



ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Not all blind people are blind. Not all sighted people can see. Knowing what the world looks like is not a requirement for understanding. Over the last seven years I have been listening to men and women who are blind or visually impaired. I spent two to three days with each person. It's been a rare privilege to have these deep and personal conversations. My ears saw much more than my eyes.

As a result of their blindness, what have they found out about their other senses? How can new meaning be extracted from familiar sounds? Why does the general public carry such prejudice?

The public fears blindness in the same way they fear cancer or dementia. For many, darkness and the unknown are deeply frightening. Whenever I hear any sighted person speak of blindness, it is always about disabilities or limitations. The conversations are rarely about competency or newfound perspectives. When something is taken away, often something else takes its place.

Each person I met who lost eyesight after having vision went through an initial period of depression and desperation. The first year of blindness is extremely different than long-term developed nonvisual adaptation. When a person loses sight, he or she remains a whole, vibrant individual. They do not lose their intelligence, personal histories, wisdom, empathy, and all the egalitarian promises of equal rights. Many become more courageous and determined.

Perception is deeper than we can imagine and more mysterious. Our other senses have their own wisdom separate from sight. Voices expose sincerity and character. Sounds are not just sounds but have origins and destinations. Memory awakens and tilts. What becomes more sensitive is awareness from a cultivation of attention.

Everyone knows something important and valuable, precious wisdom born from experience. You can never really understand a person until you consider things from his or her point of view. Through the gift of images and presence, each eloquent voice draws us into deeper understanding.

MICHAEL NYE

Michael Nye practiced law for 10 years before pursuing photography full time. Recipient of a Mid-America National Endowment for the Arts grant in photography, and a Kronkosky Foundation grant. He participated in two Arts America tours in the Middle East and Asia, and has exhibited and lectured widely in museums and universities. His photography and audio exhibitions, "Children of Children" (stories of teenage pregnancy) and "Fine Line: Mental Health/Mental Illness" and "About Hunger & Resilience" have traveled to over 150 cities across the country and continue to tour.



Exhibition Can Be Installed in Any Space – On Walls or Easels:

Technical

There are 46 portraits and 46 audio stories. Mounted below each portrait is a wooden box containing an audio player and headphones. The stories range from 4 to 6 minutes each. Many sites have used this exhibit as the centerpiece for related programming including lectures, student field trips, radio and other educational and fundraising activities.

Installation

This exhibit can be installed on walls in formal museums and galleries - or anywhere with the optional easel installation. The easel installation has been designed to hold the photographs, lights and audio components and have been installed in universities, libraries, and conferences.

Photographs & Audio

All photographs are made using an 8 x 10 view camera. Photographs are black & white silver darkroom prints. Each image is mounted on 24" x 30" archival board and framed. Audio narratives were edited/mastered with the approval of each participant.

Cost & Availability

Contact • MichaelNye.org • 210.476.0497 • MichaelNNye@gmail.com

**PROMOTIONAL VIDEO: MICHAELNYE.ORG/BLIND
VIMEO.COM/MICHAELNYE/BLIND**

A MULTIMEDIA PHOTOGRAPHY & AUDIO EXHIBITION



MY HEART IS NOT BLIND

PHOTOGRAPHS AND AUDIO STORIES

BY MICHAEL NYE



This exhibition is extraordinarily moving. I'm mesmerized by the emotion and wisdom. I feel I'm experiencing what they have experienced. Michael Nye spent 6 years working on this project. These passionate, insightful narratives emerge from his close listening with each participant. This project will have immense, incredible impact on communities. I would encourage everyone and anyone of any age to experience it.

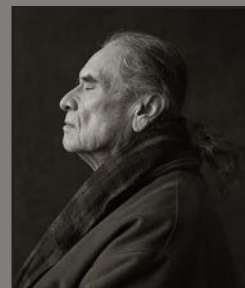
Mike Gilliam -- *President/CEO San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind & Visually Impaired*



About My Heart Is Not Blind

MULTIMEDIA PHOTOGRAPHY AND AUDIO EXHIBITION

Michael Nye's exhibition, MY HEART IS NOT BLIND, brings light into the dark misperceptions about blindness. For the last 7 years Michael has been listening to men and woman who are blind and visually impaired. Blindness doesn't make someone less intelligent, less capable, less competent. Many become more courageous and determined. Perception and adaptation are deeper than we can imagine and much more mysterious. Through the gift of images and presence, each eloquent voice draws us into deeper understanding.



I have heard many of the participants' stories and have been profoundly moved by what I've heard. It is an experience in empathy. Being able to understand someone else. This project probes beneath the surface. Michael Nye's questioning of us, his insight and commitment to this project caused us to search deeper and to bring out an awareness that we ourselves perhaps did not know we had. Those feeling, hopes, desires, even regrets which we have maybe buried for too long.

Larry Johnson -- *Author – Teacher and Columnist*