

Photographing Emotion in Street Photography

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

Today I want to talk about photographing the emotions in street photography — not only the emotions of the world around you, but the emotions of your internal state, of yourself, of your soul.

I've come to realize that discovering how I look at the world from my subconscious mind tells me more than my rational ability to construct a narrative or look at things linearly.

Photographing From Instinct

When I'm photographing, I'm acting on instinct — a physical response. It's somatic. I'm engaging the sights, the sounds, the smells of the street, and then responding to that gut feeling. That pull that makes me click the shutter comes from desire. And that desire comes from an internal compass that's subconsciously driving me through the streets.

When I photograph from instinct, the work naturally reflects my internal state.

That's why I'm drawn to the snapshot — using a compact digital camera, composing loosely with the LCD, making an instant sketch. An instant photograph. No processing needed.

That constraint liberates me.

Constraint as Liberation

By limiting the technical side, my instinct has no choice but to surface. I'm not thinking about settings or perfection — I'm focused on the present moment.

And when I'm immersed in that moment, the photographs reflect that state of presence.

Yes, we all have a past and a future. But in the moment I click the shutter, none of that is my concern. Everything I've experienced — the places I've been, the people I've met, the music I've listened to, the conversations I've had — all of it channels through me right then.

And it shows up in the photograph.

The image becomes a reflection of the subconscious pull.

Letting Go of the Agenda

I don't approach the streets with an agenda anymore. I don't start with a preconceived idea of what I'm looking for.

That's how the subconscious emerges — by letting go.

This approach requires detachment. I enter a stream of becoming. Each click of the shutter is just me chipping away at life, asking questions.

I'm not concerned with making a single image.

Photography, for me now, is life affirmation. It's a way to stay present.

Photography as Presence

When photography becomes an act of gratitude and presence, the internal state emerges naturally. I don't have to try to say anything.

I'm not interested in describing life as facts within the four corners of a frame. I'm more interested in describing life as fiction — blending documentation with abstraction.

Elevating the mundane.
Transcending the obvious.
Tapping into something internal.

When someone looks at a photograph, they're not just seeing the external world.
They're feeling something. And that feeling is different for everyone.

That's the power of art.

Play, Flow, and the Childlike Mind

By not trying to say anything, I stay in a perpetual flow state. I don't know what I'm going to find when I go out for the day. I'm not searching for meaning.

I'm playing.

That childlike creativity — imagination, spontaneity — helps me discover who I am and how I feel about life.

And I think that's the ultimate goal of an artist:
to cultivate authentic expression through perception.

Giving Birth to a New World

A photograph isn't just a reflection of the world. It can be the birth of a new one.

In a fraction of a second, you can create something entirely new.

So if there's anything to take away from this, it's this:

Don't only think about what life *is*.
Think about what life *could be*.

Find new ways to play the game.

Elevate the ordinary into the extraordinary — through how you see and how you feel.

Thanks for watching today's video.

I'll see you in the next one.

Peace.