

Artist's Statement

Roger Raepple

The deadbeat dad took my cat and left when I was 10;
fourth grade, Mrs. Young the teacher who did not insist that this very tall boy play Jack in Jack and the
Beanstalk;
no one wants to play catcher, I will, I'll start;
high school angst of being the poor kid in the rich kid's school (a time of angst for all - what was the
cause of their angst?);
the only time I lost physical control (ah, control, the antithesis, the devil, to the creative) – winning that
state football championship – a dance of delirium on the field;
my brother dead at 29;
I arrived on day one in Bien Hoa or was it Nha Trang with a mortar cacophony;
365 days later the tarmac at Oakland Army Terminal kissed once, twice, three times, certainly not a
lady, 22, I was still a boy but grizzled;
“Sir, what time is it?” – I've been outed, college kids know this fellow student was in the Army;
the Fernandez family, seven children and mother in 1100 square feet with the dad in prison in Cuba –
they did not care about that Army thing, I was just Roger (they were living the American dream but they
did not know it, dreams are frightening sometimes, many times);
Carolyn (I found a Peggy Lipton and she likes me);
Zach, age 2½, ends my trepidation of adopting at such an age, runs from his foster mother's hands
across the lawn and jumps into my arms (shouldn't this be a movie?);
“I feel different” Carolyn says - Yates survives the difficult last days in the womb;
graduations for children and wife – pride as the parade goes by;
fifty years since leaving Vietnam and some of my friends did not make it – what have I done with those
fifty years?

My images reflect all of life's experiences, every image a self-portrait. For the viewer, you, every image
a mirror. You bring your unique experiences, your special history, your loves, and doubts, your grief,
your laughter. I cannot expect that what an image means to me will mean the same for you. Would
that not be immensely unfortunate – if we all saw things the same way?