

FLUX ACADEMY · A SCHOOL FOR SEEING

MODULE 7 · THE STREET

Get Close

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LESSON 036



Proximity Changes Everything

- Getting close isn't just physical — it's a philosophy
- Distance kills intimacy; proximity creates it
- Capa's rule still holds: not close enough



What You'll Walk Away With

- Understand the two dimensions of closeness: physical and emotional
- Know why proximity produces more impactful images
- Have practical tools to step in — today



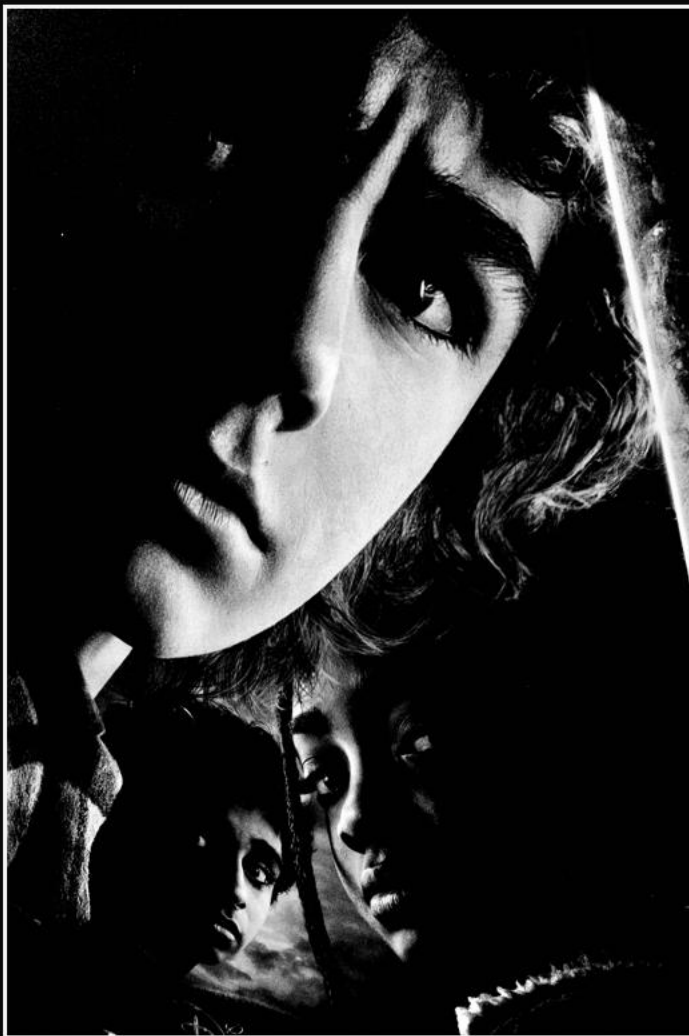
Distance Is the Enemy of Intimacy

- Telephoto distance removes the viewer from the moment
- Distractions fill the frame when you're far away
- Presence can't be faked in post



Fear Is the Real Distance

- The fear of confrontation keeps most photographers far
- Fear is part of the process — not a stop sign
- Courage is built through repetition, not waiting



What "Close" Actually Adds

- Impact — filling the frame makes it visually striking
- Authenticity — physical presence leads to genuine images
- Raw energy — gestures, emotion, and tension become visible
- Connection — the viewer feels like part of the moment



The Wide Lens Forces You In

- Use 28mm or 35mm — forces physical commitment
- Wide glass eliminates the telephoto escape hatch
- Zone focus or snap focus removes hesitation at close range



Proximity Lets Foreground and Background Speak

- A calm foreground figure, a charged event unfolding behind them
- Getting physically close lets you emphasize the foreground
- The two layers together — the mundane and the dramatic — carry the story



Details Cut Through Chaos

- A crowded, chaotic scene can overwhelm the frame
- Getting close creates order — skin, eyes, small gestures
- The real emotion lives in the details



The Deepest Moments Are Earned, Not Hunted

- The most intimate scenes — grief, ritual, private emotion — demand trust
- Get physically low and level with your subject, but only once you belong there
- Time with a community comes before the camera does



Immerse Until You Become Invisible

- Don't just pass through a place — live inside its daily rhythm
- Share meals, share space, share time with the people there
- Trust built over time lets you photograph the everyday, unguarded moment



Curiosity Comes Before the Camera

- Spend real time with a person before you photograph them
- Lead with genuine interest in what they're doing, not the shot
- Care that's real gets sensed — and it opens the frame



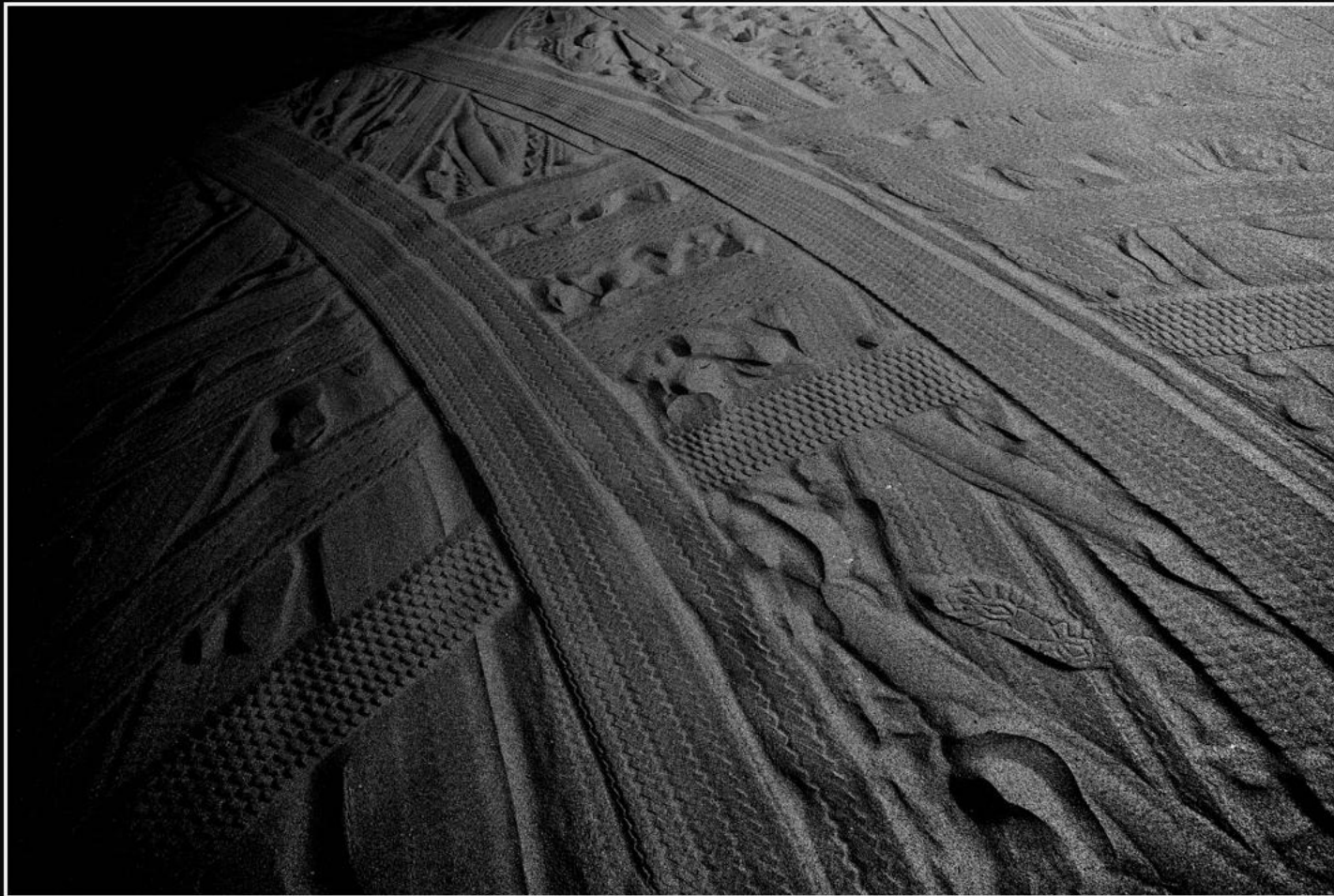
Say Yes to the Invitation

- When a stranger offers hospitality, accept it
- Sit, stay present, don't rush to the next scene
- The intimate frame is a byproduct of the connection, not the goal



Move With Confidence, Not Hesitation

- If you hesitate, people sense your uncertainty
- Don't hide the camera — be open with your intentions
- Confidence removes the awkwardness of being close



Play and Connection Go Together

- Come upon people at work — and joke with them before you shoot
- Connection through humor opens the scene naturally
- Go out in the spirit of play, like a big kid



Crowds Make It Easier

- Busy events: parades, protests, festivals
- Crowds give you cover — cameras are expected
- Use high-energy environments to train your closeness muscle



What's the Worst That Can Happen?

- Detach from outcome — the fear is almost always bigger than the reality
- Pretend you're photographing the background
- Get uncomfortably close — then go one step closer



Ten Close Shots Per Outing

- Set a simple rule: 10 close-up shots minimum per session
- No skipping, no excuses — just step in
- Volume trains the muscle; repetition kills the fear



Build Emotional Closeness Before the Camera

- Have a conversation before raising the camera
- Spend time in a location — return again and again
- Be a fly on the wall: immerse, don't interfere



The Instax Connection Tool

- Carry a Fujifilm Instax — give prints to strangers
- Gifting prints opens doors and builds trust fast
- Especially effective with elders, children, and tight-knit communities



Confusing Aggression With Closeness

- Getting close $\neq$ shoving a camera in someone's face
- Bruce Gilden's style is one flavor — not the whole definition
- Connection and immersion, not confrontation



Thinking Physical Distance Is the Only Problem

- You can be two feet away and still emotionally distant
- The photograph reveals whether you were truly present
- Emotional closeness is the hidden ingredient



Building on Fearless Shooting

- Lesson 035 removed the limits on what to shoot
- Getting close is the natural physical expression of that fearlessness
- No limits on subjects → no limits on proximity either



Step In. Every Time.

- Two kinds of closeness: physical and emotional — you need both
- Fear shrinks through repetition, not waiting
- The world only reveals itself to those who step in