

BILL WESTHEIMER

62 GLEN AVENUE
LLEWELLYN PARK
WEST ORANGE, NJ
07052

☎ 973 669 8124
fax 973 669 3312
bill@billwest.com



MANUAL

The Personalities of Hands

*The eyes may be the windows of the soul.
But hands reveal our humanity.*

www.billwest.com/manual



MANUAL

The Personalities of Hands

OVERVIEW

MANUAL: The Personalities of Hands is a book of portraits with a twist: personal stories and private secrets told through images of hands. Readers witness the diverse range of humanity through photographs and photograms of hands rather than traditional pictures of faces. The photographs also make up a fine art exhibition.

Bill Westheimer has captured the hands of 150 people from diverse walks of life, including a priest, rock star, trapeze artist and politician. The meaty strong manly hands of a butcher and the wrinkled womanly and wise hands of a teacher tell stories and hint at mysteries which captivate the reader. The book is far more than a series of interesting photographs because these hands reveal the subjects' humanity, reflecting personality, occupation, creativity and aspirations.

Using techniques both historic and modern, Westheimer gives us hand portraits from three perspectives. We see the the photographer's perception of the subject's hand as captured by a 19th century wet plate glass negative; we witness their hand and gesture as revealed by a camera-less photogram created in a collaboration between subject and photographer; and we perceive their self image in a brief handwritten statement.

MANUAL encourages the viewer to imagine entire lives and shrouded secrets based on what we see in these hands; it triggers our natural desire to find similarities with others; to fantasize about the unknown and it confirms that hands reveal secrets about our fellow man. This book satisfies the voyeur in each of us by peering into the stories of lives told through hands.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bill Westheimer's photography has been used for scores of book covers with a wide range of publishers, dozens of corporate annual reports and countless editorial projects over the past 25 years. His extensive experience as a commercial photographer proves him professional, reliable and dependable.

His Camera Obscura views of New York created with Charles Schwartz were recently exhibited at the Alan Klotz Gallery in New York's Chelsea gallery district and The Carl Solway Gallery in Cincinnati. Westheimer's work is in numerous collections including Atlantic Richfield Corp., JP Morgan Chase, Cincinnati Art Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art –San Diego, Goldman Sachs, Laguna Beach Museum and Pacific Bell.

He received a B.A. in philosophy from Union College with additional study in photographic and graphic art. He has studied with renowned photographers such as Jerry Burchfield and Mark Osterman.

BOOK FORMAT

- The book size is 10.5" high x 16" wide.



- The pages are laid out as spreads with the person's handwritten self-image on the left side along with their occupation and a folio number. The facing right page is the pair of images of the person's dominant hand.
- 125 pages
- the best 50 portraits will be selected from nearly 150 available
- full color reproduction of the artwork on one side of sheet, black ink only on the reverse
- book design can be adapted to suit the publisher's requirements.

COMPETITION

MANUAL is a unique treatment of a universal subject, though some similar books are available. No other book approaches hands in an ethnographic style. This book gives the readers three views of each subject instead of the usual one-dimensional single portrait.

A highly successful show at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in 2004 demonstrated the great interest people have in hands. This exhibition, *Speaking with Hands – Photographs from The Buhl Collection*, centered on images of hands by many photographers from the 1850s to the present. The catalogue from the show, while not similar in content or intent, does share the same subject as **MANUAL**.

HANDBOOK with Footnotes by Eve Arnold was published by Bloomsbury in 2004

Elliott Erwitt's Handbook by Elliott Erwitt was published by Quantuck Lane Press in 2002

Artist Gary Schneider used a similar technique in photographing hands but not as a means of telling a person's life story nor did he compile a broad range of portraits.

The trade book market today includes several popular titles about hands and how they influence our culture and define our humanity. See Frank R. Wilson's The Hand and John Napier's Hands. These books use text and words in contrast to the visual and illustrative nature of **MANUAL** which encourages the viewer to imagine the lives behind the hands.

MARKETING

Target Audiences:

- Photographers and lovers of fine photography -- intrigued by the combination of old and new technologies and the handmade craftsmanship of the images.
- Physicians -- whose understanding of how life choices (including occupation) affects bodies.
- Teachers – looking for new ways to encourage their students to communicate about themselves and letting them understand that there are more ways than just the written word to tell a story.
- Teachers and career counselors can use the book to illustrate the potential in their students' lives.
- Psychiatrists and psychologists – intrigued by and appreciative of the links between occupation, hand and statement.
- Anthropologists and Sociologists will find the range of humanity instructive.



- General Interest – those who enjoy books that offer insights into humanity through photographs that serve as a jumping off point for the imaginative.

Outreach Initiatives:

- Exhibition in a Manhattan gallery linked to publication.
- On **The Manual Project** web site, provide instructions for how amateur photographers can achieve similar results and encourage them to send electronically for inclusion in the online gallery. Art teachers could use this as a project – and their students' hands and handwritten "one liners" would be included in the gallery.
- A website and parlor game in which the players guess the occupation from the image. This can become a social networking website where people can rate and post their impressions of the images, and post images of their own hands.
- Online e-cards website
- Westheimer can lead "hands-on" workshops in conjunction with book sales and signing, providing information about what his technique and also what he has learned from **The Manual Project**.
- Westheimer will collaborate with a publicist to select media targets in conjunction with publisher; will develop release, determine and undertake pitches.

Constituency:

The 150 people who were photographed form the core of the network of **The Manual Project** supporters. We have people in Scotland, Pakistan, New Zealand and Britain who were involved in creating the work who will help promote the book. Combined with the production personnel and the people involved in the exhibition, the promotional network is substantial. Subjects included several people with valuable media connections.

COLLATERAL OPPORTUNITIES:

Additional products provide brand extension for **MANUAL**, reinforcing the concept and getting the concept in front of other audiences:

- Calendars
- Flip Books
- Mini version for impulse purchase
- Note cards
- Memory books for parents, grandparents
- A children's edition would teach children about how occupations influence people's lives
- Wallpaper
- Gift wrap

COMPLETION TIME:

All photography has been completed. The images have been digitized and are high resolution. Timing would be a factor of the publisher's schedule.

MORE INFORMATION:

The **Manual Project** website: www.billwest.com/manual

Contact the author directly: Bill Westheimer
bill@billwest.com
212-431-6360