

The Joy of Video for Street Photographers

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

I'm currently walking down Market Street here in Philadelphia, filming with the **Sony Handycam DCR-SR40**.

This is my new vlogging camera.

Welcome to... **2006**.

The cool thing about this camera is that it's got an **800× digital zoom**, and I can get *really* close to things. That's opening up a completely new way of seeing the world, and today I wanted to share some thoughts on the joy of video—and why I think video is becoming such a fun medium for street photography.

Twelve Years of Street Photography

I've been shooting photographs on the streets for around **12 years**, but I've never explored video as deeply as I've wanted to.

I've used a GoPro. I've filmed clips on my iPhone.

But having a **dedicated video camera** like this Handycam feels like an entirely different experience.

I think the reason is simple.

As artists, we all seek that **tactile feeling** when making things.

That's why people still shoot film. Why people paint with brushes. Why they draw with pencils. Why sketchbooks still matter.

There's something special about physically interacting with the tool you're creating with.

Flipping out the LCD screen. Zooming in. Holding the camera. Moving through space with it.

It's a completely different feeling than holding up a phone.

Creating for a Physical Medium

This camera records in a **4:3 aspect ratio**.

Recently I picked up an old **CRT television**, and I've been watching these videos back exactly as they were meant to be viewed.

That changed everything.

Instead of simply uploading videos to YouTube or my website, I'm starting to think about creating work for a **specific physical medium**.

The files are digital.

But the experience becomes physical again.

That idea really excites me.

Why Video Feels More Emotional Than Photography

Something I've noticed is that when I watch these clips back—even if it's just a stranger walking down the street—it almost feels like a real memory.

Video feels incredibly emotional.

Photography is different.

A photograph isolates a slice of time inside four corners.

Because of that, there's mystery.

Ambiguity.

The viewer fills in the gaps.

Video doesn't really work like that.

Video feels closer to an answer.

Photography asks a question.

Video describes what actually happened.

The combination of movement and sound creates a completely different emotional experience.

When you hear the streets...

When you hear footsteps...

When you hear someone's voice...

When you watch people moving...

You feel connected to the actual moment.

Maybe a photograph can suggest those emotions.

But video lets you experience them.

Photography is more abstract. Video feels more tangible.

Maybe it's nostalgia.

Maybe it's the old Handycam.

Maybe it's the CCD sensor.

Whatever it is...

It feels real.

Learning a New Technique

I'm still figuring out how to hold this thing.

Right now I'm filming like a traditional vlog.

But I've found that if I hold it around waist level and stabilize it with my thumb, the footage becomes much smoother.

Even learning how to hold the camera is changing the way I shoot.

Building My Video Workflow

The videos coming out of this camera are tiny.

Around **480p**.

Low resolution.

4:3 aspect ratio.

I actually downloaded **Final Cut Pro** because it lets me export native 4:3 videos without worrying about adding black bars.

But the interesting part isn't editing.

It's the workflow.

I built an entire software system for this camera.

When I dock the Handycam into its charging station, my own software—**FluxCapture**—automatically detects it.

It imports every video.

Converts the original .mpg files into MP4s.

Organizes them into numbered folders.

Renames everything automatically.

Then, when I finish editing a film and publish it to my archive, the software extracts additional material from every video.

It automatically generates:

- GIF files
- Screenshots
- Frame sequences

I'm trying to extract as much information as possible from every video I make.

The finished film isn't the only output anymore.

The video becomes an archive of multiple visual artifacts.

I really like that way of working.

Seeing the World Differently

Something strange has happened.

After years of shooting the **Ricoh GR** in high-contrast black and white...

After years of making street photographs...

I stopped seeing the world in the same way.

The camera trained my eye.

It became instinct.

That's the goal.

To stop thinking...

...and simply begin seeing.

Now I'm using this Handycam.

Suddenly...

I'm looking at everything differently.

The biggest technical change is obviously the **800× digital zoom**.

I don't have to stand close anymore.

I'm noticing architectural details.

Reflections.

Compression.

Small moments far away.

Even the low resolution feels beautiful.

The Carl Zeiss lens is surprisingly sharp.

And when you watch the footage back on an old CRT television...

It just looks incredible.

The Beauty of Imperfection

This camera uses an old **CCD sensor**.

The way it handles highlights...

The blooming...

The strange artifacts...

They're aesthetically beautiful.

Those imperfections become part of the image.

There's also a ridiculous night mode.

It almost feels like X-ray vision.

When you zoom into lights...

Reflections...

Water...

Everything becomes surreal.

Lately I've been thinking a lot about abstraction.

Not through photography this time...

But through moving images.

The Joy of Starting Again

One thing I've realized is that once you achieve the artistic output you've been chasing for years, something interesting happens.

You become free.

You're no longer trying to prove anything.

You're free to experiment.

You're free to play.

I think that's where artists truly grow.

Not by endlessly refining the same thing...

But by destroying their old habits.

By becoming a beginner again.

By entering a new period of uncertainty.

To evolve, you have to destroy your old way of seeing.

Photography gave me that for many years.

Now video is doing it.

And honestly...

It feels amazing.

Returning to the Childlike State

People often think mastery is reaching a destination.

I don't.

I think the highest form of mastery is returning to a childlike state.

Playing.

Exploring.

Being curious.

Experimenting without expectations.

That's the final form.

Not perfection.

Play.

Right now I feel like I'm standing on a blank slate again.

And that's exciting.

That's the thought of the day.

Maybe I'll make more videos like this with the Handycam.

Peace.

Have a nice day.

God bless you.

Enjoy.