

You Can't Live Forever, But You Can Make Photographs

Photography is more than an art form; it's an infinite journey of exploration, chaos, and creation. *You cannot make the same photograph twice.* This truth echoes in my mind as I stand atop a cliff behind the Philadelphia Museum of Art, overlooking the Schuylkill River flowing below. Morning sounds fill the air—birds, cyclists, and people on their daily walks. Boathouse Row, with its stunning architecture, stretches out, and the river's calm waters remind me of life's constant changes. I'm reminded of my youth spent building forts and bridges from stones, of creating something from nothing.

Maybe that's the ultimate goal of an artist: to bring the unknown into form, creating from a vastness of possibilities. Today, the streets are my playground, and photography is my means of exploration. Every moment is unique, never to be repeated. Photography, like life, is truly infinite.

Returning to the Basics: Light and Shadow

Photography, at its essence, is about one thing: *light*. Light shapes the world around us, giving depth, texture, and life to every scene. Each photograph captures a fleeting relationship between light and shadow, which can never be replicated. No photograph is the same; each moment is its own, and photography is thus an endless journey of becoming.

Every day brings new images waiting to be captured. For me, photography is not about perfection; it's about *creation*. With today's tools—compact cameras, iPads, efficient workflows—there's no excuse not to embrace spontaneity. Photography has become a way of life, a means of connecting with the world.

"Each photograph is a unique expression, capturing a singular moment that will never be again."

The Streets Are a Playground

Street photography is more than a genre; it's an ethos, a way of seeing and being. The streets are a stage, and every passerby an actor in this chaotic play of life. As photographers, we are part of the action. It's not about "filling the frame" or mastering composition—it's about *being there*, living in the moment and capturing it raw.

A friend and I recently discussed how it's one thing to fill the frame, but another to be present. A technically beautiful photograph is nice, but it's the courage to embrace the chaos that creates something truly powerful.

Embracing Spontaneity and Letting Go

In an age of curated perfection, I find beauty in letting go. Street photography is chaos personified, and in a city like Philadelphia, the unpredictable moments are what make it beautiful. Life is messy, and the most powerful photographs come from embracing that uncertainty.

My tool of choice is the Ricoh GR III, small enough to fit in my pocket and perfect for capturing spontaneous shots. I let intuition guide me, using the camera to capture moments as they come. There's no need to wait for the "perfect" picture; instead, I move slowly—75% slower than the crowd—to see the details others overlook. And with each photograph, I remind myself: *the next one is always my best.*

"The key is to slow down, to see the subtleties and details that others might miss."

The Realm of Art: Our New Frontier

In a world of paved streets, traffic lights, and endless convenience, art is our new frontier. Photography offers limitless possibilities for creation, for leaving a lasting mark. Like the sculptures outside the Philadelphia Museum of Art, which inspire

generation after generation, photography can have the same impact.

But to create timeless art, we must break free from outdated notions of success. Galleries, books, film cameras—they belong to a different era. Today, we should strive to make art that speaks to the present and pushes boundaries.

Detaching from the Outcome

Over the past year and a half, I've learned to detach from the outcome of my photography. I shoot every day without worrying if the work is "good" or "bad." Great work takes time; it's the result of years of dedication. I back up my photos daily, but I don't dwell on them, knowing that the best work will emerge with time.

"The strongest work comes from years of dedication, from continually throwing myself into the act of creating."

Nature: My Office and Inspiration

Most days, my office is outside. I believe nature fuels creativity—thank God William Penn preserved these green spaces. Walking through the city, observing architecture, reflecting on history, all these elements inspire me. The streets of Philadelphia offer a constant reminder of change and growth. Street photography lets me be a tourist in my hometown, always eager to explore.

A Call to Create

Photography is more than a medium—it's a way of being. Move beyond consumption and embrace creation. Unsubscribe from distractions. Stop chasing likes and followers. Instead, grab your camera, walk out the door, and create. Life is too short to do otherwise.

"Maybe you will die, but you can make photographs."

Each photograph is a reflection of a moment, a connection to life on a deeper level. Photography brings me closer to the world's beauty, to its chaos and harmony. I walk through Philadelphia each day with a sense of wonder, purpose, and gratitude. The unknown is where I thrive, and maybe, just maybe, it's where we all should strive to be.