

A NEW BOOK BY NANCY FARESE

POTENTIAL SPACE

A Serious Look at Child's Play

In the constant motion between our inner and outer worlds, we inhabit what the psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott called our "potential space" where creativity and resilience are born, and sustained.

-NANCY FARESE



IT'S TIME TO LOOK SERIOUSLY AT CHILD'S PLAY

Nancy Farese has traveled the world in search of play. As a photographer working closely with social agencies in trauma sites, refugee camps and very remote places, she has discovered and documented children at play, creating a visual archive of an essential human talent for healing, adapting, and thriving. Her images and writing invite us to see the broad tapestry of this innate behavior in ways that are both familiar and provocative, driving a fundamental question: **what is play for?**

Potential Space is photographic exploration of why and how children play around the world. Today, play has become commercial, expensive and extreme, nearly unrecognizable as a simple activity involving collaboration and cooperation, designed by nature to promote happiness and well-being.

The intention of this work is to look seriously into the world of play as essential to human and social development, while asking two vital questions: How are we protecting and promoting this essential activity in human lives everywhere? And equally important—where did all the fun go?

*A child that does not play
is like a drum that does not sound.*

—AFRICAN PROVERB



This visual index of play from around the world is a stunning exploration of the human relationship to play, captured through the lenses of culture, tradition, and economics. Farese offers us an intimate look into the unlimited world of sliding down mud hills, imaginary friends, and complex games of tag that resonate with compassion, familiarity and joy.



That every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

—THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD, Article 31, 1989





*You can learn more about a
person in an hour of play
than in a year of conversation.*

—PLATO



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



NANCY RICHARDS FARESE is a photographer, author, and entrepreneur whose work promotes visual storytelling as an essential tool for social good. An award-winning documentary photographer, she has worked extensively for international development organizations including the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, CARE USA, RefugePoint, and the Carter Center.

Farese holds a master's degree in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School and was a Fellow at the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics, and Public Policy. Her writing has been published in the NiemanStoryboard, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and San Francisco Chronicle. She is the founder of the visual storytelling nonprofits PhotoPhilanthropy (2009) and CatchLight (2015). Originally from Carrollton, Georgia, Farese now lives in California.