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PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY AND PHILOSOPHY

Introduction

Transcendent spirit, you have given me all I asked you for. All Nature and all Knowledge became my province, and I had the power to feel it and enjoy it. Nor was it a mere cold, curious glance you let me take. You let me gaze into Nature’s deepest heart, as if into the bosom of a friend. The ranks of all things living you paraded before me, teaching me to recognise my kinship with all creatures, in the water, in the quiet thicket, in the air.¹

Developments of our societies in a sense of better quality of living depend to a large degree on our ability to understand the conditions of the present situation, to cognate potential opportunities and to introduce them into our world. In order to achieve this ever-so mutating goal, human beings learn mental skills so they can alter in a suitable and sustainable manner the physical world, the only place which we inhabit.

People who were most intrigued by the human conditions and prime forces of the Universe became known as philosophers and since ancient times they worked on those subjects diligently offering a variety of approaches. For example, when Zoroastrianism, the brainchild of Zarathustra, was gaining ground in Persia, and Siddhārtha Gautama (Buddha) wandered throughout India spreading his understanding of life, Heraclitus, one of the most inspiring of Greek philosophers lived in relative seclusion in Ephesus, on the coast of Asia Minor, saying:

If you do not expect the unexpected you will not discover it; for it cannot be tracked down and offers no passage.²

What we can deduce from this is that it is brave not to fear the unexpected and yet it is the only way to grow, to expand one’s capabilities. People, who

¹ J. W. Goethe, Faust, p. 92.
² Heraclitus fr. DK B 18 from: J. Barnes, Early Greek Philosophy, p. 113.
follow this wise observation, would open up to endless possibilities of the world without a priori set expectations. Heraclitus, seen at the time of flourishing Greek philosophy, as obscure is as modern as Henri Bergson, who wrote at the beginning of 20th century that:

*It is enough to be convinced once and for all that reality is change, that change is indivisible, and that in an indivisible change the past is one with the present.*

While Bergson describes in these words the prime condition of all current events, which is their homogeneous continuity in time and space of what is gone and what has just began, Heraclitus points to the lack of uniformity between present and just entering our existential space events, therefore to unexpected, impossible to fully predict novelty of what is just about to happen now. One could say that the consequences of uninterrupted flow of real life is its inconsequential meandering, undercurrents and whirlpools, which we can miss by holding on to what we experienced already.

So, it was obvious from the beginning that the task of understanding the world is not simple, because the world doesn’t lend itself to fragmentation which is easier to de–cipher or encapsulate than any totality nor it will yield to our commands. Subsequently it should be accepted that we have to find practical schemes and effective algorithms as otherwise we would be left pondering, like a child standing on the edge of the ocean imagining the beach on another side. This would do not much good for the bettering of our future. Philosophers came with an answer:

*We break the flux of sensible reality into things, then, at our will. We create the subjects of our true as well as of our false propositions. We create the predicates also. Many of the predicates of things express only the relations of the things to us and to our feelings. Such predicates of course are human additions.*

Following this understanding we employ the most reliable in its repeatability of our systems of knowing, that is of natural science inclusive of mathematics, to find out the hidden energies dwelling within nature:

* [...] the scientific concepts are idealizations; they are derived from experience obtained by refined experimental tools, and are precisely defined through axioms and definitions. Only through these precise definitions is it possible to connect the concepts with a mathematical scheme and to derive mathematically the infinite variety of possible phenomena in this field. But through this process of idealization and precise definition the immediate connection with*

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reality is lost. The concepts still correspond very closely to reality in that part of nature which had been the object of the research. But the correspondence may be lost in other parts containing other groups of phenomena.¹

William James similarly judged our ability to comprehend surrounding phenomena as only conditional, because we tend to infuse our current experience with outcomes of previous, past encounters, therefore skewing nature into an artificial entity.

Results of our investigations often do not live up to our expectations, and so it is not unusual that we feel defeated in our attempt to probe the core of nature:

_We usually refer to incorrect inductive inferences concerning the meaning of our perceptions as illusions of the senses. For the most part they are the result of incomplete inductive inferences. Their occurrence is largely related to the fact that we tend to favour certain ways of using our sense organs – those ways which provide us with the most reliable and most consistent judgements about the forms, spatial relations, and properties of the objects we observe._²

In other words nature will usually humble and confuse us with baffling behaviour:

_I should like to come back to a subject on which I have often spoken, the continuous creation of unforeseeable novelty which seems to be going on in the universe. As far as I am concerned, I feel I am experiencing it constantly. No matter how I try to imagine in detail what is going to happen to me, still how inadequate, how abstract and stilted is the thing I have imagined in comparison to what actually happens! The realization brings along with it an unforeseeable nothing which changes everything._³

Before we can (ever so vaguely) control and manipulate elements of nature, we must appreciate the principles of its modus vivendi. Therefore we cannot rest if scientific, logical or otherwise exact trials are not completely satisfactory, but out of necessity we need to find supplementary means of enquiry.

This is nothing new. For thousands of years humans strived to touch deeply into the workings of our environments by other, than scientific, means.

¹ W. Heisenberg, _Physics and Philosophy_, p. 188.
³ H. Bergson, _The Creative Mind_, p. 91.
be it shamanic events or by recording the fleeting reality in stories and images. In order to capture their observations they painted scenes on cave walls, talked about them at gatherings, carved written words about grand events into walls of monuments and not that long time ago invented printing press to publish all kinds of encyclopaedic books with illustrations on this subject. But all of it happens after the event took place; all of it is like an afterthought, recalled from a memory. Therefore philosophers created intellectual methods for grasping phenomena in such a manner that the truth could be re-created from the re-formed snippets stored in our brains, a kind of induction from the past back to the present time.

This is done by associating a stand alone event into a web of related events of our choosing thus giving mind a chance to trace back to that one phenomena, which we are looking for:

Memory’s causes

Such being the phenomenon of memory, or the analysis of its object, can we see how it comes to pass? Can we lay bare its causes?

Its complete exercise presupposes two things:

1) The retention of the remembered fact;
2) Its reminiscence, recollection, reproduction, or recall.

Now the cause both of retention and of recollection is the law of habit in the nervous system, working as it does in the ‘association of ideas’.

In short, we make search in our memory for a forgotten idea, just as we rummage our house for a lost object. In both cases we visit what seems to us the probable neighbourhood of that which we miss.

But we must be alert to the real danger that someone’s lie can become a substitution for knowledge to such an extent that it may provide a victim with a false understanding of reality thus guiding a person towards a misleading path:

In the hallucinations artificially produced in hypnotic subjects, some degree of peripheral excitement seems usually to be required. The brain is asleep as far as its own spontaneous thinking goes, and the words of the ‘magnetizer’ then awaken a cortical process which drafts off into itself any currents of a related sort which may come in from the periphery, resulting in a vivid objective perception of the suggested thing. Thus, point to a dot on a sheet of paper, and call it ‘General Grant’s photograph’, and your subject will see a photograph of the General there instead of the

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1 W. James, The Principles of Psychology, p. 615.

Multi–optional dimensions

It is of a paramount importance to our lives that we manage to conceptualize a profusion of personal experiences which, like waves of an ocean, overlay each other. To this end we extract information from a multiple sources ranging from inner, direct, sensory observations to second hand quotes which come from personal contacts with other people. Equally important to our well–being are all kinds of social media (television, publications, internet, mobile communication or photography). That is how we map our future with intention to avoid turmoil and secure stable, healthy environment for a length of our lives and those who are dear to us. While many thousands of years ago it was sufficient to grow wiser from a story told by the fire in front of a simple dwelling, the development of larger societies altered it all. Philosophers were now required to extend their mental tools, to apply paragons and form theories in response to the growing mass of vastly diverse new and old knowledge, so the rest of us would have a chance to make some sense out of it. By more recent times, in the period when William James, Henri Bergson, Marcel Proust, Carl Gustav Jung, Peter Brook, Martin Heidegger matured into their roles in society, the stream of contradictory facts was truly overwhelming and yet all true and real. These thinkers and creative people, and I mention here just a few names, responded to the human diversity with fresh approaches which are complementary to each other.

Social dimension

The profound social changes brought upon by the disturbing avalanche of massive upheavals during the first half of the 20th century had a profound, albeit hidden, impact on our attitudes to others and to ourselves:

*The spiritual problem of modern man is one of those questions which belong so intimately to the present in which we are living that we cannot judge of them fully. The modern man is a newly formed human being; a modern problem is a question which has just arisen and whose answer lies in the future. In speaking, therefore, of the spiritual problem of modern man we can at most state a question – and we should perhaps put this statement in different terms if we had but the faintest inkling of the answer.*

[...]

*The man whom we can with justice call ‘modern’ is solitary. He is so of necessity and at all times, for every step towards a fuller consciousness of the present removes him further from his original ‘parti-

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cipation mystique’ with the mass of men – from submersion in a common unconsciousness. Every step forward means an act of tearing himself loose from that all-embracing, pristine unconsciousness which claims the bulk of mankind almost entirely.¹

Existential dimension
In those fermenting societies our roles were not as clearly defined as before and unexpectedly we were faced with prospect or straight facts of interdependence with distant people in different cultures. Therefore more than ever we desired stability so we could live with some sanity within the world and personal space. After all it is extraordinary that while sitting in a specific place on Earth, like our home we can instantly reach any other place on the same planet, as long there is a telephone line near by or a communication satellite is placed conveniently many kilometres above that patch of land mass or a vessel sailing across one of many seas on the planet. This stability came from tying being with time, thus giving us most profound basis for daily existence, which is not disturbed by neurotic hesitations and doubts of our belonging to society or even life itself:

What is in time and is thus determined by time, we call the temporal. When a man dies and is removed from what is here, from beings here and there, we say that his time has come. Time and the temporal mean what is perishable, what passes away in the course of time. Our language says with still greater precision: what passes away with time. For time itself passes away. But by passing away constantly, time remains as time. To remain means: not to disappear, thus, to presence. Thus time is determined by a kind of Being. How, then, is Being supposed to be determined by time? Being speaks out of the constancy of time’s passing away. Nevertheless, nowhere do we find time as something that is like a thing.

Being is not a thing, thus nothing temporal, and yet it is determined by time as presence.

Time is not a thing, thus nothing which is, and yet it remains constant in its passing away without being something temporal like the beings in time.

Being and time determine each other reciprocally, but in such a manner that neither can the former – Being – be addressed as something temporal nor can the latter – time – be addressed as a being.²

² M. Heidegger, On Time and Being, p. 3.
Performance

All rites of passage happen in real time with their profound pain, unique beauty and a sense of ultimate purpose. They are immediate, unique for those concerned, and yet they were and are repeated to this day in easily recognizable stages. With evolution of our societies rites became formalised, but still retain their powerful undercurrent which stirrers our emotions, because they unfold, are displayed in front of our eyes, close by, and performed by people, who breath the same air as we do.

The performance is about our belonging to the human kind in a wholesome manner:

Anyone interested in processes in the natural world would be greatly rewarded by a study of theatre conditions. His discoveries would be far more applicable to general society than the study of bees or ants. Under the magnifying glass he would see a group of people living all the time according to precise, shared, but unnamed standards. He would see that in any community a theatre has either no particular function – or a unique one. The uniqueness of the function is that it offers something that cannot be found in the street, at home, in the pub, with friends, or on a psychiatrist’s couch, in a church or at the movies. There is only one interesting difference between the cinema and the theatre. The cinema flashes on to a screen images from the past. As this is what the mind does to itself all through life, the cinema seems intimately real. Of course, it is nothing of the sort – it is a satisfying and enjoyable extension of the unreality of everyday perception. The theatre, on the other hand, always asserts itself in the present. This is what can make it more real than the normal stream of consciousness. This also is what can make it so disturbing.¹

Written Story

We could easily be forgiven to assume that with such profusion of events and relations, which people living in crowded cities are exposed to, our minds will give up and store in memory only most important facts. And yet, these unexpected events, which Heraclitus described so elegantly, can spark a whole chain of recollections and apparently unconnected thoughts or sensual experiences. This is very reassuring, because thanks to these eruptions coming from individual sub–consciousness, we become aware of our mind’s potential, giving us hope for the future:

¹ P. Brook, The Empty Space, p. 111.
At most I noticed cursorily that the differences which exist between every one of our real impression – differences which explain why a uniform depiction of life cannot bear much resemblance to the reality – derive probably from the following cause: the slightest word that we have said, the most insignificant action that we have performed at any one epoch of our life was surrounded by, and coloured by the reflection of, things which logically had no connexion with it and which later have been separated from it by our intellect which could make nothing of them for its own rational purposes, things, however, in the midst of which – here the pink reflection of the evening upon the flower-covered wall of a country restaurant, a feeling of hunger, the desire for women, the pleasure of luxury; there the blue volutes of the morning sea and, enveloped in them, phrases of music half emerging like the shoulders of water-nymphs – the simplest act or gesture remains immured as within a thousand sealed vessels, each one of them filled with things of a colour, a scent, a temperature that are absolutely different one from another, vessels, moreover, which being disposed over the whole range of our years, during which we have never ceased to change if only in our dreams and our thoughts, are situated at the most various moral altitudes and give us the sensation of extraordinarily diverse atmospheres. It is true that we have accomplished these changes imperceptibly; but between the memory which brusquely returns to us and our present state, and no less between two memories of different years, places, hours, the distance is such that it alone, even without any specific originality, would make it impossible to compare one with the other. Yes: if, owing to the work of oblivion, the returning memory can throw no bridge, form no connecting link between itself and the present minute, if it remains in the context of its own place and date, if it keeps its distance, its isolation in the hollow of a valley or upon the highest peak of a mountain summit, for this very reason it causes us suddenly to breathe a new air, an air which is new precisely because we have breathed it in the past, that purer air which the poets have vainly tried to situate in paradise and which
could induce so profound a sensation of renewal only if it had been breathed before, since the true paradises are the paradises that we have lost.¹

**Philosophical dimension**

It is physically impossible to notice the totality of all events taking place within our existential environment during a single minute and to assess their relevance to each other as well as to ourselves. Therefore we cut out a majority of sensory impulses out at the moment they reach the brain and allow only a fraction of them to be processed by our minds. Just the vastness of reality is censored by our memory mental tools, which is a pre-requisite for allowing us to properly comprehend the reality. If this course of action is sufficient, if it helps us to function well within the true world, then it means that our translation was the correct one. So, we carry on with that clearly successful system of behaviour; it eventually becomes our individual philosophy for living. If our manner of thinking is biased, if it affects as stirring negative emotions, then we fail and we should learn from it in order not to get hurt again:

*Reality, as James sees it, is redundant and super-abundant. Between this reality and the one constructed by the philosophers, I believe he would have established the same relation as between the life we live every day and the life which actors portray in the evening on the stage. On the stage, each actor says and does only what has to be said and done; the scenes are clear-cut; the play has a beginning, a middle and an end; and everything is worked out as economically as possible with a view to an ending which will be happy or tragic. But in life, a multitude of useless things are said, many superfluous gestures made, there are no sharply-drawn situations; nothing happens as simply or as completely or as nicely as we should like; the scenes overlap; things neither begin nor end; there is no perfectly satisfying ending, nor absolutely decisive gesture, none of those telling words which give us pause: all the effects are spoiled. Such is human life.*²

**Pictorial dimension**

The 18th century was the period when new philosophical, social, artistic ideas were so completely entwined with individual lives that this similarity of coming with fresh ideas encourages us to identify with these people and their

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achievements in the 21st century. Not only modern political systems grew straight from them (including all present day democratic constitutions) but a new approach to taxonomy, that is classification of organic creatures, which are populating our planet and also to the structure of music; all have roots in that time. People from Carl Linnaeus to Johann Sebastian Bach, from Giacomo Casanova to Jean-Baptiste le Rond d’Alembert, from Denis Diderot to Thomas Jefferson exuded panache for strong opinions about all kinds of events. They didn’t hedge their bets, but spoke their minds giving others a chance to stand their ground on a principle of a right to a personal opinion:

[...] The first aim of Painting is to move us. A work which moves us greatly, must be excellent on the whole. For the same reason the work which does not move us at all, does not engage us, is worth nothing; and if criticism finds in it nothing to reprove in the way of faults against the rules, it means only that a work may be bad without having faults against the rules, as a work full of faults against the rules may be an excellent work.¹

Photography

The desire to document, to faithfully render reality into an image which one could keep beyond the phenomenology of an event, while the present moment defuses into the past, was a dream which no artist nor story–teller could even contemplate achieving. Yes, Canaletto used his camera obscura to paint a city–scape of Warsaw (used centuries later as a template for re–building the city which was annihilated at the end of 2nd World War by Nazis and Soviets) and a death mask made of wax could be used as a matrix for a sculpture. But even such faithful attempts were confounded by a manual intervention of a craftsman and significant time lapse since the event took place. So the race was on to come up with straightforward technique to make analogue copies of what’s around us now. When the solution, or rather solutions were invented almost simultaneously in France (Niephore Niepce 1826, Louis Jacques Mande Daguerre 1838) and in England (W. H. Fox Talbot 1839), the acrimonious dispute was similar to that which took place between Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and Sir Isaac Newton on the subject of calculus, because all those involved knew that the stakes were very high indeed.

Yet, the initial impact of this new technology was limited to provision of cheap family portraits. The process was studio bound, because light–sensitive photographic plates had to be freshly made to stay moist, then exposed for a couple of minutes and developed immediately after in a darkroom, which was a step away. Only with introduction of dry substrate (during the second half of 19th century) were photographers able to move away from toxically unsound darkrooms and take their bulky equipment to distant places, where they could witness and to train their lenses upon people who already worked outside (like

a painter Camille Corot at Arras in 1871), for the first time ever to record stages of an animal movement (Eadweard Muybridge, Galloping Horse) and depicted the horrors of destruction (like the aftermath of battles during the Civil War in the USA).

Since the later years of 19th century American Civil War and German war with France were now fought on an industrial scale and European empires grew exponentially thus facilitating mass production, the economies diversified at a rapid rate. The transformation of people’s lives from those years onwards could not be greater and these social stratifications were also documented more precisely and more intrusively than ever before by photographers, whose images were published by bewildering range of newspapers. For the first time in human history all people, inclusive of those who were illiterate, had access to information beyond their immediate neighbourhood and this change had a profound impact on their understanding of their own lives and their place within society.

However, while this new, and in so many ways, fascinating technology of photography was reshaping people conceptions of the world, its cultural standing was negligible. Yes, Edgar Degas used photography as a convenient aid for some of his paintings and Nadar, a flamboyant engraver and personality of metropolitan Paris, took many portraits of his friends, but photography was still just an interesting gadget, an up–start well below the art proper.

In the USA the situation was somewhat different, because by the end of 19th century photographic images of national leaders were more appropriate for the egalitarian society than painted portraits. While still fashioned in academic taste they did show people, who appeared as real as those who populated Great Plains in their drive towards West Coast or those who toiled away building the New York City. New and old immigrants could relate to their faces and thus form a connection to the place, which they wanted to call their home.

As the cost of photographic equipment declined and processes were simplified, photographic portraits were not only printed in newspapers, but also evolved into mug shots or self–taken passport portraits. They were useful because they recorded in mechanically simple process the features of a great variety of people. Another type of photographs emerged with an onset of light–weight equipment at the beginning of 20th century: tourists’ snap–shots. They were made of people posing in front of famous places in order to document for posterity the fact that they, at some stage of their lives, existed for a short while in that specific place. These photographs are taken purely for the benefit of the future and have nothing to do with a fleeting, existential moment. Even if they are taken quickly, hence snap–shots, they are seldom any more than random happenings of light flying through an open lens to reach the sensitive element hidden inside a modern day camera obscura. At some later day they would spark up memories.

More glamorous versions of portrait photography fill magazine albums and wedding albums endowing our lives with sparkling glitter. One could see with profound justification that they relate to immediacy of being only in
terms of dates in a calendar. They barely serve as a way to discover the unknown, because the purpose of that photography is to create symbolic images and not to document unexpected phenomena.

Since the dawn of civilization humans were able to intentionally (albeit semi–consciously) supplement sensory experience with elements drawn from our knowledge so they could communicate and create rich and varied societies. This applies just the same to portrait photography, because a personal memory is often enough to sufficiently re–create a person from a mere, flat image. And it works for us, even if an image is fragmented and truncated.

Many people very much doubt that a photographer can create an image, which truly holds within itself the ephemeral, the elusive elements of our personalities without propping it up with a razzmatazz of symbols, archetypal quotes and such likes? It is often questioned if a simple picture can move emotionally or inspire in thoughtful manner other people. Even more to a point: can it happen when a person on a photograph is unknown to us either on a personal or social scale or is plain anonymous? Will we be awaken to stranger’s true personality by an image without any notes and pointers?

Most doubt it, even those who are intensely creative:

[...]
Sick man lookin’ for the doctor’s cure
Lookin’ at his hands for the lines that were
And into every masterpiece of literature
For dignity

Englishman stranded in the blackheart wind
Combin’ his hair back, his future looks thin
Bites the bullet and he looks within
For dignity

Someone showed me a picture and I just laughed
Dignity never been photographed
I went into the red, went into the black
Into the valley of dry bone dreams

So many roads, so much at stake
So many dead ends, I’m at the edge of the lake
Sometimes I wonder what it’s gonna take
To find dignity

Or perhaps people are not that charismatic as we wish to imagine them, so a portrait is just a statement of what we created inside ourselves? Maybe we are just plain? Obviously, as this comes from Andy Warhol, it has double meaning (as always):

I think ‘aura’ is something that only somebody else can see, and they only see as much of it as they want

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to. It’s all in the other person’s eyes. You can only see an aura on people you don’t know very well or don’t know at all. I was having dinner the other night with everybody from my office. The kids at the office treat me like dirt, because they know me and they see me every day. But then there was this nice friend that somebody had brought along who had never met me, and this kid could hardly believe that he was having dinner with me! Everybody else was seeing me, but he was seeing my ‘aura’.\(^1\)

The prime function of photographic technology is to record an incoming light which was reflected from another human being or a fragment of surroundings, in a similar speed to human ability to notice alterations in a movement (approx 1/25 sec), while preserving the originality of the given situation. In that instant the true moment of human reality will project itself upon a light sensitive core of a photographic camera and by changing it either in chemical or electronic composition leaves a mark which subsequently will represent the honesty of that incredibly brief event.

I strongly believe that there are photographers, who do not deviate from it and yet the most inner aspects of model’s personality are there too, exposed for our eyes to be seen:

My photographs don’t go below the surface. They don’t go below anything. They’re readings of what’s on the surface. I have great faith in surfaces. I always prefer to work in the studio. It isolates people from their environment. They become in a sense [...] symbolic of themselves. I often feel that people come to me to be photographed as they would go to a doctor or a fortune teller – to find out how they are. So they’re dependent on me. I have to engage them. Otherwise there’s nothing to photograph. The concentration has to come from me and involve them. Sometimes the force of it grows so strong that sounds in the studio go unheard. Time stops. We share a brief, intense intimacy. But it’s unearned. It has no past [...] no future. The photographs have a life of their own now. Whatever it was I brought to them is in them and it isn’t in me [...] anymore.\(^2\)

For me the camera is a sketch book, an instrument of intuition and spontaneity, the master of the instant

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\(^1\) A. Warhol, The Philosophy of Andy Warhol, p. 77.

\(^2\) Avedon, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, no page.
which, in visual terms, questions and decides simultaneously. In order to ‘give a meaning’ to the world, one has to feel involved in what he frames through the viewfinder. This attitude requires concentration, a discipline of mind, sensitivity, and a sense of geometry. It is by great economy of means that one arrives at simplicity of expression. One must always take photographs with the greatest respect for the subject and for oneself. To take photographs is to hold one’s breath when all faculties converge in the face of fleeting reality. It is at that moment that mastering an image becomes a great physical and intellectual joy. To take photographs means to recognize – simultaneously and within a fraction of a second – both the fact itself and the rigorous organisation of visually perceived forms that give it meaning. It is putting one’s head, one’s eye, and one’s heart on the same axis.¹

Conclusion

Both Richard Avedon and Henri Cartier-Bresson describe here a way of photographing people, which implies togetherness with a model while taking portraits. Neither of them ever mention their concepts, thoughts or ideas for a set–up nor their premonitions about a person. They both write about the convergence of beings within the same space and intense togetherness for a fraction of a moment, while they co–create a portrait. In my mind only this manner of a total entwining of personalities will render the human presence into an image which retains the reflection of this particular phenomena.

It is so because of the unique technical construction of a photographic camera coupled with light sensitive material, which was designed for that very specific task.

It is so because the photographic equipment is focused on capturing the existential moment at a speed which is on a par with photographer’s capability to observe.

That is why one could replace a word philosophy from this quote by Henri Bergson by photography to describe what I mean:

Philosophy [Photography] stands to gain in finding some absolute in the moving world of phenomena. But we shall gain also in our feeling of greater joy and strength. Greater joy, because the reality invented before our eyes will give each one of us, unceasingly, certain of the satisfactions which art at rare intervals procures for the privileged; it will reveal to us, beyond the fixity and monotony which

¹ Henri Cartier–Bresson, A catalogue from the exhibition at Side Photographic Gallery.
our senses, hypnotized by our constant needs, at first perceived in it, ever–recurring novelty, the moving originality of things. But above all we shall have greater strength, for we shall feel we are participating, creators of ourselves, in the great work of creation which is the origin of all things and which goes on before our eyes.¹

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