

Street Photography Breakdown: Part 10 🌍

What's poppin, people? It's Dante.

Today we're doing **Street Photography Breakdown, Part 10**, where I share with you **five different photographs from five different locations throughout the world** — breaking down the compositions, the stories, and the philosophy behind how I work.

Giving you the **information I wish I had** when I first started getting into street photography.

1. *The Playground in Mumbai*

So here, with example number one, we're at a **playground in Dharavi**, Mumbai.

When I enter a new location, *I like to explore openly* — no preconceived ideas, no expectations.

"I go with the flow. I go down one alley, I go down the next. I get invited into a home, I drink some coffee, I move to the next location."

I discovered this spontaneous playground scene — so many children playing, so much energy. It felt like one of those dream scenes. I had to **create order from the chaos**.

I noticed this boy — *the king of the playground* — standing on top of the monkey bars. I dropped to a low angle, centered him in the frame, and used the **blue sky as a backdrop** to isolate and emphasize.

Key decisions I made:

- Low angle to frame the sky.

- Use of feet in the foreground for **layering**.
- Framing the yellow bars as **leading lines**.

"There are some very simple decisions that a photographer must make in order to create a complex layered frame."

The blue sky became my stage. The children in the far background added **depth**. I embraced the chaos, and something beautiful emerged.

"Seriously embrace the chaos openly... go forward with curiosity and courage, and you will find yourself in these situations you can only dream of."

2. The Dogs of Mumbai

This next one — a layered composition of **dogs along the promenade** at sunset.

There were dogs jumping off ledges, laying in the street. I could *sense the possibility*.

I chose one dog as my **anchor** — strong in the foreground, filling 1/4 of the frame, **gazing at its owner**.

Then, layer by layer:

- A man looking back at the dog owner.
- A third dog sleeping on a bench.
- A woman next to another dog.
- A dog on a ledge *behind her*.

All composed against a **misty skyline**, creating clean foreground, middle ground, and background separation.

"I seek to create something that's visually beautiful and easy to read as a filled frame."

The **gesture of the hands**, the **bench as a line**, the **fog in the distance** — all work together.

"You don't want to just clutter a million different things going on. You want to synthesize the moment with the composition."

3. Coffee and Pigeons in Jericho

This photo came from a **spontaneous solo adventure** to Jericho.

I had left a kibbutz in the north of Israel — packed my bags at night and rode all the way to Jericho. *No plan. Just instinct.*

"I knocked on the door of a hostel and got free room and board in exchange for cleaning floors and making beds."

I lived alongside a Palestinian family. Slept in mosques. Ate **pigeon and rice off the same plate** with brothers every day.

That photo — I'm drinking **strong black coffee** on a pigeon coop rooftop. I noticed the scene unfolding, but I only had one person in the shot. So I **plugged in my own hand** to anchor the foreground.

"I was like, wow, I could make a beautiful photograph of this moment. However, I only have this one guy... so I just plugged my hand there in the foreground."

It's personal. It's intimate. And honestly, it's a little funny — looks like a pigeon might've pooped on my cup. 🤔

4. Philadelphia Bus Stop

This is my **textbook example** of how I use **layering** in a local scene.

Right away, I noticed the **light** — a strong beam casting a rectangular shape on the bus stop pole. That was my cue.

I worked **back to front**:

- First, I anchored the **circular SEPTA sign** against the blue sky.
- Then I angled my body with intention.
- I *waited*.

A silhouette fell into the shadows. Another man walked into the light with his gaze downward.

"Bus stops are full of potential. Mundane scenes — but packed with possibilities."

Everything aligned — **foreground, middle ground, background**, plus the light and shadows.

"All I really needed to do was wait for the subject to enter the light."

5. On the Frontlines: The Palestinian Conflict

This was real.

I found myself photographing **on the front lines** of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Not planned — just something I got pulled into while living in the West Bank.

This shot — a **masked man**, eyes piercing through the tattered cloth. I was behind a **concrete barrier**, *getting hit with live rounds, rubber bullets, and tear gas*.

"If your photos aren't good enough, you're probably not close enough."

This is as close as it gets. The man's eyes are filled with **fear and fire**.

Elements in the frame:

- Man with the keffiyeh.
- Piles of smoke from burning tires.
- A crouching figure silhouetted in the background.

"It's a very simple frame out of all this chaos... mask, eyes, keffiyeh, smoke, fire, sky."

"The goal is to go into the unknown, embrace the chaos, and put order to it."

And that takes courage.

Final Thoughts

There's so much to see — to feel — to photograph.

"All you really need to do is open your door and pick up your camera."

Take a walk. Take a risk. Go somewhere new. Because not only do you come home with strong photographs — you come home with **memories**, with **wisdom**, with **stories** that live inside you forever.

 **Dive Deeper into My Work**

Check out [**DanteSisofo.com**](https://DanteSisofo.com)

- 🎓 **Start Here** page: My philosophy & how I mastered straight street photography
- 📄 **Free PDF:** Download my contact sheets
- 📷 **Ultimate Ricoh GR Guide**
- 🧠 **How to Conquer Your Fear of Street Photography**
- 🔗 **YouTube Channel:** POV from Mumbai + lecture playlist

Thanks for watching, y'all. **Peace.**