Why Compact Cameras Are the Best for Street Photography

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

Today I wanted to share with you some thoughts about the compact digital camera. Here I've got the Ricoh GR IV Monochrome.

And yeah, essentially I just wanted to discuss **why the compact camera is the best camera for photography.**

Point and Shoot Without Hesitation

Very simply, you can freely point and shoot without hesitation.

With the compact camera, there is basically no decision-making needed. You don't have to worry about which camera to use, which lens to use, or what kind of camera you're going to bring out with you, because essentially you can just slip it in your pocket.

There are really no excuses.

When you have a camera that slips in your pocket and you don't have to make any decisions about which lens or camera to use, then you're freely able to shoot.

No Viewfinder Means More Freedom

I would say one of the biggest benefits of using a compact camera is the fact that there is no viewfinder.

The reason being, **I can photograph much more freely.**

If I had a viewfinder right now and I wanted to photograph this little lock here, do you really think I'm going to go up to this lock, put the camera to my eye, bend down, and try to focus closely on that thing?

Honestly, no.

But with the compact camera, I can hold the camera out at arm's length. I can throw this camera around. I can get extremely close to surfaces. I can simply drop it very low, go to macro mode, and photograph a detail from below.

> *There's something about the connection of the compact camera to your physical body on a wrist strap that completely transforms your practice as a photographer.*

It's unlike any other way of operating as a photographer.

You really can't get this experience with any other camera.

The Compact Camera Is a Path to Innovation

It's a very specific way of operating, and I believe it's the way forward.

As a photographer, I hope and would think you're looking to innovate. And I believe this kind of compact, small digital camera system is the path to innovation.

You can't really strip photography bare of any of the technical, superfluous things any further than a camera like this.

It's kind of just glued to your wrist, and all you have to do is **point and shoot some shit.**

It's really simple.

Because of that, I can throw the camera around freely. I can get extremely close to things. I can photograph people unobtrusively because it's very stealthy.

You almost appear like a tourist when you're shooting with this thing.

When you can see how small it is and how little real estate it takes up on your physical body, it's very liberating.

Stop Performing as a Photographer

To put the camera on your neck, wipe the lens down, and *be this photographer* becomes a chore.

Photography starts to feel like work when you adopt this identity of you being a photographer.

With a compact camera, you can integrate the practice with your everyday life without the burden of putting the camera on your neck and telling yourself:

> *Today I'm a photographer, and I'm going out there to make pictures.*

There's this act of putting the camera on the neck that becomes almost performative and distracting from the act of you actually living.

With the compact camera, what it provides you is this ability to just go out there and live your life and photograph whatever you find, photograph whatever you're experiencing, without this burden of performing as this photographer with the camera on the neck.

And I do believe that makes a huge difference.

The Camera Becomes an Extension of Your Body

I can photograph a subject walking toward me from an extremely low angle, and it's very easy for me to do so.

I don't have to drop to my knees.

I simply extend my arm to the left.

What happens when you're in tune with the camera like this is you can make photos in ways that you otherwise couldn't make.

For instance, I can hold the camera like a claw, with my thumb on the left and my index finger on the shutter on the right, and I can photograph to the left of me or even to the right of me by making quick adjustments.

I can hold the camera with my thumb underneath and adjust to a vertical composition with the flick of a wrist.

I don't have to do all of these strange acrobatics with the camera to get the shot.

I can quickly drop the camera to the right of me and make a photograph from the hip and know that things will align.

Because what happens when you're in tune with your camera is **you don't even need to look behind the screen.**

You can simply photograph freely and loosely.

Photography Becomes Instinctual

The compositions you make become much more intuitive and instinctual.

And the results actually showcase the way in which we engage with life, which is through the imperfections, through the spontaneous nature of the streets.

When you engage with the medium through photographing with a compact camera, you can much more easily and naturally evoke that feeling of the chaos of the streets because you're not perfectly lining everything up and putting the camera to your eye.

That's what makes it interesting.

5 Reasons the Compact Camera Is Superior

There are a lot of reasons why the compact camera is superior.

First, the most practical reason is the fact that it slips in your pocket.

Second, you can have it on a wrist strap and photograph much more intuitively and freely without the use of a viewfinder. You can become much more instinctive with your practice.

Third, the results become much more raw and spontaneous due to the fact that there is no viewfinder. Aesthetically, the imagery—especially if you're practicing street photography—becomes much more interesting.

Fourth, it's stealthy. It's extremely small, so you can be unobtrusive with the way that you're shooting. You essentially appear like a tourist.

Fifth, it's extremely simple.

You remove all decisions.

You have the lens that's attached to the camera. You don't have to worry about making the decision of which camera to use or putting a camera on your neck and making this whole identity around being a photographer.

You can just go out and live your life and not worry about the photography stuff.

> *Slip the camera in your pocket. If you see something, photograph something.*

I think that's extremely liberating.

Photography for the Rest of Your Life

For me, what the compact camera provides is this kind of longevity.

I kind of just want to keep photographing endlessly for the rest of my life.

And genuinely, **the camera can get in the way.**

When the camera gets out of your way and simply becomes an extension of yourself, and you can just live your life, that's where longevity is found.

It's found where there is no more work to be done.

There isn't this chore or burden of performing and photographing.

It's just seamlessly integrated with your day and with your life.

Then you can find yourself entering the flow state, enjoying the day, and photographing.

So yeah, those are some random thoughts about the compact camera that I had this morning. I just wanted to share with you what I'm thinking about candidly here.

If you enjoyed watching this video, thank you so much.

I'll see you soon.

Peace.