

Ricoh GR IV Monochrome Geotagging POV | Philly in Flux

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

Today we're hitting the streets of Philadelphia with the Ricoh GR IV Monochrome paired with the GR World application. The mission is simple:

Document one street.

Lehigh Avenue.

I have no idea what I'm going to find, but by the end of the day I want to produce both a physical zine and a digital archive complete with geotagged photographs.

This is the full workflow—from walking the street and making the photographs to publishing the work online and printing the final zine.

Let's go.

Starting the Walk

I hopped off the bus at 33rd and Lehigh Avenue and immediately started walking.

The architecture is beautiful.

The goal is to walk the entire street from one end to the other, photographing everything that catches my attention along the way.

GR in hand.

GR World running.

Just walking and documenting space and time here in the City of Brotherly Love.

This is my small homage to America's 250th anniversary.

My Ricoh GR IV Monochrome Setup

One of the techniques I use constantly is **crop mode**.

I have it assigned to the video button on the side of the camera.

A quick press switches me into the 50mm crop. If I see architecture across the street or something higher up on a building, I crop in, make the photograph, and keep moving.

The goal is speed.

The majority of these photographs are made while walking.

For the monochrome red filter, I simply hold down the video button.

My settings are intentionally simple:

- Aperture Priority at **f/8**
- Snap Focus at **2 meters**
- Everything else automatic

I also use the Fn button to switch between:

- Snap Focus
- Single Point Focus

If I'm close to a subject, I'll switch over and lock focus precisely.

That's really it.

The camera disappears.

The process becomes intuitive.

Conversations on the Street

One of my favorite things about these walks is that people are curious.

They ask questions.

They tell stories.

A contractor stopped me and we talked about the vacant homes along the avenue.

Others asked what I was doing.

My answer is always the same:

I'm documenting the city.

That's really what this project is about.

Preserving what exists right now.

Photographing the Ordinary

A mural from 2006.

A church cross glowing in morning light.

Modern cars parked along the curb.

A doorway that looks like you'd fall right out of it.

The ordinary becomes interesting when you slow down enough to look.

One thing I love photographing is parked cars.

Not vintage cars.

Modern cars.

The cars people actually drive today.

Those details become historical records faster than we realize.

315 Photos in 40 Minutes

By the time I photographed a fading sign on a storefront, I had already made roughly 315 photographs.

Forty minutes had passed.

By the end of the walk I knew I'd be close to 1,000 frames.

That's how I work.

Fast.

Intuitive.

Constantly experimenting.

The red filter allows me to revisit the same scene and produce entirely different interpretations.

The process becomes playful.

The Duty of the Photographer

Standing beneath a McDonald's sign, watching its shadow stretch across the sidewalk, I started thinking about why I enjoy projects like this.

The ultimate duty of the photographer is to articulate the mundane.

Everything around you is seemingly nothing.

A school.

A fast-food sign.

A Save-A-Lot.

A flagpole.

Nothing remarkable.

Until you decide to look.

Then the shadows matter.

The infrastructure matters.

The details matter.

And suddenly you're creating a document of a place and a moment that will never exist again.

On this particular day, the goal was simple:

Document what Philadelphia looked like right here, right now.

Turning Life Into an Open World Game

There are a few different ways I think about this project.

The first is that it turns life into an open-world game.

I get to explore new territory.

Unlock new sections of the map.

Discover parts of the city I normally overlook.

The second is that I have a mission.

Not wandering.

Not aimlessly photographing.

A clear objective.

Create:

- A zine
- A digital archive
- A body of work

The mission gives direction.

The constraint gives freedom.

Walking one street in one direction sounds limiting, but it actually creates creative liberation.

You stop searching for photographs.

You start finding them everywhere.

Contributing Something Beyond Yourself

The most fulfilling aspect of this project is preservation.

These photographs can outlive me.

They can exist digitally.

They can exist physically.

They can serve as references for future generations.

They become evidence.

A record of what this place looked like.

And that feels meaningful.

It feels like contributing something beyond yourself.

Lehigh Avenue Conquered

After nearly three hours of walking, the journey was complete.

Lehigh Avenue conquered barefoot.

I had made 824 photographs.

Flow state achieved.

Now it was time for Phase 2.

Importing the Photos

My workflow is intentionally simple.

I use a Lightning-to-SD card reader and import everything directly into the iPhone Photos app.

High-contrast small JPEGs import quickly.

The GR World app can transfer files over Bluetooth, but I usually reach for the dongle because it's reliable.

Folder created.

Photos imported.

Book-making mode activated.

The Flux System

Back at the studio, everything runs through a system I built.

A custom publishing hub created with Claude Code.

The entire workflow is automated according to my preferences.

I create a project.

Upload the photographs.

Generate a draft.

The system automatically:

- Creates thumbnails

- Generates derivatives
- Removes EXIF data
- Reverse geocodes GPS coordinates
- Builds the project structure

The result is a fully geotagged archive.

Publishing the Archive

The archive lives inside my Flux system.

Every project contributes to a larger map.

Every walk becomes part of a growing body of work.

For the Lehigh Avenue project:

- 114 archived photographs
- 4.2 miles walked
- 2 hours 17 minutes documented

Each image can be opened directly on a map.

You can see:

- Exact GPS coordinates
- Camera settings
- Street View location
- Downloadable JPEG files

Everything is accessible.

Everything is preserved.

Creating the Zine

Once the archive is complete, I select 36 photographs.

Each image gets added to a zine cart.

Then the system generates a print-ready PDF.

The project includes:

- Chronological sequencing
- Automatic captions
- GPS coordinates
- QR codes linking to the digital archive
- Contact sheets
- Manifest documentation

The entire workflow is designed for speed.

Walk.

Photograph.

Archive.

Publish.

Print.

Repeat.

Map Your Own Walk

If you want to archive your own street and create a project like this, I built a tool specifically for that purpose.

You can submit a walk directly through my website.

Upload your photographs.

I'll process them.

Publish the archive.

Generate the zine.

And help preserve your corner of the world.

Because documenting where you live is one of the most rewarding photographic projects you can undertake.

Thanks for following along.

I'll see you soon.