

Lust for Life

I've been thinking a lot about what photography means to me lately. I've recognized that the photographs I create are merely a display of my lust for life. I believe that a photographer thrives on the frontlines of life, becoming closer to both themselves and the world around them.

Mind, Body, and Spirit

The connection between your mind, body, and spirit is critical to consider when practicing street photography. I believe that your photographs not only display how you see the world, but turn the world inward as a reflection of your spirit.

What is Soul?

Let's disregard religion and consider that your **soul** is your physical body. Perhaps this is separate from **spirit**, which is a much more metaphysical or philosophical way of viewing yourself.

Maybe it's important to distinguish between both the soul and spirit. When you look at somebody's facial features, physical body, skin, flesh, etc., this is the soul of the person you are looking at. The connection between the mind and the body creates the soul of a person. Your soul is a reflection of your life decisions, what you decide to do and more importantly, what you decide not to do.

What is Spirit?

My **spirit** is evoked through photography. When you tap into your subconscious, explore your inner desires, curiosities, and intuition, your spirit is evoked through your medium of choice. I believe that everybody has a god-like intuition, which is activated through your physical gut.

My spirit is evoked through the art I make, the things I say, and think. I have a childlike spirit. I find myself in this curious state each morning when I wake up with my eyes wide open. I'm merely wondering what's out there, and return to day one each day like I am a child. I thrive in the unknown, articulating chaos, and making sense of the world around me through my childlike spirit.

How Curious Are You?

Perhaps the most important question to ask yourself as an artist or photographer is, **how curious are you?** I don't believe that photography requires skill. Making art requires a strong sense of curiosity and courage. Skill is something that is easy to acquire and accessible to anybody who knows how to operate a camera. Perhaps the difference between a "good" and "bad" photographer is merely how curious they are.

Ultimately, I find these binary notions about an artist's work to be foolish at best, and say nothing about the work. A photograph should not be good, but it should provoke you to ask questions. A photograph should not have you asking what lens the photographer used, but asking why the photographer decided to put a frame around the life in front of them.

An idea to consider going forward is that we should make pictures that depict **what life should be**, and not what it is on the surface.

How to See?

Maybe it's best for every photographer to **relearn how to see** each and every day and not get caught up in one way of seeing. How you see the world is what determines what you decide to put inside your frames. It is important to note that what you exclude from the frame is just as important as what you include in the frame.

I believe that the frame is something that is filled through intuition, and not skill. When I look at the world, I'm not looking at it like it's a picture. I'm not looking at leading lines, complementary colors, shapes, form, and all of these basic notions that anybody can learn from a textbook. Seeing the world isn't a 1-2-3 or an A-B-C. The world is filled with multifaceted complexities, visual, sensual, and auditory stimuli that you must embrace in order to see. Personally, I simply **smell the sense of a potential photograph to make**. It's an instinct, a gut reaction, a mere curiosity.

The Frontlines of Life

What is the frontlines of life and what does it mean to me?

I believe that a photographer makes their best work when engaged fully in the public space, on the street, on the **frontlines**. Closeness is not just a physical proximity to me. When you consider the closeness of a photographer, it does not mean that you are merely walking around and getting in peoples' faces. Closeness occurs when you engage with the street in an emotional way, pouring your spirit into the world around you. I believe that your approach and process matters. Street photography requires time spent working in the same location for an extended period of time. You should become closer to a place through repetition and genuine interest in a person, place, or event.

Lust for Life

At the end of the day, your **lust for life** is what determines what you create, how you see the world, what your spirit evokes, and how you go about your day-to-day life. Personally, I see the streets as my playground for me to enjoy and an arena for me to test my courage. I am both playful and courageous, fueling my curiosity through taking more pictures each day in a stream of becoming. I dance through the street playfully as both a bystander and active participant in the drama of everyday life, providing me a space to evoke my inner childlike spirit. The photographs I come home with are merely a reflection of my lust for life, depicting my own interpretation of what the world should be. The photos I make require no skill. It is my duty as an artist to simply remain curious, courageous, and lusting for life.