

Why I Stopped Creating for the Algorithm (And Found Joy Again)

What's poppin', people? It's Dante, currently walking along Penn's Landing here in Philadelphia.

Today I wanted to share some thoughts about creation, art, and the act of **not taking yourself too seriously as an artist**.

Seriousness Kills Joy

I think seriousness kills joy.

When you're creating with the mentality of *work*—when you're attached to making something important, building a project, chasing a theme, or forcing a narrative—you lose the spontaneity that made you want to create in the first place.

Even with street photography, it's easy to become obsessed with making *strong* photographs instead of simply responding to what's in front of you.

I think the real joy is found in:

- Curiosity
- Serendipity
- Unpredictability
- Play

When you're walking through the street making photographs or videos, cultivate your inner curiosity. Follow your gut. Follow what feels effortless.

Create from a place of abundance instead of obligation.

Become a Big Kid Again

I think that happens when you're no longer working.

You're simply playing.

Even right now I'm zooming into the water because I'm curious.

The reflections almost look like stars or galaxies.

There's something about this old CCD Handycam that resonates with me. The softness. The imperfections. The way 480p renders light.

It doesn't feel like I'm making content.

It feels like I'm making a memory.

Everything I Make Is a Visual Diary

I treat photography, videography, and everything I create as a **visual diary**.

A diary is simply a record of your everyday life.

Nothing more.

When you approach creation this way, you naturally find more things worth making.

The opposite is creating for an outcome.

The moment you decide exactly what something *should* become before you've even experienced it...

...the joy disappears.

The joy is in experimentation.

The joy is in chaos.

The joy is in trying something you've never done before.

Starting From Day One

Filming with this old Handycam has brought me back to being a beginner.

Every day feels like day one again.

And I think that's where joy lives.

Trying something new.

Changing.

Remaining open.

Why Video Feels Different

Lately I've been thinking a lot about the idea of the visual diary.

Photography has always been my language, but video feels different.

When I watch old footage, it resonates with me more deeply as memory.

A photograph leaves mystery.

Within those four corners, there are questions.

Video feels closer to reality.

The movement.

The sound.

The colour.

All of these elements combine into something that feels much closer to remembering than simply looking.

The Original Spirit of YouTube

I think about the very first video uploaded to YouTube.

"Me at the Zoo."

It's only about fifteen seconds long.

Jawed simply records himself at the zoo, talks briefly about elephants having long trunks, and the video ends.

That's it.

No hook.

No thumbnail strategy.

No algorithm.

Just someone preserving a moment.

There's something incredibly beautiful about that.

Imperfection Is the Aesthetic

The camera matters.

This Handycam reminds me of childhood home videos.

Like your dad filming family memories.

The tool itself shapes how the memory feels.

That's why I love imperfection.

Low resolution.

CCD artifacts.

Weird reflections.

480p.

High contrast.

Grain.

Black and white.

With the Ricoh GR, I intentionally embrace grit and imperfection because those qualities feel more honest to me.

They're closer to memory than perfection ever could be.

Even filming my face awkwardly close to the lens without worrying about composition...

That's part of it.

It's raw.

It's immediate.

It's real.

Remove External Validation

The only way you'll find your style is by removing the noise.

Likes.

Comments.

Metrics.

Performance.

Social media trains you to create for approval.

I don't want that.

That's why I disable likes and comments on my videos.

Everything I make exists because **I think it should exist.**

Nothing else.

I only create things that I personally want to see in the world.

That mindset changes everything.

You begin creating because making things feels good.

Not because you're expecting something back.

Nothing Can Stop You

That's how I feel now.

Nothing can stop me.

Because there's nobody left to please.

Creation has become something deeply personal.

It's simply how I cultivate joy in my everyday life.

I don't need something to go viral.

I don't need a sensation.

Life is short.

Why spend it chasing outcomes?

Create What You Actually Want to Create

If you want to start a YouTube channel...

Share the videos you genuinely want to make.

Don't make videos for the algorithm.

Don't make photographs because they'll perform well.

Trust your intuition.

Remove the judgment.

Forget what's trending.

Forget what gets clicks.

Create from your own perspective.

That's the only place your real voice exists.

Stop Consuming

I genuinely think the best thing you can do is disconnect.

Delete Instagram.

Unsubscribe from everybody on YouTube.

Stop consuming.

Start creating.

Because the moment you're creating instead of endlessly consuming...

...life becomes richer.

Consumption might inspire you for a moment.

But too much consumption becomes stagnation.

I don't want stagnation.

I want flow.

I want to move my body.

Experience life.

Notice things.

Record them.

Share them.

Then move on.

I Don't Need an Audience

I think this is why I'm here.

To create.

I don't need anyone to affirm that.

I affirm myself through making things.

I don't need millions of comments.

The only feedback that really matters comes from the people closest to me.

My mother.

My brother.

The people actually in my life.

Everything else...

They're just numbers on a screen.

Digital shadows.

Illusions.

Remember That Life Is Short

Recognize the impermanence of life.

Recognize that one day you'll die.

Oddly enough, that's liberating.

Because from that realization comes clarity.

You'll finally create what **you** want to create.

You'll find beauty in ordinary days.

You'll begin treating your life as something worth documenting.

That's all a visual diary really is.

Your perspective.

Your everyday experience.

Without worrying about where it ends up.

Just make things because you genuinely enjoy making them.

I'm gonna go.