

## Stop Taking Photography So Seriously

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

Today I'm thinking about **play, presence, and why you should stop taking photography so seriously.**

When I photograph, I'm merely using the camera as a way for me to remain **present** in the moment that I make a photograph.

On a very practical level, that means tuning out all distractions and remaining laser focused.

What I do is simple. I wake up in the morning, I drink my coffee, I look at the sun, I get my day started, I move my body, and then I'm out here with my camera, **embracing what's in front of me directly.**

I'm not hunting.

I'm not looking.

I'm not searching.

I'm using photography as a vehicle for me to cultivate **being.**

And being is the act of being in the moment, in the present, where the past and the future are merely distractions.

## Photography as a Practice of Presence

Go slow.

Embrace everything you see.

Stop thinking and dwelling on everything about photography, because ultimately, **the pictures and the outcome will come.**

But the only way to get there is to embrace the sun, to embrace the sights, to embrace the smells and the surroundings.

As you increase your receptivity to these things, with sensitivity comes clarity. And with clarity, you begin to see.

That act of seeing is what then influences our photography.

Because once you start looking—really looking—and once you start photographing from that pure state of **childlike wonder and curiosity**, that's where joy and meaning is found.

*Make pictures from that pure state—where you're not thinking, not dwelling, and not forcing.*

### **Stop Dwelling on the Outcome**

I think that making a picture as a way for you to cultivate presence in life is the ultimate outcome that I find fulfilling.

So stop thinking about photography.

Stop dwelling on the outcome of this thing.

Simply treat photography as a way for you to **explore the day in the spirit of play**.

Make pictures from that pure state. That place where you're not thinking. You're not dwelling. You're not considering everything as a photograph.

You're simply embracing what's in front of you and responding to what triggers you to then make the photograph from that instinctual, childlike, curious state.

And then over time, with consistency, as you continue to make, as you continue to look, as you continue to feel and photograph, perhaps we can create our own world.

## Creating Your Own World

Perhaps we can make a photograph that evokes a sense of mystery, a sense of ambiguity, that has emotional quality, that goes beyond basic notions of what makes or breaks good photography.

That's the deeper thing.

Not whether the image checks some technical box.

But whether it **feels** like something.

Whether it opens up a world.

Whether it carries emotional weight.

I believe life can become a dream while practicing photography.

So go beyond reality and create your own world through the camera.

*Once you start photographing from that pure state of childlike wonder and curiosity, that's where joy and meaning is found.*

## The Beauty of Paying Attention

Look at the birds.

Listen to them chirp.

Find yourself inspecting little insects.

Check out the textures.

Look at the landscape.

Look at the clouds up above.

When you zoom out from your body from this sort of third-person perspective and look down from the heavens, and then inspect the details below, you start to really embrace this sense of being with the practice.

You start to really engage the senses.

You start to really feel deeply.

And when you cultivate this curiosity, everything around you becomes infinitely fascinating and novel again.

The mundane isn't necessarily what it seems.

### **A Fun Ricoh GR3x Tip**

I'm absolutely loving the **macro mode**.

One fun tip: I use the **71mm built-in crop mode** with the **Ricoh GR3x**, and that increases my ability to fill the frame while using macro mode.

I just find it to be such an interesting and fascinating way to explore photography.

It opens up another way of seeing.

Another way of paying attention.

Another way of turning the ordinary into something mysterious.

### **A 7-Day Photography Challenge**

That's my thought of the day.

I have a challenge for you.

If you'd like to embark on a **7-day photography challenge**, I invite you to the top link in the description of this YouTube video.

For 7 days, you will create a **visual diary** of your day and submit your photographs directly to me.

I will then review your photograph.

And at the end of the journey, I will invite you to the **Flux community**, where we can share our ideas about photography, philosophy, and of course, the work.

So yeah, I'm inviting you to the challenge.

Click the link at the top of the description.

And I'll see you there.

**Peace.**