

The Roots of Zydeco ✦ Ancient Indian Culture ✦ Louisiana Folk Art

Winter 1998-99

LOUISIANA CULTURAL VISTAS

Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities

photographer

Josephine
Sacabo

A Sense of Place

Also inside: New fiction by James Lee Burke,
Jazz legend Doc Cheatham's final interview

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A SENSE OF PLACE

The Photography of Josephine Sacabo



There are powerful places in the world. Deep places that, for whatever reason, transcend their geography and pull with a greater gravity. These are places that tend to attract and collect people and circumstances and resonate more vividly in the human psyche.

Photographer Josephine Sacabo sees it as a kind of "continuity" in the history of a particular place — a continuum that allows for an exploration of time and space in all directions. Over the last ten years Sacabo, who started out as a photojournalist, has wandered into powerful places to evoke sad, sweet, fearsome, beautiful impressions of life. Ghost towns and cathedrals are transformed

through technique and imagination into otherworldly venues.

In the work that appears here, shot in Antigua, Guatemala and the Mexican desert, Sacabo admits that she was responding to the particular locations.

"Aesthetically, I am drawn to a place," she says. "I want to include that world [in my photographs], but in a very subjective, internal way. I love places where a lot has happened; that have the rich reverberation of other times. When I am in a place that feels like that, that is where I photograph."

It is also where she lives. A denizen of the New Orleans French Quarter, Sacabo is nurtured by the architecture, history and cultural melange of her own neighborhood. "I feel that it is a living part of my own life," she says. "To wake up, ride a bike, go to the grocery store in that context — that is the backdrop of my own life."

Sacabo's subjective, introverted work has been viewed in galleries and museums across America and Europe, and has turned up in a number of international art publications.

The edgy area between dreams and reality is the zone in which her most current work exists. The dark and stately beauty of her images leave much unsaid; in shades of subtlety, Sacabo speaks.

-Nick Marinello



de Susana San Juan
The World in Paris

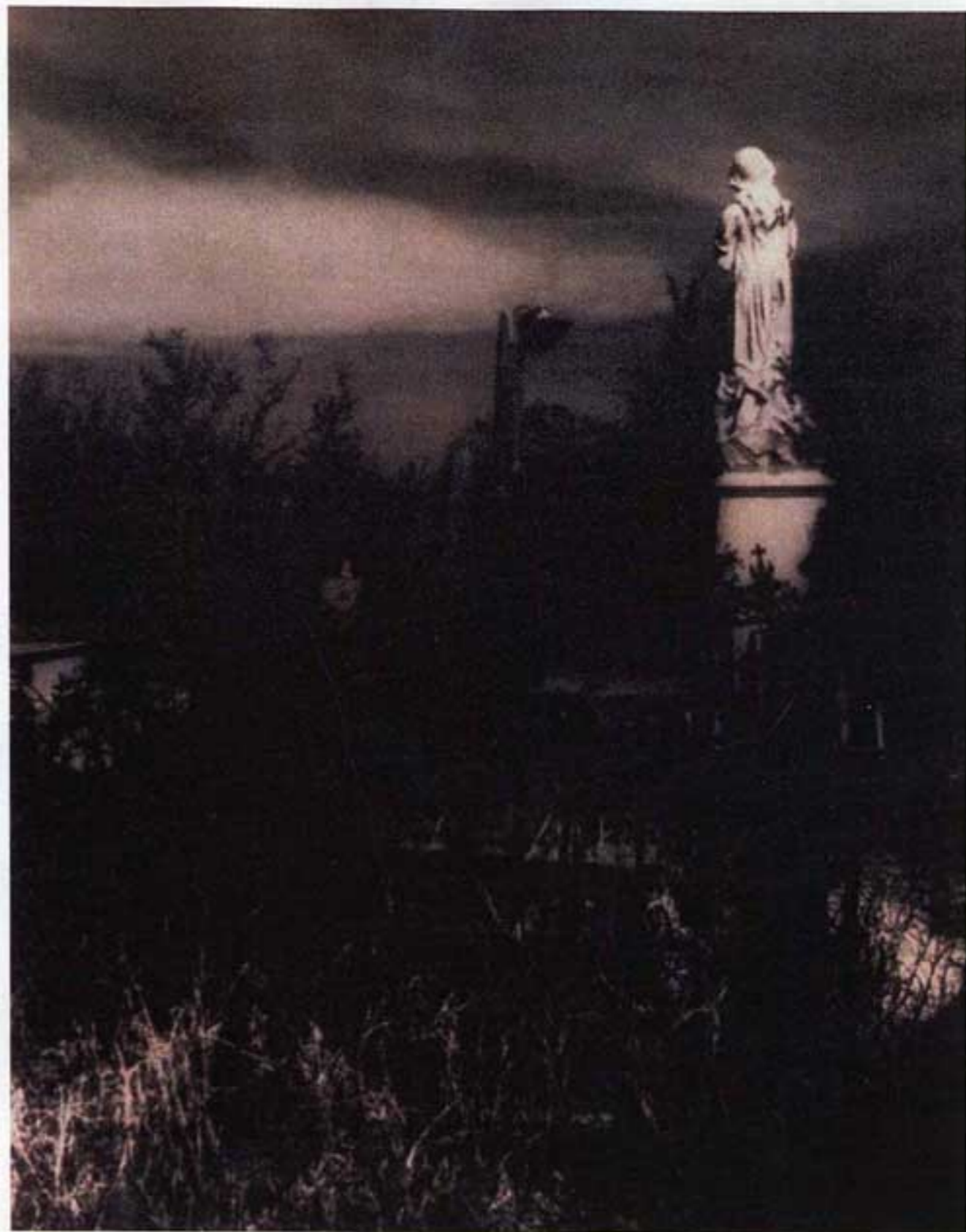
El Mundo Inalcanzable de Susana

Homenaje a Juan Rulfo. (Homage to Juan Rulfo)

El Mundo Inalcanzable de Susana San Juan is a series of photographs based on the Mexican novel *Pedro Paramo*, a tragic myth of Mexico, by Juan Rulfo. The setting is a town in ruins; the characters, souls wandering in it, doing penance, telling their stories. Among them is Susana San Juan, whose entire discourse is one of memory and delusion, delivered from her tomb. It is the story of a woman forced to take refuge in madness as a means of protecting her inner world from the ravages of the forces around her: a cruel and tyrannical patriarchy, a church that offers no redemption, the senseless violence of revolution, death itself. These photographs are my attempt to depict this world as seen through the eyes of its tragic heroine. It is my homage in images to Mexico, to Juan Rulfo and to Susana San Juans everywhere who will not be possessed.



San Juan. (The World in Ruins)



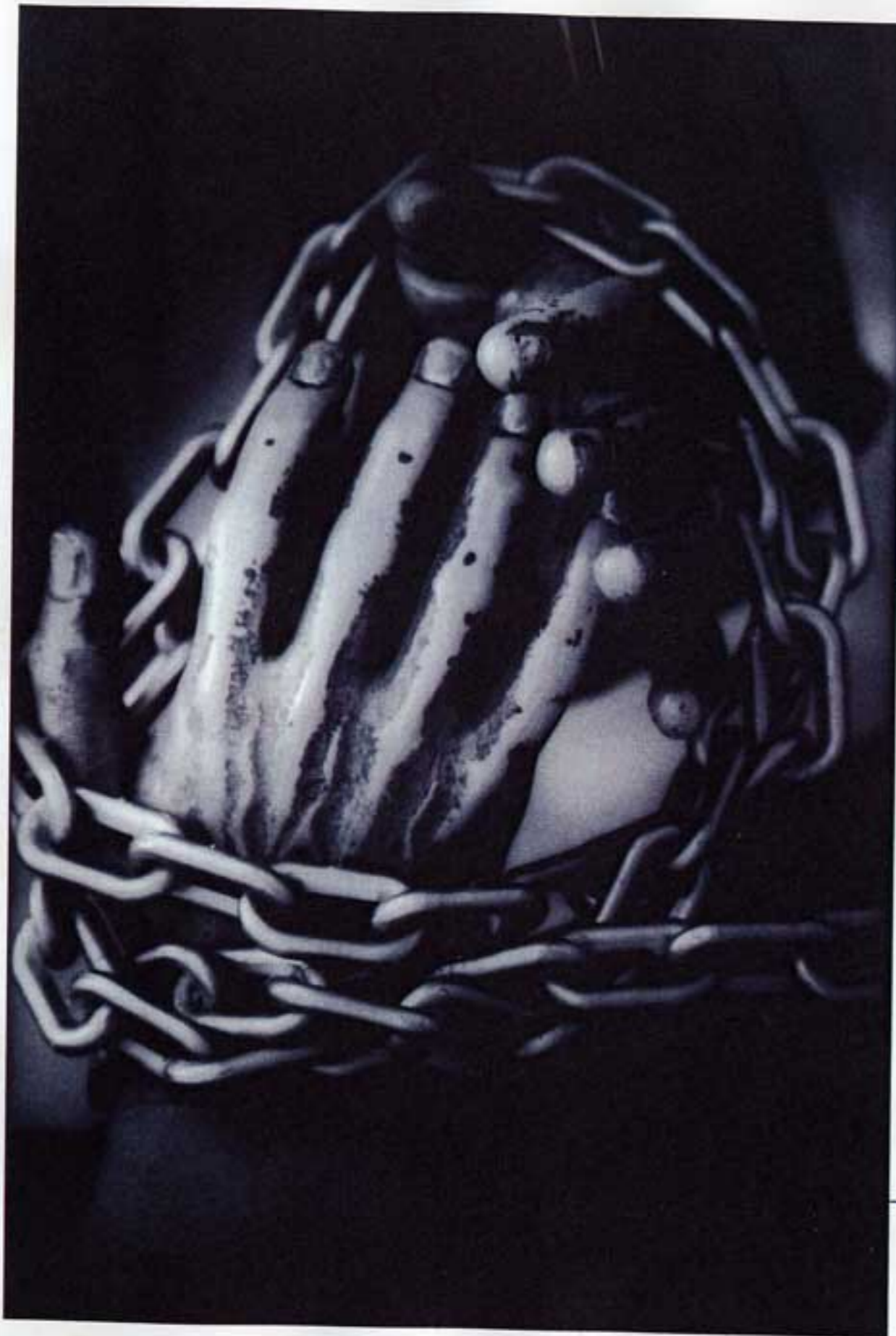
El Mundo Inatcanzable



sana san



(The World in Ruins)



Lessons from the Shadows

These photographs were taken on Good Friday in Antigua, Guatemala. Throughout the entire Holy Week endless processions shrouded in incense parade through the streets.

Statues of the wounded and suffering Christ and his grieving mother are removed from the altars of the cathedrals and placed on enormous biers which are then carried through the streets on the shoulders of the faithful — the "Nazarenos", or Nazarenes, mostly descendants from the Maya — sharing symbolically in the suffering of the suffering God and in his triumph. For He is carried in glory and grief through the streets, while the evil are remembered only for their transgression against Him.

Here in Antigua, for one week of every year, one can witness in all its hypnotic exultation, the eternal drama of the humiliation, torture and death of innocence.

*Lessons from
the shadows*



Tropics of Memory