

James Nachtwey – War Photographer

A charged term and title.

It is mainly about that role but it would be fair to say that his reportage is more wide-ranging, dealing with human life at the extremes of violence and injustice.

To what extent does he epitomize the 'idea' of what a photojournalist is, whether in his manner, his viewpoint, his images or the cultural hinterland that surrounds his work – the magazines, the exhibition spaces, the media organisations?

Consider the visual attempt to mimic his viewpoint using the SLR-Cam.

To what extent does the film's downbeat and maudlin nature reflect its serious credentials (Christian Frei's) and therefore Nachtwey's also?

The film makes some effort to critique the nature of photojournalism, and, more broadly, international news reporting, especially in terms of exploitation. This is done 'softly' as the partisanship is in favour of the protagonist.

To what extent do we consider this kind of work important still? The extent of this western, liberal hegemonic view have been challenged and supported in equal measure. Should we be looking for the work of Kosovans, Indonesians, Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda?

Write a review of this film on your blog, considering these views and others that you may have formed while watching it.

Link to the film online: <https://archive.org/details/wphoto>

Christian Frei/James Nachtwey (2001) *War Photographer*, First Run Features

Further Reading:

- | | | |
|------------------|--------|---|
| Lindfield, Susie | (2010) | <i>The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence</i>
Chicago: University of Chicago Press |
| Sontag, Susan | (2004) | <i>Regarding the Pain of Others</i> . London: Penguin |