

The Visual Diary Mindset That Changed My Street Photography | Flux Archive #4

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

Welcome to **Flux Archive #4**, where I share some of the photographs I've made over the past few years and the lessons I've learned throughout my decade-long journey practicing street photography.

Today we're looking through **Flux Volume 4**—photographs made throughout **August 2023** across **Philadelphia, New York City, and Costa Rica**.

More than anything, I want to share the idea of using photography as a **visual diary**, and why I believe this approach unlocks entirely new possibilities for your practice.

Let Moments Come to You

The first photograph was made from my apartment window.

Around 7 PM, after dinner, I looked outside and noticed smoke rising from a fire in North Philadelphia. I simply saw the moment and made the photograph.

The goal isn't to constantly hunt for photographs. It's to allow moments to come toward you.

That simple shift changes everything.

Photography stops becoming something you chase and instead becomes a way of paying attention.

Gestures Are Everywhere

One of the easiest things to look for in street photography is **gesture**.

A hand adjusting sunglasses.

A couple kissing.

People interacting with each other.

These small movements instantly add life to a frame.

If you're ever unsure what to photograph, begin looking for hands, body language, and interactions between people. They're simple visual triggers that repeat endlessly throughout the streets.

Follow the Light

Sometimes people don't matter at all.

Sometimes it's the light.

Artificial light underground. Natural light breaking through clouds. Shadows stretching across the street.

Don't get caught up asking whether something is or isn't street photography.

Allow **light and curiosity** to guide you.

One practical exercise I constantly return to is simply looking upward.

By exposing for the highlights and crushing the shadows in high-contrast black and white, clouds become abstract, dramatic, and almost otherworldly.

Whenever I don't know what to photograph...

I photograph the sky.

Shooting From the Hip with the Ricoh GR

One of my favorite photographs in this collection was made in Queens.

I'd never been there before.

Three women stood outside a storefront, and I made the photograph while casually walking past.

With the Ricoh GR, I rarely need to raise the camera to my eye.

Looking down at the LCD gives me enough information to understand how the composition will align.

I often hold the camera low, press the shutter with my thumb, and photograph discreetly.

You can still create strong compositions without ever looking through a viewfinder.

The Ricoh makes that possible.

Don't Be Afraid to Engage

At Coney Island I noticed a couple dancing beneath the boardwalk.

Instead of staying distant, I walked over.

We talked.

I held their speaker while they danced.

Then I photographed the scene.

Being emotionally present changes the photographs you make.

You can engage with people and still come home with candid photographs.

Immediately afterward I found a group of boys playing basketball on the beach.

I'd never seen that before.

Again, curiosity led the way.

Photography Is a Visual Puzzle

Every photograph is a puzzle waiting to be solved.

Your position. The background. The timing. The gesture.

All of it has to come together.

For the basketball photograph, I dropped low so the player separated cleanly from the sky.

The hoop. The tower. The dunk.

Everything aligned because of where I positioned myself.

Layering begins with movement.

Instinct Matters Too

Not every photograph is carefully constructed.

When my brother and I arrived in Costa Rica, a local dog wandered near our Airbnb.

I instinctively lifted the camera and made the photograph.

Frames made from instinct often carry a different energy.

There's a balance between careful composition and immediate reaction.

Sometimes you solve the puzzle.

Sometimes you simply trust yourself.

Photograph Your Life

Costa Rica reminded me why I love photography.

My brother looking out the window before a storm.

The ocean.

The beach.

A tilted horizon.

A reflection in the car mirror.

These photographs matter because they're my life.

Looking back through them allows me to relive those memories.

That's the power of the visual diary.

Finding Meaning Through Abstraction

High-contrast black and white helps me simplify the world.

By exposing for highlights and allowing shadows to disappear, ordinary scenes become abstract and emotional.

A horse.

An insect.

A spider.

My brother juggling rocks against the sky.

Abstraction helps me find meaning in everyday life.

Learn the Light in Your City

One of my favorite places to photograph is Market Street in Philadelphia.

Around 5 PM, during certain times of the year, the light becomes incredible.

Knowing your city matters.

Know where the light falls.

Put the sun behind you.

Expose for the highlights.

Wait.

You don't always have to chase people.

Sometimes you simply stand still and allow gestures to arrive.

Everyday Moments Matter

I photographed my friends while we watched *Oppenheimer*.

The photograph happened the exact moment the atomic bomb exploded on screen.

Those small personal moments become part of the diary too.

So do the tunnels beneath City Hall.

I've photographed there countless times because the light is endlessly beautiful.

Sometimes I hold the camera high.

Sometimes I shoot vertically.

Sometimes I simply wait for people to enter the frame.

Fishing the scene.

Waiting for convergence.

Turn the Camera Around

Don't forget to photograph yourself.

I make self-portraits often.

They're part of the diary too.

Photography isn't only about documenting what life looks like.

It's about documenting **how life feels**.

Reflections.

Distorted windows.

Imperfections.

Atmosphere.

Mood.

These choices create a world that feels personal rather than objective.

Photograph What Brings You Joy

A discarded newspaper.

A couple riding a scooter.

A father and daughter.

Someone sitting alone in a park.

There is always something worth photographing.

The more consistently you go out, the more you'll begin recognizing recurring patterns.

Eventually those compositional decisions become instinctive.

Your eye develops naturally.

Photography becomes less about searching and more about seeing.

Thank you for watching.

If you'd like to print this body of work, you can find the **Flux Volume 4** PDF in the description.

You can also submit **36 photographs** through the Flux Generator for a chance to have your own issue reviewed here on the YouTube channel.

If you'd like to join the Flux community and our Discord, click the Join button below.

I'll see you in the next one.

Peace.