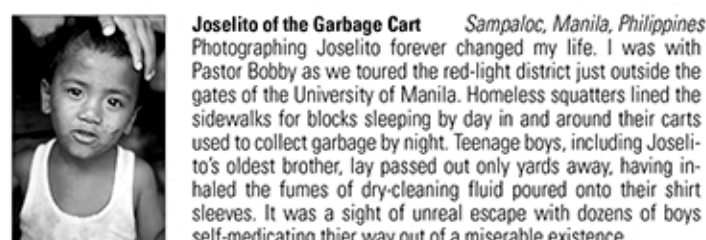


So many, many children the world over need hope: children in our neighborhoods, homeless in our cities, the poor in third world countries. Children are so often abandoned... physically abused... impoverished... malnourished... sex trafficked. The World Health Organization estimates that more than *one billion children* are severely deprived of at least one of the essential goods and services they require to survive, grow, and develop.

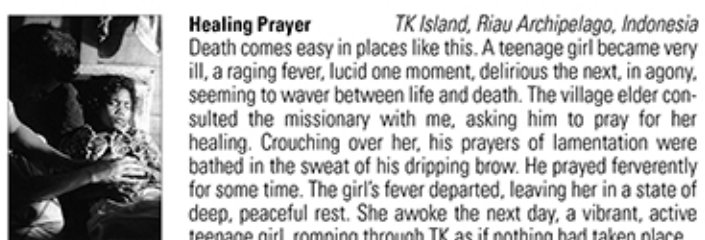
Most of these photographs of children in need of hope were taken while on assignments for non-profit organizations in Asia, Africa, Central and North America. The written descriptions in this program provide a brief telling of the often heart-rending stories of the children pictured, as well as the thoughts they inspired.

My story, at least the story of my adult life, can largely be told through the accumulated stories represented by many of these photographs. Each one has impacted me causing reflection and contemplation regarding my place in the world.

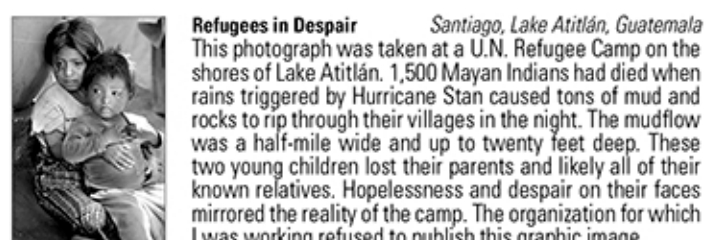
Photographing these assignments exposed me to an enormous magnitude of suffering, but also great joy in seeing firsthand how missionaries sought to help those in need. The narrow focus of the camera's lens permanently burned scenes into my mind. To this day, my thoughts are often suddenly pushed aside, overtaken by a strong image from a photo projected onto a darkened screen just behind my eyes—mostly images of children in need of hope.



Josefito of the Garbage Cart *Sampaloc, Manila, Philippines*
Photographing Josefito forever changed my life. I was with Pastor Bobby as we toured the red-light district just outside the gates of the University of Manila. Homeless squatters lined the sidewalks for blocks sleeping by day in and around their carts used to collect garbage by night. Teenage boys, including Josefito's oldest brother, lay passed out only yards away, having inhaled the fumes of dry-cleaning fluid poured onto their shirt sleeves. It was a sight of unreal escape with dozens of boys self-medicating their way out of a miserable existence.



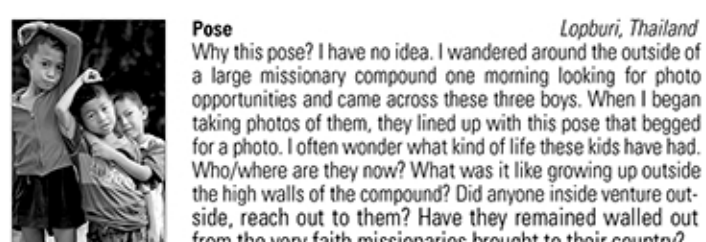
Healing Prayer *TK Island, Riau Archipelago, Indonesia*
Death comes easy in places like this. A teenage girl became very ill, a raging fever, lucid one moment, delirious the next, in agony, seeming to waver between life and death. The village elder consulted the missionary with me, asking him to pray for her healing. Crouching over her, his prayers of lamentation were bathed in the sweat of his dripping brow. He prayed fervently for some time. The girl's fever departed, leaving her in a state of deep, peaceful rest. She awoke the next day, a vibrant, active teenage girl, romping through TK as if nothing had taken place.



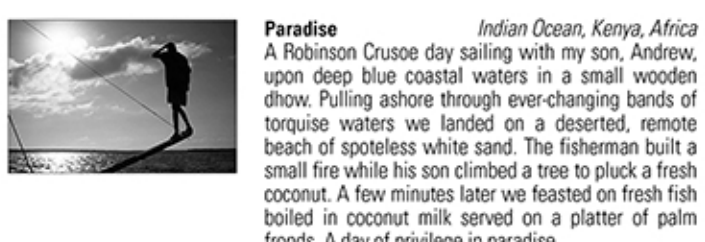
Refugees in Despair *Santiago, Lake Atitlán, Guatemala*
This photograph was taken at a U.N. Refugee Camp on the shores of Lake Atitlán. 1,500 Mayan Indians had died when rains triggered by Hurricane Stan caused tons of mud and rocks to rip through their villages in the night. The mudflow was a half-mile wide and up to twenty feet deep. These two young children lost their parents and likely all of their known relatives. Hopelessness and despair on their faces mirrored the reality of the camp. The organization for which I was working refused to publish this graphic image.



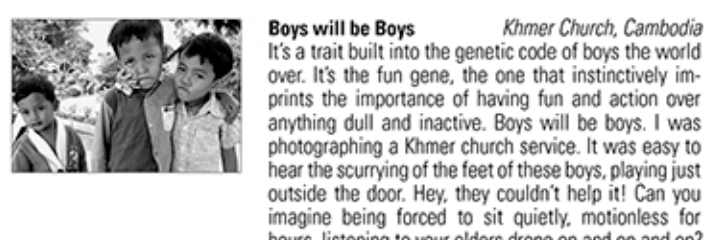
Field Trip *Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*
Properly shrouded from head to toe, these little girls were dwarfed by Cesar Pelli's enormous Petronas Towers rising 88 stories above, twin towers babbling back and forth for all to hear in this stable secular state's determination to reach modernity. A contrast: the shimmering gold above cascading down upon the green and beige of the girls below; the traditions of a thousand years or more pressed down to almost insignificance by the sheer weight of a rising consumerism.



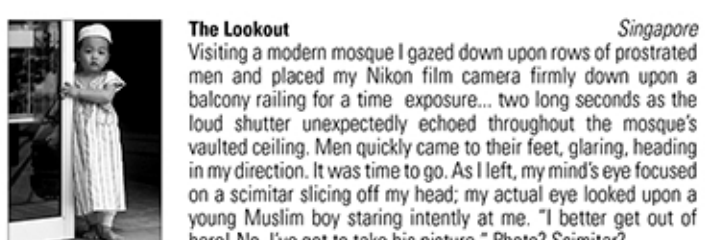
Pose *Lopburi, Thailand*
Why this pose? I have no idea. I wandered around the outside of a large missionary compound one morning looking for photo opportunities and came across these three boys. When I began taking photos of them, they lined up with this pose that begged for a photo. I often wonder what kind of life these kids have had. Who/where are they now? What was it like growing up outside the high walls of the compound? Did anyone inside venture outside, reach out to them? Have they remained walked out from the very faith missionaries brought to their country?



Paradise *Indian Ocean, Kenya, Africa*
A Robinson Crusoe day sailing with my son, Andrew, upon deep blue coastal waters in a small wooden dhow. Pulling ashore through ever-changing bands of turquoise waters we landed on a deserted, remote beach of spotless white sand. The fisherman built a small fire while his son climbed a tree to pluck a fresh coconut. A few minutes later we feasted on fresh fish boiled in coconut milk served on a platter of palm fronds. A day of privilege in paradise.



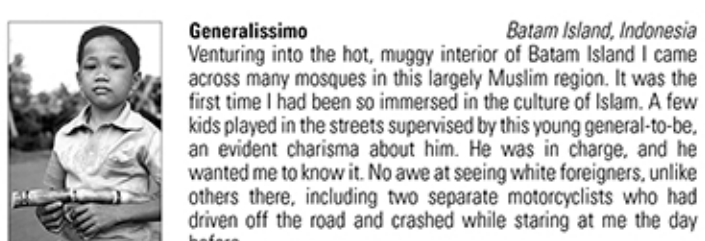
Boys will be Boys *Khmer Church, Cambodia*
It's a trait built into the genetic code of boys the world over. It's the fun gene, the one that instinctively imprints the importance of having fun and action over anything dull and inactive. Boys will be boys. I was photographing a Khmer church service. It was easy to hear the scurrying of the feet of these boys, playing just outside the door. Hey, they couldn't help it! Can you imagine being forced to sit quietly, motionless for hours, listening to your elders drone on and on and on?



The Lookout *Singapore*
Visiting a modern mosque I gazed down upon rows of prostrate men and placed my Nikon film camera firmly down upon a balcony railing for a time exposure... two long seconds as the loud shutter unexpectedly echoed throughout the mosque's vaulted ceiling. Men quickly came to their feet, glaring, heading in my direction. It was time to go. As I left, my mind's eye focused on a scimitar slicing off my head; my actual eye looked upon a young Muslim boy staring intently at me. "I better get out of here! No, I've got to take his picture." Photo? Scimitar?



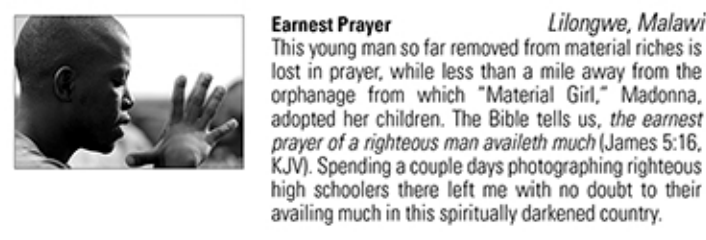
The Secret *Buena Vista, Colorado*
A secret is passing from one girl to the other. Is it something known by the one and not the other? Is it meant to remain unknown? Is it not understood, a mystery? This photograph was unplanned, a fortunate brief concurrence of events. As I set up strobe lights to shoot a family event I suddenly looked over and witnessed the passing of the secret. Fortunately, I had a camera with a telephoto lens hanging around my neck. I whipped it up to my eye, pressed the auto-focus button, and pressed the shutter. A sixtieth of a second later the moment had passed along with the secret.



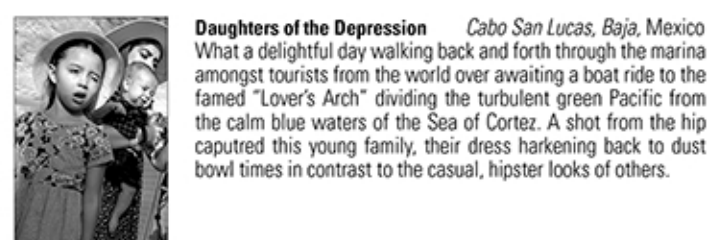
Generalissimo *Batam Island, Indonesia*
Venturing into the hot, muggy interior of Batam Island I came across many mosques in this largely Muslim region. It was the first time I had been so immersed in the culture of Islam. A few kids played in the streets supervised by this young general-to-be, an evident charisma about him. He was in charge, and he wanted me to know it. No awe at seeing white foreigners, unlike others there, including two separate motorcyclists who had driven off the road and crashed while staring at me the day before.



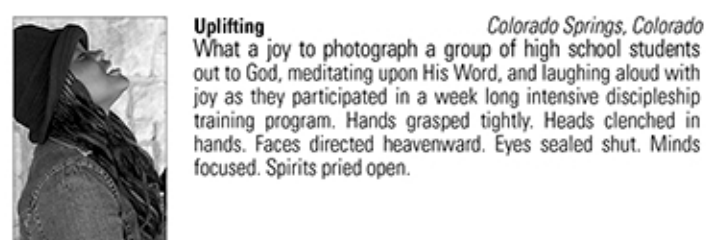
Never out of Sight *Cone Va Village, Thailand*
In a remote village near the peak of the highest tropical mountain over-arching vast areas of the Golden Triangle in Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar, live Karen and Blue Hmong Chinese minority peoples. Day and night grannies never lose sight of their grimy, young grandchildren. There are no teenage girls. Well, one—she is Cone Va's most valued possession, and only a few teenage boys. Most teens have been kidnapped to serve as sex slaves in Bangkok while their mothers tended fields and village fathers gathered under the blue haze of an opium pipe.



Earnest Prayer *Lilongwe, Malawi*
This young man so far removed from material riches is lost in prayer, while less than a mile away from the orphanage from which "Material Girl," Madonna, adopted her children. The Bible tells us, *the earnest prayer of a righteous man availeth much* (James 5:16, KJV). Spending a couple days photographing righteous high schoolers there left me with no doubt to their availing much in this spiritually darkened country.



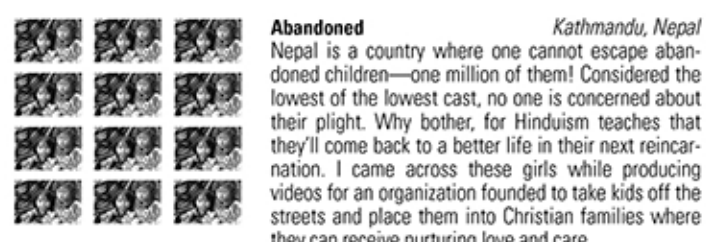
Daughters of the Depression *Cabo San Lucas, Baja, Mexico*
What a delightful day walking back and forth through the marina amongst tourists from the world over awaiting a boat ride to the famed "Lover's Arch" dividing the turbulent green Pacific from the calm blue waters of the Sea of Cortez. A shot from the hip captured this young family, their dress harkening back to dust bowl times in contrast to the casual, hipster looks of others.



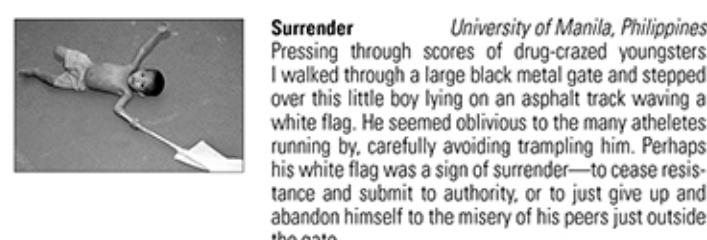
Uplifting *Colorado Springs, Colorado*
What a joy to photograph a group of high school students out to God, meditating upon His Word, and laughing aloud with joy as they participated in a week long intensive discipleship training program. Hands clasped tightly. Heads clenched in hands. Faces directed heavenward. Eyes sealed shut. Minds focused. Spirits pried open.



Evangelism Hardware *Luzon, Manila, Philippines*
A poor baby held by a thankful, poor mother, both grasping onto the protection supplied by missionaries. Squatters living in hastily crafted cardboard shacks; rats the size of cats gnawing through the cardboard to chew upon babies sleeping within. How do missionaries help people in such need? Sometimes it's evangelism by hardware... they provided wire screens to cover holes in the cardboard to keep out the rats. Babies unbiten; incarnation at work.



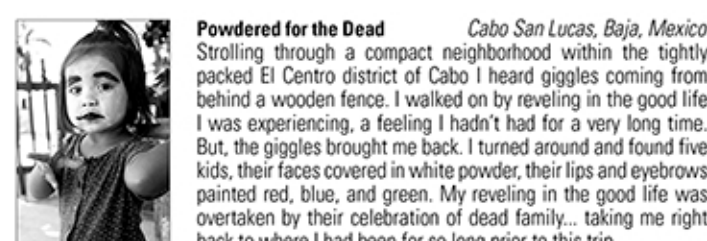
Abandoned *Kathmandu, Nepal*
Nepal is a country where one cannot escape abandoned children—one million of them! Considered the lowest of the lowest cast, no one is concerned about their plight. Why bother, for Hinduism teaches that they'll come back to a better life in their next reincarnation. I came across these girls while producing videos for an organization founded to take kids off the streets and place them into Christian families where they can receive nurturing love and care.



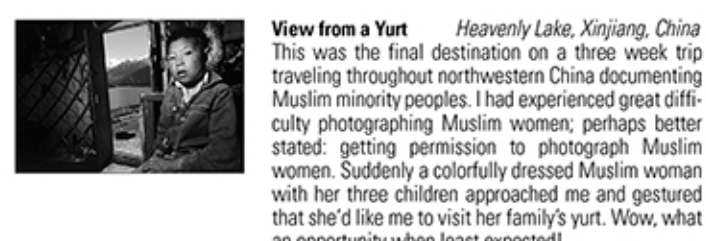
Surrender *University of Manila, Philippines*
Pressing through scores of drug-crazed youngsters I walked through a large black metal gate and stepped over this little boy lying on an asphalt track waving a white flag. He seemed oblivious to the many athletes running by, carefully avoiding trampling him. Perhaps his white flag was a sign of surrender—to cease resistance and submit to authority, or to just give up and abandon himself to the misery of his peers just outside the gate.



Waiting for a Bird *Batam Island, Indonesia*
I reached a rough wooden hut where four kids were seated quietly, lined up against a wall, as to not disturb their sick mother. Their father was out hunting birds. Just before leaving, I was asked to pray for the sick mother. Bowing my head, my eyes kept open upon seeing the camera bag in front of me with \$20,000 of equipment. Why did I have so much and these people so little? How could I pray for her? Should I seek forgiveness? Is this how things are supposed to be?



Powdered for the Dead *Cabo San Lucas, Baja, Mexico*
Strolling through a compact neighborhood within the tightly packed El Centro district of Cabo I heard giggles coming from behind a wooden fence. I walked on by reveling in the good life I was experiencing, a feeling I hadn't had for a very long time. But, the giggles brought me back. I turned around and found five kids, their faces covered in white powder, their lips and eyebrows painted red, blue, and green. My reveling in the good life was overtaken by their celebration of dead family... taking me right back to where I had been for so long prior to this trip.



View from the Yurt *Heavenly Lake, Xinjiang, China*
This was the final destination on a three week trip traveling throughout northwestern China documenting Muslim minority peoples. I had experienced great difficulty photographing Muslim women; perhaps better stated: getting permission to photograph Muslim women. Suddenly a colorfully dressed Muslim woman with her three children approached me and gestured that she'd like me to visit her family's yurt. Wow, what an opportunity when least expected!