

FFOTO

LUTZ DILLE

(Born in Leipzig, Germany in 1922, died in France, July 6, 2008)

Lutz Dille arrived in Toronto in 1951 and worked in a variety of odd jobs until the late fifties, when CBC television producer Ted Pope saw Dille's Paris photos and decided to animate them into a short film for television. Following this Dille started to receive assignments and was able to turn freelance. Apart from his commissioned work, whenever time and money allowed, he set out without any particular social message in mind or preconceived ideas, simply to photograph people. The personal assignments took him across Europe, the United States and Latin America. Three more films featuring his photographs were produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation: Speakers Corner, London 1961, Ring of Time, Mexico 1960, New York Live In, New York City, 1962.

In 1967, the National Film Board of Canada organized an Exhibition, "The Many Worlds of Lutz Dille". A catalogue of the same title was published by the NFB at this time, the first of their IMAGE series. In the same year at the Bytown International Exhibition he received the Yousuf Karsh award for the best collection of photographs in the exhibition.

Dille was by this time working in film as well as photography. In the early 1960s he'd bought his first movie camera and had started to work freelance for television, particularly in the area of Social Documentary. As an independent filmmaker he produced a number of documentaries and experimental films in which he often utilised both still and the moving images. In photography he began to experiment with colour printing, texture and form. He explored these aspects in his series "Lanes" which he photographed in the back alleys of downtown Toronto. He exhibited this work at the Arnolfini Centre for Contemporary Art, Bristol, England in 1982.

In 1975 and again in 1977 he visited Salford, an industrial town in the North of England, which was going through a period of drastic social change. Whole neighbourhoods were being demolished and people being uprooted and re-housed in high rises. Dille chose to photograph for the main part in colour. In fact, the only time he has chosen to photograph people in colour.

Dille went back to Europe in 1980, accompanied by his wife Mary and son Oliver. Dille was sorely missed by a legion of Toronto friends and colleagues who had grown accustomed to his dominant social presence. He lived in Wales from 1980 until 1985 where he taught a course in Film making at the Newport College of Art, Gwent. He was awarded a British Arts Council Film Grant to make a documentary on the potter Walter Keeler titled "The Mudspinner". From 1985 until the time of his death, Lutz Dille lived in the south of France, where in recent years his photography has been widely exhibited. In 1990 his Paris photo series '1951' was edited and distributed by the Griffelkunst in Hamburg Germany. Between 1993 and 1995 the FNAC Photo Galleries, Paris, organized a retrospective "Lutz Dille, Street Photography" 1951-1968. This Exhibition toured major cities in France, also Antwerp, Belgium and Berlin, Germany.

In 1995 the "Centre de la Photographie" Lecture, France organised an exhibition "Lutz Dille Photographies"; in 2004 a retrospective exhibition curated by Martin Eberle for Städtisches Museum, Braunschweig, Germany which also published the catalogue *On the Street : Photographs of the 1950s and 1960s by Lutz Dille*.