

Why I Chose the Ricoh GR IV Monochrome for Street Photography

Stripping Photography Down to the Essence

What's poppin', people? It's Dante, currently along the Schuylkill River here in Philadelphia, thinking today about why I choose the Ricoh GR IV Monochrome for my street photography.

So I'm no stranger to Ricoh. In 2015, I picked up the GR II and made some of my earliest and best photos with that camera. Fast forward seven years, I picked up the GR III and started photographing in high contrast black and white with small JPEG files.

Now in 2026, picking up the Ricoh GR IV Monochrome and really pushing myself forward with this commitment, with this mindset shift in my practice — adopting a monochrome sensor, adopting a streamlined workflow, stripping away color, stripping away decision generally, removing friction from my life as a photographer.

It seems that the more I go forward on this journey as a photographer, the more I'm looking to **subtract** from the practice.

I'm trying to strip away everything from photography and return to the **essence of the medium**.

Commitment Changes How You See

I'm not going to sit here and tell you about the technical details of the camera system — how it renders life on the sensor or what the files look like.

But I will tell you that **the way your mind shifts when committing to a practice — when committing to black and white photography — is unlike anything.**

For me as a photographer, my goal is to **continue photographing**.

So I decided to remove friction. Remove choice from my life.

Whether or not I shoot color or black and white.

Go left or right.

Use this camera or that lens.

I strip it down to this **simple black box with a shutter button** that allows me to cultivate instinct.

I don't want to think when I'm on the street.

When I photograph things, I'm just curious about how life will look like photographed.

I'm not hunting for photographs.

I simply throw the camera in my pocket, live my life, and photograph what I find.

Infinite Novelty in the Mundane

No matter where I am — whether I'm in the bustling city or on the side of the river here in the outskirts where I usually dwell — I find **infinite ways to play this game of photography**.

By adopting a black and white workflow, I've found new ways to articulate the mundane.

And I find **infinite novelty all around me** as a photographer.

By stripping away color and returning to the essence of the medium — **light itself** — I become more curious.

I become more joyous.

Because life really is glorious.

Life isn't necessarily what it seems.

When I photograph things, I'm not saying that this is a fact. I'm not looking at life as this or that.

I'm wondering.

What You Get Back Is What You Didn't See

When I make a photograph and commit to monochrome with everything baked into the high-contrast file — contrast settings cranked to the max — you could argue that *what you see is what you get*.

You can't go back and post-process.

But what's interesting is:

What I get back in the photograph is what I didn't see.

Photography with monochrome becomes a **natural abstraction of life**.

And once you go monochrome, it's almost like you can't go back.

You can't unsee the **infinite novelty** that's all around you.

Light provides endless ways to return to photography.

A Streamlined Practice

My goal is simple:

Wake up and pick the camera.

Walk more.
Photograph more.
Do more.

When I streamline the practice into the most simplified workflow possible — small JPEG files around five megabytes, processing baked in, nothing to tweak — I cultivate instinct.

I cultivate a practice where:

I shoot → I go home → I publish.

Shoot.
Go home.
Publish.

And I exist in this **perpetual stream of becoming**, evolving every day, making new frames while walking the same lane that I walk every single day.

Following the Light

That's why I choose the Ricoh GR for monochrome.

It reshapes your mind.

It changes the way you look and experience life.

From that state of curiosity, you can infinitely return to photography because of the way **light provides the novelty**.

It's everywhere.

Right now I'm looking at the sky — the blue sky above, the tree in the foreground, the white popping from that sky.

I throw on a red filter and photograph the patterns of nature.

And what I get back in the photograph **isn't what I was looking at.**

When I go home and review the photos, I smile.

I'm eager for the next day to wake up and photograph more.

Because there are **infinite ways to find new things inside the photographs you make.**

The World Is Always in Flux

With a red filter, I can photograph the same scene twice and get two completely different results.

I could stand on the same street and photograph the same scene every single day for the rest of my life.

But I will **never make the same photograph twice.**

The light is always changing.

The world is always in flux.

And so are you.

Your cells replenish.

You grow older.

You evolve as an artist.

There's beauty in stripping away the superfluous technical aspects of photography and returning to **pure instinct.**

Stop thinking. Start shooting.

Just live and respond intuitively from the gut.

Over time, you cultivate your authentic expression.

Your style emerges — not because you chose black and white — but because you **removed friction** and lived your life with a camera.

Photography Is a Way of Living

Photography has nothing to do with photography.

Photography has everything to do with:

- How you engage with humanity
- How you live your everyday life

If you're curious about life and you're following the light, it's inevitable that you will find your authentic expression.

Right now I'm hearing the cars passing by.

The railroad track.

The wind moving through the leaves.

The rocks beneath my feet.

Walking barefoot.

Feeling the sunlight on my skin.

Photography isn't about the medium or even the content inside the frame.

It's about **how it reorients the way you see and feel life.**

Slip the Camera in Your Pocket

So the more you walk, the more you see.

And the more you practice your photography.

I'm trying to make it inevitable that I practice.

So I slip the Ricoh in my pocket.

I live my life.

And I photograph what I find.

And sometimes I just watch the geese pass by and smile.

That's really why I choose Ricoh.

A Quick Note: Flux Volume 1

Also check out the first edition of **Flux Volume 1**, a small publication of my photographs from Tokyo.

It's 13 days in Tokyo, all photographed with the Ricoh GR III and Ricoh GR IIIx in high-contrast black and white.

I put together a little trade book through Blurb with a collage cover I designed.

That trip to Tokyo honestly felt like the moment when my vision really came together.

Photographing in the pools of light at Shibuya Crossing and the gritty alleyways of Shinjuku at night — something clicked in my practice.

So I compiled those 13 days into this small book.

If you're curious, you can check it out through the link in the description.

The Joy of Looking

Anyway, those are my thoughts for today.

I'm excited to see what kind of new photos I can make with the Ricoh GR IV Monochrome.

Look at this birdhouse right here with the sun glowing behind it.

That is beautiful.

When you look at the LCD screen of a monochrome camera, it almost feels like **looking beyond the veil.**

That photo looks unreal.

So yeah.

Thanks for watching.

I'll see you in the next one.

Peace.