

The Goal of Street Photography – Philosophy, Mindset, and the Ricoh GR III

*“The goal is not to make good photos.
The goal is to **become someone** who sees.”*

What's popping people?

I'm Dante — walking towards the Schuylkill River Trail in Philly, my favorite spot to think and breathe. Got my Ricoh in my pocket. Just caught a leaf mid-air. Life is good.

Today's thought: **What is the goal of photography?**

First, Let's Talk About What It's Not

- It's not to make a good photograph.
- It's not to publish a book.
- It's not to have a gallery show.
- It's not to get validated or go viral.
- It's not even to travel the world.

The goal...

is to enjoy what's happening right now.

I'm walking out of the shade into the sun, gravel underfoot. A butterfly dances by, cars roar past the grocery lot, leaves shimmer. This is it. This is the moment. And photography — it's the thing that lets me see it all.

Photography is a tool to help you fall in love with ordinary life.

Step One: Get Zipper Pockets

Seriously.

If I were to write a “Photography for Dummies” book, **chapter one would be: get some shorts with zipper pockets.** I wear the Lululemon License to Train (RIP to those, they might not make 'em anymore), but any pair with zipper pockets will do.

Why?

So you can carry the **Ricoh GR III** — the GOAT of street cameras — with you at all times.

Carry the Camera. Always.

- The world becomes your playground.
- Every walk becomes a potential adventure.
- Every block becomes a canvas.

Having the Ricoh with me 24/7 is how I train my eyes. It's how I stay in the flow. It's how I find new ways to articulate what's in front of me — and inside me.

You don't need a new city. You need new eyes.

It's Not About the Photograph

It's about *being present*.

Being barefoot on the curb.

Seeing the light hit a wall just right.

Watching the same corner at the same time each day — just to see what *might* happen.

That's the real magic.

Street photography is not about what *is* — it's about what *could be*.

The possibility. The serendipity. The chance encounter.

That's what makes it *alive*.

Enter the Stream of Becoming

"You can't step into the same river twice."

Every moment flows. Every photo is unrepeatable.

You'll never make the same picture twice.

And so we return — again and again — with childlike eyes.

To walk. To see. To feel. To *play*.

Photography is not about arriving.

It's about staying in motion.

The Goal: Courage and Curiosity

Not success. Not acclaim. Just this:

- Courage to walk out the door.
- Curiosity to wonder what's around the next corner.
- Confidence to press the shutter without overthinking it.

Courage literally means “heart.”

Have heart. That's it.

The photographer with the most heart wins.

Fitness Analogy Time

What's the goal of fitness?

Not the six-pack.

Not the big chest.

The goal is *doing the reps daily* — with consistency.
You don't stare at your abs while lifting. You just lift.
Over time, the results come.

Same with photography.

One good photo a year? Fine.

One powerful moment a week? That's enough.

Keep showing up.

Go Where the Action Is

Want more decisive moments?

- Know when the light hits your favorite corner.
- Know what time the office lets out.
- Know where the kids get out of school.
- Know your city.

Anticipate without expectation.

Be intentional without being rigid.

The frame arrives when preparation meets flow.

Have Conviction, Not a Checklist

Don't go out like it's a school project:

- "Today I'll shoot red balloons and people in top hats."
- "I must use my 23mm f2 at f8 only."

Nah. Let your instinct guide you.

A real story — I once told myself I'd capture a rainbow in Baltimore. It rained. I waited. The clouds cleared. **I got the shot.**

Same thing happened at Logan Square in Philly.

I *willed* the moment into existence.

Not because I forced it — but because I was *ready*.

Photography as a Mirror

When you photograph from the heart, **you become a mirror.**

- Some people will hate that.
- Some will envy you.
- Some will admire you.

But none of that matters.

The real power is in cultivating **your own way.**

Your photo reflects your soul.

We may shoot the same settings.

Same Ricoh. Same corner.

But your shot is *your shot.*

The Problem With Projects

I'm not a fan of the "photographer with an agenda" thing.

It's forced. Contrived. Cringe.

Stop trying to change the world with your camera.

Start by changing yourself.

Too many photographers are imposing narratives.

Acting like they're journalists or gods.

Boring.

What's actually interesting?

Who you are. What excites you. How you see.

Color to B&W: My Personal Reset

I spent seven years shooting color.
Traveling, striving, pushing to be the best.
And I got *too good*. Like... it became easy.

So I blew it all up.
Reset. Started fresh. Shot black and white JPEGs.
Went back to the street with fresh eyes.

To stay alive creatively, destroy everything sometimes.

Burn it down. Start over.
Make work that feels like *you*.
Not like what others say is “great.”

Photography Is Just the Excuse

To walk.
To see.
To be alive.

That’s the point.

Not fame. Not followers. Not getting published.

***Use photography to take yourself less seriously.
To play. To return to your inner child.***

You could stare at the same river every day for 300 years.
But if you’re changing inside, the photos will reflect that.
Your *internal evolution* becomes the image.

Archive Yourself

This is the real idea that hit me:

Make photos not for galleries, but for ghosts.

For the people walking these streets 300 years from now.

For your unborn children.

For someone to find your hard drive and *feel* your life.

Every image is a time capsule.

So start preserving it.

Archive yourself.

***Live like your life is a living work of art –
and let the photographs follow.***

Just some thoughts from today.

Still walking. Still learning.

Still pressing the shutter.

We're in it together.

Let's stay in the stream.

– Dante