

## **I Shot 36 Photos in 30 Minutes & Made a Zine**

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

I'm currently here in Bartram's Garden in West Philadelphia, shooting with the Ricoh GR4 Monochrome.

I'm going to be doing the ultimate challenge today of producing 36 photographs in under one hour, going home, and producing a zine.

So follow me along as we walk the trails in this beautiful park and make some photos.

### **Finding Beauty in the Small Details**

Right off the bat, what I'm really interested in photographing are these beautiful flowers.

There's so much beauty all around me already, and I'm starting to notice how I can isolate the flowers, underexposing and producing a beautiful, abstract image of these plants.

I'm currently using macro mode with the built-in 50mm crop mode and underexposing by 0.3 on the exposure compensation dial to create a more ethereal effect with the image, which essentially crushes the background into black and exposes for the highlights.

I'm also using the multi-segment metering mode today.

When I'm photographing, I like to think about the photograph and the composition itself almost like a visual puzzle.

Whether I'm photographing people on the street, inanimate things, or nature like flowers, I think about how I can relate different elements in the foreground and background to synthesize the composition.

Horizontal versus vertical is something I consider a lot.

With this composition specifically, I'm choosing to make a vertical frame, isolating this flower in the foreground and then showcasing that flower there in the background.

Using that vertical framing allows me to create hierarchy throughout the composition from foreground to background and isolate different elements.

When you're looking at life, don't just look at life as a horizontal plane. Think about how the camera orientation and the way that you place things can influence the photograph.

## **Photography Is the Art of Noticing**

I love the texture of these decaying leaves.

Wabi-sabi.

One of the things I love about macro mode is that it forces me to look at all these small details around me.

Right now, I'm looking at these beautiful leaves, the holes within them, and how these critters have been eating them. I want to make a photograph of this small detail because I find it to be very beautiful.

***Photography is all about the art of noticing.***

Ultimately, my goal as a photographer is to remain curious about things.

Whether I'm looking at people, light, gestures, forms, shapes, or even textures like the patterns of these beautiful leaves, there's so much intricacy and detail all around me.

When you're in a park like this, you might think, *Oh, it's mundane. It's boring.*

But ultimately, there's infinite novelty because everything around me is in flux and changing.

All of the beautiful flowers are decaying. Things are regrowing. Each season is changing.

I find that to be something really simple that fuels my curiosity: reminding myself that everything around me is changing and there's so much possibility in the mundane.

### **Photography as Life Affirmation**

I like to think about my philosophy and outlook on life generally as somebody who has biophilia.

I have a love for all natural things.

I love nature. I love people.

Surrounding myself in these spaces gives me this deep sense of appreciation for life generally, and I find that photography, for me, is an act of life affirmation and gratitude.

***With each click of the shutter, I'm simply saying yes to life and thank you for the day.***

Spending time in nature like this reminds me that the small details in life are what are most meaningful to me and most beautiful.

## **Look Down. Then Look Up.**

One pro tip when photographing anywhere, whether you're in a park, the city, or anywhere in between:

Look down beneath your feet.

Then look up above you into the sky.

There's something below you and there's something above you.

When your perspective opens to macro details or vast landscapes, you'll start to see differently.

Right now, I'm looking at this beautiful leaf upon the ground. I'm going to make a photograph of this thing from a very close perspective.

Then I'm going to look up above and look at the beautiful shapes formed between the trees and the canopy.

I'm using the crop mode built into the Ricoh to get close to the shapes that I'm interested in.

## **Darkness Creates Mystery**

The only setting that I typically touch is the exposure compensation when shooting high contrast.

Right now, I'm going to underexpose a little bit.

I'm looking toward this trail and seeking to make a more mysterious frame, where it almost looks like the trail is leading to nowhere.

I find that darkness in imagery can create mystery and even an emotional quality that can be evoked for the viewer.

As much as I'm looking at life and all of the things around me—the different objects, shapes, and forms—what I'm seeking to achieve through the imagery is an emotional impact on the viewer.

## **Photography Gets Me Into Reality**

One of the things that I love about photography is that it simply gets me out into the world, into reality.

That's what's so powerful about photography.

It requires you to physically get down low onto your knees and look at the leaves.

Look at all these things and find beauty all around you.

Whether you're looking out at a tree canopy or somewhere in your backyard, there's so much possibility in life generally.

I really do thank photography for reminding me of this fact.

***With photography, anything is possible. Photography, for me, becomes a superpower.***

I find such rich meaning in the act of simply noticing, exploring, and photographing.

## **Using Black and White to Create a New World**

One thing I want to talk about is light and how light can elevate a photograph.

Right now, we have pretty soft light. We don't even have dramatic light.

But by stripping away color and photographing in black and white, I can use abstraction as a solution to the problem of finding something in the seemingly nothing that's all around me.

I could simply look at this leaf and say, *Oh, it's just a leaf.*

But when I get down below to my feet and look at this thing using light, observing the different ways that light and shadow interact with this leaf, I can create a new world through photography.

That act alone is what's fueling me with curiosity to continue photographing.

## **You Don't Have to Travel Anywhere Special**

You really don't have to travel far or anywhere special to start photographing.

Don't be dependent upon the external world delivering you something.

Simply slow down.

Look beneath your feet.

Look all around you.

Start noticing.

At the end of the day, that's all we're responsible for as photographers: noticing and feeling deeply in the moment when we're photographing.

The more that you walk, slow down, and start noticing, the more you're going to start photographing.

## **Your Instincts Are Your Style**

A thought I have about style in photography is that style doesn't arise through choosing color or choosing black and white.

Style arises when you cultivate your pure instinct.

The way that I set my camera up specifically gets me to a place where I'm no longer thinking and hesitating, but simply photographing from my pure instincts—from what I am noticing.

***Your instincts are your style.***

What you're drawn to through your intuition is ultimately your style.

Style isn't a decision of color versus black and white, or this kind of processing versus that kind of processing.

High-contrast black and white, for me, is a solution to photography where I'm no longer thinking about processing. I'm no longer thinking and hesitating about my camera settings.

I simply start photographing.

The practice that I've developed has gotten me to this place where I'm no longer in my mind, but I'm in my physical body, responding to my pure instincts, noticing things, and simply photographing.

Over time, with the consistency compounding through practice, you'll find your authentic expression.

But it will only arise through time spent cultivating your instincts.

**Don't Box Yourself Into One Genre**

As a street photographer who's been photographing humanity, traveling the world, and telling stories, I'm trying to unlock myself from the shackles of what street photography is and simply start photographing from my pure instincts.

Following my childlike curiosity and going to the places that I like to be—nature, parks, sometimes the streets, photographing people—is allowing me to creatively thrive.

One myth I want to challenge is that you have to box yourself into only one genre or one way of thinking about photography.

Unlock more possibilities through photography by tapping into your childlike curiosity.

Some days my childlike curiosity has me coming out into the park to play.

That's just where I happen to be today.

I'm not worrying about only photographing a particular subject matter or pigeonholing myself into practicing street photography.

I'm currently looking at nature, looking at plants, and finding possibility in my photography.

I'm not boxing myself into any limiting beliefs of what I believe a photographer should be.

## **Photography as a Visual Diary**

One thing that has been allowing me to flourish creatively is honestly photographing everything.

I simply treat photography as a visual diary of my day.

When I'm out here walking and photographing, honestly, I don't have anything to say.

What will be said will be said through the photography.

By treating photography as a visual diary, I'm merely bringing my camera for the ride and photographing throughout my everyday life.

I'm no longer hunting.

I'm no longer striving or searching for photographs.

I'm experiencing life while simultaneously making photographs.

The pressure of performance and finding great photos can become a burden and a chore. It can make photography less fun.

But if you simply enjoy stepping out into the sun, going for a walk, and photographing what you find without the burden and pressure of performance, you'll start to find more joy in your life.

Don't worry about what the photographs mean.

Don't worry if there's no deep underlying meaning.

***Simply use photography as a way for you to stay connected, grounded, and grateful for life.***

## **Everything Is in Flux**

As we go into this new season, we have fall approaching. It's the end of September, and as the season is changing, I'm simply noticing these simple things.

The leaves beneath my feet.

The decaying matter all around me.

Change, I think, is a good thing.

To be in flux, to be in change—this, to me, is where pure happiness is found.

For me to confine myself to only being a street photographer and only photographing people would honestly become a complete bore.

Photography would become a chore if I continued forcing myself to perform in a certain way.

Going into the winter season this year, remind yourself as a photographer to change, to evolve, to photograph, and to experience new things.

### **36 Frames Complete**

I just finished the 36th frame on today's beautiful photo walk here in Bartram's Garden.

Not much light. Pretty cloudy day. Fall is coming soon.

But it reminds me that there's infinite potential all around me.

Despite whether or not the light is great, despite whether or not I find something extravagant or some spectacular scene to photograph, I find that my curiosity is what's guiding me.

Through surrounding myself in nature, going on these small hikes, and photographing these small details, I'm simply fueling my love for life.

Ultimately, that's what I want my photography to be:

***A direct reflection of my gratitude and appreciation for life itself.***

Through these images, I hope you can feel that presence in the pictures.

Now we're going to return home to my studio, go through the work, and create the full zine.

### **Turning 36 Photographs Into a Zine**

I just got home from making photographs at Bartram's Garden, and I'm currently on the iPad Pro.

I finished going through all of the photographs and added them to a folder in the built-in Photos app.

Now I'm ready to create the zine.

All you have to do is visit the link in the description for the Flux Issue Generator.

Give the issue a title, add your name, and then click the area where it tells you to drop 36 photographs.

Go to your photo library, select the photographs that you would like to include in the zine, and click **Generate Flux Issue PDF**.

It automatically compresses the images, gathers the metadata from each individual image, and timestamps and sequences the zine chronologically.

The photograph is captioned with the time, date, and your name. There's also an issue or sequence number at the top right with the title of the work.

In the back, there's a simple contact sheet alongside a manifest document with each individual photograph.

Then all I'm left to do is print the work.

You can also submit this work for review. Add the title, your email, the location and date, and a little description of the photographs you made.

I can receive the work you create, print it at home, and review it here on my YouTube channel.

I'm looking forward to seeing your submissions.

## **The Final Zine**

Here we have the final zine.

This is the cover: **Bartram's Garden**, with the date and my name.

I store all of the work inside these manila folders, and it's the final touch to completing my zine.

As you flip the work open, we have the protocol page, basically describing what Flux is and how the zines are made.

Then we have the first photograph on the right-hand side, exposing for the highlights of these beautiful flowers and crushing the shadows in the background.

Today, I'm thinking about how photography is all about curiosity.

The goal of the photographer, I believe, is to increase your curiosity.

To be in the moment.

To be aware.

To be present.

To be engaged with your surroundings.

Because there's infinite possibility for your photography despite where you may be in the world.

## **The Audacity to Find Meaning in the Mundane**

Today's example is me walking through Bartram's Garden on this very mundane day where there was no striking light.

It was a very cloudy day.

But I'm still looking closely and feeling deeply when I'm in the moment making pictures of things.

I'm looking beneath my feet.

I'm looking at the leaves.

I'm gazing up at the tree canopy.

By removing this goal of making great photos—or even removing a preconceived notion of what I should be making photos of—I simply enter the flow state of making new work.

When I'm in the park, I'm in a very typical location.

You too can find yourself in a location similar to this and make work.

It requires curiosity, however.

***It requires the audacity to find meaning in the mundane.***

I believe that's something we can all achieve.

I wanted this video to be a reminder that there's something beautiful outside of your window.

It requires you to go out there and step into the flow.

Step into that stream of becoming through clicking the shutter, through making work, through saying yes to life.

To me, that's what photography is all about.

It's not about the outcome of these images being great or leaving a sensational response on a viewer.

It's about the way photography gets me closer to life and engaged with reality.

That's why I'm so grateful for this practice of making photographs.

It keeps me grounded in the now.

### **36 Photographs in Under Half an Hour**

The back of each zine has a contact sheet and a manifest document describing each individual photograph.

I started photographing at 4:50 and finished photographing at 5:28.

So this work was made in under an hour.

36 pictures, an automatically generated zine, chronologically timestamped and sequenced, using very accessible materials: printer paper and a laser printer.

You too can participate in this practice.

I'm looking forward to seeing your submissions.

Please use the link in the description to generate your own issue and submit the work to me.

With that being said, thank you for watching, and I will see you in the next video.

Peace.