

Flux Weekly Witness #13: Blur, Gesture & Everyday Street Photography

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

Welcome to **Flux Weekly Witness #13**, where I look at the photographs that you submit to me in the Flux community.

Today we're looking through the last five days from **Suhaib Al-Jawahri**. These photographs were made throughout the month of July in New York City.

Suhaib says he's finding inspiration from **Daido Moriyama** and **Josef Koudelka**, two photographers who use high-contrast black and white aesthetics in a way that's deeply emotional. Let's dive in.

Intimate Moments Close to Home

Right off the bat we have this cat looking directly into the lens.

It's such a small, intimate scene. Something incredibly ordinary, maybe photographed inside the home.

I really resonate with pictures that are homebound—work that's personal and close to you.

Having a Ricoh with you at all times really lends itself to this kind of photography.

The Strongest Portrait

These next two frames immediately stood out to me.

The intimacy of this child's eye, combined with the light reflecting off the nose, creates such a special moment.

The vertical framing really emphasizes the gesture of the gaze.

There's something extremely special about the nuance of the light and the way it falls across the face.

This is probably my strongest frame from the entire set.

Alongside it we have these flowers, and I love pairing human photographs with nature or inanimate objects.

It opens your horizons.

You don't need to photograph only one thing.

Stay open to all the different complexities of life.

Echoes Between Frames

These photographs of the children work almost like a diptych.

One is photographed from above.

The other shows a boy drinking from a can.

Although they're different people, there's something about the framing that makes them feel connected.

On the right, the frame-within-a-frame composition emphasizes the gesture beautifully.

The left image is more mysterious.

The shadows covering the face create ambiguity while turning the hair into a simple geometric shape.

Simple Gestures Matter

Moving back into New York City, we have this textured photograph with the repeated "New York" typography.

Next to it is a man reaching for his glasses.

I can actually tell Suhaib is probably using the crop mode on the Ricoh here because the framing feels much tighter.

It's a very simple gesture.

But that's exactly why it works.

Everything in the composition points back toward that small movement.

Even the strip of light in the background helps separate the figure and gives the frame more depth.

Blur as Emotion

One image that really surprised me was this sporting event.

I honestly couldn't tell if it was a photograph of a photograph or an actual live moment.

The blur, imperfections, and movement make it feel surreal.

You know they're playing a sport...

But emotionally it becomes something much stranger.

That's why I enjoy it.

The aesthetic qualities of blur resonate with me much more than technical perfection.

Strange Things Along the Walk

One of my favorite discoveries is this broom balanced across two traffic cones.

These are the moments that reward paying attention.

He also has a really strong sense of when to shoot vertically versus horizontally.

That instinct shows throughout the body of work.

Portraits with Feeling

There are several close-up portraits here that are blurry and imperfect.

I genuinely enjoy that aesthetic.

Especially imagining these printed on old monochrome laser printers using ordinary copy paper.

There's something about that presentation that really suits the photographs.

One frame feels slightly weaker because the sunglasses remove some of the human connection.

Compositionally it's still interesting because of the negative space and the relationship between the rectangular forms.

But the next portrait has much more emotion.

Even a simple gesture—covering the nose—creates tension.

That emotional gesture elevates the photograph.

Nature Against Industry

We move into photographs of ivy growing across industrial buildings.

There's always something compelling about nature slowly reclaiming man-made structures.

Nearby we see stacks of vintage televisions creating repetitive patterns and shapes.

Those repetitions naturally lend themselves to photography.

Framing the Subject

There's also an interesting photograph of a religious sculpture framed through a window.

Normally cutting off half of the face might feel distracting.

Here it actually works.

Using the architecture itself as a framing device creates something much more intriguing.

Photographing the Phone Era

We hear all the time that street photography has been ruined because everyone is looking down at their phones.

I actually think the better approach is to lean into it.

This close-up of someone's hand gripping a phone becomes interesting precisely because it reflects the time we're living in.

Years from now, these everyday gestures may become historically meaningful.

Street photography changes.

Our job is to respond to that change instead of fighting it.

Building Sequences

I almost pair this phone photograph with the portrait that follows.

The close-up face hidden in shadow.

The mustache.

The tension.

Together they almost feel like the same person.

Sometimes photographs naturally begin creating conversations with one another.

Movement Everywhere

We move into blurry photographs on the subway.

Legs repeating across the sidewalk.

A small foot tucked into the corner of the frame.

Graphic compositions built from negative space.

A man moving through blur.

I really enjoyed the energy throughout this sequence.

Looking Beyond People

There's a man praying.

A silhouetted cyclist.

Graffiti.

An empty parking lot.

Cathedral architecture.

Street infrastructure.

One photograph in particular is packed with visual energy.

Poles.

Curbs.

Leading lines.

Cones.

Manholes.

Shadows.

Everything comes together into one cohesive composition.

Photograph Everything

I appreciate the variety throughout this body of work.

It's not only about people.

It's also about strange discoveries along the walk.

Like that broom from earlier.

Or this fuzzy pillow sitting on top of a bench.

Walk through the world believing everything has photographic potential.

Final Thoughts

We finish with a wonderfully textured frame that reads:

"Jesus Saves" alongside **"Free Palestine."**

As always, at the back of every Flux issue you'll find the contact sheets and manifest documents.

If you'd like to print this work yourself, the link is in the description.

If you'd like to submit your own photographs for review, generate your own Flux issue using the link below.

If your work is selected, there's a chance I'll review it here on the YouTube channel.

I really enjoyed looking through this body of work.

I'm especially inspired by Suhaib's use of blur.

Aesthetically, it really resonates with me.

This portrait remains my favorite frame from the entire issue.

Really great work.

Keep it up.

I'll see you guys in the next video.

Peace.