Why I Photograph the Same Streets Every Day

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

Check it out. Got the Ricoh GR IV Monochrome, snapshotting my way through life.

And today I wanted to talk about **why I photograph the same streets every single day.**

With Consistency Comes Mastery

Essentially, with repetition of returning to the same locations, you can improve your photography because **with consistency comes mastery**, right?

If you hit the same street, if you know where the light will be, if you understand the rhythm of the people on the street, and you go out there daily and do the same thing over and over again with repetition, it's obvious you're going to start to tap into your intuition.

Your instincts will kick in because you're eliminating all the decisions.

You no longer have to think about where you're going to go, what you're going to photograph, or how you're going to operate. You simply work with autopilot.

It's kind of simple.

> *If you just keep walking the same street over and over again, it's inevitable you're going to find something.*

It's just a matter of time, consistency, and repetition—showing up daily.

There's something about that which leads to mastery.

So yeah, I highly recommend: **find a route in your town and stick to it for a year. Stick to it for two years.**

Keep going out there and photograph that same corner, that same street, and you'll be surprised at what you find as you repeat that practice every single day.

Stop Looking for a Photograph

The other thing is to reshape the way that you're thinking about your approach to photography.

Instead of looking for a photograph, looking to tell a story, or being dependent upon the content in your frame being interesting or a subject being curious, start to think more about what's actually in your control.

Your own inner curiosity.

Your own ability to create something.

Then you'll start to thrive.

What I'm trying to say is:

> *Don't be dependent upon the external circumstances of the world to deliver you something to photograph. Look at everything intensely.*

On a practical level, slow down when you photograph.

Look at the textures on the walls. Look at the buildings up above and the shapes that are formed when two buildings converge. Look at how you can create an abstract geometric photograph through the use of shape and shadow.

Look at the simple things, like people walking, their feet, and their patterns.

Don't be overwhelmed by the fact that you're not seeing anything interesting.

Start walking slowly and start photographing.

Look at the way you can create a composition with the shapes of the wall, the textures above you, or what's beneath your feet.

Start to play the game in a new way where you're not dependent on anything externally.

What you're dependent upon is your own internal way of creating.

Put Order to the Chaos

The goal of the photographer is to articulate the unknown and to put order to the chaos out there on the streets.

You go out there on the street and you have this hope inside of you of finding something, but you're detached from the act of actually doing that.

You're detached from the fact that you're going to find something.

You embrace the unknown. You embrace the chaos.

Everything is out of your control.

But what's in your control is your ability to move your body, to have curiosity, and to place four corners around something to create something of order.

To create something that's legible.

To create something that's impactful.

I believe that's possible despite the external circumstances of you seeing something interesting.

Everything Is Photographable

I think that's one of the things a lot of street photographers specifically are challenged by.

You have this preconceived notion of what makes a great photo, or this preconceived idea of what you should make a photo of, and then you start to hesitate.

You don't even make any frames.

But if you just slow your body down and start to look around your town—looking beneath your feet, looking to your right and your left, scanning your head high, and changing your perspective internally—then that's going to reflect externally through the photographs you make.

Because ultimately, what we're really responsible for as photographers is **increasing our curiosity and remaining receptive and open to what's in front of us.**

I'm not dependent upon something around this corner being incredible or interesting.

I'm not dependent upon a character with an interesting facial expression.

I'm not dependent upon the light being good or bad.

I'm depending upon my own internal way of looking at life and how I feel about the world.

And that's what's going to put me in this place where everything is interesting.

Ultimately, everything is photographable.

Remember that.

You're responsible for your perception. You're responsible for your feeling towards life and your curiosity.

Reshape the way you think about this thing from going out there in the world and looking at the external world as something that needs to deliver you something.

Just start shooting.

It's actually so simple.

Thrive in the Mundane

You can look at the streets and think, *Oh, everyone's just walking from point A to point B. There's nothing to photograph today.*

It's like, well, that's you, man.

I see people walking on the street, looking at their phones, drinking their coffee, going to their jobs or whatever, and to me, that's interesting.

I thrive in the mundane.

Maybe it requires you to reorient your brain. Maybe it's neuroplasticity.

I feel like we're bombarded with so much technology and all this stuff that's interesting and spikes your dopamine. We sort of lose that receptivity to the basic, primal experience of life.

Just being outside under the sun.

Walking slowly.

Observing.

Finding everything to be interesting.

Obviously, this isn't an easy mindset to achieve, but I believe this is what's really necessary in order to thrive with longevity as a photographer and to keep going out there and photographing.

> *You can't be dependent on the external world being interesting. You have to be able to thrive in boredom.*

Tune Out the Noise

In order to achieve that, tune out all of the noise and all the distractions.

Stop consuming so much photography. Stop watching YouTube. Stop consuming for inspiration.

Tap into your own internal motivation, which is the movement of your body and being outside.

Then life becomes like a movie.

Life becomes like a video game.

There are so many surprises in the mundane nature of life.

What Will Reality Manifest to Be in a Photograph?

Maybe the most simple thing I can share with you before ending this is that when I'm personally photographing in mundane situations on these same streets each day, the simple question I have is:

> ***What will reality manifest to be in a photograph?***

I'm not dependent on reality and the world being interesting.

What I'm curious about is how the world will be rendered upon my camera sensor through the way the light emanates through the lens.

Life actually is a dream, and we can go beyond reality through the medium of photography.

I'm always surprised at what I find despite walking these same mundane streets each day.

That's the way I like to think about how I engage with life. That's what keeps me curious and keeps me coming back out here and photographing.

Think about what the world could be, not necessarily what it is, through your internal way of playing the game.

So yeah, that's my thought of the day.

Thanks for watching, and I'll see you soon.

Peace.