

Experience

Perhaps it is our direct experience which shapes reality as we know it. I like to consider my camera as a passport and a way to explore the world. Through my raw experiences in everyday life, or traveling, I find that these moments are what shape my worldview.

When I consider language and the impact that it has on culture, and the world at large, perhaps viewing photography as a universal language becomes a superpower. Where language gives meaning to life, and direct experience is what shapes reality.

Information

In this cybernetic world that we currently live in with automation, machines, and technology that feed us information through digital platforms, such as social media or the news, whether on television or computers, perhaps we should be more critical of the information that we consume. Just think, when you hear news about conflict in the Middle East or legislation that's passed in a state that's across the country, do these things truly matter in your everyday life?

Why consider what's going on outside of your city, your state, and focus on worldly affairs? Perhaps the language that is used within the information that is so easily accessible is what causes neurosis and anxiety amongst the masses that gather in protest.

The real war isn't going on in the Middle East, it's in your mind.

Maybe we should trust our real and direct experience more, and ignore the noise and all of these distractions.

Language

Think of the word fat. When you hear the word fat, you may believe it to be a bad word. Am I permitted to tell somebody that they look fat? This would be seen as morally unjust or bad. However, a doctor is permitted to inform you that you are overweight and that you must lose weight.

I like to consider the body as a human battery and the sun as the ultimate charger that fuels us with power. What I find most interesting about fat is the fact that it holds and stores energy within our body, and charges our battery. Maybe people that have an excess amount of fat, or as doctors would say, "overweight," can survive without consuming food for longer periods of time because of the excess energy stored in the body.

I know that when I consume fatty red meat, I get better sleep, and am fueled with more power, energy, and can sustain my body for a very long period of time. I only need to eat one time before I go to sleep, and never feel hungry throughout the day.

American people have been deceived through language.

When I go into a grocery store and view the Cheerios box, it informs you that it helps lower cholesterol and it is good for your heart health. How is it that this factory-made carbohydrate can provide my body with any sustenance or energy worth consuming? It seems a bit deceiving to me and astonishing to me how we feed it to children. I've also seen those weird lab-grown meats that Bill Gates is a proponent of and find this to be very alarming. Why should anybody trust a fat guy?

Also, it's my belief that a lot of the causes of obesity have nothing to do with the food, but the beverages. Alcohol, soda, and all the sugary drinks are being consumed even more so than the junk food. Perhaps this is the big problem here, soda, alcohol, and any sort of drug.

Don't trust anyone that drinks sodas or alcohol.

Going forward we should consume more flesh and fatty red meat as a way to give our bodies the energy that it truly needs.

Zero buffer

Photography should not be this thing that gets in the way of your life. You shouldn't have to take your camera out of the bag, consider all these technical things and jargon, different cameras, lenses, etc. I believe that it should be a very streamlined and easy thing to practice, no matter the circumstances.

Set your camera and forget it.

All I need to do is click a button, the shutter. I believe that the snapshot is a very liberating approach. There is no barrier to entry and everybody has access to practice these days with compact digital cameras. My thought is that the compact digital camera will be the future of photography because of its accessibility. Don't allow photography to be this thing that you set aside for dedicated walks or trips or outings. Just simply carry the camera with you.

If it's too big to fit in your pocket, maybe that's the problem.

Danger is exciting

This morning, during my walk along the river trail, I noticed a man with a taser in his back pocket lurking in the shadows surrounded by trees. I'm reminded of my time passing through the halls of City Hall when a crazy man threatened me with a knife, just walking through the center of my hometown a few months ago during the winter months.

I traveled all throughout the various Palestinian cities in the West Bank. The most dangerous one that I remember was in Nablus at the refugee camp, Balata. In this refugee camp, there are not any police whatsoever. I remember seeing these two

gangster types with camouflage pants, black T-shirts, and pistols, tucked away in their pants and visible. I remember hearing gunshots as I left the refugee camp as they practiced during sunset.

When I arrived with my friend, we were greeted by a group of young children with a pocket knife. Playful, but rather threatening, and they constantly would flash it towards my friend and me. Ultimately, we wound up disarming the boy, and moved on to the next location. We then stumbled across a cemetery. A group of young boys took notice of us, and were playing with Nerf guns. I made a photograph of the boy standing on top of the grave holding one of these guns. It reminds me of my youth, playing with Nerf guns, buying BB guns, and even as a young boy, I would carry a pocket knife in the woods to sharpen sticks and make spears. However, the boys began pelting us with rocks, and we were hiding behind one of these gravestones. In order to leave the situation, we had to hop the fence and get the hell out of there. Next, we were being chased by a group of teenagers with another knife. This time, much more threatening, as the men were certainly older than the boys and were military-aged males. Because they were such a large group, the only thing that we could do was run. I remember running through the various alleys and stumbling across a shop. We entered the shop and were greeted by a woman who saw me in distress. These women went to the door and scolded the boys, and I was able to move on freely and leave the scene and never come back.

The youth have a respect for their elders as they hold some authority.

I remember taking the bus back to Jerusalem the following day and reminding myself that this is not a place to play.

The decline of culture

When I consider Philadelphia, you can clearly tell that the culture is on decline. All you have to do is notice the various trash scattered all around the beautiful Philadelphia Museum of Art in the grass. It really is a shame because it's such a

beautiful location, but the people that inhabit these spaces have no respect for these places. It's kind of funny to me that somebody will consume a meal and then just throw the trash down on the ground when there's a trashcan just nearby.

Yesterday I witnessed disrespect like no other. A young family with many children were waiting to cross the street, but a bus driver was dropping off some riders at the corner. There were four women supervising a group of children. One was very obese, one alongside a child, one pushing a carriage, and the other walking along. The bus driver was closing the door and began moving. The mother, or presumably so, maybe an older sister or something, threw a soda can at the windshield of the bus. Another woman began kicking the windows of the bus, and the next woman started to twerk, or shake her butt, as many young children sat back and laughed.

This is a really crazy city, Philadelphia.

Who knows what the next generation will bring to the table, but I'm sure it won't be orderly. Maybe they eat too many Cheerios or drink too many soda pops? I think that the foods that we consume in cities, whether sugar, soda, and processed junk, are a huge contributing factor to mental decline or disease. Maybe the people that consume these things will inevitably be out of control.

I love chaos

I know for a fact that I thrive in chaos. Perhaps as a street photographer and artist, it is a good thing that culture is on decline.

I do thrive in chaos and surrounded by danger.

This is where interesting work is produced. Maybe to embrace it openly is wise. My thought is, just don't die.