

## **40mm vs 28mm for Street Photography (It Doesn't Matter)**

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

Currently on the streets of Philadelphia with the Ricoh GR IIIx, photographing today with the 40mm—and I just have some thoughts about using this particular focal length for street photography.

### **Focal Length Doesn't Matter**

I think I need to start off by saying this:

I don't believe focal length is as important as it seems.

Photography is a physical act.

It's you moving your body in relationship to moments—and recognizing your instinct to click the shutter.

That's it.

### **It's About Your Body, Not Your Lens**

For example, I just saw a man reaching down to pick something up.

At the same time, someone with a cast on his arm was walking toward me.

So what did I do?

I positioned my body to relate the foreground to the background.

Maybe there's overlap. Maybe it's imperfect.

That's fine.

*Composition isn't technical—it's physical.*

It's your feet.

It's your positioning.

It's how you move through the world.

### **What Makes 40mm Different**

Now with the 40mm—it does require a bit more precision.

You have to be more intentional with your positioning.

More aware of relationships in the frame.

I think it lends itself well to:

- **Layering**
- **Cleaner separation**
- **More controlled compositions**

The compression helps you organize the frame a bit more.

You can be more deliberate with your background.

### **But Instinct Still Leads**

Even with that...

I'm not really thinking about composition.

Lately, I'm just drawn to light.

I'm curious about how the camera sees the world.

*I don't think—I respond.*

The less you think, the more interesting your photos become.

### **28mm vs 40mm (The Real Truth)**

Traditionally, 28mm is the classic street photography lens.

You look at someone like Garry Winogrand—chaotic, energetic frames, distortion, lots happening.

And yeah, the focal length contributes to that.

But here's the thing:

You can still create that same energy with a 40mm.

It's not about the lens.

It's about:

- where you are
- what's happening
- how you respond

If you're in the right environment, you can make spontaneous, energetic images with anything.

## **The 40mm Crop Trick (40 → 71mm)**

One thing I've been experimenting with:

Using the built-in crop mode on the GR IIIx.

I mapped it to the movie button, so I can jump from 40mm to 71mm instantly.

And honestly—it's kind of wild.

It lets me:

- get close without being physically close
- isolate faces
- focus on small gestures and details

You can capture really intimate moments without disrupting the scene.

## **Embracing Imperfection**

When I crop in like that, things get weird.

Strange compositions.

Hands cut off. Tight framing.

But I like that.

I'm shooting JPEG, high contrast, just letting go.

Not worrying about image quality.

Not trying to be perfect.

*Just embracing the imperfections of the practice.*

## What Actually Matters

For the longest time, I thought I preferred 28mm.

It's more versatile.

But honestly?

Just run with what you've got.

Because what actually matters is this:

*Your instinct.*

And instinct only comes from:

- consistency
- repetition
- daily practice

## Final Thought

If you're out on the street every day, shooting...

The focal length doesn't matter.

That's the truth.

A lot of photographers overthink this decision.

Camera. Lens. Setup.

But the real path?

One camera. One lens. Shoot every day.

That's how you build instinct.

Right now, I'm just experimenting. Pushing myself.

Trying new things—like the crop mode.

Keeping it fun. Keeping it fresh.

But at the core?

It's still the same thing.

Move. Observe. Respond.

That's it.

See you in the next one.

Peace.