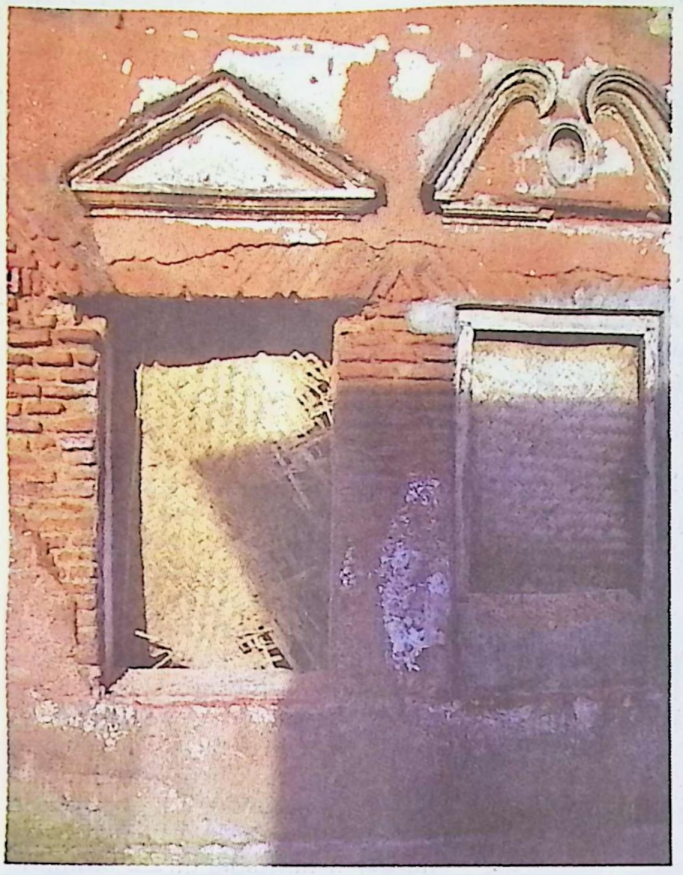






sense of oneness between the outdoor and indoor environment.

Siam Reap, Cambodia; this is a macro-photography shot of a grated window with slivers of sunlight veiled by seemingly burlap cloth. Initially the viewer finds it hard to discern exactly what is in the photograph giving it a very different feel from the other photographs in the exhibition.

Santa Fe, USA; this is a photograph of the top of a stucco wall with two gaps to let beams of light through. At first glance it appears that it may be one of the many ancient stucco structures which is the traditional building style in the southwest United States. Ironically, this wall was actually a newly built gate to an Indian restaurant in the American desert.

Marienstatt, Germany; here is a photograph of a school which Oertel attended. The shot is taken from a low angle, giving the building an almost imposing look. The window in the photo cannot be seen through, suggesting a separation of the inside and outside, giving the building a regal look.

Algajola, Corsica; here is a photograph of a small rectangular building with a large blue curtain-like veil in front. The photo has an air of mystery as the viewer can only speculate what lies behind the vibrantly coloured cloth partition.

"Every culture or society has doors and windows, for purposes of entry, exit, letting in light and general well being, but they are designed quite differently," Oertel notes. Coming from a rural background, the son of a farmer, he talks about how in his hometown going to see an art exhibition would be considered a frivolous activity. He stressess that he is not a professional photographer without any formal training, and thus is more apt to appreciate the work of untrained artists as it has a more organic, natural feel to him.

"Art is often overly intellectualised. Arts are a form of expression and free thinking and formal training is unneeded," according to Oertel. He is firm in his stance that arts and culture cannot be limited to people with traditional training, mentioning the actresses Grace Kelly and Sophia Loren who had no formal training, "by focusing closely much is lost." Oertel comments adding, "with age the ability to perceive objectively decreases for most people. Art cannot be taught, it comes naturally, from within." In contrast he says people in other fields such as doctors and lawyers require formal training before their work is considered credible.

Oertel also mentions the effects of the digital era upon the arts "The Internet has allowed anybody to distribute and so the standard of quality has gone down. People stay home these days, consumed by their gadgetry." He criticised the current system, saying, "expense has come to mean quality."

The "Doors and Windows," exhibition of Torsten Oertel's photography will be on exhibition through the 29th of May. The gallery is open for viewing on weekdays from 2:00pm 8:00pm.