

*"When words become unclear, I shall focus with photographs.
When images become inadequate, I shall be content with silence."*

- Ansel Adams

HEART AND HARD WORK

Success Chua Style!

I first met Harvey Chua after the publication of my first book: *Portfolios That Sell*. Harvey, (a woman who is named after her father's American friend from the war they each served in) reached out to me to see if I'd be up for a visit, as she and her husband John were on a trip to the United States from the Philippines where they lived and ran a very successful commercial photography studio.

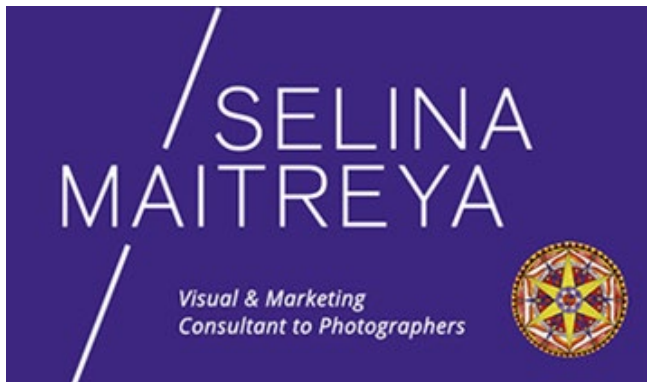
I invited Harvey, John and their friend Ann Gay to my home for dinner and that began a long distance friendship, where I followed their career for years, excited for them as their business grew, and saddened by John's death, just a few years ago.

While I didn't know the details of how John and Harvey grew their business, I had seen how talented they were and how committed to education, sharing information and building community, the Chua team was.



Their story I later learned, would take pages and pages to share here with you, yet I'm hoping that this brief introduction will inspire you to look at your values and actions as you build not just a career, but a life in photography.

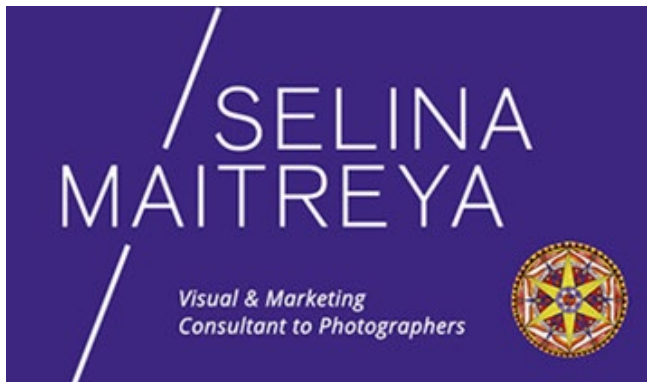
John and Harvey started with nothing but a dream and a 35mm camera.



In 1970 the Philippines was not the hot spot for photography, yet John recognized his passion for photography early on. He loved the medium of photography. It gave him great joy in so many ways, and he was smart enough to realize that Harvey would be a great partner handling the business aspect of their business.

In 1974, with no portfolio to speak of, they opened their new photo business. ADPHOTO, started as a small format -oriented studio and as clients requested other formats John learned and adapted and the business continued to grow.

Over time ADPHOTO became the largest studio for car, food and architectural photography business in the Philippines - Ranked #1 by Google-for automotive, food and architecture photography.



Harvey and John were a remarkable team.

The details as to the day to day decisions that grew the business were many, yet perhaps it's the values and philosophies the Chuas believed in and lived daily, that created the success they achieved.

John and Harvey Were Smart Risk-Takers.

In 1983 with political upheaval in their country affecting their daily life and threatening their business, when photographers were scrambling for any work they could find, the Chuas chose to focus their efforts on marketing to the food and pharma industries.

They believed that these industries would always need photography regardless of political strife and they were right!

It was a decision that was extremely wise and one that saw their business grow.

Just a few years later they put enough money aside to buy the building they were renting, a purchase that allowed them to move their growing family into the building and have their home and business under one roof.





John and Harvey Were Also Committed to Servicing Clients Well

Servicing involved not only working through national brownouts, and learning the world of commercial photography as they went along, but it was equally important for them to establish ethical practices and open communication with their clients as they built their business.

It was these values that enabled them to build a strong community with clients so invested, that they helped John to move to digital when it seemed price prohibitive to do so.

Imagine today, asking your clients to help you replace your entire shooting system... that's the power of the collaborative spirit that John and Harvey built.

To this day their oldest client relationship lives on after 48 years!

They Believed in Working Hard and Staying Ahead of the Curve.

John and Harvey saved and bought a building before it was easy to do so. They bought generators and air conditioners and were the only studio that kept working during frequent national brownouts... Early on they saw that digital was the next medium and stepped into the digital world by asking clients to help support the effort.

Each of these decisions called for risk, boldness and courage and each rewarded the Chua's with continual work and a healthy business.

They Believed In Always Giving Back.

John and Harvey were also extremely active in sharing with their community. From Harvey's years of teaching new Photographers the business, to the creation of their advocacy group, Photography With a Difference, they have literally changed hundreds of lives.

John's long friendship, as a volunteer zookeeper, with the elephant Ma'ali at the Manila Zoo brought world -wide awareness to her life. He also organized and led more than a thousand volunteer photographers in photographing or teaching photography to persons, including children, with special needs.

The Chuas were always actively giving of their time, their know-how, their heart!



John passed away just a few years ago. He is sorely missed by so many and yet the studio carries on with G-nie, John's protege. She was a former art director/client who, in 1992, joined Adphoto as an apprentice. G-nie, now a multi-awarded advertising photographer, is at the helm shooting away with her team, as Harvey still oversees the operation.

In a world that can sometimes feel cold and distant, and in the world of photography that can often feel competitive, and disheartening, how wonderful to know that the joy of photography as a medium, bold brave decision making, and a natural inclination to give back are still values that matter and contribute to success in business and life!

As Harvey continues on without John, she reminds us all, *"To learn the business thoroughly, to trust ourselves, to build community with our clients, and with others outside of the industry, by using photography as a tool to empower others."*

Finally, as John would say, she reminds us to *"DREAM BIG!"*

The community of photographers not only in the Philippines, but worldwide, owes a huge debt of gratitude to the Chuas. Our neighbors in the Philippines are creating excellent photography, building solid relationships based on following and communicating fair and equitable business practices, and giving back to their community near and far.

To Harvey and John for all they created, a hearty thank you seems not to be nearly enough!

In Grace
With Gratitude
Selina