

Fine Art Imagery by Joseph Leto

Profile/interview

The following comments were taken from an interview, at The Yerba Buena Center For The Arts, in San Francisco, February 28th, 1996

"Mr. Leto's responses are within quotation marks".

"It took quite some time before I considered myself an artist. I think some people claim that title too easily," suggests Mr. Leto. He received his formal training at Parsons School of Design, in New York city, where he studied industrial design (1964-68). It was there that he first developed his interest in photography.

Since his graduation from Parsons in 1968, he went on to; a successful career in the display and exhibit design fields, (he began and managed his own company), designed an office building facade, and created a large scale (public space) steel sculpture, in New Jersey. And also along the way, tried his hand at oil painting, product design, furniture design, and interior design. Finding some success in all.

"After all this time, my primary artistic love continues to be photography, but I arrived at a stage where I felt somewhat limited by that discipline." It was about this time when he discovered the new emerging world of digital imaging, the very technology that could get him past those limitations.

"When I realized that I could do just about anything imaginable with my photos, I was reborn as an artist." Consequently, after approximately twenty-five years in the commercial art world, he retired from his "real job", and became a full-time fine artist.

He now utilizes a computer to create his art by modifying his own photographs. These are photos taken and accumulated by him over a thirty-year period. To use his words, *"The computer is just a tool, like a paint brush, like a camera, like anything we use to make art. There is no difference."*

Although he has only been engaged in this new extension of his art for a few years*, he has already garnered much attention and praise for his work. By its nature, his work is somewhat difficult to describe or classify. At times it appears like "normal" photography, or like a watercolor painting, or a combination of both. *"Once you're in the digital domain, there are no clear boundaries between photography and painting, nor does it matter. The creativity is in the artist, not the medium."*

*At the time of this interview.

