

CARSON ZULLINGER

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Carson Zullinger is a working artist who has been heavily involved in the arts community since the late 1970's. He was a founding member of the Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, serving as President of the board during its early years. He rejoined the board in 2006 and served for 10 years including Development chair, and treasurer. He also was honored to serve on the Delaware State Arts Council for 7 years. He currently serves on the Board of the Biggs Museum of American Art for the last 9 years.

Carson Zullinger is the 2014 recipient of the Masters Fellowship from the Delaware Division of the Arts. He has exhibited extensively since the early 1980's including the Delaware Art Museum, the Delaware Contemporary, and the Biggs Museum of American Art. His work is in Museum and private collections.

QUOTES FROM VARIOUS CURATORS:

Ryan Grover, Curator at the Biggs Museum of American Art in conjunction with Zullinger's 2014 retrospective at the Biggs Museum wrote:

"The "Line of Beauty" is an expression termed by British artist and satirist, William Hogarth (1697-1764), in his 1753 treatise on aesthetics entitled The Analysis of Beauty. Hogarth identified the visual dynamism that can be added to an artistic composition with contrasting serpentine lines popularized in European arts of the 17th and 18th centuries. Since then, many artists have demonstrated sensuality, emotional expressiveness, physical transcendence, motion and luxury through the S-shaped line.

Much of Carson Zullinger's photography of the past 40 years illustrates Hogarth's notion of *The Line of Beauty*. Carson realizes the artistic compositions of his dreams in figural studies juxtaposed against contrasting environments of the natural world, architecture and lighting techniques."

Margaret Winslow, Curator of Contemporary Art, Delaware Art Museum wrote in my published book, "Hanalei Dream"

"Throughout his over forty years as a photographer, Carson Zullinger has remained fascinated by the nude figure and its potential to convey the complexity of human existence. The both stark and subtle juxtapositions he establishes within his compositions

reveal the natural tensions that exist on both the microscopic and universal levels. In some photographs, the curve of a woman's arm mirrors the gnarly roots of a banyan tree while in others, the solid nude is an obstacle around which the gentle molecules of water slide. It is in either scenario that Zullinger captures the richly symbiotic relationship between the land and the figure.

In past photography series, Zullinger has placed the curved figure of the model in stark juxtaposition to the rectilinear lines of manmade buildings. The brilliant color and black-and-white photographs that comprise his 2016 project in Kauai mark a continuation of the photographer's renewed interest in the challenges inherent in working within the natural environment, away from the studio or static spaces. With each shift of light or passing breeze, both artist and model must respond to the unique habitat in which they find themselves temporarily grounded. Several images require longer exposures to capture the raking light that moves across the hip at the end of the day. When working at night, Zullinger glides through the shot, revealing the scene and figure within. The mottled quality and numerous light sources create an image imbued with mystery.

Zullinger has visited the island of Kauai for 26 years, and these journeys have been a source of renewed energy and creative spirit. A reoccurring pose in the series is that of offering—both arms outstretched with palms turned skyward. This motion simultaneously praises the surrounding nature while absorbing that which springs forth from the land and sea. This, and other gestures, conveys a sense of appreciation and wonder, serenity and vitality. Unlike in past series, Zullinger responded directly to the natural elements—space, time, light—and his models when capturing his images. Instead of pre-visualizing each composition, he embraced a creative practice that focused on mindfulness—keeping himself actively attentive to every shift he witnessed. It is through this approach that the artist is able to mine the energy and places between the body and its surroundings—the blurred edge between scarf and thigh or crisp line between leaf and breast. Zullinger's series, *Hanalei Dream*, demonstrates his ability to balance these two equally vibrant subjects—the vitality of the human form and the majesty of an ineffable place."

Ryan Grover also wrote a forward to my published book, "Elements, Australia 2018"

"Much has been said about the models, poses and gestures captured in the photographic images of Carson Zullinger. He is at heart a figurative artist and exploring human depth through photography is the story he is committed to telling. His recent exhibitions at the Biggs Museum of American Art and the Delaware Contemporary have been reflections on gesture, movement and narrative. However, attention should be given to Zullinger's evocation of space and the growing importance landscape has taken in his artwork in the past decade.

Carson Zullinger has always excelled at storytelling through the body. However, he seems to be exploring the notion that the best stories come from characterization of the whole scene and all its constituent players. His figures work equally as well as co-stars alongside the rich environments he drapes, layers and folds around the body. His relationships then take center stage and the complexity of spaces, forms and textures become something entirely left to chance."