

Ricoh GR IV Monochrome – Street Photography Diary #5 (No Such Thing as Cliché)

Street Photography Diary Entry #5 – Philadelphia St. Patrick's Day Parade

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

Today we're gonna be looking at my street photography that I recently made during the St. Patrick's Day Parade here in my hometown, Philadelphia, with the Ricoh GR IV Monochrome.

And so today's topic revolves around photographing at parades.

There Is No Such Thing as Cliché

I think it's the perfect opportunity for me to discuss what I am personally looking for when photographing in these situations.

In street photography, we call these moments cliché. Photographing a parade—it's cliché, right?

I think there's just such a misconception around that.

When I'm at a parade and I'm looking at all of the complexity—the people, the action, the crowd, the density, the details, the textures, the light—everything around me is infinitely fascinating.

There is no such thing as cliché.

If you think everything's been done, you're not gonna make a picture.

If you think photographing a parade is boring, it's going to inhibit your ability to find joy in your everyday life.

The Parade Is a Gift

The parade is a treat.

It gives you the ability to get close and engage with humanity.

The parade is a gift from the street photography gods.

It's your opportunity to:

- explore your perspective
- try to make new photographs
- push yourself

When a parade happens, that's when it's time to go.

Blurring the Line Between Documentation and Myth

You've got:

- the photojournalist documenting the event
- the street photographer avoiding making it look like a parade

There's this idea like:

"I want to photograph the parade, but I don't want it to look like a parade."

And I'm out there photographing, petting this gigantic police horse—this mythic creature.

I'm trying to create **mythic street photography**.

Something beyond this world.

Photography Beyond Fact

It doesn't matter if I'm at a parade, walking a mundane street, or in the woods.

I don't look at life as fact.

By documenting and abstracting at the same time, I open up **infinite possibility** in how I can make photographs.

The Moment With the Children

On this day, I wandered toward the end of the parade.

I saw these children playing with blankets, pretending to be flying squirrels.

Two little creatures, just playing against a brick wall.

A simple scene.

But I saw:

- innocence
- playfulness
- ambiguity

My curiosity pulled me in.

Creating Ambiguity

Street photography isn't about where you are.

You can create a frame with:

- no sense of time
- no sense of place

A frame that creates **myth and meaning**.

I'm not looking at the moment as fact.

I'm trying to reflect how I *feel* about the world through the frame.

I'm trying to connect my internal feeling to what I photograph.

Staying With the Scene

This wasn't a quick snapshot.

I stayed.

I observed.

I was present for about 10 minutes as the moment unfolded.

I chipped away at the scene, making frame after frame.

And eventually, I found it.

What I'm Really Looking For

At the end of the day:

I'm looking for ambiguity.

Not just action.
Not just obvious moments.

I want:

- no time
- no place
- sometimes no face

Just feeling.

Just mystery.

Just myth.

Emotion Without Explanation

Emotion in photography doesn't have to be direct.

It doesn't need:

- words
- facts
- obvious expressions

I believe emotion can arise **without explanation**.

We can go beyond the obvious.

Same Perspective, Any Environment

Whether I'm at a parade or walking a quiet street—

my perspective stays the same.

The external environment doesn't matter.

What matters is how I see.

Closing

That's how I approached the St. Patrick's Day Parade here in Philadelphia.

Those are the photographs that I made.

That's everything I've got.

Peace.