

PHOTO CAPITAL.

Something I've been meaning to write about and think about; capital, photo capital.

So the first question is, what is photo, why does it matter?

My first general thesis is that photography, digital photography, might be one of the most underrated innovations of all time. Let us consider how many domains it crosses, and why it is such a big deal:

First, the digital transformation of photography, from film photography to digital. I think most thinkers and individuals have not yet grafted how and why this is such a big deal;

For millennials like myself, or people who are born a little bit before or after me, I'm 36 and born in 1988, there certainly is an alert and romanticism of the past. Everyone reminisces about the "good old days", in which "life was simpler" etc.

however, a simple intervention: what if, the number one complication in our lives is not digital technology, not the Internet etc.... But something a little bit more unsuspecting; AirPods, AirPods pros, noise canceling headphones? I would actually make the arguments that noise canceling headphones might be the true menace to society, not iPhones, iPads, or screens.

People talk a lot about screen time, no. She is not screen time, the issue is maybe audio related?

For example, I don't own a pair of AirPods, I don't even own a pair of headphones anymore. Cindy has a pair of AirPods pros that my best man Justin got us, and this morning just listening to Michael sailor interview, with just one earbud, with the noise canceling AirPods pros, simply to listen to the interview without waking up my mom. Yet, the bizarre feeling; when I listen to the interview, it kind of put me in a weird alternate universe, in which I truly felt disconnected from the world and reality. It actually made me feel a little bit weird.

Disconnecting their AirPods, out of my ears, actually... I have another theory; isn't your ears, earlobes, sound, kind of related to your spatial sense surroundings of the environment?

My simple idea; if you want to become a better photographer, a more attuned person, just throw your AirPods in the trash.

Visual?

So Aristotle I think one said that our vision is actually more important than anything else that our first great delight on the planet is visual. Even though I'm a guitar for and visual artist, I would actually make the other case that actually... Your ears, and your hearing, might be 1000 times more important.

For example, let us consider how human beings learn, how they learn languages, speech patterns and communication, and how natural it is for children. To teach the child the alphabet how to read text, is actually very unnatural, a huge technological feat and innovation. However, for a child to learn how to speak a foreign language, simply by hearing the words intonations, the sing song rhythm, is 1000% natural.

for example, music, music tour ears. Even a one year-old child, who could barely stand, can listen to music rhythms and beats, and start dancing. Even send when he was about a year old, he already learned how to make beats on GarageBand both on the iPhone and iPad! He actually knew and learned how to sample and make beats, far before he was even able to speak!

So my first theory ; **music, voice, audio; might be more important than the visual?**

Then what?

Advancing this argument; if in fact, audio is more important than visual, then what are we to do as visual artist, photographers?

First, let us return to first principles, first principles thinking. My general idea is that photography and visual things are kind of unnatural. And this is where we make our art.

I think there's this one saying, maybe Aristotle, what nature fails to complete, man and art completes.

Art should best be stood as a novel invention and innovation technique and tool. For example, art and art making is unnatural. But then again a lot of things are unnatural, but certainly make life 1 trillion times better. For example, can you imagine living without electricity? Even one of my most new favorite inventions and innovations; the insane joy of having an in unit washer and dryer? In fact, all the washers and dryers on the planet can probably contribute 100,000 times more to the carbon footprint than all the bitcoin miners on the planet combined and maybe even multiplied by 10. Yet, ain't nobody rolling to get rid of washers and dryers.

And also something that people don't understand, I learned this from my architect friend ERIC, is that almost all buildings, made out of concrete and the such, these are all carbon products. It is almost impossible to build a modern day building without carbon derived materials. So unless you like living in a hut, munching on acorns, without running water Wi-Fi or electricity, maybe this faker signaling about reducing carbon emissions might be a wise idea.

The insanely phenomenal innovation of digital photography

OK let us do some simple math. Let us say conservatively, currently a roll of film is about 10 bucks, for Kodak PORTRA 400. Then assuming that you want someone else to process it and scan it for you, let us say that even on the cheap end, it is \$10 or \$15 for developed plus scan. This is then around \$20-\$25, for 36 exposures, or assuming you have that new Pentax half frame camera, you can squeeze out 72 exposures for about 20 bucks or 25 bucks.

No you can see how this can easily get expensive. Even if you shoot four rolls of film, that's around 100 bucks. That is insanely expensive.

And it adds up. Shooting film guitar for you, now that I am becoming wiser, a more keen economist, is the ultimate depreciating asset, and the easiest way to burn through all your money and capital.

It is kind of like purchasing a high performance car or vehicle that runs on premium gasoline; this might be the stupidest decision of all time. Why? Assuming you have a luxury Lexus SUV, you can easily blow \$500 a week on gas, which is maybe \$2000 a month on gas! Assuming that you put that money into bitcoin, and bitcoin goes from a \$1.3 trillion industry to \$130 trillion industry, you have at least 10 X gains ahead of you. So your \$2000 -- \$200,000 or \$200k a month! That's \$2.4M a year!

Becoming a profitable photographer

Everyone is in chase of profits. If you do not chase profits, you are a fool.

What is the easiest way to get profits? Simple; keep your expenses insanely insanely low, this is the key.

The number one rule in money finance and investing; simple, **just don't lose money!**

How does one lose money? There's 1 trillion ways to lose money;

First, equipment, gear, or never investments. They are the worst thing that causes you to bleed through your money.

If you want a really really great camera that will last you a very very long time, my current suggestion is get the Lumix S9 full frame camera, my personal thought is this body should be able to last you 5 to 10 years, and just get the 26 mm F8

pancake lens which only cost 200 bucks. The body is around 1500, the lens is about 200 bucks, so the whole set up (\$1700) should be able to set you up for a long time.

Or, just buy the cheapest smallest most affordable Fujifilm X camera, also just get a interchangeable lens system. There's a new XM-5 body, I think it's only about 800 bucks. And just get the cheapest pancake lens, which should be a little bit less than \$1000.

If you're a hobby photographer, on a budget, just get a used Ricoh GR digital camera, whatever generation suits your budget. I have already proven in 2017 that you could take insanely great photos on a Rico GR two camera, which was only \$600 at the time. And all the new Ricoh GR 3X cameras and beyond, are also insanely good. All around \$999 and below.

What's your telos?

Ultimately, with enough time meditation reflection and consideration, it all comes down to philosophy. The philosophy of photography, a concept that I pioneered maybe seven years ago.

Why does this matter? Ultimately you have to think about the purpose or end goal of things. For example I was looking at this new meta-quest augmented reality glasses that Facebook just put out, and I just watched it, scratching my head, looking at all this impressive technology advancements, and it just made no sense to me. Somewhat along the line, should have come in with a critical thought, and thought;

Is this something that people need and or want?

Kind of a bad thing is that nobody wants it, and also nobody needs it. Apple Vision Pro is an utter disaster, Steve Jobs would have never ever ever allowed to even go into development. Because Steve Jobs was a master mind and understanding the human psyche, human economics and proportions. Never forget the legend of the

original iPhone three; pioneer the iPhone three and the iPhone four and 4S to be used only with one hand, with your thumb being able to reach all sides of the screen without stretching. And then, after his tragic passing, all these greedy apple executives, trying to increase shareholder value, kept making the iPhone bigger and bigger, heavier fatter uglier, compromising design for the sake of “power“, inadvertently causing millions of people on the planet to get extreme carpal tunnel pain in their hands, and also, falling victim to this terrible cycle of constantly upgrading their iPhones, until no end.

In fact, I find Apple to be the new loanshark, the new evil presence, the new bank which preys on poor people.

For example, there’s all these plans now in which you could keep upgrading your iPhone, at a 0% premium, forever. This is terrible; Apple stimulate some sort of fake desire for a fake thing; which doesn’t have any true utility. Everyone knows this, even Apple employees know this. The whole place is a mess.

Even now, just go to any Apple Store, feel the vibes. What was once energetic, happy optimistic and friendly has gone dark, Muros, Molly, unfriendly and cold, terrible to go to.

Back in the day I used to be excited to go to the Apple store like a kid going to a candy shop. Now, I avoid the Apple Store like the plague; even the last time I went to the Apple store, simply to just buy a new iPhone Pro to test it out, I literally had to wait in line for about 30 minutes, Before anyone even attended to me, before I could even purchase my device?

And once again, the biggest benefit to go into a store in real life is you could sense the emotional energy of people. Everyone looked miserable, disgruntled, unhappy.

Choose hope

I think the reason why I am so enthusiastic about bitcoin, Michael sailor, micro strategy and like is that it is full of optimism, hope and happiness. Everyone is happy in the bitcoin community, smiling, optimistic joyful, happy, and everyone is part of the same emotional roller coaster.

And the whole bitcoin network is virtuous because if micro strategy turns into \$1 trillion company, the first bitcoin bank or the first bitcoin finances corporation, everyone wins! The price of bitcoin goes to 13 million a bitcoin, everyone wins. The hedge fund managers, the 80-year-old retired person with bitcoin spot ETFs, The individual bitcoin holders, people with the Coinbase account, even the crypto anarchists.

You know the sign of a good investment when both anarchists and traditional corporate capitalist can thrive together.

I actually had a thought, back when I bought bitcoin for only about six or \$7000 of bitcoin... A bitcoin could actually benefit photographers and street photographers, in terms of accepting payments in bitcoin, charging services in bitcoin, we're also figuring out how to use bitcoin, NFT's and wrapping it, maybe creating some sort of new economy for photography and art?

I also have this big idea, creating the first Satoshi and bitcoin back photo platform. ARS, arsbeta.com was my first stab at it; but the issue at the time was there was no real financial instrument backing it. Now that lightning has been invented on the bitcoin at work, the ideas of micro transactions with the Toshi's becomes a real reality; assuming that a single Satoshi is real money, but super super small, like a fraction of a penny; things become very interesting because there is a true financial stake here; real skin in the game.

For example, if every single time I liked your photo, but it cost me a single Satoshi, you would probably think twice about it. And if to follow somebody, cost you a Satoshi or gave us Satoshi to the photographer, or creator... This would be a big idea.

And also, the idea of a photo critique community, shout out to my friend Jun Goodhouse Kim, if commissioning somebody for a real photo critique would accept payments institutions, then, a real new economy could arise.

Currently the number one critical issue with Instagram is that it cost nothing, and the whole platform is being run by bots.

TikTok has become an interesting disruption; back to by mainly in China, and spyware, essentially China has been able to disrupt the social media industry of Instagram, essentially taking everything that America did well with vine, Twitter Instagram and Facebook and YouTube, Snapchat and Instagram stories and making it far better. Making it more entertaining addictive, more toxic?

Actually the number one reason I encourage everybody to delete TikTok, is that it might be the most toxic poisonous substance of them all; because they are a century backed by a low-key evil mainland Chinese corporation, there is zero incentive for the company, Bytedance to moderate or to delete dangerous videos concepts and ideas; the amount of conspiracy theories and weird stuff on TikTok is alarming, even to me. And also, I'm a little bit concerned about all of the unregulated things which are happening on TikTok, at least YouTube Google Facebook Amazon and the like try to do some level of content moderation, with TikTok there is none.

Assuming that Donald Trump gets elected president or whatever, the first thing he should do is probably ban TikTok. I almost find this to be a moral imperative; there is a terrible asymmetry here;

Why is it that America allows a Chinese corporation like TikTok to operate in America, but mainland China does not allow any tech company to operate on her shores?

Other stuff which are very scary; all of these video games like RIOT games and like, which once again are all run by mainland Chinese corporations, is essentially China's plan to indoctrinate the heart the souls and the minds of the youth. The best way to spread bad propaganda is through soft propaganda; soft coercion, through entertainment media and the like. Even a very very weird thing, watch Pacific Rim to the movie; I think they had some financing from a Shanghai backed venture capitalist fund or something; that paints China mainland China in a very favorable light? I recall watching this on an airplane and finding this to be an extremely bizarre thing.

Even apparently, the new Disney Mulan film the live action one, the main actress commended and praised the Hong Kong police for cracking down on the pro democracy student protesters?

And also, let us consider the biggest coward and pussy of them all, John Cena who had to publicly “apologize“, for calling either Taiwan or Tibet a country?

The same goes with any sort of NBA player, because there are so many people in mainland China who love basketball, even this one mainland China governmental official, who I met in Cambodia, super friendly and 100% fluent in English, told me that he named his first son Jordan, after Michael Jordan.

And this is what a lot of people who don't understand we have never traveled to; the Chinese is the mainland Chinese, the everyday person loves America, American culture, and would honestly prefer to be here than in mainland China. But capital controls, the oppressive government prevents that. And this is once again, why any rich and smart mainland Chinese person will send their kid to an Ivy League school in the states, And or prefer to buy property or homes in Vancouver, because living in China sucks. You don't want to be a billionaire in Shanghai or Beijing; the pollution itself will kill you.

Back to photography

Life without photography is not a life worth living. Or, **a life without photography would be a mistake.**

I think for myself, the biggest draw and appeal of photography is that it is the great antidote to things; the great antidote to joy, driving, happiness and the like.

For example, I still do believe that traveling is good for the soul; better to spend \$100,000 on traveling to planet, rather than buying a loser Tesla car. Or even a single-family home, I'm starting to think more and more, buying homes in America's a scam. Better to just buy bitcoin instead, and see your money 100X from here.

If I could tell you that buying \$1 million a bitcoin today, which is about 16 or 17 bitcoin, would grow to be 100 million in 21 years, and I could tell you this with 100% certain to you, would you do it? Of course! Only an idiot wouldn't.

But I think the problem is in America, even for us millennials, now that we're getting older, having kids etc.... Is that having physical property like a single-family home is the Apex of humanly worldly success in America. But this is a 20th century idea, The baby boomers and before then. Or Gen X. A 21st-century idea, in the year 2024 and beyond, is the digital transformation of property, or digital energy which is bitcoin.

Hope

No no no, the world is not going to explode, there will be no World War III, Bill Gates is not trying to inject 5G into your buttock, and control your soul. And no no no, mainland China is not a threat; I think China only has one military base somewhere in Africa, in America has maybe 1000? The power of the US Navy is maybe 10,000 X to that of mainland China, I think the whole red herring of China as a threat is just a distraction, maybe by the US government to encourage increased spending for military budgets. But we all know that nobody can mess with America, even if they wanted to.

Even Russia, the lame duck with loser Putin running the show, obviously Russia is losing. Putin, with his Shorty guy Napoleon complex, thought he could take over Ukraine, and obviously he cannot. And I think sooner or later the people will overthrow him, exile him, or who knows maybe even hang him? Like Marie Antoinette?

Now what?

Once again, photography might be the most democratizing force. For example, like a Camera is very profitable in mainland China, this is why like a Brazil was forced to take down the Tiananmen Square commercial. But the truth is difficult to hide; once you're rich mainland Chinese kid oligarch from a billionaire family goes to Harvard Yale Stanford UCLA UC Berkeley, and get access to Google or ChatGPT and Gmail; obviously they're going to discover the truth, and prefer to be in America than China. The only rich mainland Chinese kids who go back to China because they are strong armed by their rich families to come back to inherit the family business, obviously against their own will.

