

to watch you, and you go inside and dance, there's something profound going on, especially because a couple of miles away at Taos Pueblo, there's thousands of tourists watching the Deer Dance."

The dances and dramas featured by Gandert in this series were being performed when Edward Curtis was touring New Mexico in 1907 and 1913, but the self-appointed documenter of the Vanishing Indian never gave them the time of day. Their hybridity would presumably have appalled him, seeker after (and concocter of) authenticity that he was. Miscegenation was disapproved by turn-of-the-century Anglo society. Events like the Comanche dances, in both Pueblo and Hispano villages, were undoubtedly disparaged as impure and therefore worthless. (Many tourists have the same initial response to the garish colors and improvised costumes of the Comanche dances.)

Even today, Los Comanches and related dances as performed in Hispano villages are cultural stepchildren in relation to the immense literature on the Pueblo kachina dances. (The Matachines are an exception, perhaps because their origins are so mysterious, and presumably European.) Most of these local dramas are rarely mentioned in print, except in passing or in small-press folklorist literature. When I looked in the libraries and archives for references and old photos of Comanche dances to compare to Gandert's, I had little luck. Reference librarians wanted to steer me toward the dances at the pueblos rather than at the northern villages, which have seldom been written about in the last quarter-century.

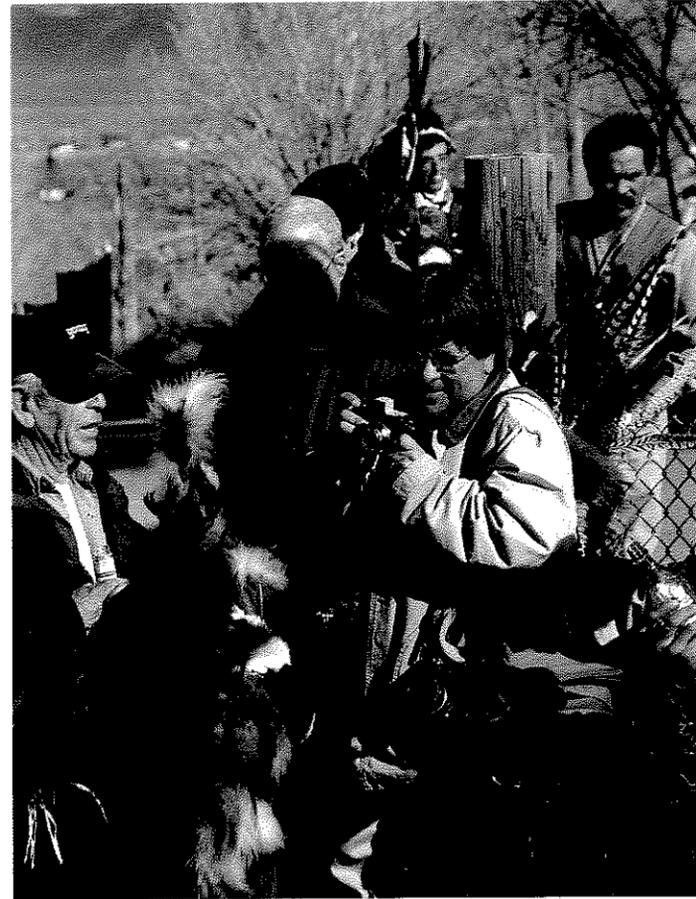
In a tourist-dependant New Mexico, the mythical status of "Indians" is always in the foreground, while in the background lurks an unremarked competition between New Mexico's two cultural tourist attractions, one of the symptoms of the unresolved crossovers that take place so often in everyday life. Enrique Lamadrid has outlined how images of cultural superiority in the movies reflect Indianophilia and Hispanophobia, as well as the suppression of the *genízaro* as a unique style of *hispanidad*. By the early years of the twentieth century, he writes, the stereotypes of "Mexicans" were fully formed, "radiant with all the persuasive power of the hegemonic forces that had begotten them." Charles Lummis, in *The Land of Poco Tiempo* (1928), could describe "Mexicans" as "ignorant as slaves, and more courteous than kings, poor as Lazarus, and more hospitable than Croesus." By the twentieth century the northern New Mexican land grant heirs were *déclassé*, lacking the cachet of the romanticized (if previously vilified) "primitive" or the Spanish aristocracy. Hispanos were still "troublesome" — in part because there were so many of them. Indians, on the other hand, no longer a threat in internal exile, could now be idealized. The *genízaros* in turn represent the banished "mixed bloods" or "half breeds" (which Plains Cree artist Gerald McMaster says suggests "half a person"). As nomadic Natives were captured, they were detribalized, thrown out of the Pueblo kivas, landing inevitably in Spanish culture.

Dancing with a Camera

Chris Wilson

It's cold, overcast, and beginning to snow at about 9 a.m. on New Year's Day—the first morning of a new millennium. Miguel Gandert and I have the windows of his Subaru station wagon rolled down as we jostle down a dirt road in Ranchos de Taos. He is here to photograph the Comanche dancers of Talpa for the fifth time, as part of his ongoing documentation of Indo-Hispano ritual celebrations. I've come along to gather impressions of him at work and to enjoy our growing friendship. Soon we pick up the sound of Indian drumming and follow it to a cluster of pick-up trucks parked along a road north of town. In one practiced, continuous sequence, Miguel breaks to a stop, puts the car in park, turns off the engine, pockets his keys, reaches into the back seat for his camera bag and three cameras, slips them over his head, and is out the door.

We climb a gravel drive to the bare dirt yard beside a stucco brown, metal-roofed ranch house. I find my place at the end of a crescent formed by ten or so people watching a circle of dancers dressed in buckskins, moccasins, and brightly colored feather headdresses. Miguel heads straight for the three-man chorus headed by Francisco Gonzales, a former state legislator, nicknamed El Comanche. They smile and nod, their voices grow louder, their drum beat stronger as he steps within an arm's length and raises a camera. After a



Miguel Gandert photographing
Comanches in Talpa, 1998
(Photo by Andrew Connors)

few minutes, this set ends when the dancers take the owners of this home, the Sandovals, captive and dance around them triumphantly. Then we're all invited in to a waiting spread of coffee, punch, cookies, cake, and mincemeat turnovers. ("This is the place with the really good empananitas," Miguel had confided as we drove up.) Back in his Subaru, he sheds his cameras into the back seat as fluidly as he put them on.

We spend the rest of the day winding through the contiguous villages of Ranchos and Talpa in a caravan of vehicles—three drummers, six to ten dancers, and a dozen or so supporters. At one house, when no one emerges after two songs, we move on. At others, one or two or five or ten people emerge to greet us, watch four or five dances, and take pictures with their Instamatics.

Forty-four years old, five-foot-seven, and dressed in a light-weight black jacket, jeans, and running shoes, Miguel Gandert stands at the edge of the crowd, arms folded, watching intently. At one stop, he scrambles up on a pickup to shoot an overview. At another, he goes down on both knees to get the best angle on a young dancer. Like a curious black bear come down off the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, he weaves in close to the dancers, hunched forward, camera raised to his eye, leading with his nose. (More than once he's been knocked senseless by a spinning

dancer.) At another house, he focuses on a sixty-year-old woman with her infant grandchild bundled in her arms as the Comanches circle around.

About 11:30, snow squalls force an early break at the Armijos' for a lunch of ham, green chile stew, red chile and beans, posole, flour tortillas, cake, and pastelitos. We sit satisfied, talking in the living room. Miguel is handing out handsome 16-by-20-inch prints of photos taken in earlier years. As they pass from hand to hand around the room, someone explains, "Here's Luis Giron who was killed in a motorcycle accident."

"Mira. Look how serious you are in this one, Abrán."

"Come here, mija," a mother calls across the room. "Come see how little you were in this picture."

"Oh, this one's from when Miguel set up his big camera and took pictures under the portal at Francisco's."

"Here's old Manuel who died since last year. He always loved it when we came to dance at his house on his saint's day."

"I'm a real product of northern New Mexico," Gandert says as we drive back to Santa Fe in the dark. Although considered Hispanics by the U.S. Census, Gandert and his parents, like the Comanche dancers of Talpa, belong to the Spanish-speaking but largely mestizo enclave of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado known to geographers as the Hispano Homeland. Cultural cross-fertilization and intermarriage with Native Americans began soon after Spanish colonists arrived in the region in 1598. Their descendants, settled in land-grant villages on Mexico's far northern frontier, found themselves annexed to the United States following the U.S.-Mexican War of 1846. Deprived of most of their village common lands through legislative and judicial chicanery, they nevertheless insisted as early as the 1890s, through their thriving Spanish-language press, that they could be loyal U.S. citizens while also maintaining their culture and Catholicism. They were both Hispanic and American: *Hispano-Americanos*. From 140,000 Hispanos in 1900, their descendants in New Mexico and Colorado have grown to perhaps half a million today.

Miguel Gandert's mother, Cecilia Mondragón, grew up in Antonito, in the part of Anglo-dominated Colorado that tried to secede and rejoin New Mexico as recently as the 1960s. She attended high school in El Rito, New Mexico, before going on to Highlands University in Las Vegas. Miguel's great-grandfather, a German-born trader named William Gandert, moved in the 1860s from Taos east over the Sangre de Cristos to Mora, New Mexico, where he married Mariana de Jesús Vigil. In time, Gandert became recognized as a Hispanic name. After serving in the Army during World War II, Miguel's father, José, attended Highlands on the G.I. Bill. He was elected student body president, met Cecilia, and married her.

Miguel, the third of José and Cecilia's four children, was born in 1956, when José was teaching in Española. Three years later, José became a leader and lobbyist for the New Mexico National Education Association, and the Ganderts moved to Santa Fe. Like other middle-class Spanish-American families living in the flat-roofed, adobe style ranch houses of the Casa Solana subdivision, one of Santa Fe's first suburbs, the Ganderts chose not to speak Spanish with their children because they believed it was important for them to speak English without an accent to get ahead. But Miguel spent summers on his grandfather's farm in Mora, where he heard Spanish spoken every day.

He recalls the day in 1967 that he climbed the piñon-covered hills above Casa Solana to watch a National Guard convoy with cannons and a tank head north out of town. Land-grant activists demanding the return of stolen common lands had just declared their independence from the United States and raided the county courthouse at Tierra Amarilla. The troops were off to quell this, the last rural insurrection in U.S. history.

A not overly athletic twelve-year-old, Gandert was manager of the Young Junior High

basketball team when his science teacher, Doug Smith, loaned him a camera to take game pictures for the yearbook. It may be a cliché of personal narratives, but this was the event that changed his life: "I remember going into the darkroom and seeing my first picture coming up in the developer, and I was hooked. It's still like magic for me today. A photograph's a frozen moment, a memory you can hold and share." Through his school years, Gandert served on the newspaper and yearbook staffs. His father had begun working for the Agency for International Development, preparing Spanish language text books for use in Latin America, and in 1970, moved the family to the Ecuadorian capital of Quito, high in the Andes Mountains. While attending a Montessori-style international high school there, Miguel polished his Spanish.

At seventeen, in the fall of 1973, he returned to enroll at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. The University Studies program permitted him to create his own mix of honors classes, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, political science, and journalism. Although the intensity of the Chicano movement had peaked in the late 1960s, Gandert embraced its revisionist history of stolen grant lands and a mestizo heritage, encapsulated in New Mexico in the self-identification *Indo-Hispano*.

UNM had the foremost photo and photo history program in the country at that time, and Gandert took a full complement of undergraduate classes and graduate seminars from art historian Van Deren Coke, photographer Thomas Barrow, and Beaumont Newhall, the pre-eminent historian in the field. The first daguerreotypes of cathedrals and stiffly posed people, expeditionary photographs of pyramids and the Grand Canyon, Eugene Atget's deserted Paris streets, Wegee's tabloid newspaper crime shots, Walker Evans's sharecroppers, Dorothea Lange's Dust Bowl refugees, Auguste Sander's stern-faced Germans, Cartier-Bresson's beautifully composed "decisive moment" photographs — Gandert drank them all in.

Contemplating photographs of people who were once full of life, but are now long dead, can produce a disquieting sense of one's own mortality. That is inherent in photography. Gandert's comprehensive study of photo history deepened this experience into a permanent sensibility. Although he continued to work as a photojournalist during his undergraduate years, he also became a documentary photographer working for posterity, aware of his potential audience a generation or ever so many generations hence. As Gandert put it, he wanted to provide "a window onto the appearance of my time."

The older photographers in the graduate program at UNM during those years revealed in Edward Weston's *Daybooks*, the diary of a bohemian photographer willing to endure hunger and a lack of recognition in the pursuit of art. Meanwhile, Gandert emulated the legendary *Life* photojournalist W. Eugene Smith and most admired the hard-edged docu-

mentary photographers Mary Ellen Mark, Robert Frank, Josef Koudelka, Danny Lyon, and the lesser-known chronicler of New York's Puerto Rican barrios, Rene Gelpi. Gandert liked the intimacy Gelpi achieved with grainy black-and-white film and a wide-angle, 28mm lens that required him to get close to his subjects. Above all, he was transfixed by the way Gelpi's subjects stared proudly, sometimes defiantly back at the camera.

"Early in my career I was obsessed with people looking at the camera," Gandert recalled in a 1998 interview. "I wanted pictures that looked back at people so there was a dialogue and I became a surrogate." This was fifteen years before the anthropologist John Urry coined the term *the tourist gaze* to describe the way that tourists are allowed to stare at people who interest them, while those depicted in stereotypical tourist images avert their own eyes from the tourist gaze. Even then, Gandert was beginning to transform the romantic tourist image of Hispanic New Mexico with portraits that stared back.

As photo editor of the student newspaper, *The Daily Lobo*, Gandert shot everything from rock concerts to regents' meetings. His first coherent body of work emerged from a story on a student-sponsored boxing club in the Albuquerque barrio of San José. Exhibited soon after his graduation from UNM in 1977, *Two Corners of the Ring* includes shots of boxers exchanging blows and trainers working over their battered protégés between rounds, but consists primarily of portraits of boxers staring warily at the camera, their guard up against a possible punch.

"One boxer, a young man named Victor Romero, told me he thought I wanted to know what it is to be a boxer, and that I would never understand boxing until I got in the ring," recalled Gandert some years later, after Romero had died in a boxing accident. "In one of my favorite images, Victor in a hooded sweat suit appears as a monk, his fists held forward, and behind him like religious icons, a Coke sign and a clock with a dangling cord. ... Looking at it I feel that at least a small part of the intensity of Victor Romero lives on."

Within months of his graduation, Gandert's journalism professor, the veteran newspaperman Tony Hillerman (only then writing his first mystery novels), recommended him for a cameraman job at KOAT, the local ABC affiliate. During fourteen years as cameraman and news producer at Channel 7, he also worked for CNN and ABC on assignment in Korea, Mexico, and Central America. "There's nothing that I did that's not really dated," he explains. "Nothing was ever really complete. You're always limited by time. Something that deserves two hours gets two minutes." So, on the side, Gandert took graduate courses in



Victor Romero, Albuquerque, 1977

photography at UNM and worked to complete larger bodies of documentary photography. "It's what kept me sane," he says.

For his 1983 master's thesis show, Gandert produced seventeen portraits of gang members who look directly into the eye of the camera. Black-and-white Converse high tops, pressed work pants, flannel shirts, sleeveless white undershirts and suspenders; bandannas positioned over eyebrows, baseball caps turned backwards, and wrap-around sun glasses; immaculately polished low riders; tattoos of girlfriends, dapper *vatos*, Jesus with a crown of thorns, or the Virgin of Guadalupe with her radiating *esplendor*—these constituted the means for creating individual personas within a shared subculture. Out of focus in the background of these portraits, functioning as a subconscious landscape, are silhouettes of utility wires and leafless trees, a neighbor watching from a distance, chain-link fences, an open dumpster, a pickup truck, tire tracks in the dirt.

The anthropologist Edward T. Hall, whose work Gandert first read about this time, pioneered the study of body language and proxemics (the culturally determined distancing between people). Hall argues that most human interactions take place in recurrent social settings—situational frames, he calls them—comprised of body language and proxemics, rhythms of interaction, a situational vocabulary, a characteristic physical setting, and, in some cases, specialized clothing, formal rituals, and rules of behavior. In an informal situation—an encounter with a friend on the street, for instance—we know without thinking how far apart to stand, whether to nod, extend a hand, or offer a hug, and what sort of pleasantries to exchange. A more formal situation such as a Catholic mass includes not only the prescribed liturgy but also our Sunday-best clothes, our hushed voices, and knowledge of where to sit in relation to other parishioners.

Posing for a family portrait in a photographer's studio is a relatively formal situational frame. Handing a camera to a stranger at a family picnic or a tourist stop so that she can take a group picture is a related, if less formal situation. We know to arrange ourselves shoulder to shoulder facing the stranger. The stranger knows to pause briefly after raising the camera and to ask us to say cheese, so we have a chance to compose ourselves. Gandert photographing a victorious boxer with a trophy clutched in his padded glove, or a cholo leaning against the door of his beloved lowrider, is a closely related social situation.

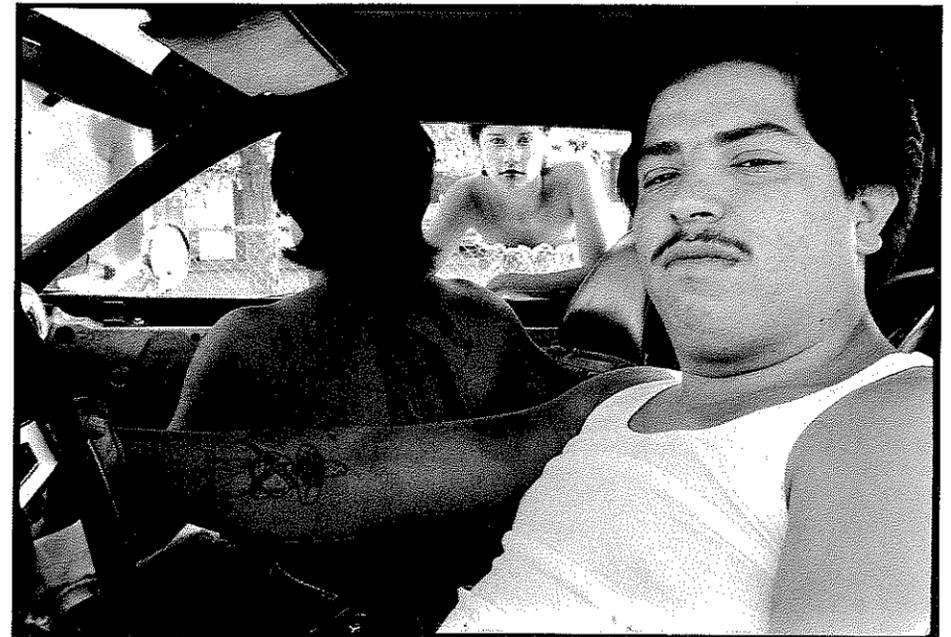
In his master's thesis, Gandert admits to being a bit of a voyeur and feeling some guilt for taking people's pictures. It helped that his work was addressing the dearth of Hispanos in history books and museum exhibits. It also helped that anyone roaming Albuquerque's barrios with a camera slung over his neck in those years (as I also happened to have been, working on a historic building survey) was regularly greeted by enthusiastic requests to take people's pictures. The camera meant attention and validation. One of Gandert's basic rules

became, "Never say no when someone asks to have their picture taken." He began giving away prints to everyone he photographed. (There are stacks of 5-by-7 prints of people he's been unable to locate stored in a metal cabinet in his UNM office.) Gandert also began to sell prints to collectors, museums, and archives to help pay the high cost of film, processing chemicals, and photo paper.

In 1982, Steve Yates, the curator of photography at the Museum of Fine Arts in Santa Fe, invited eleven veteran photographers to document the state's contemporary human landscape. Yates was so impressed with Gandert's thesis show that he delayed the publication of the photo survey to allow Gandert to refine his work. If he stayed at a medium distance in his earlier work out of deference to the conventions of portraiture, Gandert now moved in much closer, in the process inserting himself into other situational frames.

In one image taken for the survey in 1983—an image that has long been one of his best known—a lowrider is stopped at the side of a residential street. Friends lean in at both windows to socialize. It's a situation repeated a hundred times a day in the barrio. The difference here is that the person standing at the driver's window is Gandert, holding a camera. Perhaps his ready smile and unthreatening demeanor gained him access, or the car's occupants already knew him and had seen his photos. His wide-angle lens soaks in the chrome steering wheel and shiny vinyl within, as well as snatches of chain-link and nearby houses outside the windows. The driver and a young woman in a halter top, her elbow resting on the passenger's window, fix their eyes on the camera. Visible tattoos provide surrogate personas for each. It is a relatively informal situation, but the presence of Gandert's camera elicits their dignified composure and wary gazes that hold any inclination to romanticize at bay. As always, Gandert provides a visual frame by carefully printing the black edges of his negative—an indication that this is the original, uncropped image.

Published in 1985 as *The Essential Landscape*, the photographic survey was accompanied by nine essays probing New Mexico's vernacular cultures. Their author, J. B. Jackson, was considered by many the preeminent writer on American cultural landscapes. Of the pho-

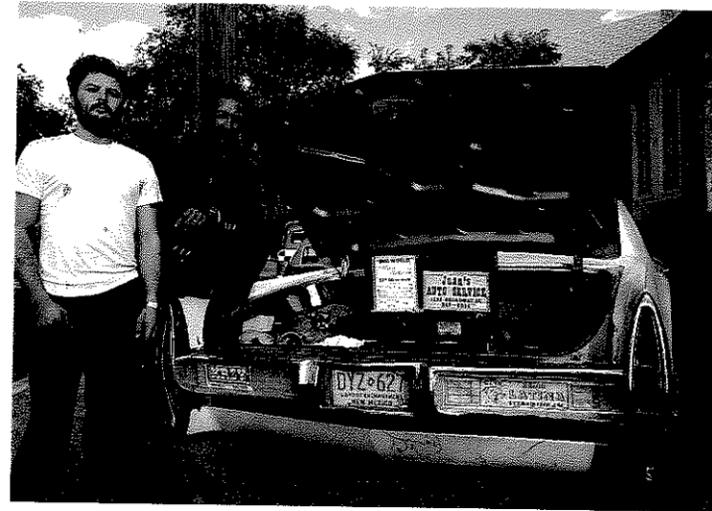


Melissa Armijo, Eloy Montoya, Richard
"El Wino" Madrid, Albuquerque, 1983

tographers included in the book, Jackson was most interested in the work of Gandert, and commissioned him to make slides for use in his talks around the country. Gandert read Jackson's essays, and the two cruised through lesser known villages and neighborhoods talking about the physical landscape and the ways people make a living, socialize, and come

together for community celebrations. In late 1985 and early 1986, Gandert made a series of slides for Jackson of the subterranean economy of roadside flea markets, mechanics working in driveways, and day laborers with their tools. In 1987, when Jackson, then in his late 70s, grew tired of escorting a PBS crew that was making a documentary about his vision of the landscape, he told them, "Go with Miguel. He knows what I see."

Throughout the 1980s, Gandert continued to make portraits of outsider subcultures — exotic dancers, remnant hippies, and the clientele of Okie's, a university area bar slated for demolition. Each September he geared up for an intense two weeks of photographing carnies at the state fair. And when the festering dispute over alienated common lands flared again in 1988, he produced a series entitled *Tierra O Muerte* (Land or Death) that



Juan's Auto Service, Albuquerque, 1985

includes shots of jailed land-grant activists and fortified encampments.

Gandert continued to photograph the lowrider subculture and also began to shoot their toddlers, parents, and grandparents, a traditional *matanza* (pig slaughter and roast), cemeteries, Matachines dancers, and the Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. In one 1987 image, an eleven-year-old in her lacy white first communion dress poses in front of an unconventional backdrop of concrete block wall and graffiti-covered dumpster — a holdover, perhaps, from his earlier gang work. In another image, taken two years later during the Good Friday pilgrimage up Tomé Hill, an aged figure hoists a large crucifix up on his shoulder against a cloud-streaked sky. In the background, taking up half of the frame, is the sort of cultural landscape of irrigation ditches, fenced fields, and adobe houses that Jackson read as signs of hard work and human aspiration. Gandert's other long-term documentation projects include the Hispanic farms and ranches of the region, portraits of Southwestern artists and writers, and the hard street life of Juárez and its burgeoning *colonias*.

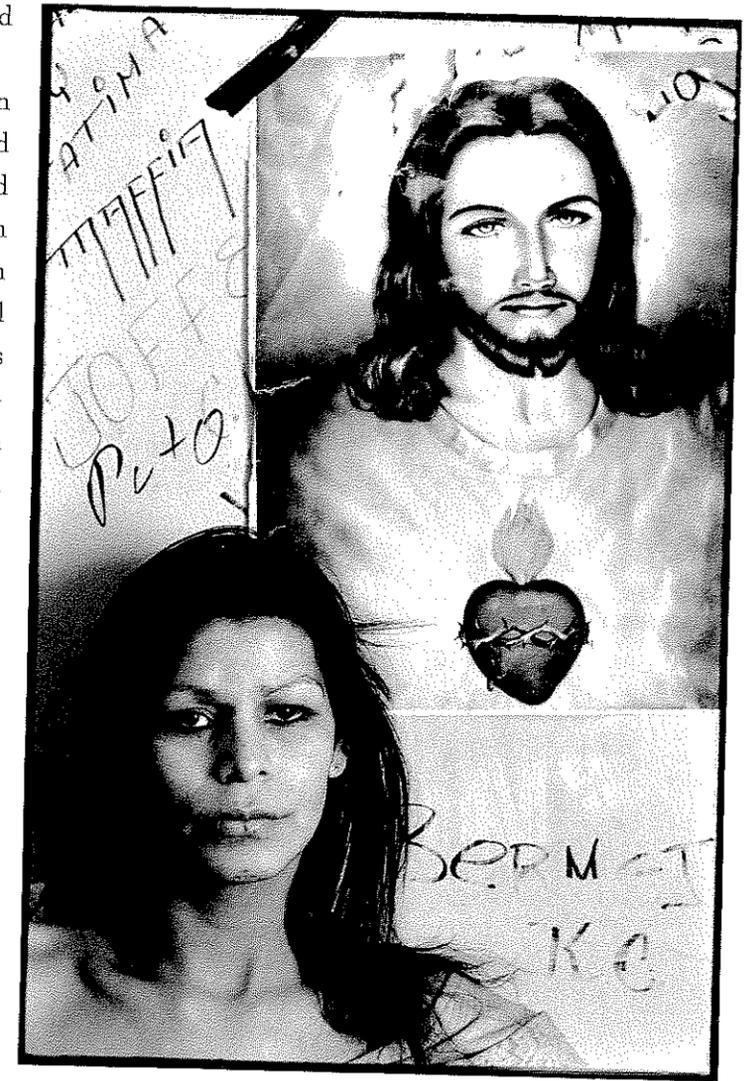
Some Hispanics object to Gandert's photos of Juárez prostitutes, as they did earlier to his barrio gang photos. Understandably concerned that these images might provide ammunition for bigots, they argue that they are not representative of Hispanic culture. But in the context of his larger body of work, these photos reveal Gandert's desire to include various segments of society and his commitment to afford every individual respect through the

opportunity to present him or herself to the world in a dignified manner.

During the 1980s Gandert taught occasionally at UNM, and in 1991 he was hired as a full-time professor in Communication and Journalism, a department that combines traditional newspaper and TV work with the study of intercultural communication. Although he has covered the full range of photo and broadcast journalism classes, Gandert most enjoys teaching "Introduction to Visual Communications" and "Intercultural Field Research." Students know him as a mellow, approachable, engaging professor who provides practical advice on camera technique and interacting with people, while also conveying substantial enthusiasm for his own work and his students' potential for contributing to the documentation of contemporary cultures.

Gandert has continued to exercise his journalistic license to explore corners of society that might otherwise be off-limits. He has photographed the first Mexican woman police chief in Tijuana for *People en Español*, the fiftieth anniversary of the Trinity Site for the *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, a survivor of the Truth or Consequences sex murders for *Maxxim Magazine*, and the control room of the Four Corners Power Plant for the annual report of the Public Service Company of New Mexico. In 1997, when Ken Burns asked him to produce a portfolio for the web site accompanying his PBS documentary, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, Gandert chose to spend his allotted two days photographing Pueblo Indian casinos populated by gamblers, dealers, cashiers, and security guards, as well as documenting the educational, environmental, and recreational programs made possible by casino income.

Over the past decade, Gandert has dedicated the better part of his free time to the documentation of the ritual celebrations depicted in this book. (We can only imagine how much support and patience have come from his wife, Julie Newcomb, a writer and radio producer, and their daughters, Sonja, 14, and Yvonne, 10.) The rituals Gandert photographs are joyful and somber, poignant and profound, and, for me, ultimately unfathomable. So I will leave the interpretation of their origins and meaning to those historians, anthropologists, and folklorists who have studied them closely. What interests me most about Gandert's work



Diego "Lucy" Delgado, Juárez, México, 1992



Juan's A

are the spatial dynamics of these community rituals and the modern situational frame of people interacting with the photographer and his camera.

We know from the Heisenberg uncertainty principle that the observation of a physical phenomenon unavoidably alters that phenomenon. The same holds true for social phenomena, which poses a dilemma for students of society. To minimize the impact of their presence, folklorists and anthropologists often stand back among the onlookers, using a telephoto lens to take pictures. Gandert does the opposite when he shoots with 21 and 28mm wide-angle lenses, weaving in as close to the action as decorum permits.

From a romantic perspective, such a forthright intrusion of modern technology undermines the authenticity of tradition. But these rituals are kept alive solely by people who live in the modern world. Each of the celebrations is photographed by community members, some by television crews; people with cameras have by now become customary participants. At a recent show of Gandert's work at the Albuquerque Museum, a sixty-five-year-old Hispanic woman thanked him by saying, "Finally we can see ourselves in the museums." Likewise, grown children who have had to move away to find work but come home to take part in community celebrations will take Gandert's prints back with them to hang on their dining room walls in Denver or Phoenix. Gandert and his photos thereby become part of the social, symbolic web that sustains community.

To record the physical and social context, Gandert stands back with his preferred, handheld Leicas with wide-angle lenses. (He typically uses three cameras with different lenses so he won't have to change lenses in the middle of the action.) Some events, such as the Good Friday pilgrimages to Chimayó and up Tomé Hill, are linear and relatively solitary experiences. Religious processions, by comparison, are circular, generally originating at churches, winding through communities, and returning to their starting points, thereby projecting religious devotion throughout villages and urban neighborhoods. These routes down city streets, state highways, dirt roads, and paths alongside acequias are often lined with spectators. In the foothills of the Sandía and Manzano Mountains east of Albuquerque, where recent suburbanization has inundated old Tijeras, Cañoncito, San Antonio, and San Antonito, annual Matachines dances and religious processions reassert a Hispanic presence that dates back to the early 1800s. One developer who sought to close a little-traveled dirt road was surprised when he met with opposition because the road has served as a procession route for generations.

Gandert sometimes employs a panoramic camera to encompass church, plaza, and ritual dance in one long horizontal image, most notably at Alcalde and Ranchos de Taos. Buildings may be missing from the perimeter of the old plaza at Alcalde, but when the Matachines, Abuelos, and Malinche begin to dance, and a crowd gathers two and three deep

around them, it is easy to appreciate how the three—church, plaza, and ritual celebration—intertwine as the primary modules of community organization. At the Tortugas church near Las Cruces, evergreen trees, concrete block walls, and chain-link fences have been used to define the perimeters of three dance grounds, one for each of the parish's dance groups. The new Juárez colonia of Anapra may cling precariously to a raw hillside beside the international border, but when its dancers take their places in front of their new concrete block church, they too define both a plaza and a human community.

The Talpa Comanche dancers begin each New Year's Day soon after sunrise in the small plaza in front of the Ranchos de Taos church. At house after house, the chorus typically takes a place beside the residents in front of their home, while supporters who follow along form a crescent facing them, with the dancers in between. At each stop, houses, outbuildings, fences, and, sometimes, a trailer home define a space, thirty-five feet or so square—a good size to accommodate this number of participants. Just as plaza spaces relate to the scale of community ritual, residential compounds relate to the more modest scale of Talpa's Comanches and to the size of extended families. When the horseback skirmishes between Los Españoles y Los Comanches at Alcalde require a more ample space, the action moves to open ground where pickup trucks define the perimeter of temporary *plazas de armas*.

Gandert moves to a middle distance to record remarkably deep and wide swaths of action, all of it in focus. To describe a single image: we are standing on the side of a street in Bernalillo. Directly in front of us, a row of hooded Matachines wearing blue jeans and running shoes face a row of girls in their white communion dresses, who carry *arcos*—arches perhaps four feet across, decorated with flowers. On the other side of the street, a woman in her front yard aims an Instamatic camera back at the dancers and us. Behind the girls, a man in sunglasses holds one handle of an *anda*, a litter bearing a statue of San Lorenzo, while cradling an infant in his free arm. Meanwhile his young daughter, with her hand tucked in his pocket, mimics the dance step the older girls have just completed.



Arco de Triunfo, Bernalillo, 1991

Indian and Spanish chant, Gonzales leads the chorus in a new refrain: "Oh we love you grandfather. Yes we love you grandfather. You know we love you grandfather." Encircled by dancers, drummers, relatives, and a few remaining supporters, the daughter and great-grandfather are dancing together, grinning. With a bitter wind bearing down on us off the snow-covered Sangre de Cristos, some brush tears from their eyes.

I didn't notice whether Miguel was standing and watching, or had gone in among the dancers, down on one knee perhaps, working to get a better angle.

Sources

Thanks to Miguel Gandert, Joanne O'Hare, Helen Lucero, and Anne Boynton for editorial suggestions.

In addition to interviews with Miguel in January, March, and April of 2000, and the loan of his career portfolio, this essay draws on the following:

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