

## Authenticity in Street Photography

### **Here comes the sun do do do do**

*Here comes the sun and I say... it's all right.*

What's poppin, people? It's Dante — getting my morning started here in Penn's Landing, Philadelphia, basking in the glory of the sun. Got the Ricoh GR III in hand.

It's a beautiful day. Memorial Day.

And today, I'm thinking about what it means to be **authentic**.

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## What Does It Mean to Be Authentic?

### **Authenticity in street photography.**

Let's look at the word. The etymology of *authentic* —

- *autos* meaning **self**
- *hentes* meaning **doing, accomplishing, being the master of**

So to be authentic is to be the master of your own self. To do things for the sake of doing them. To seek to accomplish something *for yourself*.

***“To be authentic is to make photos of the things that genuinely and deeply resonate with your soul.”***

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## Let Go of Validation

In street photography, authenticity has nothing to do with:

- chasing trends
- using the camera gear others recommend
- shooting for a zine, gallery, or Instagram likes

It's not about external validation at all.

It's about tuning into your own vision and your own *feeling* — photographing as a reflection of your **soul**.

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## The Visual Diary

I don't photograph because I'm attached to a subject, theme, or moment.

Most people are out here:

- hunting
- desiring
- waiting for something to align

But I think: let go.

Let life *flow* towards you. Be there, camera ready.

Treat it like a **visual diary** of your day.

***“Photograph your way through life, like a simple visual diary.”***

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## Your Vision Is Yours Alone

My way of seeing is mine.  
Your way of seeing is yours.  
That's authenticity.

It's not about finding *unique subjects*.  
It's about doing something because you're driven by **the act itself**. No expectations. No hopes. No attachments.

You have to **let go** of the photograph entirely.  
You have to release the alchemy, the outcome, the image.

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## Everyone Understands Images

Images are everywhere —  
We all consume them: TV, phones, screens.

But the problem?  
Trends. Copycats. Mimicry.

One photograph gets attention and suddenly a thousand more try to replicate it. It flattens the whole thing — makes it binary. “Good” vs. “bad.”

***“To be authentic is to let go of the notion of what makes a photograph good or bad.”***

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## Trust the Intuition

So instead, you follow:

- your childlike curiosity
- your gut instinct
- your intuitive eye

My intuition always brings me to the river. To the sunlight. I love how it glimmers off the water. I look out at the horizon. I snap pictures because they move me.

***“I don’t think about the result. I’m just looking at life.”***

I’m not always putting four corners around it. I just press the shutter when it *feels* right.

And hopefully, my photos reflect that feeling I’ve cultivated — that **authentic self**.

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## **Become Who You Are**

Friedrich Nietzsche famously said it:

***“Become who you are.”***

In a world full of distractions, news, noise, algorithms —  
It’s rare to live a life of **leisure**. A life of **contemplation**.

Walking. Wandering. Enjoying the sun.  
Reading. Writing. Thinking. Creating.

That’s the path to authenticity.

But you only discover it in **silence, contemplation, and solitude**.  
And through that discovery — you photograph your way through it.

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## Create Your Own World

Ultimately, that's my goal with photography:

***“I create my own world. With each click of the shutter, I try to abstract reality.”***

I photograph the mundane. I follow the **light**.

Photography is *drawing with light* —

- *phos* = light
- *graphe* = writing, drawing

I'm not chasing anything. I'm not attached to anything.  
I'm just **being**.

***“To be free, one must stop doing and simply be.”***

When you do that, you're no longer hunting.  
You're simply allowing life to arrive — and you respond.

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## Embrace the Rawness

That's the beauty of street photography:

- the raw
- the visceral
- the imperfect

Authenticity is more needed than ever right now.

Just look at all these contests and festivals.  
It's all junk.

**Junk.**

***“Delete your Instagram account and just photograph your way through the day.”***

Stop taking it all so seriously.  
And maybe — just maybe — your **soul** will start to reflect itself back in your photographs.

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