

Ricoh GR IV Monochrome – Street Photography Diary #4 (Light, Intuition & Flow State)

Photography Has Nothing To Do With Photography

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

Welcome to **Street Photography Diary #4**, where we look at photographs I've been making with the **Ricoh GR IV Monochrome**.

Today we're talking about **light, photography, exploration, curiosity**, and my overall philosophy around the practice.

The way I think about photography these days is becoming **much more liberating**.

I'm throwing the camera around in unfamiliar spaces.
Looking at faces. Looking at people.

Of course I'm thinking about composition.

But more than anything, I'm honing in on **intuition**.

I'm letting the chips fall where they may.

I'm not trying to say anything particular with my photography anymore. It's a radical approach in a way.

The Inner Spiritedness

I'll see the sunrise hitting the buildings.

I'll notice reflections creating abstract shapes across the scene.

But what really keeps me photographing every day isn't the camera.

It's this **inner spiritedness**.

This enthusiasm for life.

This love for **mundane everyday life**.

Just waking up in that state keeps me perpetually photographing.

And I think this is extremely important to talk about because photography actually has **very little to do with photography**.

The Technical Phase

There are a few stages photographers go through.

At first you learn the **technical side**:

- How to set the camera
- Where to position your body
- How to synthesize light, subject, and composition
- Timing and framing

Once you become comfortable with your gear and understand these fundamentals, something interesting happens.

You can finally begin to **play freely**.

Photography becomes much more intuitive.

Your Photographs Are You

I believe the photographs you make are essentially **a reflection of who you are**.

When you make a frame of someone or something, it's your **state of being** that is reflected back through the photograph.

Your attitude.

Your curiosity.

Your way of feeling about life.

All of that carries into the photographs you make.

So to put it simply:

If you're a boring person, your photographs might be boring.

But if you live an interesting life — if you explore, travel, interact with people, and embrace new experiences — those things live in your subconscious.

They shape how you see.

And that ultimately shapes your photography.

Feeling Deeply, Seeing Clearly

A lot of photography practice gets in the way of simply **feeling deeply and seeing clearly**.

Cameras.

Gear.

Lighting formulas.

Composition rules.

All of that can create noise.

But the most interesting photographer will usually make the most interesting photographs.

So what should you actually do?

Go out there and:

- Have a laugh
- Explore
- Play
- Talk to people
- Visit unfamiliar places

From that state, you cultivate your own way of playing the photographic game.

Flow State

After a decade of photographing, I've realized something.

Making good photographs is actually **the easy part**.

Framing a scene, noticing light, pressing the shutter — that's simple.

The hard part is entering the **flow state**.

That moment where:

- You're not fiddling with your camera
- You're not thinking about composition
- You're simply responding to intuition

You see the light.

You notice a gesture.

You move your body.

Click.

But getting to that point requires something very simple:

Consistency.

The Power of Daily Practice

Flow state emerges from **repetition and obsession.**

I'll be honest — I haven't missed a day of photography in nearly a decade.

I shoot every single day.

Not because I force myself to.

But because I wake up curious.

Photography for me is like breathing.

It's like waking up and catching the sunrise.

It's like eating when you're hungry.

It's simply part of my life.

Will to Power

Photography is my **will to power.**

Not power over other people.

But the power to **express myself creatively.**

To animate my body through the world.

To move through life with curiosity and intention.

And if someone struggles to practice photography consistently, I think it often reflects something deeper.

It might not be a photography problem.

It might be a **life problem**.

If you're enthusiastic about life, photography becomes inevitable.

Front Lines of Life

When you wake up with vitality and curiosity, you naturally want to throw yourself onto the **front lines of life**.

You want to explore.

You want to experiment.

You want to fall down and get back up again.

Photography requires that enthusiasm.

If you're living a boring life, it's very difficult to make exciting photographs.

The Surprise

One of the reasons I love **monochrome photography** is the surprise it creates.

By stripping away color and even gray tones, you're left with **pure light and shadow**.

High contrast.

Abstraction.

And that abstraction constantly surprises me.

It's that sense of surprise that keeps me photographing every day.

Reading Terminal Market

One of the frames from today that intrigued me came from **Reading Terminal Market**.

There's a very small window of light inside that space.

Maybe **30 seconds to a minute** where the light hits a particular spot.

When the light appeared, I noticed a woman passing through the frame.

I started watching the scene.

Watching people move through the light.

Trying to layer gestures with silhouettes.

Instead of exposing for the background, I experimented with exposure to turn faces into **shapes and forms**.

Almost abstract.

Just playing with the moment.

And through that experimentation, curiosity grows.

The Simplicity of Monochrome

Monochrome photography has simplified my workflow dramatically.

By reducing the world to **light and shadow**, photography becomes much more streamlined.

And that simplicity helps me maintain **longevity in the practice**.

I want photography to become an inevitability.

Something I do naturally every day.

Climbing the Cliff

Behind the **Philadelphia Museum of Art**, there's a cliff I like to climb.

I go there often.

Standing up there reminds me to explore.

To experience life directly.

To push myself into unfamiliar spaces.

Not recklessly — but with curiosity.

Photography requires that spirit.

Tokyo Routine

I'm also currently working on a **prototype book** based on seven years of color photography from my travels.

Looking through the work reminds me of a routine I developed while photographing in Tokyo.

Every morning:

- Wake up
- Grab coffee from a vending machine
- Walk toward the train stations

At **10 AM**, the light outside **Shinjuku Station** would be perfect.

I'd stand there photographing the salarymen moving through the crowd.

Listening to the sounds of the train station announcements.

Watching the rhythm of people flowing past.

Then around **noon**, when the light changed, I'd take the train to **Harajuku**.

After wandering through **Yoyogi Park**, I'd walk down **Takeshita Street**.

Then around **1:30 or 2 PM**, I'd arrive at **Shibuya Crossing**.

For the next few hours the light was incredible.

Endless waves of people.

Constant movement.

Infinite possibility.

When the light faded, I left.

The Eternal Return

Every day in Tokyo followed the same rhythm.

Same train stations.

Same locations.

Same routine.

Yet every day felt completely different.

That's the magic of photography.

The light is always changing.

Life is always in flux.

You can stand on the same corner every day and still discover **infinite novelty**.

Closing

That's the thought of the day.

Photography has nothing to do with photography.

It has everything to do with **how you engage with life**.

Open your eyes.

Open your ears.

Bring the camera for the ride.

And explore.

Thanks for watching.

Peace.