



10 Minutes After Midnight 2015

Infrared flash photo (Candid)

by Daniel D. Teoli Jr.

Artist's Statement: Daniel D. Teoli Jr.

I'm not much for artist's statements. I feel the photo should be able to stand on its own and not need a chapter of esoteric bullshit to justify it. Neither am I one to write or hire authors to write long justifications and explanation for my books. My photo illustrated artist's books are well known for their economy of text. But everyone is not visually oriented and the intellectuals like to see some words, so let me give it a go.

If I had to sum up my interest in photography...it must stem from a liking to being able to 'freeze time.' Cartier-Bresson described how many a street photographer feels when at large..."I prowled the streets all day, feeling very sprung-up and ready to pounce, determined to 'trap' life – to preserve life in the act of living."

And that pretty much describes me to a proverbial 'T.' As an example, when working the subway in NYC I generally hop on the first or last car and at every stop I move to the next car to have a fresh look at the world with the hope of finding something interesting to document.

Now, combine that frantic need to see and record with a dose of Elliott Erwitt..."I just take pictures and hope something comes out of it."

Erwitt's quote reminds me that luck is a big factor in getting that iconic shot and to try and keep a big ego in check. Street photographers are not cut from the same cloth as studio photographers or sunset specialists. With my type of work, having a big ego and being a little off your rocker helps get the shot when the need to shove your camera in some stranger's face at 2 AM arises. To do good street photography, societal conventions can not always be maintained.

Photography of all genres trains practitioners to concentrate their vision and see things the average person may overlook. Before I was a photographer, I would seldom look at the small details or focus on a subject for any length of time.

Now I notice the beauty of a weathered wall. I see potential for a photo in a dusty window screen. In short, photographers are always looking. We look at everything, visualizing play of light, composition, shapes, color, patterns and especially in my case people. For the social documentarian our work is based on humanity...people are our landscape!

There is something that transforms the snapshot into a photograph. A spark of alchemy the photographer uses that turns the ordinary photo into something that is worthy of a second look. That elusive transformation is what I set out to capture in my photography.

In a 1979 interview entitled Inside New York's Art World, artist Louise Nevelson said: "I think that when someone is willing to live and die for something...that means it is in the genes." That pretty much sums up the sacrifices that many an artist will go through in order to do their art – they are willing to live and die for their art. Whether painter, draftsman, photographer, writer, musician, sculptor, actor or poet, artists use their art as a way to see, interpret and make sense of their world.

If you're dedicated to your art and freezing time is in your blood, you **MUST** produce and keep producing, whether you have an outlet or not to make \$...or even have any practical use for your output. Irrespective of recognition, fame and riches, we all have one thing in common...as long as we can keep pressing the button and freeze time, we feel the better for it.



Faces of Gentrification 2013
by Daniel D.Teoli Jr.

Daniel D.Teoli Jr. December 23, 2019