

Street Photography Breakdown Part 19

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

Welcome to *Street Photography Breakdown, Part 19*, where we look at **five different photographs**, breaking down their compositions and how the images were made—each with a story rooted in play, chaos, light, and life.

- **Palestinian Children at a Construction Site (Jericho)**

These scenes of playful youth are often what's most available when you're out exploring neighborhoods around the world. In this case, I found children playing on **cinder blocks at a construction site** in Jericho.

"It's the innocent youth against a gritty backdrop—and I find that visually and emotionally compelling."

- Foreground: a boy looking downward
- Right side: a peace sign gesture, *just cut off*
- Background: the mosque, purposefully framed
- Middle ground: boys squeezed between blocks

Even with some limbs cut off and a forehead peeking at the bottom of the frame, there's **beauty in imperfection**. These slices of life, fragmented yet whole, carry the image.

"Go to the outskirts. That's where the most fruitful photos are made—not always in the busy markets."

- **House Fire in Baltimore**

This was an *unplanned moment*. I was drawn in by the sound and smoke—then saw children on bikes right in front of a **burning house**.

- Right side: smoke filling one-third of the frame
- Foreground: child covering his face, *heroic presence*
- Background: a woman walking away, covering her mouth with an *Obama shirt*

"Emotion and composition work together here. It's not just about drama—it's about depth and readability."

I wasn't thinking in rule-of-thirds terms—I just physically positioned myself to let the **background and foreground interact**. That's how this came together.

- **Mimi on the Rooftop (Philadelphia)**

A very personal moment. My grandmother—*arms stretched out in red nails and lipstick*—sunbathing poolside on her rooftop.

"This is one of my strongest street photographs, and it came from family life."

- Left: gesture of her arms outstretched
- Right: Angelo, Kevin, and others in conversation
- Background: Philly skyline, chairs, fencing, a small cloud across the blue sky

What made this image work was dropping low—**getting to her level**—and letting that angle create clean separation between all the layers.

- **Children in the Tree (Penn's Landing)**

During the 2016 DNC, I was on assignment—but this photo came from *walking around and staying curious*.

- Foreground: boy grabbing the **dangling shoes** of another boy in a tree
- Middle: brother looking toward the moment
- Background: another boy hopping the fence and a man smoking a cigarette

"Layered photographs like this come from awareness—plugging in each part of the frame like a puzzle."

And the backdrop—*lush greenery, park benches, sunlight*—sets the scene of a Penn's Landing that no longer exists. A nostalgic capture of Philly.

- **Palestinian Children Playing at the Border (Jericho)**

Another joyful scene from Jericho—kids playing along the **border wall** with gestures and movement.

"It's your spirit on display. If you're in a state of play, your images will reflect that."

- Foreground: boy hanging on a pole (main subject)
- Background: **Israeli settlement** on a hill
- Left corner: boy's face peeking in
- Bottom right: **mysterious hands** thrown up into the frame

I was drawn in by a single gesture—then waited for the rest to fall into place.

"Work the scene. Be patient. Be present. Then press the shutter."

Final Thoughts

Photography is *less about technical mastery* and more about **spirit, timing, repetition, and awareness**. If you're out there, not taking yourself too seriously, you'll gain access to frames that reflect that energy.

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You can also visit [YouTube.com/@StreetPhotography](https://www.youtube.com/@StreetPhotography) to explore my lecture series and POV videos, including my work in Mumbai.

"Thanks for watching. I hope something I said today inspired or informed your journey. See you in the next one."

Peace.