

Helle

What's poppin, people? It's Dante. Currently walking along the intersection between order and chaos.

Exploring Along the Schuylkill River

Here I am, just exploring Philadelphia along the Schuylkill River. I just found this pretty cool bridge—never been up here before. Check it out. There's a nice view here.

Maybe I can make a photo through the fence or something—it's kind of cool. A frame within a frame. Actually, I think just photographing the regular view is better. Wow.

I'm using the Ricoh GR3X. I've been using it for the past couple of months straight. **Is the train coming?** Wait, no—I just heard something vibrating. Oh, it's a plane.

Gaining Perspective

This view, just elevating my physical body to a higher vantage point, looking down at the river slowly turning to ice—it's amazing. Some of it's already frozen, actually. It reminded me how open this world is, how much there is to see, do, and explore.

When you zoom out from your physical body and look at yourself from the perspective of an eagle in flight, or a plane soaring overhead, you gain a new perspective on life.

Having a view of the horizon and standing at an elevated vantage point makes you feel powerful, joyful, and abundant. I want to go out and conquer each day in the spirit of play—exploring endlessly. I absolutely love wandering. To me, this is where I thrive.

"Freedom of movement, to me, is perhaps the ultimate freedom."

Freedom Over Possessions

I think what I seek most is ultimate freedom. The ability to determine where I want to be, how I want to live, and how I want to spend my everyday life—that's more important than material things, fame, or possessions.

Material things and fame? **They're distractions from what we're truly designed to do: create instead of consume.** At the end of the day, the thing I'm most grateful for in life is photography. Photography allows me to continuously move, wander, explore, and find new ways to look at life.

The Power of Photography

I'm super grateful for this ability to make photographs. **Photography brings me joy.** It's liberating to shoot in this format—using small JPEG files with high contrast black and white.

This streamlined approach helps me make something aesthetically beautiful straight out of the camera. Wherever I am, I know I can create something beautiful, and that's a beautiful thing.

"You just move your body, look at things, recognize their inherent beauty or interest, and then photograph it."

A Mythic Childhood Memory

A fun fact—or maybe a fun myth. When I was a little boy, my brother and I sat at that exact boathouse. You know, the one where you can watch the regattas or boat races or whatever.

We were little boys, maybe four or five years old, sitting on those bleachers, eating McDonald's. I believe it was the early 2000s, maybe 2000 or 2001. And then it happened.

We saw a whale.

Or was it a dolphin? My brother and I, sitting there, saw a giant creature—a whale or dolphin—literally going down the river.

"True story. A real myth, a real legend: the whale on the Schuylkill River."

Debunking the Memory

Fast forward to today. I decided to revisit this memory. Could it be true? Did a whale really make its way to the Schuylkill River in the early 2000s? I turned to research, and here's what I found:

- In 2005, a beluga whale named **Helles** was spotted in both the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers.
- It's entirely possible that this is what I remember.

Dante: "So there was a whale in the damn Schuylkill River. What are you talking about?"

ChatGPT: "Yes, Helles. A beluga whale was indeed spotted."

This isn't fiction. It's fact. My memory, vivid and photographic, captured a piece of Philadelphia's aquatic history.

Revisiting the Scene

Today, as I walked along the bridge, I reflected on the power of memory and how it shapes us. Photography, to me, is about reliving these moments—capturing them again, even if just in my mind. **The sights, the sounds, the smells.** Everything leads back to the essence of being present.

I thought about fame and material things. **They're fleeting.** Standing here, hearing the hum of the plane overhead, I zoomed out in my mind. Suddenly, I wasn't just myself anymore. I was an eagle, soaring high above the city, above the river, looking down at the streets and the people.

From that height, nothing seemed permanent. Not the buildings, not the traffic, not even the memories I hold so tightly. But that's the beauty of it. What matters isn't holding onto things that vanish—it's finding the moments that speak to something eternal.

"We're all just passing through, like the echo of a plane overhead. But in those fleeting moments, we are everything."