

Follow the Light: Street Photography Tips Using Sunlight, Shadow, and Intuition

What's poppin people?

It's Dante going for my morning walk here on John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Philadelphia. Basking in the glory of the sun. Just following the light.

The Philosophy of Light

You know, *this* to me is the way to approach street photography: **Just follow the light.**

All of my best photos have come from intuition, from this *inner curiosity* that guides me.

"What better northern guiding star to follow than the light itself?"

I think when you physically orient your body toward the sun, let that sunlight flow into your eyes, and keep walking forward, something opens up. You're navigating not just streets — but life.

Backlit Isn't Bad

Most people want the sun to their back so faces are well lit. But honestly?

"I feel best when I'm following the sun."

I feel powerful when I'm in it. The sun charges my soul. My body. *I feel alive.* There's a **real correlation between sunlight and that feeling of strength.**

And in terms of photography, walking into the light can be more interesting. Yes, it's harder. But with the **Ricoh GR III**, shooting *high contrast black and white, small JPEGs, plus 2 exposure compensation* — you can still expose for the shadows and come away with magic.

Let Go of the Outcome

When I walked to the Delaware River yesterday, the sky was just *unreal*. Clouds. Light beaming through. A canvas for me to *see*, not control.

“If you have an idea in your head of what you’re going to photograph, you won’t find it.”

Let go.
Flow with the day.
Arrive with your camera and let life meet you halfway.

Water Pulls Me In

There's something about arriving at the river. Maybe because *we're mostly water*?
There's this gravitational pull.
This *oneness*.

I feel calm. Focused. Present.
I like starting the day that way. It's become a ritual — head to water, or a nature path, and just *walk*.

Facing the Sun = Facing the Challenge

Photographing towards the sun? It's not easy. But the results can be surprising.

- Glowing buildings
- Long shadows
- Dogs casting elongated forms on pavement
- Reflections off the Comcast Tower
- People beautifully illuminated by skyscraper-reflected light

"It becomes super ethereal. Otherworldly."

And when you shoot with *highlight-weighted metering*, you can get that tower to look like it's **emanating truth**.

"This is the beacon of truth."

Everything is Photographable

Black and white has made me focus. Strip it down: just **light and shadow**.

"You cannot make the same photograph twice."

Why?

Because the way light hits a surface — a person, a place, a moment — is always different.

Every single frame has novelty in it. That's the power of light.

And the beauty is... you're just photographing *light* itself.

Gear and Settings (My Current Workflow)

If you're curious about my exact process:

- **Camera:** Ricoh GR III
- **Mode:** High contrast black & white
- **File Size:** Small JPEGs
- **Exposure Comp:** +2
- **Metering:** Highlight-weighted
- **Focus:** Single-point autofocus

Check out dantesisofo.com, hit the *Start Here* page, and look for my **Ultimate Ricoh GR Street Photography Guide**.

Or just head to my [YouTube channel](#) and click my little face.

Artificial Light & Street Play

Even *artificial light* opens creative paths. I photographed a sculpture of an elephant — lit from one side — and played with where the light fell.

“Photography is just drawing with light.”

Think about it like this:

Photography = *Phōs* (light) + *Graphé* (drawing).

We're literally drawing with light.

Photography is Hypertrophy

I like to think about street photography like the gym.

- More reps = more muscle
- More frames = better photos

“Do the thing. Do it often. You’ll get better.”

It’s not rocket science. You don’t even need results at first.
Just shoot. Walk. Play.

Passion or Heart?

Passion comes from the Latin *passio* — suffering. Think: **The Passion of the Christ**.
So maybe it’s not about passion...

“Maybe it’s more sincere to say: follow your heart.”

You will suffer, but it’ll grow you. In photography, in life, just like in lifting — it’s all about consistent reps and embracing the pain.

Light, Shadow, and Self

Photograph the **transition** — between light and shadow.
Especially in corners, tunnels, or underpasses.

“Half of my face in light. Half in shadow.”

It adds mystery. Ambiguity. Depth.
And honestly, even the *shadow on a sidewalk* or *glimmer on a glass panel* — it can be a whole vibe.

The World Is a Canvas

“When I use light as my subject, the world becomes my canvas.”

Your camera becomes your brush.
And the sun? The ink.

Follow the light.
Crush the shadows.
Write with photons.

Final Words

Don't take yourself so seriously.
The streets are your playground.
Treat them like one.

“There's something about the light and bliss. Follow it, and you'll find happiness through photography.”

Every walk I take — Market Street, JFK Boulevard, wherever — it lights me up.
I feel the sun kiss my skin.
The vitamin D.
The testosterone.
The *joy*.

And every step reminds me:

“The world is beautiful. Walk. See. Shoot. Play.”

– **Dante Sisofo**

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