Introduction

On these walls you'll find photographs from down the street and across the world and they all have a certain thing in common. Community. Whether they assert themselves in their point of view directly or subtly, the act of making a photograph on the street, dusty or otherwise, is an act of community, a subversive act of reflection on who we are, what we are doing, where we are going, and why.

It's been happening since the day the camera was invented. It has changed art forever. It has brought us together, changed politics, industry, life as we know it, and in some cases has helped stopped war. It's with us every moment of every day this community, this big giant street we all live on.

I'll start there.
Out In The Street - How it Began

Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre
1838 or 39 on the Boulevard de Temple in Paris. Famous for the man who’s boots are being brushed. (Top)

Constance Talbot
Yes, that Talbot. First woman to take a photograph in 1839 - a still life of a verse by Thomas Moore. I’ve included her husband’s photograph of Reading in 1845 (2nd from Top) First commercially published book was The Pencil of Nature from 1844.

James Presley Ball
Famous photographer who also happened to be African American, in the 1840’s was taught to shoot and process daguerrotypes in West Virginia by John B. Bailey, also a “freeman of color”. He is famous for photographs of Frederick Douglas and Ulysses S. Grant as well as Queen Victoria. He owned one of the “great galleries in the West…replete with elegance and beauty”, which opened in 1845 in Cincinnati, prestigious space with masterpiece furniture, plenty gold leaf, and even a piano. An article from the day the gallery showing 187 of his works. The gallery, by the way, showed paintings alongside photographs. One of those painters was considered the founder of the Ohio River Valley art form, Robert S. Duncanson, who retouched and colored photographs in Ball’s studio. He also happened to be African American. Ball established successful photography businesses in 9 states of the Union, before finally moving to Hawaii, where he died in 1904. In 1992, Swann Galleries sold an 1851 daguerreotype by Ball of three storefronts in Cincinnati for $63,800, which set a world record for highest price paid for a daguerreotype at auction.
Geneviève Élisabeth Disdéri/France
Known for her 28 views of Brest, published in 1856. She operated a photography studio in France for around 35 years. Ruins of St. Mathieu around 1849 or so. (Direct Right)

Sara Louise Judd
Daguerrotypes in Minnesota starting in 1848.

Charles Nègre
Waterseller, 1851 - First to perfect the techniques required to capture people in motion. (Below Left)

Francis Frith/Scotland
Photographed Egypt, Palestine, Numibia with collodian process even in hot and dusty conditions, which was major technically. (Above) And also Shakespeare’s residence as it appeared in 1850.

John Thomson/Scotland (1837-1921)
One of the first photographers to document Asia beginning in 1862 for 10 years including Angkor Wat in Cambodia. A pioneer of social documentary photojournalism, described as such most recently by Colin Westerbeck and Joel Meyerowitz in their definitive book Bystander: A History of Street Photography, which you should get. (Direct Right)

William Brady
Civil War, 1860’s - pre-Vietnam, non-embed
**Gustave Le Gray/France**

Palermo, 1860

Most important photographer of 19th century because he trained other such as Charles Nègre, Henri Le Secq, Nadar, Olympe Aguado, Maxime du Camp. (Middle Right, Prev Page)

**Oscar Gustave Rejlander** one of the most accomplished (pre computer/pre photoshop) montage photographers, in one case using 32 images and taking 6 weeks in a work called Two Ways of Life, 4 of which were purchased by Queen Victoria, despite depicting women as they actually appeared in those days, not idealized as was common on Victorian England. They are now lost. Reijlander taught Julia Margaret Cameron photography.

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**Alwina Gossauer 1841-1926**

Switzerland

She began making professional photographs in the early 1850’s in Switzerland and was a well-known photographer throughout her life. Gossauer was her maiden name, which she used after her husband was imprisoned, divorcing him and winning custody of her children. She taught her daughter Alwina and son Jean photography, and the name and family business was carried on well into the 1940’s. At her funeral in 1926 the pastor said she “was a fighter.”

Top: Rapperswil Main Sq, 1865

Middle: Her Studio, 1880

Below: The model camera she used.
Robert Wilfred Skeffington Lutwidge
1802-1872
A photographer beginning in the 1850’s, English barrister and a Commissioner in Lunacy, being a leading part of a drive to make Asylum’s less, shall we say, insanely run.

He taught his nephew Charles Lutwidge Dodgson photography, achieving 3000 photographs including some fairly famous ones, including of Charles Darwin before he quite after 24 years. During his photography career he was also a writer, with the pen name of Lewis Carroll, writing a little book called Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. Alas, his uncle and teacher, poor Mr. Lutwidge, died in 1873 when a patient in an asylum he was inspecting in Salisbury stabbed him in the head with an large nail, what we’d call today a shiv, during on of his regular inspections.

Sara Ladd began taking photographs of the people and landscapes around Portland, Oregon in the late 1900’s and became a part of the Photo-Secession began by Steiglitz around 1902. She was known for her gorgeous Columbia River photographs, which she developed in her friend and fellow photographer’s Lily White’s darkroom, which just happened to be on her houseboat, the Raysark.

Another was Jessie Tarbox Beals, began photographing around 1888, and became the first published female photojournalist - photographing at the Massachusetts State Prison, and first night photographer. As she put it, she had “the ability to hustle” and the tenacity to overcome gender barriers. (Below and Right)
Other photographers who were also developing the social aspects of photojournalism included Jacob Riis. (right)

The ultimate maverick, inspiring great love and great hatred in equal measures was Alfred Steiglitz, once described as the godfather of modern photography and another time one of the most important artists of the 20th century in terms of his influence. As we’ve seen from these previous examples of street photography 50 years or so before, I differ on the term “modern”, but that’s really not the point.

I would venture to say here and now that the most important thing we can do as artists is learn and teach, whether by example, by the stories in our work, other a combination of these. This is how we affect our community.
The artists Steiglitz introduced to the America and the world at his 291 Gallery (291 5th Avenue) and later American Place (on the 17th floor of a newly constructed skyscraper on 509 Madison Avenue at 53rd Street in NYC) include the following: O'Keefe, Matisse, Rodin, Henri Rousseau, Cézanne, Picasso, Brâncuși, and Duchamp - oh, and artists who happen to use a camera such as: Ansel Adams, Eliot Porter, Todd Webb, Edward Steichen and many many others.

Eight of the nine highest prices ever paid at auction for Stieglitz photographs (as of 2008) are images of Georgia O'Keeffe. The highest-priced photograph, a 1919 palladium print of Georgia O'Keeffe (Hands), realized US$1.47 million at auction in February 2006. At the same sale, Georgia O'Keeffe Nude, another 1919 print by Stieglitz, sold for $1.36 million. Here are a couple street photographs of the gallery around the time it opened in 1905, eventually becoming one of the most famous galleries in the world.

On the announcement of one of the exhibitions of his work later in life, Steiglitz said: "I was born in Hoboken. I am an American. Photography is my passion. The search for Truth my obsession."

What is less known is that he conditioned this statement by following it with these words:
PLEASE NOTE: In the above STATEMENT the following, fast becoming "obsolete", terms do not appear: ART, SCIENCE, BEAUTY, RELIGION, every ISM, ABSTRACTION, FORM, PLASTICITY, OBJECTIVITY, SUBJECTIVITY, OLD MASTERS, MODERN ART, PSYCHOANALYSIS, AESTHETICS, PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY, DEMOCRACY, CEZANNE, "291", PROHIBITION. The term TRUTH did creep in but it may be kicked out by any one.

An American Place

No formal press views
No cocktail parties
No special invitations
No advertising
No institutions
No isms
No theories
No game being played
Nothing asked of anyone who comes
No anything on the walls except what you see there
The doors of An American Place are ever open to all.

Finally, here is a quote from Steiglitz, which I feel directly reflects the act and the moment of making a street photograph that is fine art - as you see on the walls of this wonderful gallery here on West Adams Blvd., east of La Brea Blvd., just south of the 10 Fwy, called Muzeumm...

I have always been a great believer in today. Most people live either in the past or in the future, so that they really never live at all. So many people are busy worrying about the future of art or society, they have no time to preserve what is. Utopia is in the moment. Not in some future time, some other place, but in the here and now, or else it is nowhere.

My beginnings
I picked up a camera around the house where I lived. I was in a foster home and I didn’t want to be in the pictures. Eventually I realized I could see things differently, feel differently, with a camera in my hands. I began to take photography classes at my high school and met Anthony Lovette, the photography instructor there. In May of 1976, he said, we’re going to Hollywood to see Edmund Teske, and we went to one of Edmund’s infamous Photo Grabs on the first Sunday of that month.

Edmund Teske said a grammar school teacher sparked his interest in photography. Later he taught at the Bauhaus in Chicago with László Moholy Nagy, an assistant to Berenice Abbott in NY, becoming friends and working with Ansel Adams, Paul Strand, and later Frank Lloyd Wright. In LA he worked for Paramount Studios, then lived and worked in Studio Residence B on the property of Aline Barnsdall, throwing uninhibited parties that drew the likes of Anais Lin, Man Ray, George Cukor, and many others.
Later he taught with Aaron Siskind, Harry Callahan, Wynn Bullock, Jack Welpott, and Judy Dater, became friends with Jim Morrison of the Doors and became his favorite photographer for several albums, and then in May of 1976, as I mentioned, through my first photography teacher, Anthony Lovette, along with his present co-executor and photographer Nils Vidstrand who I went to high school with, I met the man, and over our 20 year friendship, he changed my life too.

Weston Naef wrote that Teske will "enter the history books as the grand master of a style of picture that is taken for granted now that computers have created ways to cut and paste images seamlessly."[5] Teske was given a posthumous retrospective at the J. Paul Getty Museum in 2004.

He taught me many things, both in the darkroom, such as technique he invented called duotone solarization, which is probably impossible to do anymore - unless you can find me some Kodabromide Grade 5 paper - and in the studio — how to be an artist every day, how to persevere, to never give up - ever. By watching him I also learned the challenges of the art world, even in the 1970’s, the problems were especially difficult because he was gay. I often had to make it clear that I was not.

Despite all of that, I loved the guy. He was a great man, dramatic, sometimes difficult, but a wonderfully funny, great artist who made art and taught art for over 60 years. He taught me so much, as I know he did so many others.

On the day of his memorial at Barnsdall Park, my old friend Larry Bump, the other executor of his estate, and I were talking as we were setting up the flowers or something for the service and Larry said, Uh, Juri, can you drive me to my studio right now? And I said sure. We raced down there - It was in downtown LA. - and so we finally get there. Larry runs in and runs back and says “I’ll drive”. So we’re weaving through LA traffic under the glare of a hot Sunday - just like this one - discussing Edmund, cracking ourselves up at times, and after a long pause for both of us to remember, I said “Sometimes I think I can hear him laughing, like right here and now, like he’s right here. It’s so weird.”

Larry looked at me and said, “He is.” I looked at him, puzzled. Larry says, “He’s right there between your legs.” I looked down. There was a box there. I looked up at him. Suddenly, it dawned on me.

He had forgotten the ashes.