

Radical detachment

Would you keep photographing if you never see the results?

Eternal Return

I've been grappling with this hypothetical question, as to whether or not I would keep photographing if I were to never actually see the results from what it is that I am making. And I feel as though I've come to this radical conclusion that, I would.

And so that from that recognition, I feel ultimate liberation as a photographer. Because now at this point, the photographs are not the goal. The photographs are merely a byproduct of me waking up in the morning, enthusiastic for life.

Beyond photography

Maybe instead of photographing for the sake of the outcome, being the photographs, when I'm actually most interested in, is the way that the active actually making the photographs, bring me closer to reality, to the moment, to hyper sensitivity to all of my surroundings. I'm fully embracing the sites, the sounds, the smells of the street, and enter a flow state that makes life worth living.

Create your own world,

we have unlimited entertainment, to consume, movies, media, news, books, images, art, galleries, etc., we have this hyper aware, understanding of how to use language through visual, verbal, or even audio means to express ideas thoughts or emotions through art. The problem with this is, that with all of this understanding, it becomes very easy to repeat the same idea over and over again. Now this is something I contend with and find to be extremely challenging. But I think that by being radically detached from what I am creating, I can surprise myself more,

simply due to the fact that I am letting go. By letting go, and creating from this pure state of emptiness where my mind is off and my gut is activated, maybe maybe I'll eventually find something new.

Creative breakthroughs?

I think what I'm seeking are creative breakthroughs. I kind of treat myself like a mad scientist at the end of the day. I'm always in an extreme state. Fasting all day, walking all day, just trying to be in this like physical state of being that's full of vitality that allows me to just keep going. And so I'm trying to align everything with my life to the point where, I can somehow cultivate magic out of the mundane. And I don't know about you, but I know that it's very difficult to achieve. And so I basically do everything in my power in my body in my mind to align myself to the place where, I can increase the probability of me actually discovering something. And so during my trip in Tokyo, I was on the Shabuya Crossing, just watching as the people are walking towards me, just like an endless sea of people, one of the most photographed places in the world, and I was thinking about how difficult it was to actually produce something interesting in Tokyo. Like yes, there is unlimited visual stimulation in this bustling city, and you could argue that there is endless possibility with photography here, but it's also very easy to repeat the same visual idea through the medium over and over again. And I'm not trying to sound like the photos I made in Tokyo were so radically new or different or something, but I know for 100% certainty in a fact that whatever occurred on that trip was a complete breakthrough for me

Philosophy, technology and the human body

When I consider the current state of technology and the particular way that I was photographing with my camera, using crop mode, 71 mm, using a tiny point-and-shoot that is unobtrusive, at snap focus 1 m, one 2000s of a second at F-16, with small bw JPEGs, getting just so extremely close to the faces and making candid photos that almost look like charcoal drawings, was very much radically new in terms of approach and possibility in photography. And now that I reflect on how I arrived at this way of working and the outcome of what I achieve, it truly does arrive from my personal philosophy that got me there. For instance, I've always thought

about photography as visual problem-solving. And so when you look at the world, it's chaos. There's no order, everything is moving and wiggly and changing, but as the Photographer you need to figure out ways to articulate these chaotic things through the framing, compositional decisions, lighting timing, etc. And so as I am being bombarded by all of this visual stimulation and chaos in Tokyo, I recognize that by crushing the shadows, exposing for the highlights and cropping in extremely closely to the faces, was a strategy that I almost subconsciously, fell into through my understanding of "how to make a picture. "

But simultaneously, what I was seeking, was surprised. I was trying to uncover some sort of mystery that lies within the serendipity of photography. For instance, our eyes don't have a shutter speed, and we don't see the same way that our camera sees. And so when I'm photographing with these particular creative constraints in this particular environment, I'm merely wondering about the way that, light and life will render upon my camera sensor. I'm curious about the way that faces overlap and the way the light edges shape and form on surfaces, people, places and things. When I'm making the photograph, I actually am detached, and have no idea of what it will manifest to be. But I'm just chipping away and asking questions as I'm clicking the shutter out there on the bustling streets. And then what rises back in the photograph is a complete surprise, something that I did not see with my naked eye. And this is what I am after, this is what I seek in terms of the "outcome "in photography. It's to surprise myself. I don't wanna make a photograph from this place of victory anymore or this place of decisiveness and control. I want to relinquish control so radically to the point where I don't know what I'm gonna get back in my photography. But I simultaneously have the understanding that one must be aligned with their physical body. Their mind and their approach with how they use their camera to then influence the surprises or possibilities. For instance, I wake up at the same time every day. I go to bed at the same time every night. I walk the same street every single day. When I was in Tokyo, I never walked a single day a stray. I literally went to the same corner, I walked the same street, on repeat for 13 days in an orderly fashion, almost like I'm a soldier in the military. I ate at the same restaurant at the same time every day across from the Shabu crossing like clockwork. And I would eat the same exact food every time. And there's just something about that kind of like rigor and routine while simultaneously embracing chaotic frenzy when you're on the street that I find leads to creative breakthrough.

Love and war

So in a modern world that is pretty much about to be fully automated with no real need for much physical labor, lol, maybe it's best that we create our own meaning in life. Because at the end of the day, everything can just be absurd, there is no meaning, there's no point, etc. Maybe it's most wise to just wake up like you're in an ancient Greek battle simulator and you're preparing for death tonight. So I love living in this sort of extreme way because everything is urgent, everything is meaningful, when you recognize that any moment you could get shot by some fucking coward with the arrow in the tower and kill you. And so I'd rather be out here on the front lines of life, taking all the shots, taking all the arrows, making a fool of myself, falling down, getting back up, and just charging the gates of Troy in the Trojan horse, not giving a fuck. Because at the end of the day, there really isn't anything worth living for, but love and war.

A life of passivity, comfort, and just being in the garden all day, yeah yeah it's great, I've experienced it, you can lay under the tree, read philosophy, spend time with plants all day and putter around and never frown, and literally be in like the paradise Garden of Eden simulator 2.0, no need for anybody or anything, but what I realize is, without suffering, without sin, without pain, without hate, without anybody in society to contend with or spar, there is no love.

I definitely enjoy living in extremes. Extreme seasons of peace, extreme seasons of war. There's something about it that just makes life much more vibrant and interesting. I'm pretty sure Jesus even said to not be lukewarm or else god will spit you out. I could definitely understand that, if I was on Mount Olympus, looking down upon the mortals, I definitely be much more entertained by war love. Imagine if everybody was just pacified watching Netflix all day? That would be the most boring outcome ever, I'd be like yo just fucking throw down another flood or something lol

Maybe what I'm trying to articulate and what I'm really seeking through photography is intensity itself. To feel fully alive. To contend with reality directly on the frontlines instead of observing life passively from the sidelines.