

Snapshot Street Photography Changed Everything About My Practice

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

Today I want to talk about **snapshot street photography** and how it's completely transformed my practice.

For the past decade, I've been practicing street photography. But over the last three years, I've shifted into something much looser — photographing in a very open way using a compact digital camera, the Ricoh GR, and simply **pointing and shooting without caring about the result.**

I still understand what's inside the four corners of the frame. I can see moments, compositions, potential photographs. But the difference with the snapshot is that I'm just living my everyday life and bringing the camera along for the ride — **detached from whether I come home with a good or bad photo.**

Letting Go of the Hunt

This approach emerged after years of going out into the world hunting for my next best photo. Traveling. Chasing locations. Trying to become the best photographer I could be.

And while striving for excellence is noble, I've realized something more important:

The meaning is in the process itself.

By immersing myself in photography every single day — no matter how mundane things might seem — and photographing wherever I am, I've found **infinite creative potential.**

I'll give you an example. I went to the art museum with some friends and made a snapshot as one of them pointed toward Jesus on the cross. It was just a candid moment between me and one of my closest friends. Something I never would've photographed in the past, because I wasn't "hunting" for a photograph.

Before, I was always looking. Always searching. Always trying.

Now, I've stopped trying.

I've stopped hunting.

And I've started becoming myself through the practice.

The Snapshot Isn't "Less Than"

The snapshot isn't something to look down on.

We often think: snapshot vs photograph
amateur vs professional

But what's liberating about the snapshot is that **it's democratic**. It's a way to cultivate curiosity in everyday life.

To me, the snapshot is the **simplest and purest form of street photography**. It doesn't require technical mastery or formal education. I use a compact camera on automatic settings — usually program mode or aperture priority — and I adjust one thing:

Exposure compensation.

Everything else? Automatic.

Focus is set.

I press the button.

By removing the technical hurdles, I can fully embrace the present moment and start *playing* the game of street photography — noticing, responding, and photographing without friction.

Presence Over Perfection

The beauty of snapshot photography lies in the ability to **notice**.

Street photography, for me, is about:

- Presence
- Awareness
- Being embodied in the world

Enjoying the sounds, the smells, the movement of the street — and responding instinctively.

Photography isn't about composition, lighting, or timing. Those things emerge naturally through intuition. Photography is about engaging with life, with humanity, and cultivating enthusiasm for simply being alive.

Photography is just waking up and wandering with a camera.

To do that, you need curiosity.

You need enthusiasm.

You need vitality.

Flow Through Everyday Life

The snapshot allows me to enter flow consistently because it's seamlessly integrated into my life.

The camera stays in my front right pocket.

I go to work.

I photograph on my lunch break.

I hang with friends.

I walk the streets.

There's no separation between *being a photographer* and *being a human*.

Photography becomes a way to **find meaning in the mundane**.

Your goal as a photographer isn't to find something interesting — it's to **make the mundane interesting**.

Don't wonder if something spectacular will appear in your frame. Look at what's already there and play the game of finding beauty within it.

The Art of Surprise

When I'm photographing, I ask myself:

What will reality manifest as a photograph?

Photography always surprises me. What I get back isn't what I saw — it's often what I *didn't* see. That's what keeps me curious.

Photography becomes an abstraction of reality.
It becomes an act of surprise.

That surprise fuels the loop: play → curiosity → surprise → more play

Embracing Mistakes

Practically, I shoot small JPEGs, high-contrast black-and-white, crushed shadows, highlight-weighted metering. Imperfect. Raw.

Sometimes I make mistakes.

But those mistakes are where the magic is.

Those loose snapshots — those imperfections — are what keep me coming back.

Becoming, Not Completing

A lot of photographers get caught up in:

- Projects
- Bodies of work
- Books
- Themes

My goal is different.

My goal is to stay in the **stream of becoming**.

Joy is found in change.

Joy is found in evolution.

The moment you think something is finished, stagnation sets in. That's burnout.

The snapshot liberates you from containment. It frees you from external validation. It allows you to photograph for *yourself*.

Final Thoughts

Street photography is presence.

Street photography is awareness.

Street photography is being here — now.

By carrying a compact camera every day and snapshotting whatever arises, no matter how mundane, I stay grounded in embodied reality. That's where street photography is born.

This is my personal philosophy. I hope it encourages you to embrace play, stop taking photography so seriously, and just live your life.

Bring your camera for the ride.
The moments will arise.
You just have to notice.

Peace.