

Follow Your Inner Child

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

Today I'm riding my bike along the Schuylkill River Trail headed to the Wissahickon Forest with my Ricoh GR3x to do some photography.

I actually grew up playing in this forest as a young boy. It was essentially my backyard.

And my whole approach to photography is all about tapping into my childlike curiosity and basically just following my inner child.

So it's calling me to go to the forest and to do some photography.

So follow me along for my POV.

Back to Where It Started

Check it out — this is the exact spot that I used to play when I was a little kid here in the Wissahickon Forest.

When I was a boy, my friends and I would come out here with rocks, line them up, and create a bridge to cross the stream.

This exact stream.

And being here again...

It reminds me of this idea:

Follow Your Inner Child

When you're practicing photography, I believe it has nothing to do with photography.

Your ability to compose.

Your understanding of light.

Your technical skills.

That's base level.

What I seek is something deeper.

To evoke an emotional quality.

To go beyond reality.

To create a new world through my own subjective interpretation.

And that world comes from something very simple:

Your inner child.

Photography Is How You Engage With Life

Photography is about:

- How you engage with humanity
- How you feel about life
- Your curiosity
- Your courage

That inner energy.

That *thumos*.

That spirit that makes you want to:

- Climb trees
- Explore the unknown
- Build bridges with stones
- Ride your bike into the forest

That's the thing you need to follow.

Stop Trying to Make Great Photos

In modern street photography, there's a lot of:

- Contests
- Perfect frames
- Chasing "great images"

But I say:

Stop trying.

Just follow your curiosity.

Disregard:

- What's trending
- What's been done before
- What others think photography should be

And tap into your own subjective way of seeing.

The Spirit of Play

The peak experience as a photographer?

It's when you stop thinking.

When you stop rationalizing.

When you just move.

Like a kid with a camera.

You see a scene — you shoot it.

You see something small — you get low.

You explore.

You dig.

Look Closer

You can photograph the big vista.

Or...

You can get on your knees.

Look beneath the weeds.

Pick through the details.

Find the patterns.

That's where the gold is.

That's where the secrets are.

Closer to the Ground

We spend so much time trying to go higher:

- Skyscrapers
- Space travel
- Chasing the stars

But for me...

Peace is closer to the ground.

In the dirt.

In the leaves.

In the rocks.

That's where I find God.

A Visual Diary

I don't take photography too seriously.

I'm just:

- On my knees
- Bound by gravity
- Stumbling through the world

With a camera.

Capturing fragments.

That's it.

*You can't live forever.
But you can make a photograph.*

And maybe...

That's enough.

Final Thought

Treat photography like a personal diary.

Be open.

Be instinctive.

Be curious.

And most importantly—

Follow your inner child.

That's my thought of the day.

I'm gonna keep exploring the forest and continue on my journey.