

## **Ricoh GR IV Monochrome vs GR III – Red Filter, Street Philosophy & A Wild Day in Philly**

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

The Monochrome Report is in. It has returned.

Red filter back. Activated.

Returned from the repair center just a day ago. Got to use it one time so far – so good. They reproduced the issue using the GR World app (which I don't even use), so we're just gonna move on and let this thing chug.

My GR III? Still running after **hundreds of thousands of shots**. Even the GR II still alive.

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### **Back in Philly – Straight Into the Chaos**

I came back to Philadelphia two days ago and immediately went to Kensington.

I hopped on the Market-Frankford Line, landed in North Philly – gritty, raw, real.

I believe in photographing **everything**.

Not just joy.

But pain. Suffering. Complexity. Humanity.

***Life is not one-dimensional. Why should your photography be?***

I ended up talking with people on the corner. Just being human. That led to portraits.

That's the thing:

***Photography is a byproduct of how you engage with life.***

If you're curious, playful, open — life gives you moments.

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## **Life Is a Video Game**

Life is a video game.

You've got unlimited respawns.

So why are you scared?

Go into the gray zones on the map. The places you're unsure about.

That's where the treasure is.

That's where the photos are.

***Stop playing safe. Go explore the map.***

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## **From Kensington to Center City**

Same day:

- Kensington streets

- Greek parade
- Graduation ceremony
- Benjamin Franklin walking like a boss
- Pigeons flying through Center City

When the pigeons flew?

I didn't think.

I just moved and shot.

***Photography is physical. Not intellectual.***

With the Ricoh on a wrist strap, it becomes part of your body.

You move → you shoot.

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## **The Portal, The Weirdness, The Day**

Saw one of those portal screens — like a FaceTime to another city.

Felt surreal. Like a black mirror.

Then:

- Block party
- Dance energy
- Mall models

I told two women:

*“Is this a contest? Because you're gonna win.”*

They laughed.

Click.

That's the photo.

***Energy creates images. Not settings.***

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### **Chinatown – 50mm Crop Mode**

Switched to 50mm crop.

Tap twice. Boom.

Now I'm isolating subjects. Removing noise.

#### **My setup:**

- 50mm crop
- Underexpose by 2 stops
- Multi-segment metering

I used highlight-weighted for 3 years...

But multi-segment?

Way more fluid.

***Less friction = more instinct.***

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## GR IV Monochrome – First Impressions

Now we switch.

Same recipe:

- High contrast
- Maxed out
- Small JPEGs

But...

There's a difference.

More shadow detail. Better feel.

Snappier. Faster. Stronger.

***The monochrome just hits different.***

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## Street Skateboarding Mindset

I treat photography like street skating.

The city is a skatepark.

- Curbs
- Railings
- Light
- Shadows
- Gestures

Everything is a spot.

You don't go out saying:

*"I'm only doing one trick."*

No.

You flow.

You adapt.

You play.

***Photography is landing tricks on reality.***

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## **Red Filter = Superpower**

The red filter?

Game changer.

Crushes skies. Deep contrast. Mystery.

And it's built into the camera.

No accessories. No fluff.

***Use the tool as-is. That's the magic.***

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## **A1 – The Street Philosopher**

Ran into my guy A1.

Street artist. Wild energy.

Before he saw me — I dropped and did push-ups.

We start talking Bible stories. Genesis. Isaac. Rebekah.

Then a girl shows up...

With a squirrel puppet.

Then a camel puppet.

Gives him water.

Everything aligned.

***This is what happens when you're open to life.***

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## **Evening – Schuylkill River Trail**

Now we slow down.

Nature. Light. Sunset.

I walk this same path every day.

Same sculpture.

Every day, I shoot it.

Why?

***Training instinct.***

Like tutorial mode in a video game.

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## **Composition Is Physical**

I saw a man balancing on a railing at sunset.

At first — horizontal frame.

Too much empty space.

Then I adjusted.

Vertical.

Filled the frame.

Stayed in the scene until it ended.

***Don't leave the scene. Let the scene leave you.***

Then I did it myself.

Climbed the rail.

Walked it.

Fell off.

Sent him the photo later.

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## Final Thoughts – Go Outside

I ended the day at the cliff. Watching the sunset.

And I realized:

***Life is wide open.***

There's so much to see. So much to photograph.

When you're inside — your soul fades.

When you're outside — you come alive.

***Be a human first. Photographer second.***

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## The Philosophy

- Stop thinking
- Start doing
- Follow instinct
- Stay curious

***Your next photo is your best photo.***

Not the perfect one.

The next one.

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## Return to Day One

Wake up empty.

Forget what you know.

Go play.

Return to that childlike state.

***That's where the magic is.***

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Red filter on.

Go explore.

Peace.