

Photography as Gratitude

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

Getting my morning started here in the park, thinking today about photography and how I use photography as a way for me to remain grateful for life.

For me, the mornings are my favorite time of the day. Waking up at dawn, eager to catch the sun's rays, grabbing my camera, and just going. Going with the flow. Making pictures of whatever it is. Forgetting everything I think I know.

I move through the day making pictures in this spirit of play, and that play reminds me that I'm alive. It puts me in this grateful state. Every single morning, I'm grateful for another breath, another day, another opportunity to play.

This is such a powerful way to reframe how we engage with photography. To simply treat it as gratitude. As life affirmation.

This is my approach. My approach to life and photography going forward. I don't ever want to feel like I've seen it all or done it all. I use photography as a way to remain curious about everything.

I treat my everyday life as a photographer as life affirmation. As gratitude for life itself. Through that gratitude, I engage with life with this loving, joyous energy that flows through me. And through that energy, through that feeling, it reflects back in the things that I make.

When I make a photograph from this state, I believe it's a pure photograph. A pure photograph requires no explanation. It doesn't need anything "interesting." It simply provides a sensation.

The photographs I make become pure because I'm not trying to explain some convoluted idea. They derive from my internal state. From how I'm feeling.

Maybe, just maybe, through making pictures throughout my life, that feeling will resonate with someone else. But I'm not thinking about that anymore. I'm not wondering what they mean or what makes them great.

I'm photographing in an autotelic state. I'm photographing in a way that makes me grateful for every single day.

Photography, for me, is life affirmation. It's gratitude. It's me saying thank you for this day. With every click of the shutter, I'm reminded that I'm alive, that I'm present, that I'm here.

I treat photography like a lifeline throughout my day. Almost like a superpower. With a camera in hand, no matter what I'm doing or what I see, no matter how mundane things might be, I can always create something.

That's why I'm so grateful for photography. It allows me to fall in love with life every single day.