

NO TRUTH IN PHOTOGRAPHY; ALL IS ALLOWED

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Dear friend,

Never let no pretentious photographer or artist or teacher force you how to make or present pictures.

Ultimately, you have complete autonomy on how and why you make pictures.

1. Learn from the masters, then pave your own path

First of all, I think it is good to study the masters of photography. Why? We all need a strong foundation to start off with... in terms of our visual literacy. Before we learn how to write, we take grammar and writing classes. But once we want to make poetry, we throw all the rules out of the window.

You're a photographer poet. You make visual poems. So it's good to learn the visual lexicon and vocabulary of pictures, but once you have mastered the fundamentals... fuck all the "rules."

2. Why don't we have visual faith in ourselves?

For myself, I know that I was a slave to the thoughts of other photographers and artists for too long. I wasn't bold or strong enough to follow my own voice and inner conviction as an artist.

I do know that once I was able to master the ideas of the masters who came before me... I realized— they were just normal humans like me and you. And that they weren't perfect. In fact, a lot of them made a lot of bad pictures, you just don't see them. Because they have been edited out by time, or edited out by "professional" book editors. Many masters of photography had pretty shitty

family and personal lives, with a lot of inner drama. I don't envy them. I don't envy any other photographer. I only follow myself how, my vision, and my stubborn artistic aesthetics.

3. Always be skeptical to the teachings and ideas of others

I want you to always be skeptical. Be skeptical of ERIC KIM and all these other bloggers, folks on the internet, etc. Always be skeptical of “teachers” in photography and art. Many of them teach out of spite and resentment— because they were “failed artists” who needed to teach to make a living. Or they just feel bitter that they weren't able to make a living purely from their pictures. They see teaching as an unwholesome, dirty thing they gotta do in order to put food on the table and pay rent.

4. There are no ultimate rules or “truth” about photography

There are no rules in photography. Only tips, suggestions, and ideas.

There has not been any ultimate “truth” about photography or art which has been discovered. There are some visual explorers who have paved the path for us, and we must learn what they learned. But we cannot be satisfied. Because they discovered (some) of the truth for themselves... but you haven't found the truth of photography for YOURSELF.

5. Never stop visually exploring

The more I shoot pictures, think of visual images, and philosophize... the less I realize I know.

I'm excited. I'm like a space explorer, and there is the vast visual nebula which coaxes me forward... to explore.

Therefore in your photography, never stop learning. Keep learning from the great master photographers from the past, from other visual artists, philosophers, and anyone.

And ultimately, **seek to make your own rules of photography for yourself.** And realize there are no “ultimate” or “universal” truths of photography or art that can be applied to EVERYONE on the planet. Why, that would be “visual tyranny”— one “enlightened photography tyrant” trying to force everyone to follow their way of shooting pictures.

So friend, cast off your iron chains of visual oppression. Put on your visual jetpack, and let's both soar.

BE STRONG and BE CREATIVE EVERY DAY! ERIC