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Solomon's House: The Lost Children Of Nicaragua



Synopsis

A Piercing Photographic Essay on Nicaragua's Street Children Solomon's House is Danish photojournalist Henrik Saxgren's harrowing account of the dissolution of the social fabric in Nicaragua in the years following the revolution. The book opens with a Preface by Nicaraguan-born Bianca Jagger, an ardent spokesperson for human rights and children's issues in Central America. Despite widespread poverty and the tensions of warfare present during Saxgren's first visits to Nicaragua in the 1980s, basic standards of decency and family unity prevailed. Upon his return to the country in the mid-1990s, Saxgren found vast numbers of children living on the streets and trapped in a downward spiral of dependency. At the heart of this story is life in the shantytowns, where teenage girls pay rent to sixty-year-old men through prostitution. Having turned to these men to find a way off the streets, the girls have discovered a dark semblance of family unity under the direst of circumstances. Through unforgettable photographs and stories, Solomon's House offers a poignant revelation of the fragile nature of human society.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Saxgren is a well-received Danish photojournalist who supplies not only the photos but also the text for this sobering album featuring the children of Nicaragua that were caught in the social disintegration of the country following the devastating civil war of the 1980s. His grainy, graphic shots follow the denizens of Managua's Callejon de la Muerte, "Death Alley," a dirt path lined with shanties serving as houses of prostitution. Homelessness and hunger reign in Death Alley; crime and violence visit the place on an hourly basis. Saxgren's photographs are disturbing and haunting,

and his text sets the scene for them with perfectly concise detail as he walks Death Alley with us and introduces us to lives sad but in their way also brave. After all, the name of the game is survival, and that is, ironically, what is going on here in Death Alley. Brad Hooper
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Henrik Saxgren's previous book, Point of View, was published by Aperture. He lives in Copenhagen and is a member of the 2Maj photographer's agency.

Reviewing this book, which I have owned since it first appeared (thanks to the fantastic Urban Latino magazine for reviewing it so long ago), I feel a lot like Dracula opening the door to Jon Harker, saying *enter of your own free will*. This book is filled with darkness. Manmade darkness. Apapthetic darkness. However, when you buy and open this book, it is filled with the light of love as well. A spirit that keeps these young people going amidst a hopeless cycle. The photographs illuminate in the greatest tradition of photojournalism. W. Eugene Smith would be proud. The photos never pander to our emotions, yet they don't allow us to stand above implacably indifferent either. You can feel the love from the photographer and his night guide: a priest who takes in some of the kids. An amazing intimate body of work. But that's not all. You have a job to do after you open this book, as Bianca Jagger so eloquently pleads - what will we do *now that we are no longer ignorant*. It is a call of awareness and a call to action. Human beings are leaving wide swaths of evidence for the prosecution to codemn us to our fate. This is a key piece of photographic evidence for you the jury to consider...

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