

Fishing vs. Hunting in Street Photography

What's poppin' people? It's Dante. Today, we're going to be discussing **fishing versus hunting** in street photography. These are two fundamental techniques that we can use on the street.

I believe street photography isn't binary. There aren't just two ways to do things—it's all about fluidity. Today, we'll look at **photos, behind-the-scenes videos, and even a contact sheet** to break down how I integrate these techniques. Let's get into it.

The Fishing Technique

The fishing technique is about **patience and observation**. You set your stage and wait for the right elements to enter the frame.

For example, in **Tel Aviv**, I positioned myself at a choke point on the beach, where people and dogs were naturally moving in and out of the frame. I wasn't chasing moments—I was **waiting for them to come to me**.

"The art of fishing is pre-composing a photograph, having a pre-understanding of what the photograph can manifest into, and positioning yourself in a way that relates different elements in your frame."

How to Use the Fishing Technique:

1. **Find an interesting backdrop** – murals, shadows, reflections, strong geometry.
2. **Frame your shot before the subject enters** – visualize how people will interact with the scene.
3. **Wait for the right moment** – patience leads to stronger compositions.

Example: Fishing at a Bus Stop in Philadelphia

I've used bus stops time and time again to practice fishing. They're perfect because:

- People are **stationary** or **moving predictably**.
- There's often **great light and reflections**.
- It allows me to **pre-compose and wait**.

At this **bus stop in Philly**, I found beautiful light but no subjects. Instead of leaving, I waited, and eventually, everything aligned—the **human element completed the scene**.

The Hunting Technique

The hunting technique is all about **movement, instinct, and reacting in real-time**.

Where fishing is **patient and calculated**, hunting is about staying **light on your feet and ready to strike**. It's about walking the streets, scanning for opportunities, and **reacting to the fleeting moments** that appear and disappear in an instant.

"The hunting technique is all about staying light on your feet and ready to strike. By walking the streets and reacting in real-time to the moments that are fleeting, you want to move quickly, scanning for opportunities."

How to Use the Hunting Technique:

- **Move with awareness and speed** – always be alert.
- **Adjust your settings on the fly** – be prepared for any lighting condition.
- **Look for expressions, gestures, and fleeting moments**.

Example: Photographing a Wheelie in Philly

In **Philadelphia**, a man swooped by doing a **wheelie**. I had to **drop low and react instantly** to frame the shot. This was pure hunting—**no time for planning, just instinct**.

Another time in **Mexico City**, it started raining. I ran for cover and **spontaneously captured a kiss** in the moment. **These are the shots you can't predict—you just have to be ready.**

The Hunting Technique in Action: Breaking Down a Contact Sheet from Zambia

In **Zambia**, I found myself in a bustling market, surrounded by energy, movement, and fleeting gestures. This was the perfect environment to apply the **hunting technique**—staying light on my feet, scanning for moments, and reacting instinctively.

The Moment

As I moved through the market, a man turned his head and locked eyes with me. The **light hit just right**, creating a striking contrast that immediately caught my attention. Without hesitation, I raised my camera and fired off a single frame.

"I made this photograph in a split second—no time to think, just pure instinct. The moment happened, and I was ready."

Breaking Down the Contact Sheet

Looking back at the **contact sheet**, the story of the image unfolds:

- **First Frame:** The moment the man glanced at me, I took the shot. His face, illuminated by the light, had a sense of intensity and curiosity.
- **Subsequent Frames:** There were no second chances. The first shot was the best shot—the essence of the hunting technique.
- **Final Image:** A **bold, high-impact portrait** captured in an instant, a testament to trusting your instinct in unpredictable environments.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Trust your intuition** – The best moments happen fast. Be prepared.
- ✓ **Move with awareness** – Observe your surroundings and anticipate gestures.
- ✓ **Be ready to strike** – Keep your settings dialed in, so you don't miss the shot.

This moment in Zambia reinforced why the **hunting technique** is so essential in street photography. **Some moments don't wait—they demand action.** When the opportunity presents itself, **be ready to press the shutter.**

The Hybrid Approach: Mastering Both Techniques

So, which is better—fishing or hunting?

The answer: **Neither. It's about knowing when to switch between them.**

"The best street photographers undulate between the two—not only responding quickly with intuition using the hunting technique but also knowing when to be still, patient, and fish for a scene."

Example: Logan Square, Philadelphia

At **Logan Square**, I spent **2-3 hours** photographing the fountain. I observed the way **light reflected** and how **kids played**.

- I **set my stage** (fishing).
- I **responded instinctively** when a boy leaped into the water (hunting).

This **hybrid approach** allowed me to capture a **perfectly timed** moment.

Practice Both Techniques

If you want to improve, I recommend dedicating **entire sessions** to each technique:

- **Fishing Days** – Pick a **bus stop, mural, or high-traffic area** and wait for moments to unfold.
- **Hunting Days** – Walk fast, react quickly, and look for fleeting gestures and interactions.

By mastering both techniques, **you'll become a more dynamic street photographer.**

Final Thoughts

Street photography isn't just about **seeing**—it's about **feeling the moment, moving your body, and being in tune with the energy of the streets**. Whether you're fishing, hunting, or blending both techniques, it's all about adapting to the flow of the city.

🔥 **Want more?** Check out my resources:

- **Street Photography Blog** – Deep dives into techniques and philosophy.
- **YouTube Channel** – Video lectures & breakdowns.

See you in the next one. **Peace.** ✌️