

The Ultimate Risk in Street Photography

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

Today I want to talk about taking risks in street photography — and what that actually means to me.

When most people think about risk-taking in street photography, the first thing that comes to mind is getting close. Proximity. Courage. Danger. Overcoming fear. Putting yourself right up on a subject and making the photograph anyway.

And yeah — that *is* a risk.

But I also think it's a very basic way of looking at it.

Realistically, anybody can go out there, get close, and practice street photography. You just put in the reps. You build comfort. You do the thing.

The **ultimate risk**, though — the one that's much harder to take — is *experimentation*.

It's embracing failure.

It's trying something new.

Life Is Out of Control — Perception Isn't

A thing I think about a lot with street photography is how life itself is completely out of our control. That's where the beauty is. The spontaneity. The chaos.

But what *is* in our control is how we perceive the mundane nature of life.

And the truth is, street photography can become very repetitive.

You find a flow.
You shoot in color.
You look at life in layers.
You work corners.
You make aligned compositions.
You photograph the same way over and over again.

That comfort can be powerful.
It builds intuition.
It builds fluidity.
It builds a body of work.

But eventually, comfort becomes a cage.

The Risk of Breaking Your Own Flow

The ultimate risk is breaking that system.

Let me let the chips fall as they may.

Let me go out there and play.

Let me experiment.

For me, that meant changing my practice from the ground up — moving from color into black and white.

And through that shift, I started finding **infinite ways to articulate the mundane.**

Everything felt fresh.

Everything felt new.

When you lock yourself into one way of seeing, tunnel vision sets in. And that's where burnout lives. That's where stagnation lives.

But when you open your mind — when your body, eyes, and intuition realign — that's when you start flourishing.

Experimentation Is the Ultimate Risk

I still believe in discipline.
I still believe in consistency.
I still believe in vision.

You need to know what triggers you.
You need to know what interests you.
You need to cultivate your own approach to the streets.

But *experimentation* is the ultimate risk.

Physical Risk vs. Creative Risk

I look back at an image I made of an arrest here in Philadelphia.

It was risky.
Crowded.
Fights breaking out.
I was extremely close.

One of our local street photographers — shout out Dennis — sent me a screenshot from the news report. I was in the frame. He said, "*Of course Dante is out there.*"

And yeah — I take risks. I get close. I'm on the front lines.

But that kind of risk only takes you so far.

Comfort Is the Real Danger

The real danger is comfort.

Photography can easily become safe. Linear. Predictable.

Breaking through that means failing endlessly. Embracing that discomfort. Letting go of results.

That's where flourishing begins.

So if there's anything I want to say here, it's this:

Try something new.

Photograph the same place differently.

Look up.

Look down.

Get close — then get far.

Crush the blacks.

Expose for highlights.

Remove detail.

Embrace architecture.

Embrace the mundane.

Use the macro.

Break your habits.

There are infinite ways to photograph life.

The Ultimate Risk Is the Unknown

If your practice feels too comfortable — if repetition has turned negative — open up.

Let the chips fall.

The ultimate risk in street photography is embracing:

- the unknown
- the failure
- the awkward middle period
- the experimentation

That's where I flourish — as a human and as an artist.

Meaning isn't found in certainty.

It's found in the process.

In the failures.

In the experiments.

Getting close is one kind of risk.

But experimenting with how you see the mundane?

That's the ultimate one.

That's really it for today.

Thank you for watching.

I'll see you in the next one.

Peace.