Photographer Victoria Bullock...

Victoria Bullock has been practicing photography for 25 years. For the first part of her career she specialised in portrait and wedding photography, and furthermore has photographed for albums, magazines, concerts/musical events, and travelled to Africa (Kenya) in 1999 to photograph for World Vision, as well as judging for the AIPP (Australian Institute of Professional Photography). At the moment Vic is doing mainly pictorial scenes.

Strategic Approach

Word of Mouth

"It's always been word of mouth for me, I've never done any advertising", Vic explained that once she had done some work and established herself, word of mouth always got her the next jobs. For example, her wedding photography lead to photography for a wedding magazine; her portraits lead to World Vision work.

Competition

Vic describes the photography industry as very competitive, and to make it she states that you have to distinguish yourself and be willing to try different approaches.

Employment possibilities

Vic describes herself as being 'people crazy' and always having her camera with her. She said it wasn't hard getting started because she was always so interested - "if you've got the passion for something, it's easy; you don't think of it as a job."

Victoria started out working at photographic studios (Paul Britton Studios, then John Haniker Studios) in reception and sales. She gained a great deal of experience and knowledge of the photographic industry and worked her way up in the company structure in a short period of time. In the studio she had a great deal of exposure to proofs and photos and also began to go out with the photographers on shoots. She was still taking photos at every opportunity, and received valuable advice from the people in the studio. Vic was able to work with the owner of one of the studios and from there she was basically "browed into it". She then sat out on her own, operating from home, and one job lead to another. "More people got to know about me and recognise my photography and it just developed from there".

Also, Vic worked for the AIPP as a judge, alongside photographers such as Robert Bilbington and David Moore. This allowed her to become familiar with other Australian photographers and professionals.

Work Environment

Working in the Photographic Studios - Position and Value

Working at the Studios gave Vic the knowledge and experience to venture on her own and begin her own business. They gave her great advice and helped her improve her talent. At the beginning, she was placed at the lower end of the company structure - being on a sales and reception role. However, she explains "at I got more involved with the photography, they took me out on shoots and allowed me to do some of my own work. I worked my way up in just a short period of time."

Typical working week

When doing weddings, Vic allowed a lot of time to talk to the couple about what they wanted, where, and so forth. She held 2 hour consultations to discuss the proposal. On the day, Vic would travel up to 2 hours to the wedding, and then 4 - 5 hours photographing. After working the proofs back, she would spend time selecting photos and make up an album which would be presented to the couple. Vic said that she really enjoyed making up the photo albums because it gave her further artistic involvement in the process, being able to integrate her own style, or "Hemp", on the collection of photographs.

Vic's other jobs, such as photographing for albums and magazines, involved being presented with a brief from the client, and then going out herself (usually on location, rarely in a studio) to photograph.

Travel Opportunities

Photography has also provided Vic with the opportunity to travel. Her most recent journeys overseas include going to Kenya in 1999 for World Vision and to Prague in 2000 for an album cover.

Victoria says that she never quite knows where the next job will take her; each job is different to the next.

Photographing for World Vision, Kenya

Word of mouth landed Vic the "very challenging" task in 1999. Her job was to spend time in Kenya and to photograph the people, way of life and atmosphere. Her photos were used by World Vision in promotional campaigns to raise awareness and support for World Vision. She feels very honoured that she was involved in this project.

Vic describes her time in Kenya as very challenging, and a great experience. "The children didn't mind

Philosophy

Attitude towards young photographers

Although Vic has never employed young photographers, mainly because she has always worked alone, she says that there is a great deal of opportunities offered by Photographic Studios to gain valuable experience. She advises that aspiring photographers must take lots and lots of photos - all the time, to build up a portfolio, by which you will gain more and more experience.

"Look at different things. Look at the different arts. I think that if you want to be a photographer, you have to be involved in everything, from drawing, painting, to sculpture. See all the exhibitions.

You have to stretch your ideas. You'll get more experience and learn a lot more. At the moment, I'm really interested in Life Drawing and I'm trying to find a way to integrate photography and drawing. It makes me feel a bit more diverse. I can't tell you enough how important it is to get out there and take photos whenever you can. Experience is everything. Employers will see how interested you are."