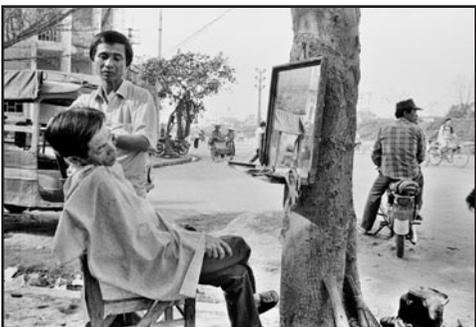
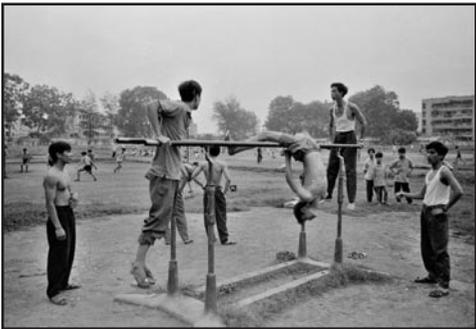




Mark F. Erickson





Other Streets

INTRODUCTION BY MARK F. ERICKSON

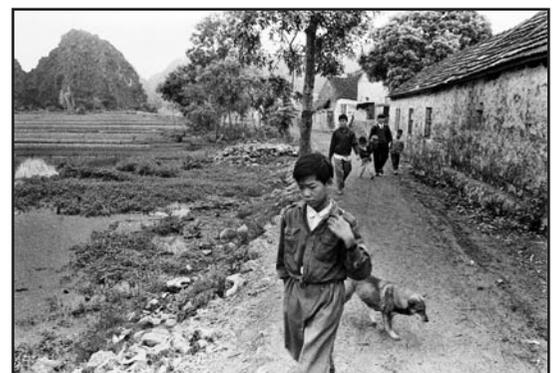
I carried this film with me for over a quarter century, from Hanoi to Saigon to Boston and to New York. The origins of these photographs lie in the Saigon of the early 1970s where I was a war orphan. I count myself as one of the lucky ones: As part of Operation Babylift in April 1975, I was evacuated by the Americans from Tan Son Nhut to San Francisco and, after medical processing, to Buffalo where I was adopted in West Seneca, New York.

As a child, I devoted hours to drawing, painting, and photography. My brother built a darkroom in our basement, so I had access to everything I needed to learn the basics. As a student at Harvard College, I studied Vietnamese history with Professor Hue-Tam Ho Tai and documentary photography with Chris Killip and David Goldblatt.

Highly influenced by what I learned from them, I returned to Vietnam in 1993 with a manual 35mm camera, a tripod, and a lot of film. I spent countless hours riding my gearless bicycle around Hanoi, shooting and burning images into my memory. Because I was always seen with a tripod strapped to my back, my nickname among the few English-speaking foreigners was “Tripod Boy.” Beyond Hanoi, I traveled in the north to Lang Son and Haiphong, and southward to Quang Tri, Hue, Da Nang, Hoi An, and Saigon—now renamed Ho Chi Minh City.

This photo project has taken far longer to complete than I ever imagined. So long, in fact, that the world in these images no longer exists—the one, that is, after the conflicts with France, America, and China, but before the rapid increase in economic development that continues to this day.

These photographs are not about war or famous people or infamous people. Instead, they are about ordinary people doing ordinary things in ordinary places.



These photographs and the introduction are from Other Streets and are used with permission. Copyright © 2019 Mark F. Erickson. All rights reserved.