

Peter Merts, photographer

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PRO-BONO DOCUMENTARY WORK

- 2018-present serving on the advisory board of the Prison Arts Collective
- 2016 documentation for Imagine Bus Project, which provides art instruction for incarcerated juveniles in the SF Bay Area
- 2015 & 2017 documentation for TeamWorks, which provides art instruction for incarcerated juveniles Marin County
- 2010 documentation of the production of *Hamlet* on Alcatraz Island by WE Players
- 2009 photo and audio documentation of a Habitat for Humanity project in New Orleans, LA
- 2009 photo documentation of Mother Miracle School, which provides free education to poor children in Rishikesh, India
- 2004-present documentation of Arts in Corrections programs in California Prisons
- 2002-present documentation of Bread & Roses, a service organization in Marin County, CA

PUBLICATIONS

Authored Books:

- 2020 *UNBOUND! The Artistic Passion of Incarcerated Artists*
- 2015 *Paths of Discovery: Art Practice and Its Impact in California Prisons* (2nd edition), with Dr. Larry Brewster
- 2015 *Outside the Box: Artwork from Solano State Prison*
- 2012 *Paths of Discovery: Art Practice and Its Impact in California Prisons*, with Dr. Larry Brewster

Authored Articles:

- 2002 *Foto Mundo* (Argentina; #413) — illustrated technical article

About my photography, or using my photography (partial list):

- 2021 *Washington Post*
- 2019 the Marshall Project website (themarshallproject.org)
- 2019 *The Economist*
- 2019 *New York Times*
- 2017 *Los Angeles Review of Books*—photos used in multiple articles on prison art programs by Arts in Corrections instructor Annie Buckley
- 2017 *High Country News* (Feb. 20)—photo for an article on prison art teacher Quetzal Flores
- 2016 *BOOM: a Journal of California* (Summer)—photos for article on prison art programs
- 2016 *Upworthy.com* (Dec. 2)—photos for article on prison art programs
- 2014 *Naratively* (8/22/14)—photo for article about the *San Quentin News*, the inmate newspaper
- 2013 *Grazia* (France)—for an article on Tim Robbins and the Actors' Gang
- 2010 *Stanford Magazine* (Nov/Dec)—editorial images of WE Players' *Hamlet* on Alcatraz
- 2005 *Pozytyw* (Poland; July)—Statue of Liberty portfolio
- 2004 *Conde Nast Traveller Magazine* (Spain; December)—article on Statue of Liberty project
- 2004 *Conde Nast Traveller Magazine* (USA; July)—article on Statue of Liberty project
- 2004 *The Buenos Aires Herald* (Sunday January 4)—illustrated article on my photography, by art critic Alina Tortosa
- 2003 *The Buenos Aires Herald* (Sunday May 4)—illustrated article on my photography, by art critic Alina Tortosa
- 2002 *La Fotografia Actual* (Spain) - vol 92 (Aug/Sept)—four-page feature
- 2002 *Foto Mundo* (Argentina; #410)—two-page feature
- 2002 *Black and White Magazine* (April, #18)—four-page Spotlight feature
- 2001 *Modern Maturity Magazine*—five editorial images
- 1999 *Geo Saisson* (Germany)—one-page portfolio feature

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- 1999 *The Sunday Review* (Independent on Sunday, London)—four-page portfolio feature
1999 The Gallery, *Newsweek Online* (www.Newsweek.com; week of July 4)—portfolio featured
1997 *Photo Metro* (San Francisco) v.16, issue 146—cover plus eight-page portfolio and interview

SOLO & TWO-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 Photoville, Los Angeles—solo show of my prison art portfolio
2010 Main Cellblock, Alcatraz Island – images of Alcatraz Island structures
2009 Pictura Gallery - Bloomington, Indiana – pieces from Solitude, Little Cumberland Island, and Argentina portfolios
2007 Aldo de Sousa - Galeria de Arte /Buenos Aires Photo - Buenos Aires, Argentina - Little Cumberland Island portfolio
2007 Compass Point Gallery - San Francisco, CA - Bread & Roses portfolio
2006 El Borde Arte Contemporáneo - Buenos Aires, Argentina (XIV Encuentros Abiertos de Fotografía) - the Little Cumberland Island portfolio [with artist Margarita Wilson-Rae]
2006 Foto Galería F.C.E. - Córdoba, Argentina (XIV Encuentros Abiertos de Fotografía) - Hombres y la Masculinidad (Men and Masculinity)
2004 Mill Valley City Hall – The Bread & Roses Portfolio
2004 XIII Encuentros Abiertos de Fotografía, Buenos Aires (Pura Gallery) – Masculinity portfolio
2002 XII Encuentros Abiertos de Fotografía, Buenos Aires (Centro Cultural Recoleta) – Solitude portfolio

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2021 San Francisco Opera House—prison art photos
2021 Eloise Packard Smith Gallery, UC Santa Cruz—prison art photos
2021 Freedom and Captivity: Art on Abolition—prison art photos
2020 San Francisco Airport—prison arts photos
2019 Pitzer College Art Gallery—Claremont, California
2019 California State Capitol, Sacramento—*Beyond the Blue*, work from the Prison Arts Collective
2017 Oakland Asian Cultural Center, group show of origami and photos, from San Quentin prison
2017 CB1 Gallery, Los Angeles—group show of prison art
2017 Alcatraz Island: *Connection Lost: Families Unraveled by Prison*
2014 Alcatraz Island: *Telling Our Stories: Work from San Quentin Prison Arts Project*
2014 Yerba Buena Center for the Arts: *Inside Out*, an exhibition of prison art
2013 *Photo ID* (art about identity) at Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, a selection from my *Masculinity* series
2007 Lendrum Fine Art, Los Angeles, California
2005 fresh stART, Arena 1 Gallery, Santa Monica, California
2005 Marin Arts Council Individual Artist Grantees' Exhibit — Marin Community Foundation, Novato
2004 *Verde, que te quiero verde* (representations of the Argentine landscape), Buenos Aires
2004 Watermark Fine Art Photographs and Books, Houston Texas
2004 “Cultural Artifacts”, Colorado Photographic Arts Center, Denver
2003 Center for Photographic Art (Carmel, CA), Center Awards Juried Exhibition
2003 Photo Review Competition (published in *The Photo Review*, Summer 2003)
2000 Galleria de Arte Fotografico, San Miguei de Allende, Mexico
2001 & 2003 Houston Center of Photography Juried Membership Exhibition
2000 Casa da Fotografia, Sao Paulo, Brazil
2000 Falkirk Cultural Center, San Rafael, California
1998 & 1990 UC Berkeley Extension Gallery, San Francisco, California
1997 Alliance Francaise Gallery, San Francisco
1990 San Francisco International Airport

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FILMS

- 2017 prison art photos used in the short film *Unbound*, about Arts in Corrections instructor Amy Querin
- 2015 Alcatraz photos used in the Discovery Channel's documentary *Alcatraz* (Indigo Films)
- 2015 Statue of Liberty photos used in the Discovery Channel's documentary *The Statue of Liberty* (Indigo Films)
- 2014 prison art photos used in the film *Cambodian Son*

PHOTO COLLECTIONS

Houston Museum of Fine Arts — Allan Chasanoff Photographic Collection

PHOTO AWARDS

- 2021 Social Award, CENTER Santa Fe
- 2021 artist interview published at Catalyst:Interviews
- 2020 Top Fifty, Photo Lucida Critical Mass
- 2004 Marin Arts Council Individual Artist Grant
- 2001 Santa Fe Center for Visual Arts — honorable mention, Vision 2001 (Assignment Earth)
- 1991 San Francisco Bay Guardian Annual Photography Contest — honorable mention (photo-essay)

RELATED PHOTO EXPERIENCE

- 2017 slide lecture on prison art photography at the Freedom Festival, Los Angeles City College, CA
- 2017 slide lecture on prison art photography at the Muckenthaler Cultural Center, Fullerton, CA
- 2017 mentored a photography student at California State University-San Bernardino, on how to photograph prison art programs (6 months, funded by an NEA grant)
- 2006 presented slide lecture at Foto Galería F.C.E. - Córdoba, Argentina (Encuentros Abiertos de Fotografía XIV)
- 2006 served as juror for Marin Arts Council Community Arts Partnership Grant
- 2004 presented slide lecture at Encuentros Abiertos de Fotografía XIII (Buenos Aires)
- 2002 presented slide lecture at Encuentros Abiertos de Fotografía XII (Buenos Aires)
- 2001 taught a 3-day photography workshop sponsored by the Marin YMCA Arts & Humanities Program
- 1992-1994 led docent tours and trained new docents at Friends of Photography Gallery, San Francisco

EDUCATION

B.A., Duke University (including one year at Exeter University, England)
photographic education — various courses at UC Berkeley Extension, and self-taught

PHOTO QUALIFICATIONS & SKILLS

analog photography – experienced in black and white film shooting, development, and processing

digital photography – experienced in shooting, studio and location lighting, Adobe Lightroom, Adobe Photoshop, and a variety of plug-ins; built and maintain my own website (www.petermerts.com)