



# DEVELOPING BACKWARDS

WRITTEN BY  
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**‘THOSE WHO  
ARE TRULY  
CONTEMPORARY,  
WHO  
TRULY BELONG  
TO THEIR TIME,  
ARE THOSE WHO  
NEITHER  
PERFECTLY  
COINCIDE WITH IT  
NOR ADJUST  
THEMSELVES TO  
ITS DEMANDS.’**

*- Giorgio Agamben*

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# P R E F A C E

I started bringing disposable cameras on school camps because we weren't allowed to bring our phones. I was probably 15 or 16 when I got my first roll developed. It took ages to get back, and I kept refreshing my emails every day to see if I had gotten them back yet.

I don't remember how or why it happened, but I kept buying them and developing them. There was something I liked about winding the plastic dial in the camera to advance the roll. There was something I liked even more about the pinky-purple photos I was getting back.

Maybe I enjoyed taking photos in a different way. I didn't see many people uploading film photos on their feeds unless they were from a camp; but there was something special about that. People my age were using these cameras when they were away from their phones. It meant that using one was kind of a special occasion, it meant you were doing something that doesn't happen every day.

But I wanted it to be  
every day.

My first proper camera was a hand-me-down gift from my grandfather. He gave me his old Nikon FM2 with a 24mm lens. He told me he got it from a guy who used it to take photos for National Geographic. It was, of course, far more complicated than my one-button click camera I had been using.

When I got into Uni I decided to take some film photography classes. I spent every moment I could in the dark room or the dev room. Most of my paychecks were going towards darkroom paper or film. I felt at home under those red lights, bringing to life my creations under the flashes of light and in chemical baths. I don't think I will ever forget the vinegary smell of the dark room mixing with whatever perfumes or deodorants people wore that day. It made the experience all the more visceral.

I am making this publication as a declaration of my love for physical media. I have invited six emerging artists and photographers to share with me their love stories too, and by extension, to openly and honestly share their words and captured images with you.

I hope with my whole heart  
that you *fall in love too*.

It would be remiss of me not to include a brief history of photography before diving into artist interviews. This being said, I cannot offer an all-encompassing history in this book. If you are seeking that, I would recommend looking into some of the books that can be found in this publication's bibliography.

What I can instead do is offer a smaller, condensed, and highly relevant history of photography since the development of digital cameras. This is, of course, the main historical reference that most of the interviewed artists comment on in their interviews with me. It is important that we are all on the same page when listening to what these photographers have to say, as the past always has a cheeky way of working its way into the future.

For a good few centuries, the idea of photography being anything other than a physical, chemical reaction was unheard of. It was chemical reactions of silver halide and light which created permanent images. It was in 1975 though that things really changed, when an Eastman Kodak engineer developed the first digital camera.<sup>1</sup> It was huge; had 16 batteries and used the newly invented CCD electric sensors. These sensors completely removed film from the camera equation.<sup>2</sup>

The real breakthrough with digital photography came with the invention of the smartphone, the all-in-one device which sought to simplify and excite daily life. As the cameras in these phones became better, the need to carry around an additional camera lessened. As phone storage increased as well, people were now able to capture even the most mundane moments of their lives on camera; they weren't limited to only the 'perfect' ones or 'the decisive moment'.<sup>3</sup> The interconnectivity that the smartphone provided meant that photos could be sent to others in a flash, and the rise of social media too meant people were able to upload their memories almost instantly.

To put it plainly, digital simplified everything, and film simply couldn't compete with that.

People didn't need to go to the store to buy their film, process it and then wait for their photos anymore. It could all be done from the comfort of their own home. Subsequently, a vast majority of labs began to close their doors in the 2000s. Kodak, one of the largest manufactures of film in the world, filed for bankruptcy in 2004 because the demand simply wasn't there anymore.<sup>4</sup>

Photography had never had another way of image making to compete with. It is interesting to consider the shift in language that came about with the development of digital cameras. The proliferation of digital meant there was now a need to specify which medium you were using when capturing images. It soon became more common to denote the use of 'film' in your photos, rather than 'digital'. To put it simply, moving into the new century, if you said you were a photographer, it was expected that you were referring to a digital practice rather than an analogue one. This was despite that, in an ontological sense, digital photography can't truly be considered photography. Slowly, film was being removed from the zeitgeist of amateur and professional photographer culture alike.<sup>5</sup>

Despite this, it is wrong to say that film 'died'. It never truly went away; it just became a niche in the photography world. Many art schools continued to teach film photography as it provides a solid framework for any amateur photographer. Most of these schools also taught students the basics using black and white film, imprinting the importance of tone, depth and composition into them, while also providing them with the opportunity to develop their own film.<sup>6</sup> Because of this, Black and white film manufacturers such as Ilford 'weathered the storm' of film recession better than colour manufacturers such as Kodak.<sup>7</sup>

With social media becoming ever more popular, the 2010s witnessed the rise of the 'social photography'; whereby images were suddenly being taken, shared, and viewed by millions of people daily.<sup>8</sup> Coinciding with this, apps which provided users with nostalgic filters for their photos became a cultural phenomenon. Apps such as 'Hipstamatic' was voted 'App of the Year' in 2010 by both Apple and Instagram. In the same year, *New York Times* photographer Damon Winter won a competitive photography award for his faux-vintage war photos from Afghanistan.<sup>9</sup>

It is evident that by the 2010s there was a desire in the masses for a vintage aesthetic to make its way into the digital landscape. Around the same time, outdated physical media started gaining popularity and making its way back into households. Most notably, vinyl began to re-emerge as a must-have for music enthusiasts.

1. Richard Trenholm, "History of Digital Cameras: From 70s Prototypes to iPhone and Galaxy's Everyday Wonders," CNET, May 31, 2021, <https://www.cnet.com/tech/computing/history-of-digital-cameras-from-70s-prototypes-to-iphone-and-galaxys-everyday-wonders/>.

2. Trenholm, "History of Digital Cameras: From 70s Prototypes to iPhone and Galaxy's Everyday Wonders."

3. Ian Jeffrey, "Photography: A Concise History", London: Thames and Hudson, 1981, pg 191

4. David Teather, "Kodak Pulls Shutter down on Its Past," the Guardian (The Guardian, January 23, 2004), <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2004/jan/23/newmedia.gadgets>.

5. Alexandra Moschovi, Carol McKay, and Arabella Plouviez, eds. *The Versatile Image: Photography, Digital Technologies and the Internet*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2013, pg 6.

6. "Photographic Film Market Size, Trends | Report [2033]," Marketgrowthreports.com, 2025, <https://www.marketgrowthreports.com/market-reports/photographic-film-market-113578>.

7. Kyle McDougall, "the Future of Colour and B&W Film with Ilford..," YouTube, September 25, 2025, [https://youtube.com/watch?v=x\\_251TxeiLU?si=EcdNY-JXa44O83iop](https://youtube.com/watch?v=x_251TxeiLU?si=EcdNY-JXa44O83iop).

8. Photographic Film Market Size, Trends | Report [2033]

9. Jurgenson and ProQuest. *The Social Photo: On Photography and Social Media*, pg 3.

10. Photographic Film Market Size, Trends | Report [2033]

11. Photographic Film Market Size, Trends | Report [2033]

If it is possible to use my anecdote as evidence, then the resurgence of film was well and truly underway by 2020. According to Market Growth Reports, from 2022-2023 there was a 15% increase in film sales, with more than 20 million rolls being purchased globally.<sup>10</sup> They posit this growth as being driven by 'younger consumers, with 68% of Gen Z photography hobbyists reporting active use of film cameras.' From 2022-2024, there was a 30% increase in people signing up for beginner film photography workshops.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, European art schools saw a 15% rise in enrolment for analogue film courses in a similar timeframe.<sup>12</sup>

12. Photographic Film Market Size, Trends | Report [2033]

13. Jurgenson and ProQuest. *The Social Photo: On Photography and Social Media*, pg 12.

And so that brings us rather nicely to the whole point of this publication. "What are the processes and methodologies that are drawing Melbourne based Gen-Z photographers to analogue photography?" In a sea of digital image making, why has film become the jacket of so many?

In *The Social Photo: On Photography and Social Media* by Nathan Jurgenson, he argues that the return to vintage aesthetics is symptomatic of a culture searching for authenticity against the backdrop of a society which has become 'McDonaldfied'.<sup>13</sup> While this explanation does make sense, I wanted to explore further. Being a part of the film scene myself, I know that for many, they haven't considered the societal causes for film resurgence. What I am instead focusing on in this book is the tactile qualities of film that makes it so alluring to Gen-Z.

Over the course of twelve weeks, I invited six photographers who use film in their practice to sit down and talk to me about their 'why'. I won't summarise what they said, because then what is the point of including the interviews in the first place? So please, read along and

I hope you enjoy.

**Artist  
introductions**

**and  
interviews.**

**"What are the processes and methodologies that are drawing Melbourne based gen z photographers to analogue photography?"**

*B a c k g r o u n d*  
When did you start photography?  
When did film photography come into your orbit and how did that come about?

Did you start in digital and move to film? Or ...  
*M o t i v a t i o n s*  
What was it about film photography that keeps drawing you in?  
What is it you are hoping to capture? Why does film help with this?  
What does it mean to be Gen Z and shooting film?  
Why do you think people our age are re-discovering film?

*P r o c e s s e s*  
Tell me about how you get ready to take photos. How you select your film, how you shoot, when you shoot, what you shoot etc.  
How do you get your film developed?  
Do you prefer prepping for a digital shoot or a film shoot? Why is that?  
If you don't develop your own film, is that something you want to learn? Are you content not participating in that aspect of image making?

*N e t w o r k*  
Do you have other photographers in your network?  
Is there a culture of Gen Z film photographers?  
How does this differ from digital photography?

*A e s t h e t i c s*  
Do you feel a bit of nostalgia for old mediums? This is extending towards things like CD, Vinyl etc  
There is of course something to be said about choosing film and the aesthetics that come with it, can you tell me a bit about what you try and create?

*C h a l l e n g e s*  
What is something you are struggling with right now?  
Do you see yourself sticking with film, or creating a diversified practice?

## Questions.

# Archie Vova.

Archie is a Melbourne/Naarm based Ukrainian photographer, whose practice centres around experience-based documenting. Some of his work includes working with and photographing the Ukrainian & refugee communities in Naarm and traveling abroad to Japan, where he captured images of traditional yakuza tattoo artists.



**LF: OKAY. WHEN DID YOU START PHOTOGRAPHY?**

**WHAT WAS THE CATALYST FOR YOU TO GET INTO IMAGE MAKING, WHETHER THAT BE DIGITAL OR ANALOGUE?**

**AV:** I didn't start very long ago. I did engineering out of school. I did it for about a year. I didn't like it. And then I saw an ad for the film school. I changed to that. It intrigued me. So, I went there. I didn't know anything about film, image making, video stills. I got my first camera. I started shooting. I really enjoyed shooting stills. And then I shot digital for a while. Maybe two years. Probably two to three years. And then I slowly, slowly got into film. I got my first film camera and then started shooting colour. Then got into black and white. I shot about two rolls of black and white before I started developing it myself. I found that process to be very fun. So I started getting into film more and more, and now I shoot exclusively film. I also run a lab now. So, I'd say I probably started shooting film about two to three years ago.

**LF: AND YOU WERE SAYING YOU ENJOYED THAT PROCESS OF DEVELOPING BLACK AND WHITE FILM. WHAT OTHER PROCESSES THAT FILM PHOTOGRAPHY HAS DO YOU REALLY ENJOY?**

**AV:** I enjoy all of it. I think when I shoot digital, I shoot a lot more images. Me personally, I don't like editing really at all. I enjoy shooting. For me it feels like as soon as I shoot it, the job is almost done. I don't like the digital that you would shoot it. And then you need to sit down and edit it a bunch. I like the slowing down. I like the imperfections of film. I like the process of making it myself. It's more hands-on. There's more character to it. There's more history to it. I enjoyed the community and the conversations about it. Digital to me now feels quite bland and clinical. And it's at the end of the day all digital cameras are very similar. The sensors are now essentially the same. Everything's very sharp. Anything you get will look basically the same unless you edit it quite a bit. I enjoy the look of film.

I enjoy experimenting with different films types too and pushing in development and scanning. It's more of a process. I can basically edit while making the image, I don't have to do too much in post with film.

**LF: IS THERE SOMETHING SPECIFICALLY YOU'RE HOPING TO CAPTURE IN YOUR PHOTOS?**

**AV:** Not really. I think about it a fair bit because when you're out shooting, sometimes people ask this question. 'What are you looking for?' I thought about it the other day. There's nothing that I really look for in an aesthetic way, but I look for situations, like shooting specific characters. There are some people who choose a certain character to shoot and that's what they look for. I think for me, if I can see something funny, situations, maybe compositions, I am drawn to that. Of course there's the interesting character that's fun to shoot and portraits of course, but mostly situations is what I'm looking for.

**LF: LOOKING THROUGH YOUR PHOTOS, I FELT THAT A LOT OF THE WORK YOU PRODUCE IS VERY DOCUMENTARY STYLE AND THAT YOU ENJOY IMMERSING YOURSELF IN A CULTURE BEFORE TAKING THE PHOTOS. DO YOU THINK THAT RINGS TRUE?**

**AV:** I think so. I think for all the documentaries I've done so far, I've started the project because I've already been a part of the community, all ingrained in some way. I don't so much enjoy parachute journalism, I think you won't get as much out of it, you won't get to the depth you want.

**LF: DOES IT HELP YOU CREATE STRONGER IMAGES BY BEING A PART OF THE SCENE FIRST?**

**AV:** Yeah, I can't remember who said it, off the top of my head, maybe Robert Frank or maybe Kappa said, if your images aren't good enough, you're not close enough.

**LF: YES, I SAW THAT THE OTHER DAY TOO.**

**AV:** It was something along those lines, but I think about that all the time. I think you need to get closer, whether that's physically or spiritually. I guess in a way that's why I enjoy shooting wider and getting closer. I enjoy shooting my portraits wide and daily life quite wide, say 35mm and wider. I think to shoot a good documentary; you need to be part of it. I think you always get better images when you're approaching someone as a friend, then as an outsider. Yeah, I think it's better, you get closer and better story.

**LF: CAN YOU SPEAK TO THE PHYSICALITY OF FILM**

**AS AN IMAGE MAKING PRACTICE? I MEAN IN THE SENSE THAT  
WHEN YOU TAKE A PHOTO, YOU PRODUCE SOMETHING PHYSICAL  
THAT'S BURNT INTO YOUR ROLL, WHEREAS WITH DIGITAL, IT'S NUMBERS.  
DOES THAT INFLUENCE YOUR PRACTICE IN ANY WAY?**

**AV:** I sort of approach that question in two ways, where I think if you're shooting digitally, it might get a little bit in the way, because of course you can see your images instantly, and judge them instantly. Whereas when shooting film, there's a lot more practise in it, and you need to know what you're doing. You also aren't checking your images because you can't, you're also not able to show anyone the images right then and there. I think that is a bit of trust both ways, and I think that helps.

**LF: DO YOU MEAN WHEN YOU'RE TAKING PHOTOS OF  
SOMEONE, OR WORKING FOR A CLIENT?**

**AV:** Both. I think even showing the images right there on the spot gets in the way. Of course, as well, because non-photographers sort of don't understand that if you show them the raw image at the back of the camera it isn't the final product, but they will judge it off that initial viewing, I guess, at least in some way, where you sort of know what your end product is going to look like, and you only really want to show people the finished product.

The second way I would answer the question is, I think society, as well as myself is getting more into physical media. I think it's

important to get into physical media with most things now only being subscription based and emphasising non-ownership is an issue. Say you have Spotify, where you have your whole library there, but at the end of the day, if you don't pay your subscription, you don't have your music anymore. Same thing with movies a lot of the time.

I think shooting a film is the physical media version of digital photography. I like to have my negatives. I don't like to have everything just digital. I like to print almost everything I shoot. I think it's a better way to archive things. I think in a lot of ways, it's easier as well. It's cleaner and safer. You have your digital files, but you also have something physical that you'll have forever that you can always rescan, that you can always print from. It's important to physically own your images rather than have them uploaded somewhere.

**LF: I HADN'T THOUGHT ABOUT PHYSICAL MEDIA IN A  
WAY OF OWNERSHIP.**

**AV:** I guess it's always in a way of ownership. With music, a lot of people are buying records, right? Because you can't really take that away from a person. They have their vinyls or CDs or whatever it is. It's harder to take that away from someone.

**LF: WHY DO YOU THINK PEOPLE OUR AGE ARE  
RETURNING TO MORE PHYSICAL MEDIUMS, WHETHER THAT BE  
OR VINYLs? F I L M**

**AV:** A bit of that would be my last answer, ownership. I think also people are getting tired of corporations and them having their fingers in every pie. The quality, I think, is still better. I mean, it's different. You can hear things on vinyl that you can't hear uploaded somewhere.

Another reason is sentimentality. A lot of people are really sentimental, and there's a lot of nostalgia when it comes from film. A lot of people's childhood photos were shot on film. I think there's nothing better than some good grain, some imperfections. I think

film colour is still basically unachievable from digital. Or with editing a bunch, you could get somewhat close. But it's different, it will never be the same. I think people are enjoying point and shoots because it's fun.

**LF: DO YOU HAVE A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE AROUND**

**YOU THAT SHOOT FILM?**

**AV:** Most of all the people I know now.

**LF: THEY ALL SHOOT FILM?**

**AV:** Yeah. People I know from school, the street photography community, people I work with, I mean I work in two labs. I work in a lab as my normal day job and then obviously my business now is the lab. So essentially my whole life revolves around it.

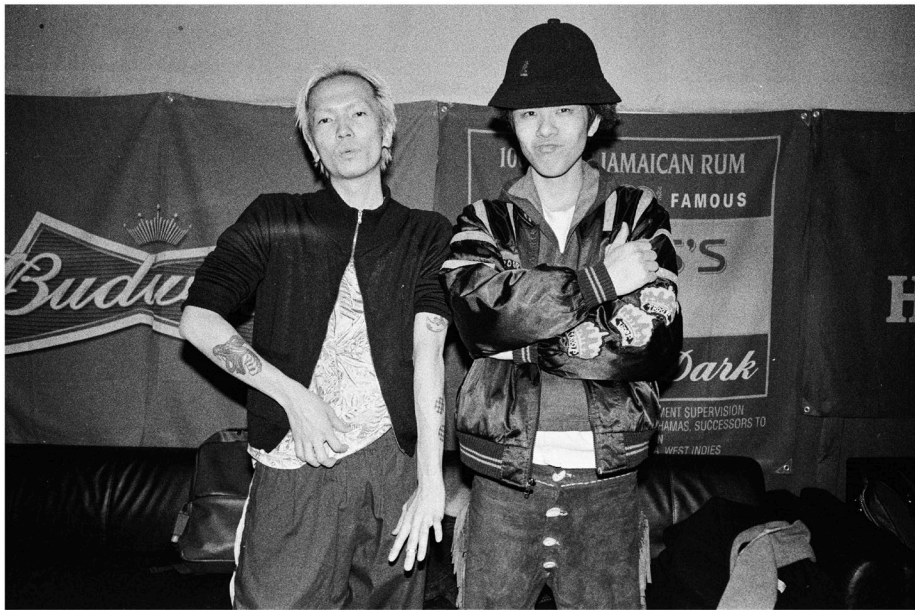
**LF: WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU'RE STRUGGLING WITH**

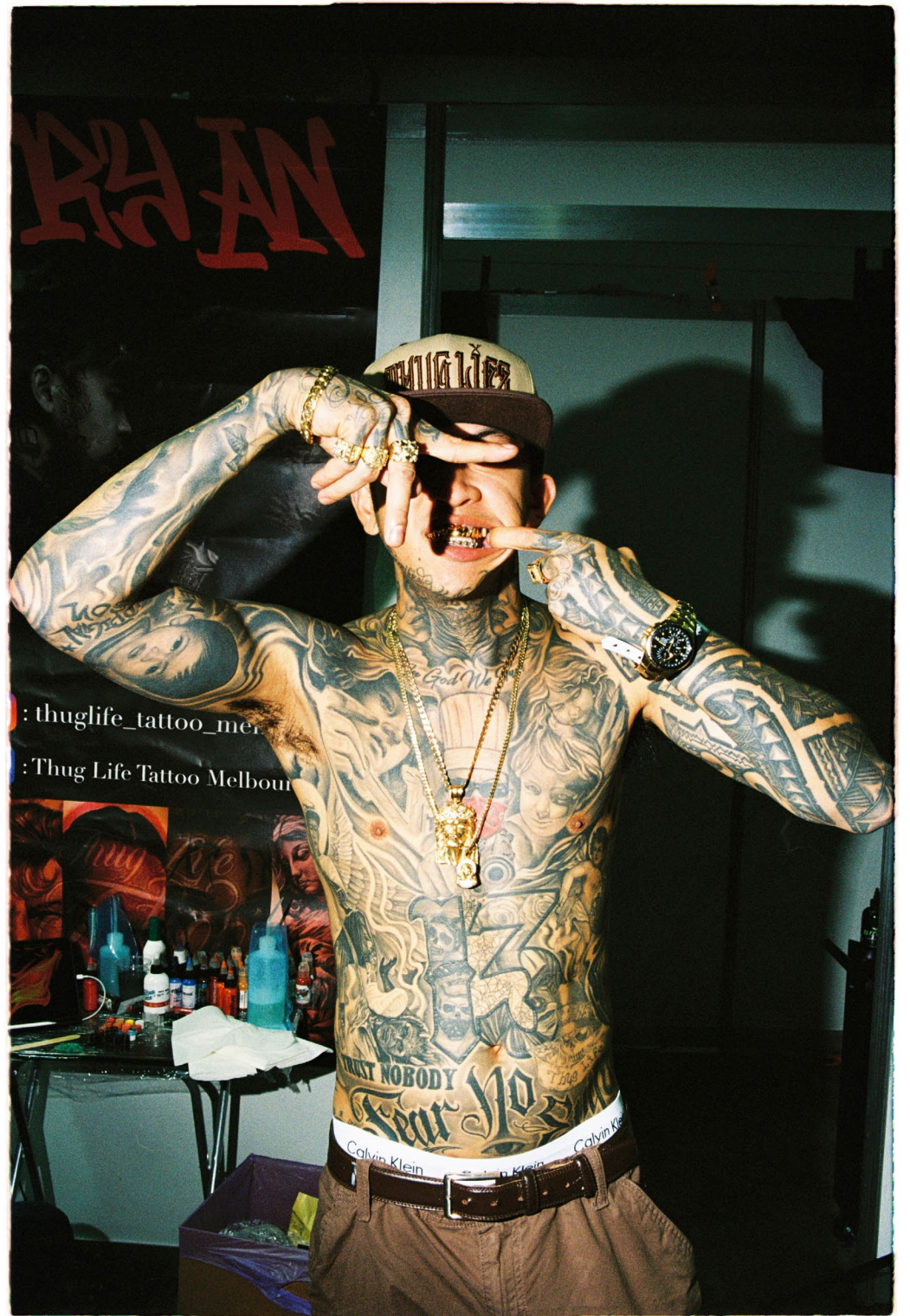
**RIGHT NOW WITH FILM?**

**AV:**

I don't think that I  
struggle with film at all.  
The only thing I  
would think of is that not  
enough people do it, and  
more people should do it.  
Get a camera & shoot some  
film.







# Michelle Kilburn.

Michelle is a photographer based in Naarm. Her practice involves both digital and analog processes, spanning from portraits, fashion and live music photography. Michelle is completing her Bachelor of Photography with RMIT, further expanding her skill set and strengthening her passion for the art form.



**LF: SO THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE SAT DOWN**

**AND SPOKEN BEFORE, SO I WAS HOPING YOU COULD GIVE ME A BIT OF BACKGROUND ABOUT YOURSELF. HOW DID YOU GET INTO PHOTOGRAPHY?**

**MK:** I first started when I was pretty young. I remember my parents gave me a little pink digi cam for like my 5th birthday and I loved it. I first used a DSLR when I was around 8 or 9 and started saving for one of my own straight away with all my christmas and birthday money. I used it for years, taking photos everywhere I went and making self portraits in my bedroom. I took photography as soon as I could in high school, which was in Year 9. We did some work in the darkroom, we made photograms to learn how negatives and the darkroom processes work, then we got to shoot our own film, develop it and make prints. I fell in love with the process and its outcomes straight away. I shot exclusively film for the next 4 years.

**LF: WOW. SO PHOTOGRAPHY HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF YOUR LIFE, THAT IS AMAZING. DO YOU DEVELOP YOUR FILM AT HOME?**

**MK:** Yes, so I developed all my own film at home for a long time, I still love doing it and I have all the equipment, but I still make mistakes and struggle to avoid dust and everything. Scanning myself also takes a while so when I need a faster turn around and perfect results, especially for a client, I go to either Irohas in the city or Good Time!

**LF: I TOTALLY UNDERSTAND. IT IS BORDERLINE IMPOSSIBLE SOMETIMES TO GET RID OF ALL THE DUST.**

**IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVE A CREATED A PRETTY SOLID PRACTICE; CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT HOW YOU GET READY TO GO OUT AND SHOOT FILM? WHAT ARE SOME OTHER THINGS YOU CONSIDER WHEN YOU ARE SHOOTING, SUCH AS FILM STOCK, THINGS YOU LIKE TO CAPTURE ETC.**

**MK:** Since I first started shooting film at school I just used the film that they supplied, which was Ilford HP5. They would buy it in bulk

and I was the only one who really continued to shoot film a lot so I pretty much had free rein over their supply, I would literally take rolls a handful at a time and it's still my favourite film stock to shoot. I've shot a little bit of colour but mostly go for wherever's cheapest. A lot of the time I just carry a film camera with me and shoot spontaneously. I have a few different ones so depending on where I'm going or how I feel. My choice ranges from a manual SLR to just a point and shoot. I have a couple cameras that sit in between those two in terms of function so generally reach for those, especially for shooting live music. My Nikon F90X is my baby, it was my first film camera and what I reach for when I want to take objectively good pictures. But it is super heavy and pretty old so I use it in more controlled environments like the studio or location shoots where I know I can take my time and keep it safe. My Minolta Dynax 500si is usually what I reach for for gigs, it's super quick, has automatic and manual settings and a built-in flash so it's great for when I need to concentrate on a fast-moving subject and what's going on around me.

**LF: I THINK EVERYONE LEARNT TO SHOOT ON HP5, IT IS SUCH A VERSATILE AND STURDY FILM STOCK.**

**I WONDER HOW MANY CAREERS ARE BUILT ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF ILFORD. I ALSO RESONATE WITH HAVING A SOMEWHAT AUTOMATIC CAMERA. I REALLY FEEL LIKE I GET THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS WITH IT. I'M ABOUT TO GET THE FEELING OF SHOOTING FILM WHILE HAVING MORE SECURITY ABOUT HOW THE PHOTOS WILL COME OUT. YOU HAVE BEEN SHOOTING FILM FOR QUITE A WHILE, I'M SURE THERE IS SOMETHING YOU LIKE ABOUT THE PROCESS AND AESTHETIC OF FILM. CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT IT IS YOU LOVE ABOUT FILM?**

**MK:** The materiality of it for sure. Even when it's scanned digitally, I find film photos always have that sense of being an object rather than just an image. Having to really slow down and think about

what you're capturing, you just cannot recreate that digitally. You can mimic it, but it's never the same.

Through developing my digital practice after my analogue practice, I know I can create photos that I like either way, but I always feel like I get it right sooner with film. As in, I can create just as many 'successful' images in a roll of 35mm film as I can shooting hundreds of digitals. I always prefer a more candid or spontaneous feel with my images, I feel like the risks involved with film compared to digital, like not being able to see the image instantly and the damage that processing can cause, communicate that better. Not only did the moment captured freeze perfectly in the photo, but all processing happened to work out as well.

**LF: AND WHAT ABOUT THE AESTHETICS OF FILM?**

**MK:** I think my favourite thing about using film is the surprise when you see your images for the first time. Not when they're well focused or exposed but seeing what grain, scratches, dust, all of that stuff can add to a photo. I'd never really thought about this before but I guess I always aim to create something that not even I expected. Since I shoot a fair bit of live music, having to move pretty fast means deciding to experiment with settings or angles is always a risk. Especially since I mainly shoot black and white, things always appear so different in a film photograph so making a great image always involves that element of surprise and spontaneity for me.

**LF: SORRY, I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME JUMPING BACK**

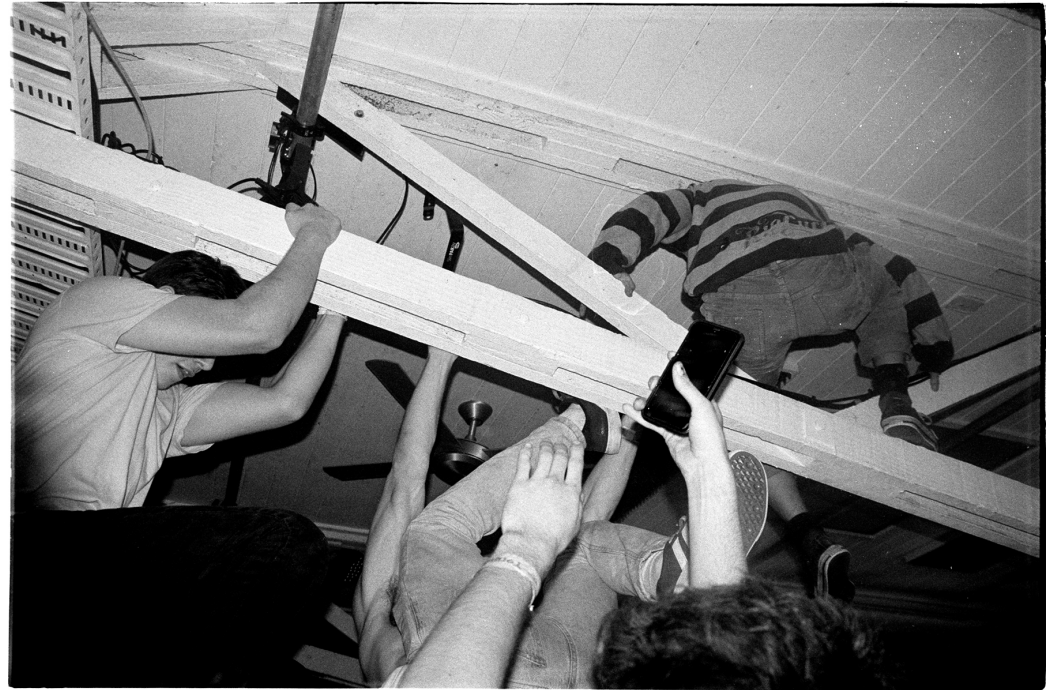
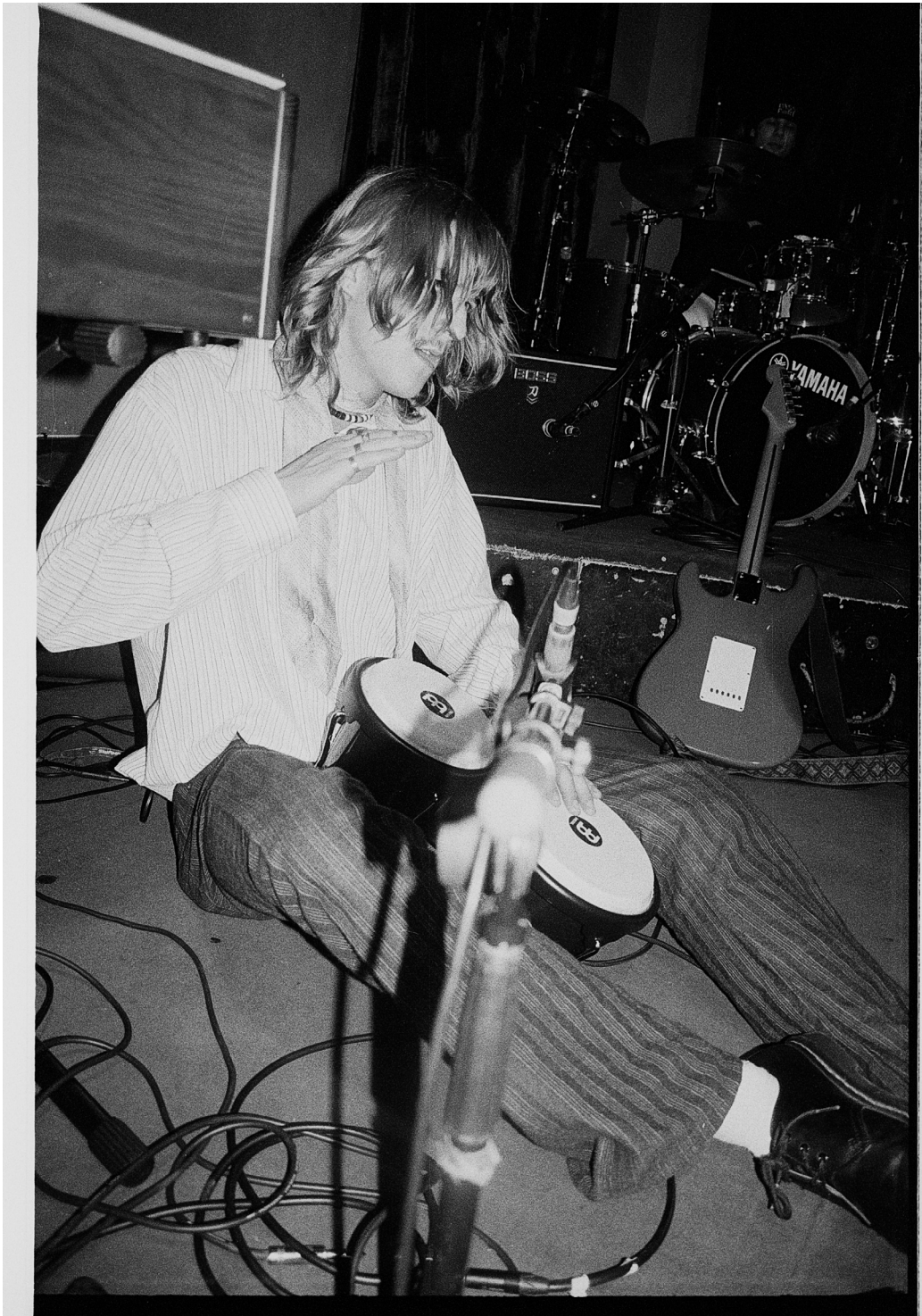
**A BIT HERE, BUT I DON'T THINK I HAVE RUN INTO SOMEONE WHO ALSO DEVELOPED THEIR DIGITAL PRACTICE AFTER FILM TOO. I'VE JUST BOUGHT MY FIRST DIGITAL CAMERA AND I'M TRYING TO WRAP MY HEAD AROUND IT, BUT I WON'T SAY IT IS GOING WELL. IT IS INTERESTING THAT WE BOTH CHOSE TO LEARN PHOTOGRAPHY THROUGH FILM DESPITE BEING DIGITAL BABIES. IT BEGS THE QUESTION, WHY DO YOU THINK PEOPLE OUR AGE ARE RE-DISCOVERING FILM?**

**MK:** Technology is such a huge part of our everyday, and instant information has been at our fingertips our whole lives, everything just moves so fast now. Being able to slow down with film and make pictures that can't be created digitally is like an escape. Materiality is becoming less and less prioritised within art, especially photography, so I think having the ability to make a physical object is something really different for people our age, and it's exciting! It creates a totally different feeling than a picture you take on your phone or digital camera.

**LF: I LOVE THE IDEA OF IT BEING AN ESCAPE FROM THE DIGITAL, BECAUSE IT REALLY IS WHAT IT FEELS LIKE. MORE BROADLY, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE GEN Z AND SHOOTING FILM?**

**MK:** I feel so lucky to be a part of the resurgence of film photography. I feel like my understanding of film photography greatly informs my digital image making, I definitely wouldn't be the photographer I am without it. It's so fun using it in ways which it never has been before, combining digital and analogue processes. I think the way Gen Z uses film photography is so beautiful, I think we all have so much respect for its history,

*but so much determination to make it our own*







# Conor McCaul.

A Melbourne/Naarm-based photographer, Conor boasts a diverse portfolio that encompasses commercial photography, including fashion and event work. With a Bachelor of Photography, specialising in Photojournalism, Conor has dedicated years to documenting personal perspectives, alongside capturing the stories of people and places. Their work is a reflection of a deep passion for visual storytelling, seamlessly blending technical expertise with creative insight.



**LF: WHEN DID YOU START PHOTOGRAPHY? NOT**

**JUST FILM, JUST PHOTOGRAPHY IN GENERAL?**

**CM:** 2020, during the virus, I watched a David Attenborough documentary, and I thought, 'Well, I'm not going to be able to make videos because of my short attention span.' But then there was also a behind-the-scenes clip of a guy going around Siberia in a little cabin that he had on skis. He was just taking pictures of nature, and I thought that was pretty sick.

**LF: SO, THEN YOU WERE LIKE, THAT'S ME?**

**CM:** Yeah, that's what I want to do.

**LF: AT WHAT POINT AFTER 2020 DID FILM**

**PHOTOGRAPHY SORT OF COME INTO YOUR ORBIT?**

**CM:** I was at Uni, and a bunch of people were shooting film. I got a film camera for my birthday and I just started using it, and I thought it was more fun to use the camera and wait to see what the photos look like. It was something to look forward to each time I dropped the roll off, but then I really liked the results from the whole process.

**LF: YOU SAID YOU LIKE THE RESULTS OF THE**

**PROCESS, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT FILM**

**PHOTOGRAPHY THAT KEEPS DRAWING YOU IN? IS IT THE**

**DOWN? IS IT THE NOT KNOWING? WHAT IS IT ABOUT**

**METHOD OF PRODUCING IMAGES?**

**CM:** Yeah, it's been a bit of that, but it's also in this day and age everyone is already on so much technology, and I'm a kind of a simple guy who is more boots on the ground instead of hands on a laptop. And whilst I still have to be on the laptop to edit my pictures, a lot more of the process is more in the camera than it would be with a digital camera. It's also nice not just to be able to come back and be like I don't have 3,000 of the same images that I need to go through and edit.

**LF: AND SO WHY DO YOU THINK PEOPLE OUR AGE**

**ARE SORT OF REDISCOVERING FILM LIKE YOU HIGHLIGHTED**

**ABOVE?**

**S L O W I N G**

**THAT SORT OF**

**CM:** Everyone's got a camera in their phone now. It doesn't really feel special to take pictures on it. It just feels normal, so more people are turning to film. It's an active decision to take photos with this thing that needs knowledge and invested time, and it's more of an enjoyable activity than shooting a picture on your phone would be.

**LF: GEN Z WAS THE FIRST GENERATION TO GROW**

**UP WITH DIGITAL IMAGES. WHAT DO YOU THINK IT**

**MEANS FOR US TO BE DISCOVERING THE JOYS OF FILM**

**PHOTOGRAPHY?**

**CM:** The whole Gen Z has been fucking brainless for a little while. We are way too attached to social media. Our generation doesn't have a definitive style; our styles are created by looking at the past, just thinking, "How can I recreate that?" We are searching for authenticity. Even people who might not shoot film will use a point-and-shoot camera. Even though the photos might not be crystal clear, it's just that nostalgic aspect of film.

**LF: DO YOU FEEL THE NOSTALGIA FOR OTHER**

**MEDIUMS?**

**CM:** I like listening to CDs. I like putting my vinyl on at night.

**LF: IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU FALL BACK TO?**

**CM:** Well, it's more that it comes down to the access. I'm sure if I had a cassette player, I would use it. I do have a vinyl player, though. I don't do it as often anymore because often I listen to music when cooking, and I can't really go and change it when my hands are covered in something. But when I do listen, it's an activity. It's not super easy to do like turning on your phone and playing Spotify. With vinyl, you're making an active decision to put the disc on and choose an album to listen to as a whole.

**LF: I ASK THIS BECAUSE I WANT TO KNOW IF YOU**

**THINK GEN Z IS LEANING TOWARDS AND SEARCHING**

**FOR ACTIVITIES AND HOBBIES THAT REQUIRE COMMITMENT?**

**HAS HAD A HUGE BOOM IN RECENT YEARS AND SO**

**YOU THINK GEN Z IS FIGHTING AGAINST THE**

**VINYL**

**HAS FILM. DO**

**INSTANT GRATIFICATION THAT DIGITAL MEDIUMS PROVIDE?**

**CM:** I wouldn't say it's fighting against instant gratification. I think it's finding gratification that lasts longer than 10 seconds on an Instagram reel.

**LF: TELL ME ABOUT HOW YOU GET READY TO SHOOT YOUR PHOTOS. HOW DO YOU SELECT YOUR FILM? HOW DO YOU SHOOT, WHEN DO YOU SHOOT, WHAT DO YOU SHOOT?**

**CM:** I don't really like to think about it too much if I'm being honest. If I think too hard about it, I'll stay too narrow-minded. When I have a lot of time, I go out into the city with my favourite roll of film, like a colour film, and I just go out and see what attracts me.

**LF: BASED ON THE PICTURES YOU SENT ME; YOU SEEM TO REALLY ENJOY COLOUR FILM. DOES IT DRAW YOU MORE THAN BLACK AND WHITE? WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE COLOUR FILM THAT YOU LIKE?**

**CM:** I think it's more accurate to what I see. Black and white is great if I have a vision. I take a lot of boxing photos on black and white because that's how I view that world. But when it comes to the city and colour photography, I think it depicts much more of what I want than black and white. It's what I see in the moment, and I don't have to spend time considering what the contrast would look like on black and white.

**LF: WHY WOULD YOU SHOOT FILM IN COLOUR WHEN DIGITAL CAMERAS CAN DO THE SAME THING?**

**CM:** I would disagree. Colours on film are way different. It just comes down to why I enjoy the process. I don't necessarily consider the colour of film too much in the moment, but I notice it after I see the results; the whole process feels more satisfying.

**LF: ARE PEOPLE PATIENT WITH YOU WHEN YOU'RE TAKING STREET FILM PHOTOS? I KNOW FOR ME, SOMETIMES I TAKE ME A WHILE TO CHANGE THE APERTURE OR GET THE SHUTTER SPEED RIGHT. DO PEOPLE MIND IF THEY'RE STANDING THERE POSING?**

**CM:** No, not at all. I've got two cameras, one which is a hybrid digital film camera, so it's got a lot of electronics in it and I can shoot that fairly quickly. And then I've got a really old viewfinder camera, and I would argue people have more engaged when they see an old camera because it's like 'wow, I've never had pictures of me taken on this', and they're more willing to go along with it because it's new to them.

It's interesting as well, people, especially lately, when I've asked to take their pictures, a fair few of them are opposed to social media. They tend to not mind their photo being on film, as long as it doesn't go on the internet.

**LF: THAT KIND OF LEADS INTO MY NEXT QUESTION; DO YOU HAVE LIKE A SUPER INTERESTING CONVERSATION WITH SOMEONE THAT'S LIKE RESULTED OUT OF THEM REALIZING YOU ARE SHOOTING ON FILM? YOU'VE HAD**

**CM:** This was kind of a short one, but recently I was at a boxing event. For context, in boxing, the belt that the winner receives is owned and sponsored by an organization. There was the guy who was representing the belt, keeping an eye on it and like making sure the fight was done in a way that was worthy of the belt. I asked him if it was okay to take a picture, and when I told him it was on

film he started asking me all these questions about it. He was a bit older and I'm assuming he had been around the boxing business for quite a while and has seen a lot of film photos in his time. He was talking to me about how he prefers the old photos. He likes imperfections, the grain, and that there is something about it that has more character. He was also talking about how you don't know what you're going to get. There's that layer of uncertainty that digital doesn't have.

**LF: LIKE BOB ROSS SAYS, 'HAPPY ACCIDENTS.'**

**CM:** Yeah, it definitely comes down to having less scrutiny on the photos. People don't like to shoot film because it's perfect.

**LF: I WANTED TO ASK ABOUT HOW YOU MERGE YOUR PRACTICE WITH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY? WHEN**

**YOU TAKE YOUR FILM PHOTOS, YOU DEVELOP THEM LIKE STANDARD, BUT DO YOU EDIT THEM ON YOUR LAPTOP AFTER? PRESUMABLY, YOU SHARE YOUR IMAGES ON MEDIA. ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT THAT WHEN YOU'RE SHOOTING?** **A N D SOCIAL**

**CM:** A lot of the time, social media is just an easy and quick way to get the gratification. I would much rather make a photo book, but I don't have the time nor the attention span for it. So, when I shoot film and post it, I get the enjoyable parts of taking the pictures, developing, scanning, and editing, and getting the satisfaction of someone getting to see my work in a much quicker fashion.

And when it comes to social media, the main thing I like to consider is making my posts themed. Instead of having lots of different subjects as you do with a book, it's usually around one thing. When I put my photos on social media, it's essentially the same thing as a chapter in a book, but smaller and contained to one post.

**LF: DO YOU HAVE A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE AROUND YOUR AGE SHOOTING FILM?**

**CM:** Yeah, I mean not necessarily our age though. There's a wide demographic. There are a fair few people though. Half of the time, I don't even message them, and I'll show up to the city and just run into them. And then we all just walk around the city together. I like to show up and see what happens. I get more excitement out of the unpredictable parts, especially like when it comes to, like you said, considering my film stock and what I'm going to go look for, etc.

**LF: COMING OFF THE UNCERTAINTY, IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU'RE STRUGGLING WITH RIGHT NOW IN YOUR PRACTICE?**

**CM:** In the film community, the cost of everything is expensive. As much as I would love to get paid to shoot film, it is not paying at the moment; it's not sustainable, especially when I shoot so many rolls. I have so much to edit and get through and organise. And sometimes I'll go through old film photos of mine, and I'll fall down the rabbit

hole of 'Why didn't I post these?' It's that getting overwhelmed with keeping on top of the photos and balancing work and life at the same time that I'm struggling with.

**LF: YOU SAID YOU FALL DOWN THE 'WHY DIDN'T I POST THESE' RABBIT HOLE, IS THAT COMING BACK TO THE INSTANT GRATIFICATION OF HAVING SOMEONE RECOGNIZE AND ENJOY YOUR PHOTOS IN THAT MOMENT?**

**CM:** Yeah, because in this day and age, there aren't many outlets as quick as social media to get your work out there. With magazines, you have to write an application, or in a competition, you have to pay. And even then, you might not get your photos seen. I can post it, and I can get it seen, or it can just sit on my hard drive or my negative folder and just not see the light of day again. I would much rather people see the photo, make their own decision about whether they like it, than not see it at all.

**LF: DO YOU SEE YOURSELF STICKING WITH FILM, CREATING MORE OF A DIVERSIFIED PRACTICE?**

**CM:** I do shoot on digital as well. I have a digital camera for work. Sometimes when I'm taking pictures on that, I just don't enjoy the process as much. I want to enjoy taking the picture more than just getting the right result. That matters more because if I enjoyed the moment more, I feel more connected to the image

**LF: SO, IT'S THAT PROCESS OF BEING OUT THERE TAKING THE IMAGE RATHER THAN HOW IT LOOKS THAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU?**

**CM:** It's sort of in between. Obviously, I want the picture to look great, but there is that nice, sweet spot where I enjoy taking the picture in the moment and I'm happy with the result after. I love when I put the film in my camera and I hear it wind on, especially because it is so audible on my digital hybrid. With my old camera, you have to manually wind it on; that physical feeling is really nice. I love the shutter sounds on both cameras, and I love having to push the lever to advance the roll.

But most of all, I Love the idea that i have to spend  
more time thinking about what I'm doing in that moment





# Indiana Ronchi.

Indiana studies film and television in hopes of working within that industry. Whilst most of his creative work centres around moving image, he finds that still frames hold immense power. He is fascinated by photography, and once heard that it is an artform entrenched in death.

He wants to discover why.



**LF: So you're studying at Swinburne?**

**IR:** Studying at Swinburne and in my second year.

**LF: Tell me how you got into that. Why you got**

**into that?**

**IR:** I wanted to be a filmmaker. I wanted to make movies. I was pretty good at maths and science. And so I understood that that was a more sturdy path for university education. So coming to the end of year 12, I had a genuine thought where I went, okay, so I'm going to do engineering, then after four years of engineering I'll make a film just to get it out of my system. And then I'll go into like an actual job.

But why did I want to get into movies? I originally wanted to be an actor because I thought that they were the ones who wrote the movies. I lived in America for three years from the age of 12 to 15. And my mum heard me talking about wanting to be an actor. And so she signed me up for like a week course. As soon as I got in, I was like, 'okay, so when do we get to make movies?' But really, they were just teaching you how to audition for roles. And I thought, 'well, that's not fun.' That made me realise I wanted to be behind the camera.

**LF: And so, we've been chatting about**

**filmmaking. Do you shoot much photography and analogue film?**

**IR:** Out of all my short films, I've only done one on 16 mil, where I was the Cinematographer. The rest of my projects have been digital. And of my photography, I would say most has been on film. Getting into photography sort of came about because I had a few little digital cameras; very small little things. I saw photography as a way to just reminding myself of a shot for a movie.

And getting my first film camera, I kind of forget how it came about, but I was reaching out to family and friends about old cameras. I wanted a nice camera, but all the digital cameras were really expensive, and it makes sense because they are beautiful cameras. I just reached out to my cousin, and he had an old Nikon just lying

around. He was like, 'oh, like I'll let you borrow it.' And so, I put a roll through. And when they came back, I was like, 'Oh, that's really good.'

It's an interesting thing where it's, yes, technically every photo I take is more expensive than digital, but because the entry into film photography was a free camera and then only \$30 a roll, it was, for me, it was cheaper than a digital camera.

**LF: I am curious as to why you use film for your photography practice when you mostly use digital for your cinematography?**

**IR:** I have friends who have really nice digital cameras and they don't carry it around as much as I carry a film camera. I think it's because film captures memories better than digital photos. I can look at my best rolls of film and, you know, I can talk about the colour and I can talk about the composition and I can talk about all that. But my favourite photo I've ever taken is just me and my friends at the beach.

And I can look at it and know that technically it's a beautiful photo. But there is something else in that photo, the whole process of just being able to see your photos, I think is related to film capturing memories, because you can't see the photo instantly. So even if you can judge the exposure and you know everything's going to be technically perfect, and you even have an idea of what it's going to be, when you have to see it, even if it's only a day later, you'll go, 'oh, so that was the photo.'

One time I just remember waiting for my friends. It was by Flinders Street and there was a tram passing. So I decided to wait by a pole, waiting for that tram to stop at that stop and then eventually pass me, and that's when I take the photo. And I get one shot.

It's not stressful. It's a process and the photo is going to be what it is going to be, even if something unexpected is added to it.

Whether someone walks half into frame, or if someone on the other side of the road is doing something weird, or if another car passes, that will be the moment. the film, it's not only a memory but it is that moment in time where it is that 60th of a second that I open the shutter for.

**LF: WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS**

**OF USING A MANUAL FILM CAMERA THAT YOU ENJOY? I'M**

**INTERESTED TO KNOW IF YOU SEE IT IN A MATHEMATICAL WAY**

**BASED**

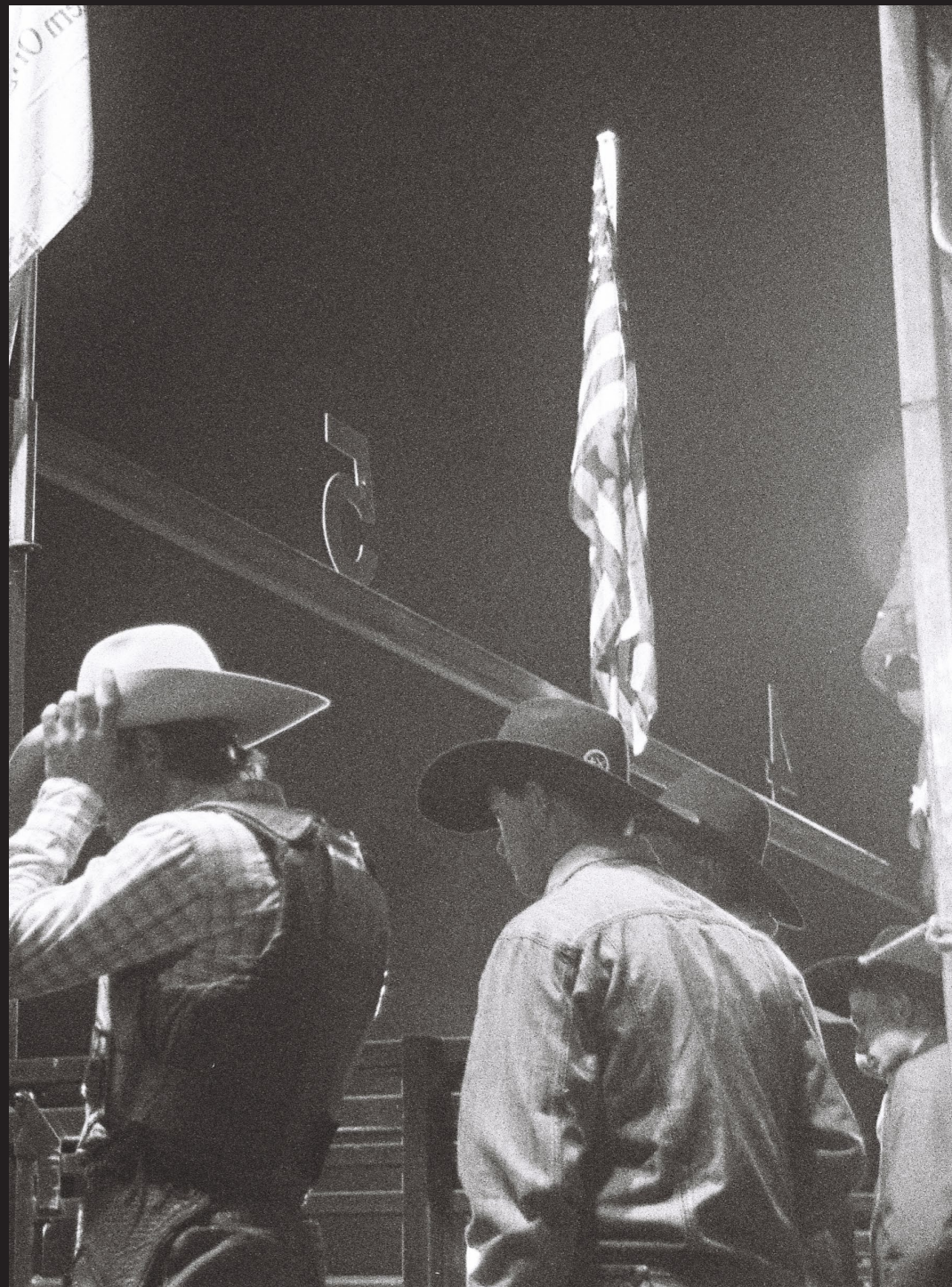
**ON YOUR BACKGROUND?**

**IR:** I suppose the technical aspects of film come out in quite subtle ways. Whether that be the winding knob rolling with the advance lever or the physical shutter. In terms of the mathematical side I do like the comfort that comes with the sunny16 rule. I like trusting old mathematics that has been passed down from photographer to photographer. There is a comfort with not having to think. I like the mechanical aspects of the aperture and shutter speed, where a click one way on the shutter dial can be balanced by clicking the other way in the aperture ring. I do like the comfort that pushing and developing gives some freedom to the iso, but also that this iso push affects the whole roll.

I think there's a weird discrepancy between a lot of people who are quite artistic, who love all the new digital technologies that can help tell their story and contribute to their practice, but they don't really indulge in the science behind it. I don't know if it's a new thing, but it's just a thing that I've noticed, I find it interesting because at least when you used to shoot on film, you had to develop yourself and you had to print yourself. Which is science. And so, you became familiar with the chemicals and the physics of it.







# Angus Macdonald.

'Gus is my best friend and a passionate 'creative'. His passion for photography, inspired by his grandpa, reveals beauty in the everyday. Through many different mediums, he expresses his individuality with authenticity. He inspires me to see differently, create boldly, and appreciate the small, powerful moments in life. His choice for using film as a medium is because it simply cannot be replicated. film shows moments can be frozen in time beautifully, it's just something digital can't replicate. the excitement of the uncertainty is honestly addictive.'

- written by Gus' partner.



**LF: So, getting into photography, how did that**

**happen for you?**

**GM:** Ever since I had a phone, I was always taking photos, and my grandparents were always encouraging me to take photos. Whenever I'd go out and hang out with my friends, I'd take photos, and then I'd come home and my grandpa would be like, 'Oh, did you have fun?' And then at the end of the question, it would always be like, 'Oh, did you take photos?' I think mainly it was like a big thing for them because that would have been like the only way they could have had images. I have been taking photos on my phone since I was 12. I remember I used to have, I don't know if you know, Daze Cam, the app.

**LF: Is that the one that kind of gives it like a really nice filter?**

**GM:** Yeah. It's a free app that makes your photos look like they were shot on film. I used to use that when I was younger. I had a photography account on Instagram. Looking back, it's the cringiest thing ever. And now that I actually like shoot film, I'm like, this is disgusting.

**LF: No, but it's kind of endearing. I was looking through my old photos recently as well, when I was shooting just on disposables. They are shit photos, but there's something kind of cute about someone learning.**

**GM:** I mean, my Daze ones were terrible, ugly selfies with my friends. But I thought it was the coolest thing ever.

**LF: Why?**

**GM:** I had no idea what film was. I didn't go, 'Oh cool, there's this app that makes things look like film, maybe I should learn to take photos with that.' For me, it was just a way to make my pictures look cool. Then as I got a little bit older, I became more intrigued with photography, and I started trying to learn things on my own. I started wanting to discover film; what is like, how does it work, and so on. My nan always had a camera. She brought it everywhere. It

was cool because I'd always wonder what she was taking photos of. There was also a lot of curiosity because whenever I saw a camera, it was a big thing with a big flash on the top. Hers was just a little point-and-shoot, so it felt less scary, and I wanted to know more. The first camera I got was from an op shop I went to with one of my best friends. We always looked at the cheap cameras. I found this Luminix, and it was really small, digital camera, and it would only shoot in black and white. I thought that was the coolest thing ever because I was obsessed with black and white. I shot on that for ages until it died; it just cooked itself.

**LF: You mentioned before that you are currently at uni. Are you one of the only people that shooting film in your course?**

**GM:** Yep. There are older people in my course that have shot film, but I'm the only one in my class that is actively still reaching for film, which is kind of sad to be honest.

**LF: What is it about film that makes you keep reaching for it? Is it the effects you get? Obviously, it would be easy to shoot digitally, and you'd have more certainty, especially in a university setting.**

**GM:** One of the biggest things about film for me is it can't be replicated. You also never know what you're going to get.

**LF: Yeah. Like a box of chocolates.**

**GM:** Exactly. Shout out Forrest Gump. I just think it physically cannot be replicated. You can sit there for hours and turn a digital image into one that looks like a film photo, but it just isn't. Shooting film is just one part of the process. You also are putting the film into a lab to be developed and then are meeting the people in the lab. You can go to a place with people that are like-minded. If you're a photographer and you come to a studio, you want to know that what you've just done or what you've just shot is in the hands of someone who knows what they're doing. Not someone who is just there to pay off their car. Photography is a very community-driven thing, that's what I've noticed since I started putting myself out there more.

I think I have met the coolest people in my life through photography.

**LF: I WANTED TO ASK MORE SPECIFICALLY ABOUT YOUR PRACTICE AND WHAT YOU SHOOT. WHAT IS IT YOU'RE HOPING TO CAPTURE IN YOUR IMAGES AND WHY CHOOSE FILM TO DO THAT? IS THERE A FEELING YOU'RE TRYING TO CAPTURE IN YOUR PHOTOS?**

**GM:** Whenever I've taken digital photos and done the edits they need, I think 'yeah that's a cool photo'. But I don't think I have ever had to properly edit a film photo. I feel like that sounds horrible because I work for a label, but most of the time the photo comes out and it doesn't need anything done to it. It's why I find myself reaching for black and white; it's almost a cop out, it's so easy. But it always looks so good. And I don't know exactly what it is I'm trying to capture; that's one of the reasons I'm going to uni at the moment. I know I just enjoy taking photos. I have a lot of like creative outlets, and I feel like that is like the most fulfilling to me, nothing really does as much as photography does. It's something I always reach for. I've spoken to a few photographers about this, but I've always found that when I'm feeling a certain way, it is reflected in the photos that I take. For me, film is the perfect way of encapsulating how I feel in that moment.

If I'm taking a digital image, I have to manipulate it and I pull it apart and I can do all these things to it. But with film, time is frozen in a certain way, and it's like that forever once it's developed.

**LF: TELL ME ABOUT THE PROCESS OF SLOWING DOWN WHEN SHOOTING FILM.**

**GM:** I was shooting digital when I came into my internship, and my mentor said 'you should shoot more film'. He's always been shooting film; he's been a big inspiration for me probably the biggest if I'm honest. And so, I did start shooting film, and he told me that I needed to slow down and take a slower approach. Obviously, when you're shooting digital, you just shoot, and that is what I was used

to. I had to realise that I needed to make every shot count, because every shot costs money, and sometimes it's really nice having things flow naturally at a slower pace.

I think that was a good step back for me in terms of my work and life.

**LF: I WANT TO TALK AGAIN ABOUT MISTAKES AND ERRORS THAT COME WITH FILM. I PERSONALLY LOVE LIGHT LEAKS; THEY RESULT IN SOME OF MY FAVORITE PHOTOS. IT'S SOMETHING A LOT OF FILM PHOTOGRAPHERS DON'T WANT. BUT I LOVE WHEN FILM PHOTOGRAPHY ACCEPTS THAT IT IS FILM PHOTOGRAPHY AND EMBRACES IT. WHEN YOU DELIBERATELY MAKE IT GRAINY, DELIBERATELY HAVE LIGHT LEAKS, DELIBERATELY PLAY WITH SCANNING YOUR PHOTOS. I WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT IT?**

**GM:** I think light leaks are probably one of my favourite characteristics of film. I always love those pieces where they have, like, unintentionally put a light leak in.

**LF: DO YOU FEEL A BIT OF NOSTALGIA FOR OLD MEDIUMS? DO YOU HAVE A RECORD PLAYER OR CD PLAYER?**

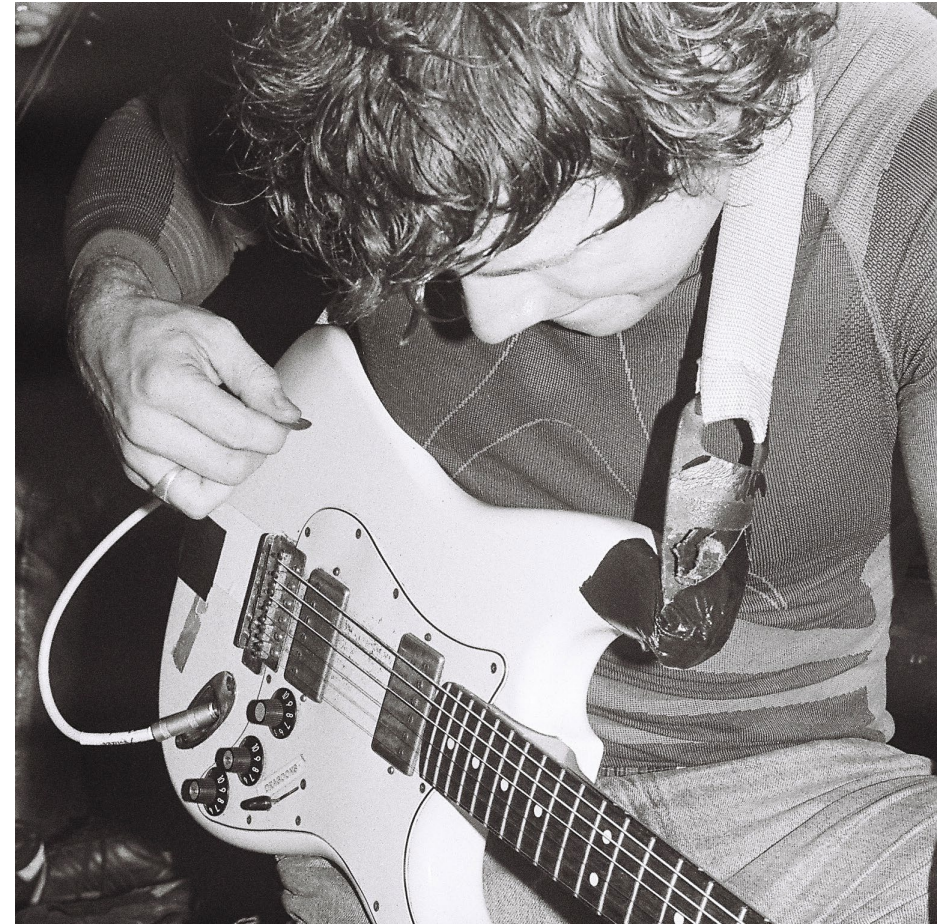
**GM:** Yes, I have a record player. I've always appreciated vinyl more so for the art on the cover, rather than what they sound like. I will say though, I hate when people buy vinyl just to listen to one song. Are you really going to skip through all the songs on the album for the one song you know? Just play it on Spotify.

**LF: I ALSO WANTED TO LOOK AT SOME OF THE PHOTOS YOU SUBMITTED. CORRECT ME IF I'M WRONG, BUT THERE ARE A LOT OF BEAUTIFUL POSED, MODELED SHOTS. YOU ALSO HAVE SOME BAND PHOTOS SPRINKLED IN, CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE SHOOTING IN THOSE?**

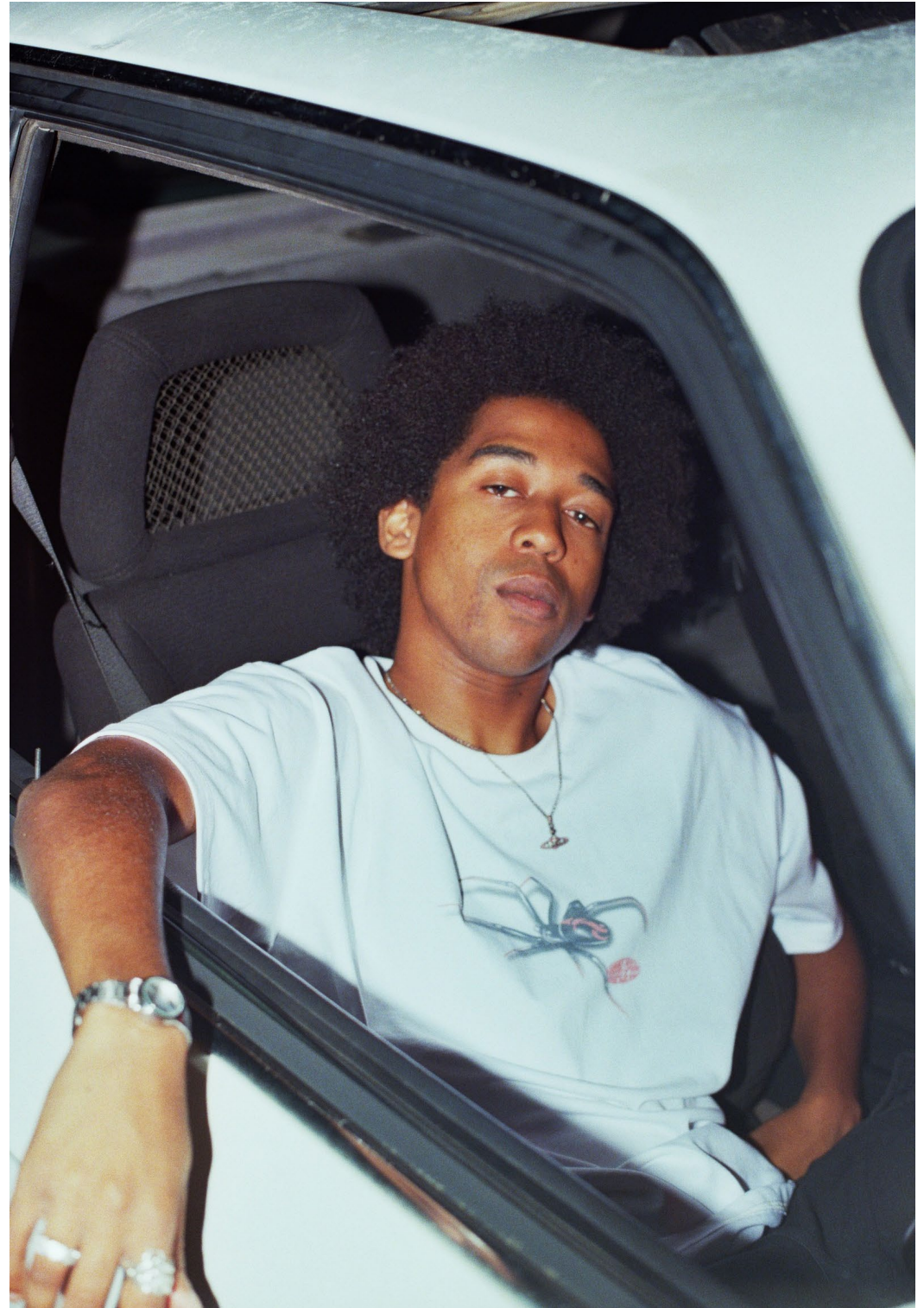
**GM:** This one here was at a super cramped bar and it was a free gig, my first ever gig actually. The band I went to see was supporting, and I had my camera on me and a roll of film I just had lying around at home. And I thought 'fuck it' and asked the support band if they

mind if I took some photos. They said 'of course'. They were really nice. I ended up shooting with another photographer called Charlie Foz; he is the loveliest guy, and his work is fucking crazy. It's nuts. He was actually the photographer for the band, but we ended up shooting together. He was shooting digital, and I was shooting film, and he was gassing me up and I was gassing him up too. It was my first time working next to someone.

I ended up crowd surfing and accidentally kicked a hole in the roof. To hide from the staff, I decided to hide at the front of the crowd and crouch down. I ended up being pretty much head-to-head with the guitarist. It was the coolest thing ever. Sometimes you are in those time-sensitive situations, and you just have to take the photos and not really think about it. I think that was the moment where I was like, 'I get it, I get taking photos.'







# Morgana Walton.

Morgana Wynne Walton is an emerging multidisciplinary artist whose warped depictions of death, nature and the human body endeavour to set viewer's teeth on edge. Utilising delicate and time consuming analogue processes Morgana aims to understand how nothing can truly escape the violence of decay.



**LF: WHEN DID YOU START PHOTOGRAPHY?**

**MW:** I started taking photos at 4 years old. The first time I was handed a camera I took photos out the window of a train while the scenery sped by. It was an assignment for my Kindergarten class.

**LF: AND SO, YOU STARTED OUT WITH DIGITAL?**

**MW:** Yes, digital was much easier for me to handle as a child and teenager, I liked the immediacy, being able to check my work on the spot and course correct if needed. I also found myself enjoying the rhythm of editing in photoshop, and the ease at which I was able to shoot and edit on my phone especially. Film has been more of a challenge as the types of photos I enjoy taking require lots of preplanning and trial and error.

**LF: WHEN DID FILM PHOTOGRAPHY COME INTO YOUR**

**ORBIT AND HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?**

**MW:** I had always been aware of film photography, my father is a photographer also and had continued to occasionally shoot on film even after digital had well and truly taken over. So, I had some exposure through that, but I didn't really start to dabble with film myself until I changed high schools in year 11, my new school being equipped with a small dark room.

**LF: I HAVE TO SAY, I LOVE YOUR PHOTOS IMMENSELY.**

**IS THERE SOMETHING YOU ARE HOPING TO CAPTURE IN THEM?**

**MW:** I'm hoping to capture how beautiful time is, how everyone and everything alive and dead, serves a purpose. Film and its physicality helps me with this as it serves as almost a memorial, a physical reminder of my memories, the world seen through my eye and no one else's.

**LF: YOU SAID BEFORE THAT YOUR DAD KEPT SHOOTING**

**FILM WELL INTO THE DIGITAL AGE. I WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT PEOPLE OUR AGE, SO GEN Z, SHOOTING FILM?**

**MW:** It's sort of a defiant thing, a purposeful anachronism, a defense against a world in which the social currency has become digitised,

and your worth defined by your productivity and clout. Film is inherently more time consuming, more physical, than phones have allowed photography to become. To be Gen Z and shoot film means to indulge in the revitalisation of a craft that doesn't automatically benefit anyone but oneself, something hard to grasp when capitalism is so overbearing in our lives.

I think there is a general longing to return to the past as of late. The world has become a very sad and scary place full of war and violence. And when looking back retrospectively, with the distance of time, the past can often look a lot better in comparison to how life feels now despite the past holding equal if not greater suffering and challenges. Film is an easy gateway into this nostalgia that allows for a simultaneous kick of endorphins, whilst also not connecting automatically to the hardships of history. In effect a soft and palatable way of indulging in nostalgia that leaves the nasty behind.

**LF: I LOVE THINKING ABOUT FILM PHOTOGRAPHY AS AN ESCAPE, BECAUSE IT REALLY IS. AND THIS IDEA OF**

**NOSTALGIA TOO IS SOMETHING THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE OUR AGE ARE REALLY SEARCHING FOR. I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKING A BIT ABOUT YOUR PRACTICE. CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT HOW YOU GET READY TO TAKE PHOTOS. HOW YOU SELECT YOUR FILM, HOW YOU SHOOT, WHEN YOU SHOOT, WHAT YOU SHOOT ETC.**

**MW:** I'm very much a kind of 'fuck around and find out' person when it comes to how I shoot. I don't really care about the technician side of it as much as I do the process of creating art, and thus I prefer to kind of feel out whatever I do while I'm doing it.

Currently I've been shooting a lot of black and white because of how cheap it is, and my preference towards a subdued palette. Mainly Ilford hp5 and kentmere pan 400. I usually lean towards these as they're affordable and relatively grainy, I like being able to tell an image was shot on film.

I shoot on a small canon rangefinder for the most part because it is the easiest to lug around for me right now. I have other cameras and am looking to get more into medium and large format but am overwhelmed by the magnitude of new tech to learn.

I mainly shoot in carefully planned moments of free time in-between studying full time and working three jobs. It's hard to find time and to go to locations so currently I've been shooting others mainly in the city and around my home during the daytime, and myself inside my house in the evening and night. I used to only shoot myself and inanimate objects because I was way too shy to ask people to model for me, but the constraints of film have forced me to expand that, and now I also shoot models. My focus is primarily on nature, the body, and how man causes destruction against all things.

**LF: AND SO WITH THE BLACK AND WHITE FILM, DO YOU DEVELOP IT YOURSELF?**

**MW:** Yes, I have free use of the chemistry to develop black and white film at my university, so I do all B&W development there, and then taking my negatives home for scanning as I have a preference for my own scanner rather than the one my university provides.

Colour is harder for me, I own the chemistry to develop it at home and am in the process of creating space for a makeshift darkroom but have struggled to find the time to get over my fears of ruining a roll and trying to develop some colour film myself. There is also the issue of needing to batch do rolls, and the other members of my family needing to be away from me while doing it. That has meant that while I am not shooting colour that often, I get it developed wherever is cheapest and the scan it myself to save money.

**LF: CAN YOU TELL ME SOME MORE ABOUT YOUR AESTHETIC PREFERENCES AND WHY FILM IS BEST SUITED TO ACHIEVE THAT?**

**MW:** I'm fascinated by the ways you can observe (and not notice at the same time) the way in which something decays.

The idea that everything, no matter how permanent it may feel, is slowly rotting away from the insane. Digital feels too clinical to me.

I understand that posting and sharing are their own forms of decay, and that images can become corrupted over time, but there is just a fascinating intimacy to film. The delicacy of the chemistry process, the way you can so easily mark the image, destroy it in an instance. I like its impermanence, and I think it communicates that nature visually also. The grain of a negative reminds me of time passing through the hourglass or rot tearing apart a house.

**LF: THAT IS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL WAY OF THINKING ABOUT FILM. I HADN'T REALLY CONSIDERED THE CAPACITY FOR DEGRADATION WHEN THINKING ABOUT FILMS AESTHETICS. THERE IS SOMETHING VERY GOTHIC AND SPOOKY ABOUT YOUR PICTURES. WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST INSPIRATIONS WHEN YOU ARE LOOKING TO CREATE A NEW IMAGE OR SERIES?**

**MW:** I would definitely agree I sway towards the dark and or macabre, so calling them gothic definitely fits. I find inspiration everywhere, film, literature, tv, nature. I'm a huge collector so anything that stirs my fancy I'll try and find a way to remember be it a quick phone snap or searching something down and purchasing it. For the longest time my inspirations were almost never other photographs, finding myself more connected to texture, motif, and narrative. Films like David Lynch's Fire Walk with Me and Robert Eggers The Witch both shaped my visual language immensely, their unflinching examples of womanhood being something I often try to echo within my own work.

When preparing for shoots specifically I often try to make a Pinterest board of images that connect to my idea, combing found images, textures, text, and my own test images to create something that helps me stay centred on my ideas as I can sometimes become overwhelmed by choice if left to my own devices. In this way Inspiration for me, serves more as a guiding force, something that

helps me stay motivated to keep trying new things, rather than something I want to directly / indirectly replicate.

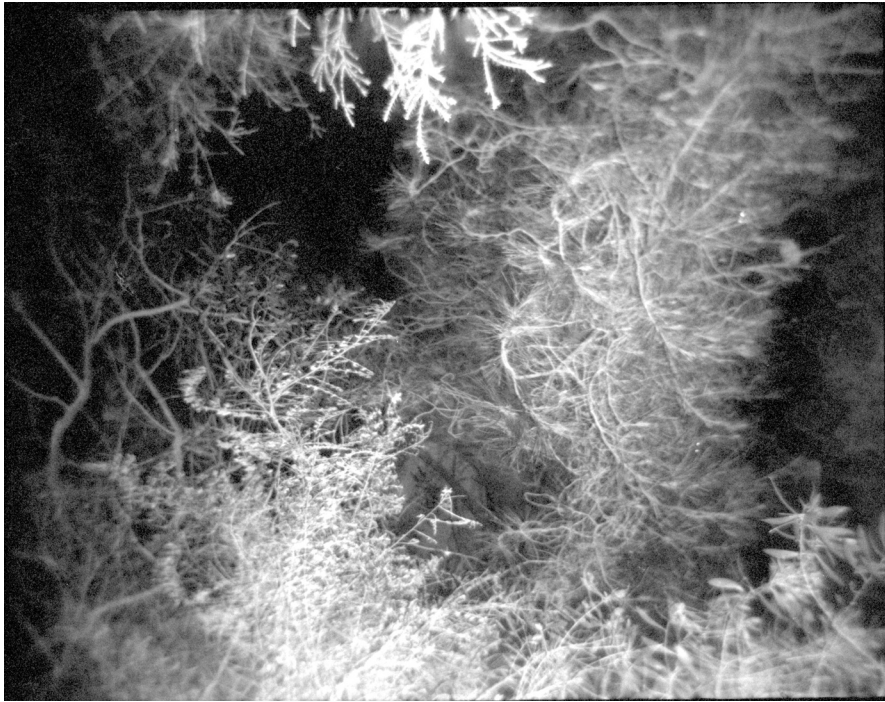
**LF:** I REMEMBER WATCHING THE WITCH FOR THE FIRST TIME AND I WAS JUST AWESTRUCK; UP UNTIL THAT MOMENT I HADN'T SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.

I LOVE THE IDEA OF INSPIRATION KIND OF HOLDING YOUR HAND THROUGH NEW DISCOVERIES AND PUSHING YOU TO CREATE THINGS OUTSIDE OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE.

I RECOGNISE THAT WE HAVE SPOKEN A LOT ABOUT THE ARTS NICHE OF FILM PHOTOGRAPHERS. I WAS WONDERING IF YOU THINK THERE IS A CULTURE OF GEN Z FILM PHOTOGRAPHERS OUTSIDE OF THIS? MOST OF US ARE FAMILIAR WITH DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY, SO I'M CURIOUS TO KNOW IF YOU THINK THE FILM CULTURE DIFFERS FROM IT?

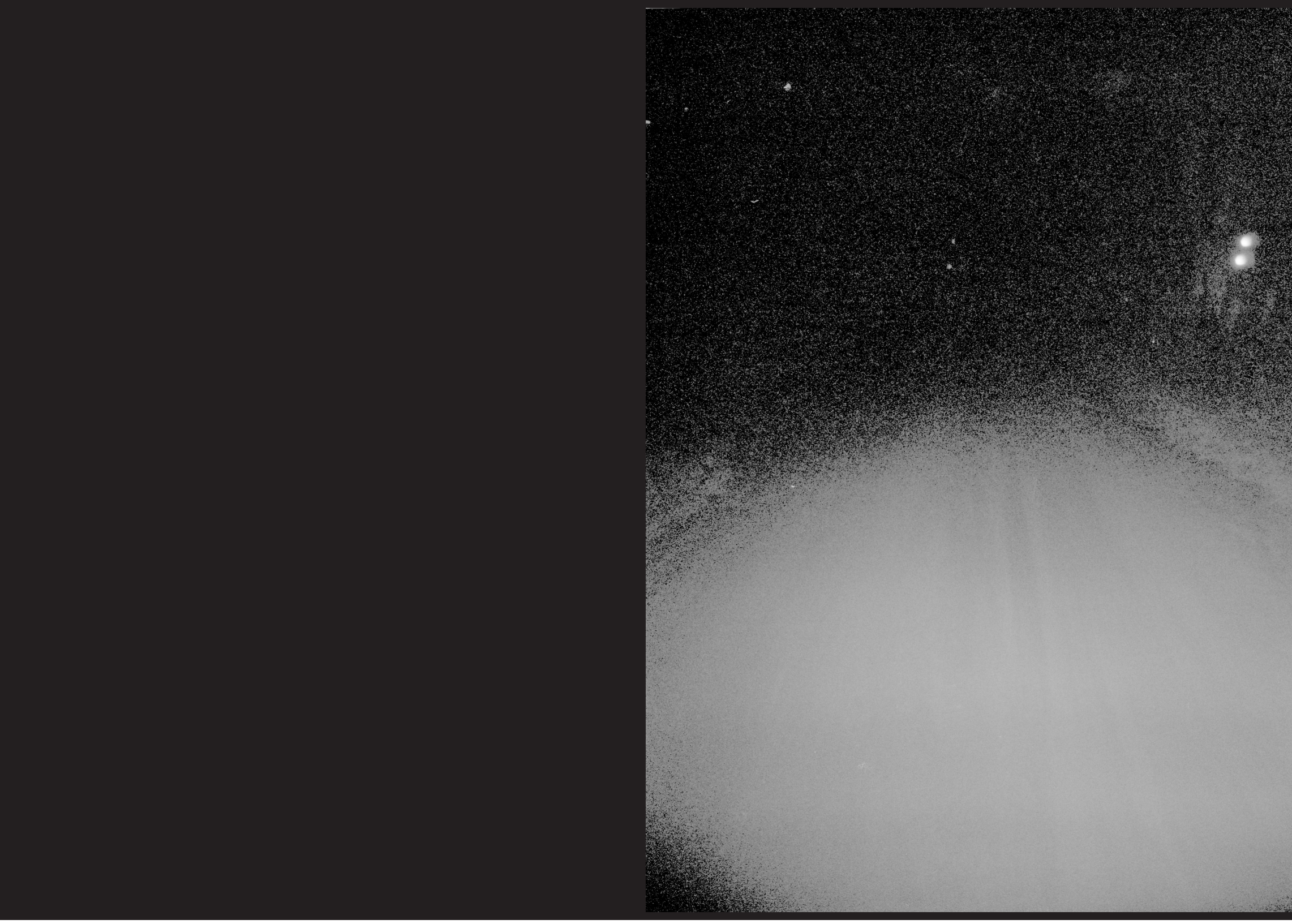
**MW:** Oh there definitely is, I work at a place that sells disposable cameras and even just seeing the way they sell at our store amongst people my age has shown me the ever-increasing gen z interest in film. We can barely keep them stocked even though their price keeps on rising and the value gap of it vs purchasing individual rolls continues to widen. They don't care, they just are interested in film and its trendiness, it's interesting to me. Digital photography seems to also be making a comeback, but mainly through lo-fi cameras, something I think that like film, is focused on a romanticism of the past and nostalgia for times in which technology wasn't so inescapable. I think Gen Z understands the way in which phones especially have taken over the social and physical economy, and are interested in film especially, as it challenges the need to take a photo to be posted immediately, allowing a distance from the event that social media just does not allow.





When I am quiet I can hear the earth speak  
my breath held inside my lungs  
trees dancing in the breeze  
their branches shedding like a satisfied cat  
sunlight filtering through their leaves  
the unapologetic trill of birdsong echoes  
even when a train clatters along its tracks  
an insect flying past my ear  
calmly singing its beautiful siren song  
you laugh at me gently,  
face colorating from tragedy to amusement  
and, in a moment, the spell is broken  
I am awoken from our soft reverie  
reminded of our place upon the land  
there is so much to learn  
when you finally let nature speak for itself





**END.**

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