

Ricoh GR IV Monochrome – Street Photography Diary #3 (Play, Self-Discovery & Visual Diary)

The Spirit of Play

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

Welcome to **Street Photography Diary episode number 3**, where we look at photographs I made recently with the **Ricoh GR4 monochrome**.

Today's topic is **finding yourself through photography and embracing the spirit of play**.

The reason I say this is because the more I return to that **childlike state**, that sort of **innocent state where you're sensitive to life**, the more photography becomes effortless.

You're embracing the **sights, the sounds, the smells of the street**.

You're looking up at the clouds and the way the light opens and thinking:

Wow, this is incredible. This is sublime.

When I started my day, I essentially woke up and made a frame.

The first thing I noticed was **the beautiful clouds in the sky**.

There's something really special about **monochrome photography** and the way it unlocks novelty in the simplest scenes I photograph. A simple view from the window can become extraordinary through the camera.

Waking Up Like It's Day One

When I think about the way I orient my day, I try to **wake up like it's day one again.**

My goal as a photographer is to **return to that childlike state of being.**

Almost treating each night like a **miniature death**, and each morning like **my first breath** — like I'm a kid again.

From that state of being, photography becomes effortless.

When I'm in the **spirit of play**, when I wake up with this inner curiosity, I'm eager for the day. I'm enthusiastic.

And from that state, photography becomes a **joy**, not a chore.

Wandering Without Looking

When I walk the streets, I'm **not looking for anything.**

I'm simply wandering like a little kid who's lost and trying to find his way through society.

And honestly, that's the most innocent way I can describe it.

I never want to feel like I know everything.

You can sit and read books all day. You can stare at information on your screen and feel like you understand the world.

But in reality:

We're just these little flesh creatures walking around who really don't know anything.

When I photograph, I tap into that understanding.

That I am flesh.

That I cut.

That I bleed.

That I feel sorrow, pain, greed.

That I have desires.

That I am imperfect by design.

The Courage of a Child

Think about a child.

A child falls down, scrapes their knee, and gets back up **endlessly**.

There's an inner courage there. An eagerness.

That spirited energy that pushes us out into the world to explore and try new things.

Photography becomes **my way of evoking that feeling**.

It's how I express that **inner childlike spirit** when I'm on the street.

It's not a serious chore where I put the photography hat on, wipe the lens, and go out to tell visual stories.

It's simply a way to **express myself openly and freely**.

The Snapshot of Everyday Life

By embracing the **snapshot**, by simply bringing the camera with me to the places I inhabit during my day, I can more authentically express what I have to say.

It starts by **emptying my mind**.

Starting the day from a **blank slate**.

Then walking the streets with my camera — living life — and letting the photographs arise naturally.

On this particular day, I joined my sister-in-law's nieces and nephews on a trip to the **Franklin Institute**.

Just photographing my everyday life.

And through those frames, I begin to **discover myself**.

The Personal Power of a Photograph

I made a photograph of a new family member — my brother recently got married — so I'm spending time with new family.

And there's something powerful about photography.

On a **subjective personal level**, a photograph can resonate extremely deeply.

Sometimes it's hard to explain exactly why.

But there's a quality to images where **ambiguity creates meaning**.

When there's no clear sense of place or time, the frame allows the mind to wander.

To ponder.

To ask questions.

And in that way, the photograph becomes a **reflection of yourself**.

The Boy Running Through the Heart

The photograph near the end of the slideshow resonates with me deeply.

It's actually a very **banal, simple photograph**.

A boy running through the **Heart sculpture at the Franklin Institute**.

But the simplicity and ambiguity of that moment evoke something powerful.

I remember being a young boy myself, running through that same sculpture during school trips.

On this day, he was running through the sculpture over and over again — fast — trying to make it through the maze.

And I'm running behind him with the camera, trying to photograph him.

I must have run through that sculpture **five times**, chasing the moment.

Then suddenly the light glimmers across the scene.

The ripples in the shirt illuminate beautifully.

The textures around him come alive.

And that moment becomes something special.

Ambiguity and Emotion

What makes photography so joyful isn't always the subject itself.

It's the **feeling that comes back to you later** when you look at the photograph.

The ambiguity.

The mystery.

The emotional resonance.

Photography as Self-Discovery

By treating photography as a **visual diary**, by simply photographing your life and bringing the camera along for the ride, you begin to discover who you are through the frames you make.

When I look at that photograph:

I see myself.

As much as I'm photographing the external world, I believe the images become a **reflection of my internal state.**

The way I feel.

The way I perceive life.

And maybe photography is less about **what's in the frame...**

and more about **how you're framed within it.**

Just Play

When you photograph loosely, when you simply **play** and stop taking the process so seriously, something interesting happens.

You start to photograph more honestly.

More authentically.

And to me, that's the real joy of photography.

The mystery.

The feeling.

The discovery of yourself through the images you make.

Closing

With that being said — thank you for watching.

I also recently released **Flux Volume 1**, a small photo book of my work from **13 days of street photography in Tokyo**.

It's about **57 photographs across 100 pages**.

If you're curious, check that out — it'll be the **top link in the description**.

There are also lots of resources on my website, including a **free course on mastering layering in street photography** and other guides.

And with that being said —

Thank you for watching.

Peace.