



Michael





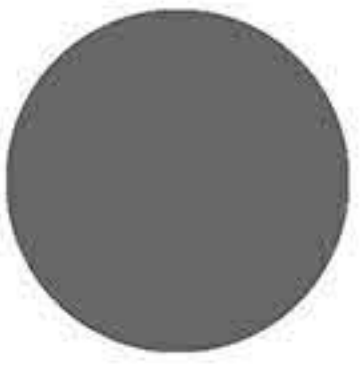
PORTRAIT OF THE PHOTOGRAPHER AS A YOUNG MAN

It was not my thought to be a photographer when I arrived in New York City. In 1955 I was 23 years old and fresh out of a two year stint as a lieutenant in Charlie Company 29th Tank Bn stationed in Germany during the Korean War.

I hated every square inch of my tour of duty.

Being too sensible to be an artist,
my passion for books dictated I get some
kind of real job in publishing, perhaps
as a designer. What door should I put my
foot in?

Someone recommended Parsons School of
Design. I asked myself "What's a Parsons?"
I dropped out after one year because I
wasn't learning anything. However, one
semester I took a class called Introduction
to Photography. At the end of the year we
had to present some kind of photo project.



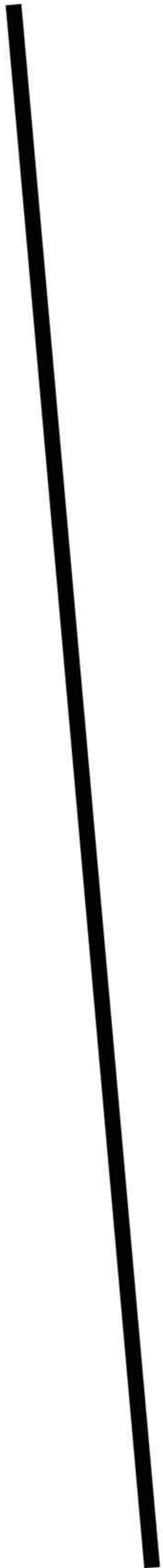
I decided to go to Stillman's Gym on 8th Avenue to photograph boxers. Not a surprising choice considering my burgeoning erotic consciousness.

I borrowed my classmate Tom Lacy's thirteen dollar Argus C3 camera.

(Three years later I borrowed it again when I went to Russia). I had no light meter, and guessed all the exposures.

One roll of film was shot without any pretensions to PHOTOGRAPHY.

These were the first photos I ever took as a photographer.



The results made me the star of the class. The photo professor was impressed enough to call Rudy de Harak the Art Director at Dance Magazine to recommend me for a job as his assistant.

In spite of no interest in dance, I pirouetted at the opportunity.

Arriving at Dance Magazine with my homemade portfolio of secondhand dance photos, I was interviewed by Rudy's current assistant, whose job I coveted.

I returned to my cell at the 34th street YMCA, like Willy Loman schlepping my sample suitcase: DEFEATED.



The next morning the magazine called me back, hiring me as their assistant because the aforementioned assistant was drafted that morning. I was at the right place at the right time. The job paid \$50 a week.

Later Rudy told me he almost didn't interview me because he thought my professor was such a dodo bird.

And this is how I became Ye Olde Duane.

