



Jerry Sumpter and barber Clarence Williams inside the Crystal Barber Shop on Wylie Avenue, c. 1952

Portraits of Home(wood)

Teenie Harris' photos at DIVA

Portraits depict a person, and a whole lot more. They tell us about trade — look at the clothing! — relationships — look at the interaction between these people! — and power. Photographs add details about place and era, gaining poignancy as the years go on. That's the gorgeous discovery in Charles "Teenie" Harris' work.

"Rhapsody in Black and White," 31 images from Harris' collection of more than 80,000 shots, came to town to accompany the Ronald K. Brown/Evidence Dance piece *One Shot* at the Hult Oct. 25. The dance was based on Harris' photographs, which he amassed during his decades as a photographer for the *Pittsburgh Courier*.

Harris was known as "One Shot" for

his genius at framing photos in one take. Whether you saw *One Shot* or no, you should head to One Shot's show, where silver gelatin prints provide warmth and immediacy. Choreographer Brown, along with curator Deborah Willis, picked these specific images to illustrate the inspiration for the dance.

Moments of tenderness mix with shots about everyday life, relaxation and, yes, death. But there's humor as well: *Tom Thumb wedding with young boy and girl in costume* might be the funniest thing in the building, with a young girl, her lips in a perfect moue, looking haughtily at her escort, a tiny boy whose face couldn't express more disgust. Harris shoots children exceptionally well, but three photos of adults stand out. One's of a waitress whose joy at being paid attention to matches the dignity with which Harris captures her. One's of Harris' wife by their car in Homewood (the black Pittsburgh neighborhood also described, memorably, in John Edgar Wideman's books). Finally, there's a barbershop, where customer Jerry Sumpter relaxes with the kind of smile that makes the viewer know he feels perfectly at home.

Harris' photos make up the largest repository of visual info, in the world, about a black community. They're full of information, but they're also full of evocative moments in daily life. Do not miss this nationally important show, up through Nov. 22 at DIVA, 110 W. Broadway. **EW**



Mary Lou Harris posed next to a car on Mulford Street, Homewood c. 1930-1939

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