Flux Archive 021 — Quantity Creates Quality

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

Welcome to today's Flux Archive Session Number 21, where we look at some of the photographs that I've made along my black-and-white photography journey.

Today we're looking at photographs made from September to December of 2024.

Today I wanted to discuss how, by not making single images, by not focusing on creating single images, and detaching myself from the act of making a single great image, I've ironically been able to create much stronger single images.

Your Next Picture Is Your Best Picture

When I'm out there photographing these days, I'm not photographing with the hopes of finding my next best picture.

I use photography as life affirmation.

> ***With each click of the shutter, I'm simply affirming that my next picture is my best picture.***

What that looks like is waking up and clicking the shutter.

Moving on to the next one.

Not dwelling on a single image.

Not looking for something specific.

Not checking off boxes with a theme or any project, really.

I'm just living my life, photographing what I find, and allowing this stream of images —of clicking the shutter more—to then deliver those single images that we're ultimately looking for.

Be Ready and Be Out There

This is a photograph I made during my lunch break at work, working in the park.

I went to this little area where I like to hike or sit underneath a tree, and I discovered this woman brushing her hair and bathing in the stream.

I don't know how I even stumbled across this other than simply being ready and being out there living my life.

Similar to this scene of this man being arrested by the police.

I wasn't out there looking for something interesting.

I wasn't out there looking for something with impact.

I was just photographing and walking.

I stumbled across it and put myself in a place where I could make this impactful frame.

I had the courage to get close to the scene.

You can see the juxtaposition of the man smiling as he's being arrested as they cause havoc in the City Hall streets, and this man who is also being arrested on the ground.

These things simply emerge while I'm out there.

Photograph Everything

As I'm out there photographing, I'm not just photographing gestures and extravagant scenes.

I'm looking beneath my feet.

I'm photographing cigarette butts.

You can see that these images can be strong on their own. They can have visual impact.

I'm engaging with humanity.

I'm getting close.

I'm layering a scene.

I'm finding decisive moments and interesting characters.

But I'm simultaneously just snapshotting.

I'm snapshotting through the day.

I'm chipping away.

I'm photographing the scene.

I'm photographing the cigarette butt.

I'm looking at people and photographing details.

There Is No Hierarchy

Here we have a scene outside of a hospital.

As they're coming out of the hospital, this man is in his wheelchair and he's going to give his partner a cigarette. They have these extravagant clothes and this interesting leopard pattern.

I'm simply immersed in these moments.

I'm not treating one moment over the other.

> ***I'm not photographing with this hierarchy of, "This image is better than the next."***

I'm not thinking that this image is a single image or that this image deserves more praise or attention.

I see a pigeon fly by.

I look up.

I grab the shot quickly.

I move on.

I enter Reading Terminal.

I see a smile.

I photograph that thing.

I'm collecting images.

What If You Never Saw the Photographs?

I'm out there photographing everything, allowing myself to be detached from the outcome of the photography almost to a radical place.

I imagine:

What if I photographed each day and never actually looked back at these photographs?

What if I never got to see the imagery?

Would I continue photographing?

I think from that state of radical detachment from the outcome, I just start photographing.

And because I'm continuously photographing, I then find these interesting single images that can stand on their own.

Stay in the Flow of Making Pictures

The goal is to be in the flow of making more pictures.

The goal is to be in that state of being where photography is effortless and easy.

You're simply clicking the shutter throughout your day, throughout your week, throughout the month, throughout the year, throughout your lifetime.

You're not worrying about the outcome of whether or not the image will be good.

Because when you collect a stream of pictures, put them together in a book, and look at the way that you explored the world, I believe the collection of images is much more interesting than any single image.

> ***Don't get caught up looking for the interesting scene. Just keep photographing.***

When you see light and shadow play interact with the silhouette at a scene, make the photo.

When you're driving through Lancaster, Pennsylvania, going to a farm, photograph out the window.

Photograph the trees.

Don't stop.

Never Stop Your Practice

I'm nonstop.

I'm not stopping my practice because there isn't something interesting.

I'm continuously photographing wherever I may be, whether on the street or by the river.

I think that's an incredibly important message.

If you're limiting yourself and your practice to only photographing when the light is just right, or only photographing when you have the time, or only photographing because you have a theme or a reason why, it's going to limit your ability to then make those single images.

If you're always on, always photographing, always ready, you'll be surprised at what happens when these photographs align.

You'll start to see your voice come together and emerge naturally through photographing.

Through snapshotting daily.

Through waking up in the morning.

Through commuting on the bus to work and photographing a moment in the shadows as somebody listens to music on their speaker.

Through looking at a woman carrying her child on the bustling streets of Chestnut Street in Philly.

I'm always ready.

I'm always prepared.

Quantity Is More Important Than Quality

Because I'm accumulating so much imagery, it's inevitable that I come home with single images and something interesting.

Quantity is much more important than quality.

The quality you can extract.

But the only way to achieve that is through clicking the shutter, putting the reps in, and putting in quantity first.

The Garden of Eden in Love Park

Here we have a scene that I believe to be one of my favorite photographs from Philadelphia so far.

We have this beautiful scene in Love Park.

There's this man holding his snake named Athena, this woman going to pet the snake, and then City Hall.

It's a very geometric, graphic shape of the different elements in the scene.

It's like we're in the Garden of Eden mixed with the *Creation of Adam* from Michelangelo.

That's how I like to think of it.

My brother pointed out that the shape almost looks like the Philadelphia Phillies P with that sort of snake loop.

I printed this photograph as stickers that I carry around with me and give to people.

I also printed it on a shirt.

It's one of my favorite photographs because it's so graphic, easily readable, and showcases an iconic moment from Philly.

It's almost like a biblical scene.

At least that's how I'm interpreting this thing.

Stay in the Mode of Production

Here we have the Day of the Dead.

A playful interaction.

A father with his children on the street.

Some police.

I'm just accumulating imagery.

I'm staying in the mode of production daily.

I think that's really what we're in control of as photographers.

We're in control of walking.

Moving.

Photographing.

Noticing.

We're not in control of whether or not we see something interesting.

We're not in control of whether or not we make a great photograph.

Remember that and detach.

Detach from the outcome of the imagery and just start making new images.

Through that slog and stream of images that you create, you'll start to extract those single frames that are great.

The Only Way to Quality Is Through Quantity

That's the simple message of the day.

The only way to get to quality is through quantity.

It's through clicking the shutter.

It's through being out there and making new work.

It's through not hesitating or debating on whether or not something is worth photographing.

Just shoot it. Think about it later.

Here's the contact sheet at the back.

At the beginning of the Flux Issue, we have the generator or protocol page.

If you'd like to create your own Flux Issue and submit the work to me, visit the Flux Generator linked in the description.

Upload 36 JPEG files. The system will read the timestamps, preserve the chronological order of the work, and generate an issue PDF just like this one that you can print out and share at home or submit directly to me.

If I enjoy the work, I'll add it to the Flux catalog, print it out myself, and do a video commentary on my YouTube channel highlighting your work.

I would love to see something that you create using this Flux system.

Otherwise, if you'd like to join the Flux Discord server community, click the Join button on the YouTube channel and you'll receive a link to join that community.

That's pretty much all I wanted to say today.

Thank you for watching today's video.

I'll see you soon.

Peace.