

Enanitos Toreros



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For the past 8 years, photographer Livia Corona has documented the Enanitos Toreros, troupes of little people performing as bullfighters. She toured and lived with them throughout Mexico and migrant farming communities in the US, often traveling with 12 to 14 people in a single van. The cars blared out a tailored audiotape advertisement:

"This evening, in your town, the Enanitos Toreros have arrived with a show that will kill you. But kill you with laughter."

Upon meeting a female bullfighter, Corona was invited to join their tour as their photographer, in exchange for promotional images. Attracted to their life and determination, a friendship developed between Corona and the bullfighters, who narrated their frank opinions on their lives and profession.

"The bull charges at you and does not look to see if you are tall, short, skinny, or fat," says one bullfighter. "If you do not know how to bullfight, they will knock you out, and if you aren't careful you can get killed. But we never kill the bull. I like this, I just wish we got paid better." Another performer explains, "Personally this has helped me a lot. I enjoy the exchange with the audience, because people get curious about you and want to know you—they value you as a performer. When I walk on the street people come up to me and greet me."

Enanitos Toreros is a Mexican cultural tradition dating back decades to its beginnings in Spain. In Enanitos Toreros, a series of photographs and interviews depict the bullfights, the families, the spectators, and the everyday life of this community of artists. The images share an intimate, parallel gaze between Corona and her subjects, and present a tough and arresting defiance that contests the stereotypical assumptions towards a community often bound by rejection and ridicule.

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