

## KING OF THE STREETS

The other day, I was with Seneca, and went on a big adventure. We stopped by the central library in downtown LA, quite magnificent! Pro tip; if you drive to downtown LA, just park at the central public library, and as long as you have a valid Los Angeles public library card, it only costs one dollar with validation at the information desk for about two or three hours!

Anyways, what we ended up doing was exploring downtown LA a bit, visiting the Apple theater (great public bathrooms in the Apple building, in the Apple Store on the bottom level) , walking by my old stomping grounds far before Seneca was born, a bit on Hope Street and on Broadway in front of ilcafe -- tried to carry him and take him to santee alley in the fashion district, but it was a bit too hot, and there was another event happening at the library, so we decided to go next time.

Anyways, I ended up shooting a street photo that I was quite proud of; why? A dude covered in tattoos, smoking a cigarette hanging out by the curb in front of a muscle car, very cool scene! I put down Seneca for a second, grabbed my camera, picked up Seneca, looped around in front to get a better angle, shoot a few photos, And continued on.

Also, walking along Broadway, actually saw about four or five street furs all hanging out and shooting together! On Fujifilm X 100 cameras, and I think I saw a guy with the film Hasselblad X panoramic camera, and actually think he shot a photo of me and Seneca walking by! I thought to myself; he will be shocked, when he develops the film, to see that he shot a street photo of ERIC KIM and his kid in the wild! (I had a very very low brim on baseball cap covering my face).

Anyways, it was a very happy sight, seeing street photography alive great and well!

And also made me quite happy and proud of the seeds that I planted for a lot of street photographers of today. Certainly not every single practicing street photographer of today will not know exactly who I am; but I'm sure that the influential street photographers who are spreading the gospel of street photography today, have probably encountered my blog my work my YouTube videos, or my e-books one way or another.

## **The death of Slim Shady**

I was talking to a guy, who is also into rap and hip-hop music like me, and he told me that Eminem just put out a new album! I was quite shocked; and also very impressed because after all these years, ever since even I was a kid; I recall when I was a kid was by far the most popular musician, Eminem is still alive and well and making new music and albums! The best way to write who the greatest rapper is, the greatest of all time, the goat is simple;

*The greatest of all time is the most durable of all time, who will last the longest.  
Or whose name will live on the longest.*

After all is said and done, what remains? Names. First names and last names, or maybe even the last name.

Even quite funny, I took Seneca to public library event, close to the Otis school of design, and I met a mom and her two kids, and Elsa her husband who is also there... I told them that Seneca's name was Seneca, and the man lit up and said, "the Roman stoic philosopher?" I was shocked that he knew exactly who Seneca was, and we started chatting, and I later found out that he was actually a professor of ethics at Loyola Marymount University -- names last!

## **Make a good name for your kid**

And I think this is where names are so critical for your kid; a name signals a lot.

I think the simple strategy is to consider an individual of the past, or maybe still alive, preferably dead, who has had a major impact on your life. And as a consequence, name your kid in honor of that individual.

For example, if and when I have a second kid, I like Marcus Aurelius after Seneca, but there is too many Marcus, so maybe I'll just name the second kid Aurelius; weather boy or girl.

*"If you know you know!" - PUSHA T*

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## **The path forward**

I think to perpetually and always restart, fresh slate, carte blanche is the way. What this means is never let your past self dominate or tyranny over your present self, or even your potential future self.

What that means is let us say in the context of photography, and life in general... Don't be constrained to an old style, don't just be trying to slap the same old horse to do the same old tricks, do something new.

For example, when I see certain, simply imitating their own style, for their entire career... It becomes a bit boring.

For example, whenever I look at the work search photographers, and that their technique approach hasn't evolved at all in over 30 years, I find it pretty boring.

Much more interesting for artists who have allowed themselves to change and evolve.

For example, do you want to be a Charmander for your entire life? No! Ideally you want to evolve, find the fire stone, become the Charmeleon, then the Charizard!

Or do you want to be a magic car for your whole life? You want to evolve and become the Gyrados! And a random stoic thought; when others engage in annoying behavior, think of it like they are a Magikarp with splash; "It had no effect!" And you are a Golem.

## **random Pokémon thoughts**

If you're born in 1988, plus or -15 years, you're probably played Pokémon or watch the show at least once in your life. I am impressed; even today... Kids of two days still know what and who Pokémon is!

Maybe the best strategy is to think of yourself as the level 255 Snorlax; with the missing no hack -- your HP is 100,000, and when these annoying digits, try to attack you, they do damage, but it is only like 10 damage or something. Don't make a big deal out of it.

And also, whenever I meet people who look kind of my age, maybe a little bit older or younger, what I like to do is to ask him "who is your favorite Pokémon? Or who is your spirit Pokémon?"

Funny enough, this shows you a lot about somebody's personality their character, and their ethos.

For example, I'll never forget this moment; Ryan from backyard brew in Palo Alto asking me what my favorite animal was? And I responded "does it have to be real or not?" he then said no. And I told him Gyrados. and he knew exactly what that was, and then printed me a free bag of coffee beans with Gyarados on front! He will forever have my favor. And I also am quite certain that he is the person who actually coined and invented the notion of minimum viable product, MVP. I think one of his customers might've stole the idea from him.

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Anyways, let us take it back to economics, economic theory, business, capitalism in general.

### **being the number one person in your niche on the planet**

This is something I believe in the past; best to become number one in a small niche, a very specific niche, then even to be number two or three in a more general field.

For example, in photography, the sea is too big. I remember once, in the past, when I was living in East Lansing Michigan, and I just wanted to meet some random guitar, I attended a random photography meet up maybe somewhere in Lansing or Detroit or something, And there was about 15 photographers, and it was a very unpleasant experience. The guys were just into HDR, and we just talk about gear

and processing and all this boring stuff that I was not interested in. I've had the realization that having my personal interest in street photography specific... Even though we are off our first, we are like different beasts.

For example, even for car enthusiast, there is a lot of difference between somebody who is into trucks versus somebody who is into Lamborghinis. Or probably a huge difference between somebody who is into over landing somebody who is into drifting.

### **the planet is big enough**

The reason why I think thinking about niches is interesting is that honestly now that we have over 8 billion people on the planet, what that means is even for a small niche. It is quite a huge impact.

For example, if you think, about the whole pie... The whole field of photography is actually still quite small. Certainly everybody has an iPhone now, which means that everybody's interested in photography, but the field of people with standalone cameras or standalone digital cameras or standalone film cameras or whatever is still quite small. Does it matter? Not really.

For example, most people do not own a Lamborghini or a McLaren or even a cyber truck. But, being part of a small exclusive club, isn't this what people desire?

For example, whenever I meet people who are really into or film or whatever... And they don't know that I'm actually a photographer, or they don't know that I'm ERIC KIM... And I hear them opine about all this random films stuff, and they don't know that I have a black paint film like MP... I feel like I have a secret weapon or a secret power. It is almost like if you were talking to a car enthusiast, and they had no idea that you secretly had Lamborghini in your garage. Or if you need to Tesla dealership and the workers there had no idea that you already had a cyber truck. Or if you own \$10 million worth of Tesla stock, or if you were on the board of directors at Tesla or whatever.

Maybe I'm starting to think; best to just lie. The next time I step into a Tesla dealership, I'm just going to fly beneath the radar, and pretend like I am secretly on the board of directors, or a major partner etc. Same thing when going to an Apple Store.

### **Pick a fight**

Do you remember that one scene in fight club, in which Tyler Durden gives assignments, and one of them is actually to pick a fight with a random person? Maybe I'll start doing this more.

I think the thing that is insanely annoying is that people always try to punk on you, bully you, or have some sort of weird power trip complex, and they try to make you feel small.

Perhaps moving forward, I'm ain't Finna let nobody ever bully me or my kid ever again, and even if I have a .01% inkling that the person is trying to bully me, troll me, or push me around... I'm going to react Like a bad bull.

I think this is the annoying thing about service; that I suppose that end the day, I desire or I expect to be treated with great respect, maybe it is a result of my massive ego or whatever, and also I do fine... Because I am such a friendly jovial happy person, also because I am Asian American... People often treat me with less respect, when compared with others?

### **Throw out the race card or the sexiest card**

If you were Elon Musk, but maybe you had on a mask or you had on the disguise, and you stepped into a Tesla dealership, and let us say that your kid X was playing around on the Tesla cars, shoes on, touching stuff making a mess etc.... do you think that the employee would have the nerve to tell Elon to have his kids stop that?

Or, let us say that in fact, you built a library, or at least, you put \$100 million grant to fund the library renovation, and then some bad employee comes up to you, and tell you that you and your kid “must go” because he is crying?

A simple way of dealing with bad actors; I think it is a good idea to make a big fuss! Even if you are the bully, the bad guy, whatever.

I actually find a really really in raging, especially when I am inside a store and some minimum wage worker tries to size me up, like at the Lululemon store, not treating me with proper respect because I pull up dressed like a poor person?

I will still never forget when I pulled up to a Lululemon, complaining about one of my products which got ruined my shorts, and I was just wearing some sort of random military Campbell jacket, etc.... And the lady working there treated me with disrespect, assuming that I was the scammer or something because I didn't pull up looking like a rich person?

Perhaps then, the best response is to speak up, knee-jerk response, loud, take up space, make a big fuss, even if you're in the wrong.

*When in doubt, make a big fuss, even if you're wrong.*

## **Why?**

America is very bizarre; we are a bunch of passive aggressive wimps. For example, everyone always likes to complain about bad behavior, etc.... Yeah what will you all do is to complain about it in private, and we will never stand up for ourselves.

I think this is what people don't understand; people like to point the finger at “white people”, peoples XYZ whatever... But, truth be told, everyone is low-key insecure somewhere, and actually in fact, everyone is being bullied somewhere!

## **no more complaining victim mentality**

For example, whenever I visit a new public library, and I have a good experience, I'd like to give it a five star review. For example the town public library is fantastic, they have a brand new maker space, and also a massive Epson printer, and you could print one huge 20 x 30 poster print once a week?

Anyways, I read a random review that one patron, suspected racism because the person had a Jewish American last name?

And then I thought to myself; truth be told... I think the average American doesn't really know what a "Jewish" last name is. But, it was only once I became 34 years old that I started to learn that certain last names were Jewish?

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## **Vanity objects**

Even though I have not touched my film Leica MP camera for about five years, it is still a great vanity option that I'm so happy that I have, which I'll own forever, and pass down to Seneca, and have Seneca pass it down to his son, as infinitum. The film let go will be like the new family Rolex.

I said this in the past, but my personal thought is the only camera I could ever imagine lasting 300 years might be a film Leica mechanical camera. Either the film Leica MP, or even the film Leica MA, which has no mechanical things at all.

Should you buy a digital Leica? Probably not. In the year 2024; it is more of a vanity object rather than a practical one. Better to get the new Lumix S9 with the pancake lens, and just put your money into bitcoin.

Hats off to Ricoh Pentax for making that new film camera! Even in the year 2024!

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## **Bitcoin & street photography**

Everyone wants to make money, make money from their art their Fatar you whatever... But the old method of selling prints or whatever, is a very 19th-century idea. We live in the year 2024; shouldn't we think about the 22nd century and beyond?

The first thought, maybe the best way to just make money is just to put into bitcoin! One bitcoin hits \$1.3 million a coin, what that means is that your minimum wage job of today, will at least 10 X or 100 X from now.

Therefore from a simple monetary perspective, the very simple idea is just make money from bitcoin! And in terms of your photography and screw photography, just do it free; giveaway your photos for free as full resolution JPEG images, give away your information your e-books and your ideas for free, no need to monetize it!

I think monetization is simply a means of people who desire some sort of legitimacy from doing something, rather than thinking critically about their own self-worth?

For example, we tend to have this very very silly notion that somehow if you make money from something, and make a lot of money from something, you could essentially metricate your self-worth.

And it is true; the simplest way to judge somebody else is how many ones and zeros they got behind them.

But this becomes funny because how much of that is actually real money versus this fake notion of "net worth"?

For example, let us say that you meet the guy in the Lamborghini with the scissor doors, or the guy in the McLaren, or whatever hyper sports car of your dream etc.... What if that person is \$10 million in debt? Then his net value and his net worth is - \$10 million... Which means he is \$10 million poorer than you.

## **I fucking love this city!**

Almost a year in living in Culver City, I fucking love this city! best city of all time, certainly within the context of Los Angeles.

*There is no second best city after Culver City*

Beverly Hills sucks, Holby Hills sucks, 99.9% of LA sucks.

City is the only walkable city in LA, maybe even the whole West Coast? Even better than New York, because you don't have to take the subway everywhere.

*Culver City is the best city in America?*

Best weather, best people, best services, massively growing tech and entertainment industry, the future.

## **Building your name**

Your best asset is your first and last name. Make people remember it. Just be like James Bond.

*Bond, James Bond.*

Kim, ERIC KIM.

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