

Flux Archive 009 — Why You Should Photograph Your Hometown

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

Welcome to **Flux Archive Session Number 9**, where I look through another collection of photographs I've made recently.

These photographs were made between **September and October of 2023**, and this issue was created using my **Flux Generator**. You can upload 36 photographs and create your own chronologically sequenced, timestamped zine exactly like this.

If you enjoy this work, you can print the PDF at home using the link below.

Today I want to talk about something that's become central to my practice:

Photograph your hometown. Photograph wherever you are right now.

The Power of Familiar Streets

Every photograph in this issue was made in **Philadelphia**, the city where I was born and raised.

What's interesting about photographing your hometown is that, over time, you begin to understand it in a completely different way.

You know where the light arrives.

You know when people begin filling the streets.

You know the backgrounds.

You know the rhythm.

That familiarity allows you to stop thinking so much and simply respond to your instincts.

Repetition Creates Instinct

This photograph was made on Market Street.

I've walked this same street every day for years.

It's wide.

It's busy.

People are constantly moving between the shops, the bus stops, and the sidewalks.

Because I know the street so well, I was able to recognize the man with the phone, the person behind him near Dunkin', and the woman approaching from the right.

By positioning myself carefully, I could compress all of those elements into one frame.

That's the gift of repetition.

The more you return to the same place, the more naturally photographs begin revealing themselves.

Infinite Novelty

People often worry they'll become bored photographing the same streets.

I find the opposite.

Even though my surroundings become familiar, life itself never repeats.

Every day brings new gestures.

New people.

New light.

New possibilities.

The external location doesn't have to change.

Your sensitivity to life is what matters.

There's infinite novelty in the ordinary when you stay open.

Finding Your Rhythm

Returning to the same locations again and again helps you find your own rhythm as a photographer.

Moments begin arriving naturally.

You're no longer chasing photographs.

You're simply ready when they appear.

One moment it might be children playing with toy swords.

The next it's someone resting on a park bench.

The photographs come because you're present.

Photography as a Visual Diary

Photography has become my diary.

I'm making self-portraits.

Photographing the skyline from the train.

Recording ordinary moments throughout my day.

Doing this gives my life purpose.

It gives my days meaning.

And I think it's important to remember:

Photograph for yourself first.

Don't photograph for an audience.

Don't photograph for likes.

You're the person who will return home, print the work, and revisit those memories years from now.

Make photographs that matter to you.

Become the Archivist of Your City

Photographing Philadelphia has given me a much deeper appreciation for where I come from.

I think about the history of this city.

The people.

The neighborhoods.

The constant changes happening every day.

I like thinking of myself as an archivist.

Not because I'm documenting objective history, but because I'm preserving fleeting moments that may never exist again.

That simple mindset has given my practice enormous meaning.

Embrace Everyone

Street photography has taught me to embrace humanity.

I don't care who someone is.

Where they come from.

How they dress.

Whether they're walking out of church or covered in tattoos.

Photography has taught me to engage openly with everyone.

To start conversations.

To remain curious.

To approach people without judgment.

It's one of the greatest gifts this practice has given me.

Photograph Mood

Not every photograph has to tell a story.

Sometimes I'm simply chasing a feeling.

These photographs were made around Halloween.

Storm clouds.

Skeleton decorations.

Dark streets.

Simple gestures.

High-contrast black and white naturally creates mystery and drama.

Even an ordinary hand.

Someone making pretzels inside Reading Terminal Market.

Or light falling across a building can evoke emotion.

Light Never Repeats

One of the reasons I can photograph Philadelphia endlessly is because light is always changing.

Buildings remain the same.

The streets remain the same.

But light never does.

Every day the shadows move.

Clouds shift.

Weather changes.

Seasons arrive.

Photography is fundamentally unrepeatable.

That's what keeps me curious.

Finding Meaning in the Mundane

I often photograph the view outside my window.

The skyline.

Clouds rolling overhead.

Ordinary moments.

Some people would see nothing.

But photography has taught me to find infinite meaning inside everyday life.

The mundane is endlessly interesting when you're paying attention.

Be Patient

One photograph in this issue began with only two elements.

A skeleton graffiti face.

A police officer.

That was enough.

But I stayed.

As a bus passed, the advertisements and stripes aligned perfectly with the officer, adding something I never could have planned.

That's the reward for staying present.

The same thing happened outside Reading Terminal Market.

I noticed a woman on her phone.

Then another gesture appeared.

Then another.

The spontaneous interactions completed the photograph.

The surprises are always there.

You simply have to remain patient enough to receive them.

Walk the Same Streets

Today my practice is built around instinct.

That instinct came from repetition.

From walking the same streets.

From returning every day.

From trusting the process.

Eventually you stop thinking.

You simply photograph.

Time disappears.

You're completely present.

And somehow...

Even though you walk the exact same route every single day...

You never make the same photograph twice.

Your hometown contains infinite possibilities if you're willing to keep looking.

Thanks for joining me for **Flux Archive 009**.

If you'd like to create your own Flux zine, upload 36 photographs using the Flux Generator linked below.

If I enjoy the work, I may review it here on the YouTube channel.

Otherwise, I'll see you soon.

Peace.