

Dante Sisofo

CONTACT SHEETS



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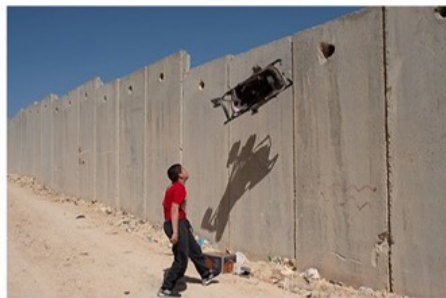


Why contact sheets?

First and foremost, I decided to make this E-Book of my contact sheets to empower other photographers. My goal is to help you learn through some simple tips and wisdom I've gained over the past decade of photographing around the world. By studying my contact sheets, you will see the behind the scenes of how my photographs were made. I will give you some advice and background information throughout this PDF. Please feel free to download and share this with other photographers that want to learn!



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The decisive moment

The notion of the decisive moment can be easily misunderstood in photography. Some people might believe that photographs are made with only a single click of the shutter. Realistically, the best photographs are made by making way more photos than you may think.



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Shoot first, ask questions later.

Work the scene

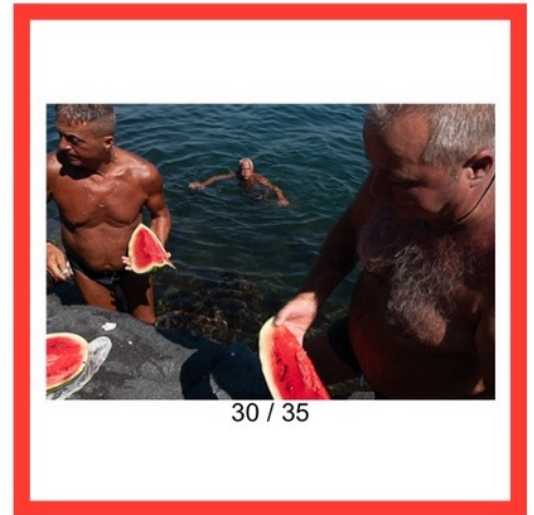
Many successful photographs are made by working the scene. What this means is, when you see something interesting, you follow through with making many pictures of the situation, moving your body and watching life unfold. Working the scene requires repetition and patience. It's important to work the scene because it will increase your chances of making a successful photograph.



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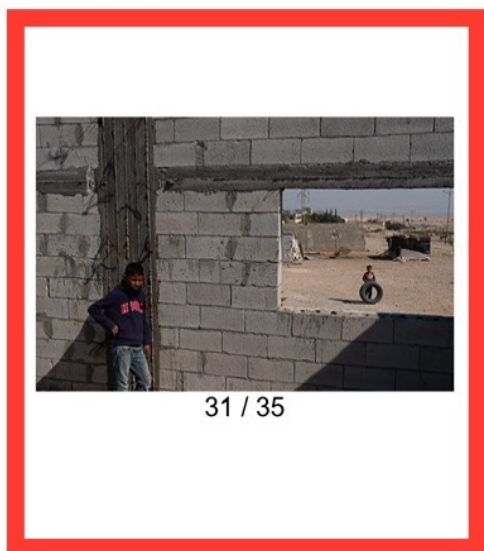


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Don't leave the scene until the scene leaves you.

Composition

Photography is visual problem solving. We are only really responsible for where we position our body, the camera, and when we press the shutter. We decide what we would like to exclude and include within the frame. To make successful photographs, you must have strong intuition and visual acuity. Composition requires daily practice that no amount of theory can teach you.



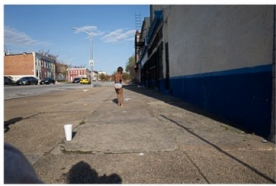
Create visual harmony out of chaos.

ASK FOR PERMISSION

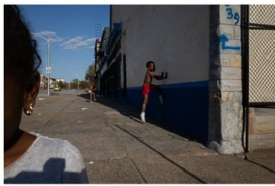


One day in Baltimore, I passed by a house with a big family outside. I started a conversation with a mother and she told me that she was preparing her children for a bath. I then asked her for permission to make some photographs. They quickly started sprinting towards the sidewalk. The energy was high and required me to be on my toes. I turned the corner,

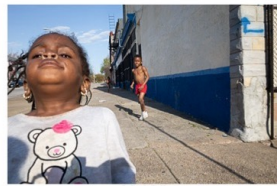
dropped to a low angle, and everyone ran directly towards me. The spontaneous nature of children playing can be a tricky subject to work with, but by remaining playful and acting fast, I found success. I even let one kid make some photos of me with my camera before their mother took them inside! You never know what stories will unfold through conversation.



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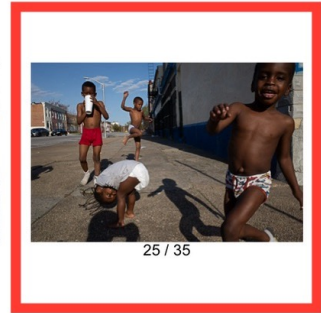
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Asking for permission is critical in my process. I believe it's important to connect with people on the street. Photographers don't always need to be a fly on the wall. Remain open and curious. Embrace others with honesty and you will be rewarded.

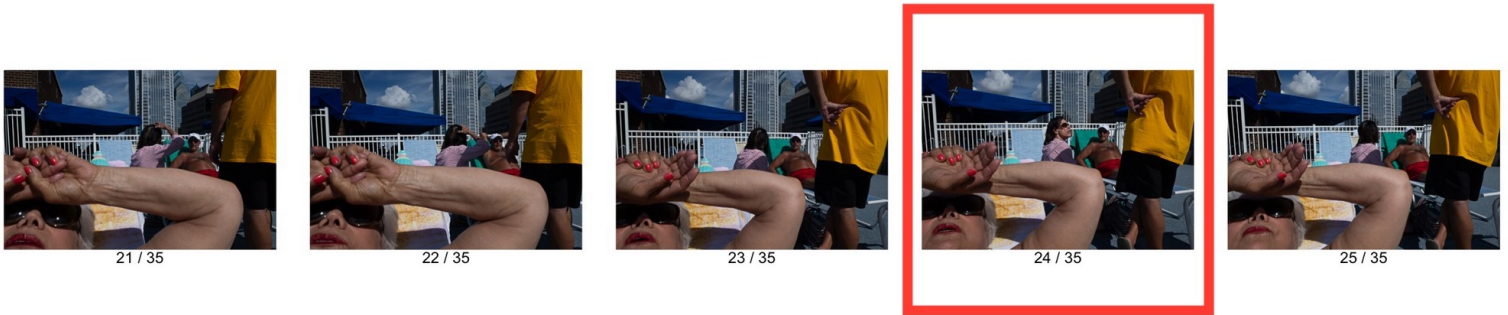
Don't be afraid to ask for permission.

GET CLOSE



In photography, it's important to get close to your subjects. When I consider closeness, I not only consider the physical proximity, but also emotional closeness. Here at this scene, I photographed my grandmother. While she was sunbathing by the pool, I decided to take advantage of the moment and make a photograph. Initially, I was composing from a

neutral distance, and not very close. Once I recognized her gesture as the significant element to include in the frame, I decided to get as close as possible to this moment.



Positioning my camera at a low angle was critical for me to achieve visual harmony. The cloud in the background, the striking colors, the gesture, the red lipstick, all fell together as I got closer and closer. Ultimately, closeness is both a physical and emotional concept for me.

The closer you are, the better the photograph.

CONTACT SHEET #2: Philadelphia, USA - May 29, 2016



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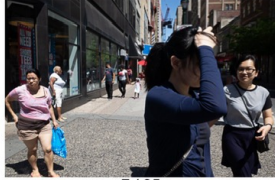
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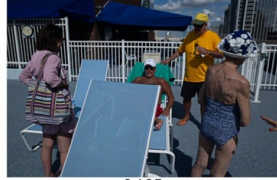
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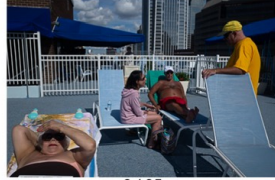
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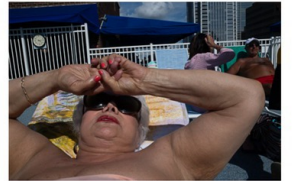
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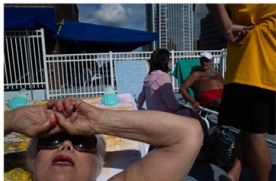
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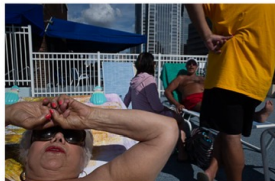
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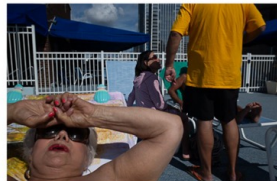
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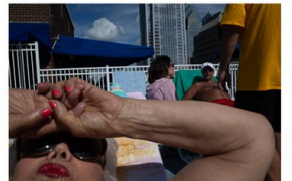
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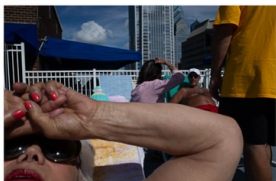
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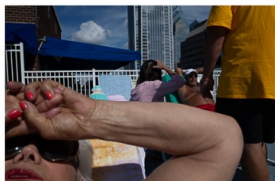
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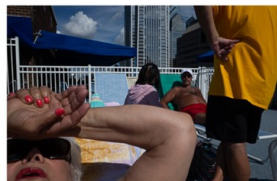
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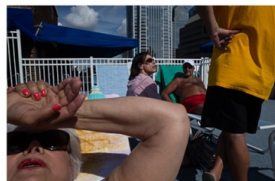
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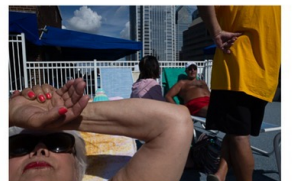
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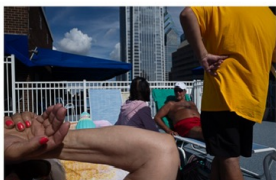
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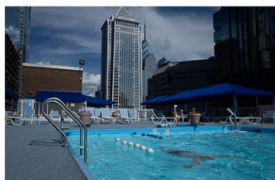
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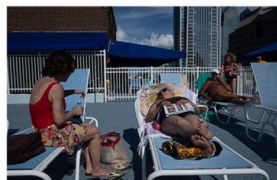
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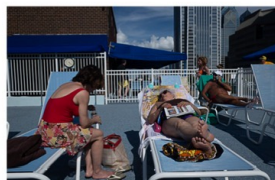
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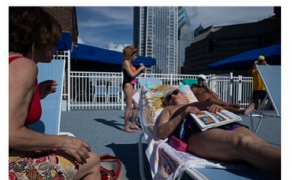
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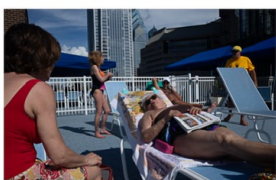
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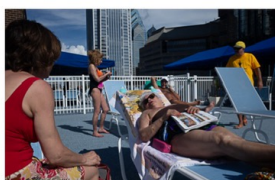
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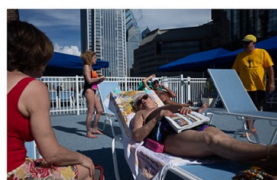
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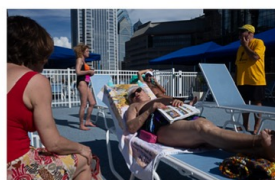
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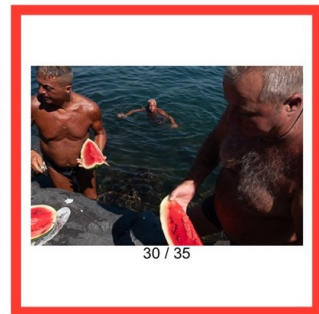
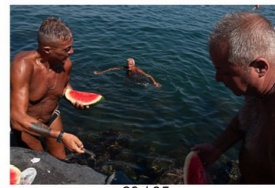
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FILL THE FRAME



On a beautiful summer day in Napoli, my brother and I decided to go swimming. We noticed a group of men sunbathing beside us. Because of the language barrier, I had no way of communicating with them. I simply used photography as a way for me to engage and just started making pictures of them. The men then proceeded to pull a watermelon from the

sea that they kept underwater to use as a natural refrigerator. We enjoyed eating together and spent a few hours with this group. When the man started slicing the watermelon, I knew this was the moment to photograph.



I observed the men from above at a higher vantage point. This perspective allowed me to fill the frame as two men are positioned on both the left and right side. I waited as the man in the water swam into the center of my frame and pressed the shutter. My patience paid off, and I managed to squeeze in detail from edge to edge throughout the frame.

Filling the frame makes photos more striking.

CONTACT SHEET #3: Napoli, Italy - August 15, 2017



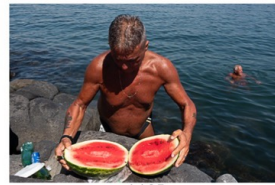
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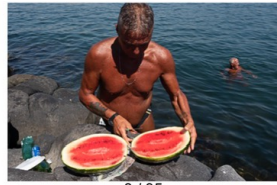
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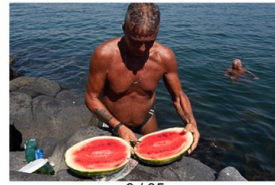
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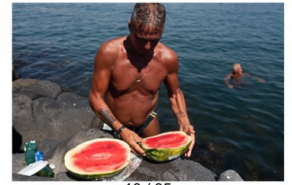
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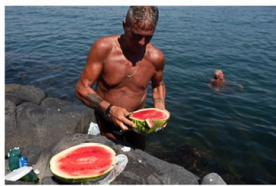
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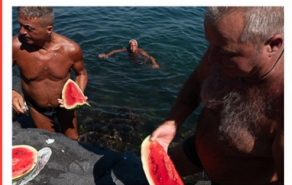
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TELL A STORY



I exited a mosque in Jericho after prayer. A group of men, the Jahlin Family, took notice of my curiosity. They invited me to their home, shared tea with me, and took me on an adventure. I got in the back of their car, and we drove to the top of the Wadi Qelt mountain range. The road was treacherous, and one of the vehicles broke down along the way.

The men exited the car and started pushing the car uphill. As the chaos ensued, I hopped out and started making pictures. I decided to include the car in the foreground of the frame. This detail makes the composition successful and helps tell a story.



Ultimately, we made it to the peak, made some coffee over a fire, danced, sang, and enjoyed the view of the Dead Sea.

Let the details tell the story.



CONTACT SHEET #4: Jericho, Palestine - February 17, 2017



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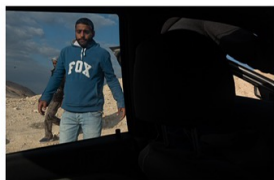
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USE LAYERS



While I was walking around the desert in Jericho, a group of boys started following me. Many children enjoy playing with loose tires, and they were pushing one along. I noticed a building that was under construction and was invited inside by the workers as they were taking a break. One of the boys followed me inside, and was standing by the window. I took

notice of the window, and how I could use it in a composition. The boy with the tire passed by the window frame, and I decided to use the layering technique. By positioning the boy in the foreground on the left side, and placing the window frame on the right, the foreground and background came together. Sometimes it's clever to put a frame within a frame when layering.



At this scene, the foreground of the child and the background in the window were obvious decisions to include to make a strong layered photograph.

Layers create a visual feast.

CONTACT SHEET #5: Jericho, Palestine - February 18, 2017



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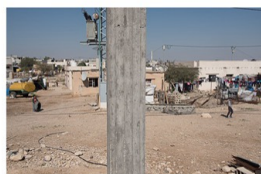
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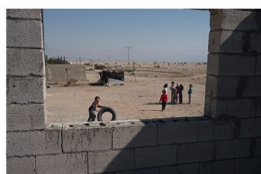
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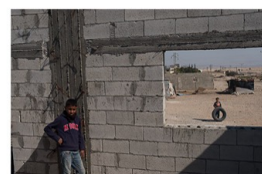
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MAKE IMPACT



In East Jerusalem, there is a refugee camp named Shu'fat. There are thousands of Palestinians that live within this community, surrounded by a wall. The looming wall is tall and was the obvious subject to photograph. It made such an impact on my soul, that it sent shivers down my spine, viewing it in person. Walking along the wall, I stumbled across a

group of boys playing. They were throwing stones over the wall and rummaging through some garbage. I photographed quickly as the moments were fleeting. One boy decided to pick up a baby stroller and threw it towards the wall. At that moment, I was prepared with my camera by photographing with repetition.



Put yourself in a position to make an impactful composition.



CONTACT SHEET #6: Jerusalem, Israel - February 24, 2017



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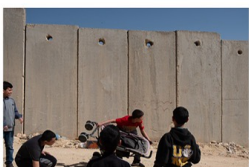
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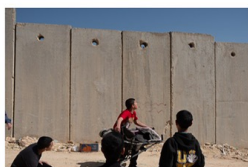
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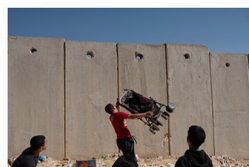
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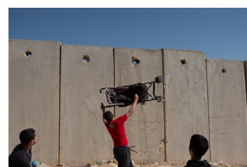
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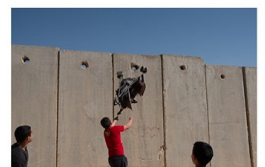
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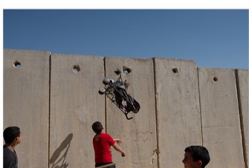
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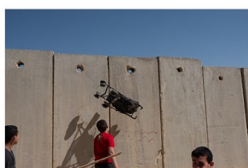
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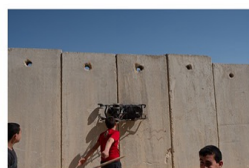
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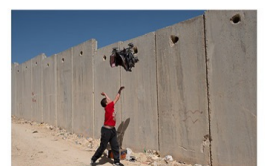
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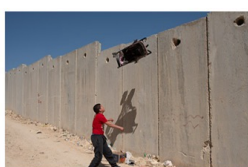
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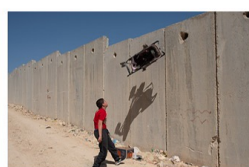
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BE COURAGEOUS



I believe a strong photograph requires the photographer to be in the heat of the action. At the border of Jericho, conflict broke out at the scene. I found myself at the frontlines, standing beside Palestinians, being shot at with live ammunition, rubber bullets, and teargas. Tires were set on fire, creating a furious atmosphere at the scene. Standing behind a

concrete wall for cover, I turn to the left of me and noticed a masked man. As he looked back towards me, I pressed the shutter.



The man's gaze, fiery scene, and the tattered mask makes it needless for me to say that I had to display all of the courage in my soul to make this photograph.

How much courage did it take for you to press the shutter?



CONTACT SHEET #7: Jericho, Palestine - May 26, 2017



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STAY PLAYFUL



Along the dirt path in Zambia, Africa, I noticed a group of boys collecting sand to make bricks. When they noticed me with my camera, they put their work aside and began doing tricks. As the boys leaped into the air, I dropped to my knees and got as low as possible. This perspective allowed me to use the blue sky as a clean background to separate the boys in the

foreground. I believe it's important to be playful on the street. Embrace your inner child, and don't take yourself so seriously. Don't be a boring photographer. Just have fun!



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Embrace the spirit of play.



CONTACT SHEET #8: Zambia, Africa - August 11, 2019

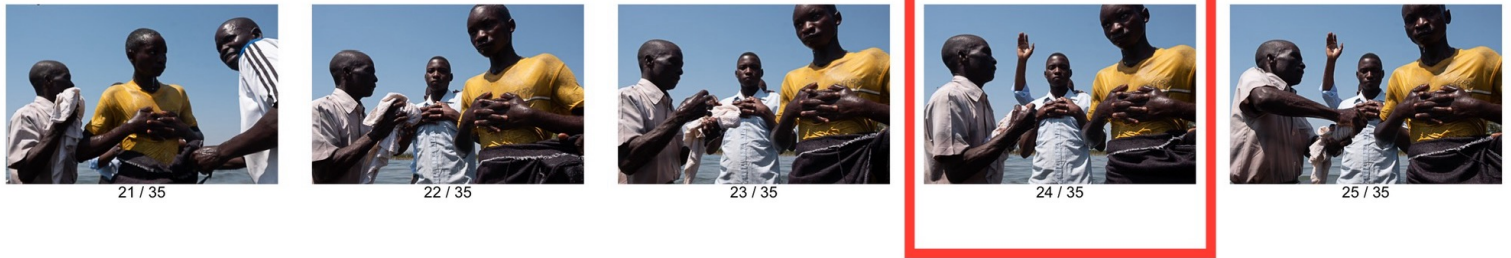


LOOK FOR GESTURES



I spent two weeks at a Seventh-day Adventist church camp in Zambia, Africa. I slept under a makeshift tent, built of sticks and plastic tarps. Each day, there was mass in the center of the village. Afterwards, people would go to the lake and bathe, clean their clothes, and fetch drinking water. On this particular day, it was time to initiate hundreds of Zambians in a

baptismal procession by the lake. Because the event was taking place in the lake, I decided I needed to get scrappy to make this photo. I quickly took off my shoes, left my spare batteries in the dirt, and went into the water.



Looking for the gestures at this scene was critical. I noticed the preacher would raise his hand before dunking people in the water. This caused me to drop to a low angle and make sure I photograph his hand at the moment it rose into the sky. Watch the faces of people when you are looking to photograph gestures and the way they gaze with their eyes.

Strong gestures create tension.

CONTACT SHEET #9: Zambia, Africa - August 30, 2019



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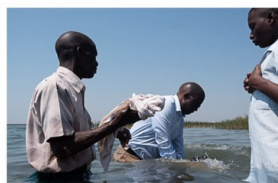
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CHAMPION HUMANITY



In Zambia, Africa it's respectful to view your neighbor's funeral procession, even if you do not know them personally. Because of this, I made sure to bear witness with my camera and document this experience. The day was very emotional with lots of mourning and prayer. As the casket was lowered into the ground, groups of men started covering the hole.

I noticed a man down on his knees, crying, and filled with emotion. The shovels were moving quickly and dirt flew all throughout the scene. I dropped low to the ground and decided to photograph very closely, revealing the emotion on the man's face.



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A photograph reveals the soul of the people in the frame. As photographers, it's our duty to share the human experience and elevate it to new heights. Champion humanity and what it means to be alive.

Document the multifaceted complexities of life.

CONTACT SHEET #10: Zambia, Africa - October 22, 2019



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CREATE MYSTERY



Philadelphia has a lively breakdancing scene. In the summer, you often see people outside blasting music and dancing. On Market Street, the light was striking, and provided me the perfect time of day to photograph this scene. Mystery is difficult to achieve in a photograph, especially when things such as dancing can be seen so obviously. Because the light was just

right, I found myself lost in the shadows. As the man flipped over and over again, I tried my luck at photographing this decisive moment.



When I viewed the photograph, I was shocked, asking myself how this was even a possibility for the shadow to display itself this way. To create mystery with your photography, you must leave the viewer asking more questions than providing answers. At the end of the day, the ultimate goal of photography is to remain curious. There is one simple question I encourage you to ask yourself before you head out with your camera each day...

What will reality manifest to be in a photograph?

CONTACT SHEET #11: Philadelphia, USA - June 24, 2021



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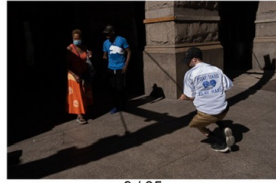
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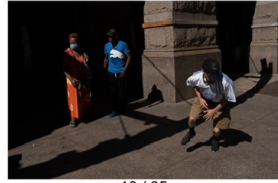
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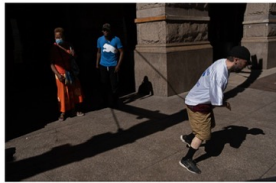
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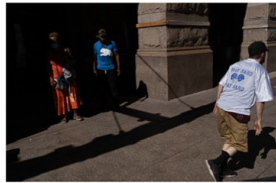
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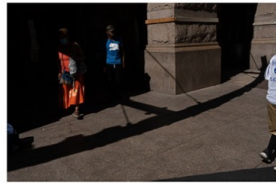
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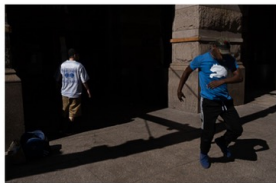
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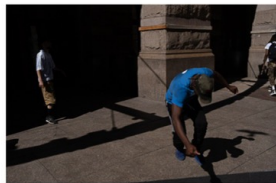
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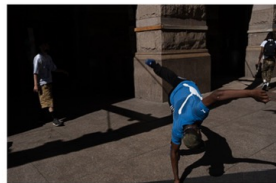
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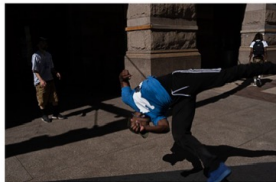
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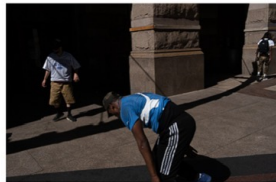
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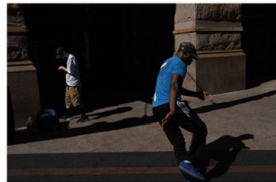
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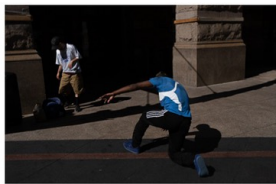
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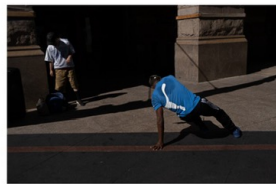
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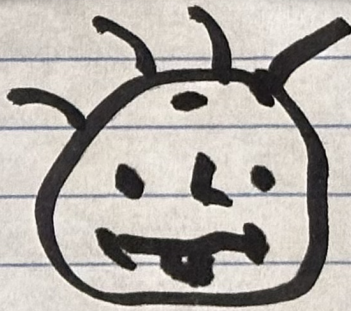


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فلسطين



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