



## ART

### World Photo Day: Exploring the beauty of the Kodachrome 'Anonymous Project'

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In 1826, a French scientist by the name of Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, sat down at the precipice of centuries worth of developing chemistry and optics. The table at his family's country home pointed out over fields, fences and adjoining brickwork. It was here that he took the first reported photograph titled 'View from the Window at Le Gras'.

Around 150 years later, cameras were beginning to be commonplace possessions for many families in America. 35mm Kodachrome cameras loaded with colour film were now at arms-reach waiting to capture the monumental and mundane moments of our unspooling daily lives. The documentation of the everyday was now underway.

There is a beauty to that in the *Anonymous Project*. As Taschen explains: “It all started with an innocent purchase on eBay. Filmmaker Lee Shulman bought a set of 35mm Kodachrome slides—anonymous family photos—and was so taken with what he calls “the emotional value of these slices of life” that he knew he had to have more. He launched The Anonymous Project in 2017 and has since acquired around 700,000 images either by donation or via vintage sellers.”

The project blossomed from the most humble beginnings into a pasture of profound beauty, as noted photography critic Richard B. Woodward writes in the introduction to the collection that collated the 300 finest submissions: “It is significant—and fascinating—that in virtually every image here, photographer and subject seem to know one another. In this embracing album of humanity, no one exists in isolation. There are no strangers here.”

Classic film character [Ferris Bueller](#) once said, “Life moves pretty fast, you don’t stop to look around once in a while, you could miss it.” It’s not quite a line of Shakespearean-level profundity but there is an undeniable truth to it. These images might not amount to much on the surface, but they represent paused places, little bookmarks in life’s unfurling cascade of diegesis in minutiae, blinked moments preserved in the amber of film.

Brimming with moments of play, passion, platitude, snapshots that surmise the zeitgeist, snapshots that surmise a fry-up, snapshots that seem like they could be from your life, and snapshots that seem a world away, this project is a unifying exhibition of modern humanity. If photos are memories then these are glimpses into the flipbooks of the lives of others.

All in all, they bring to mind the [words of Paul Simon](#) who sang in ‘Kodachrome’:

*"Kodachrome*

*They give us those nice bright colours*

*Give us the greens of summers*

*Makes you think all the world's a sunny day, oh yeah*

*I got a Nikon camera*

*I love to take a photograph*

*So mama, don't take my Kodachrome away"*

Full of the greens of summer and a few hundred sunny days, each picture has a story and the anonymous side of things means you have to write it yourself. Lee Shulman has created something truly immersive in this regard, we might not know these folks from Adam, but the personal corroborations they bring forth are unifying.

[You can find out more about the \*Anonymous Project\* and pick up your own copy of the collection by clicking here.](#)

## The Kodachrome 'Anonymous Project':



(Credit: The Anonymous Project)







(Credit: The Anonymous Project)



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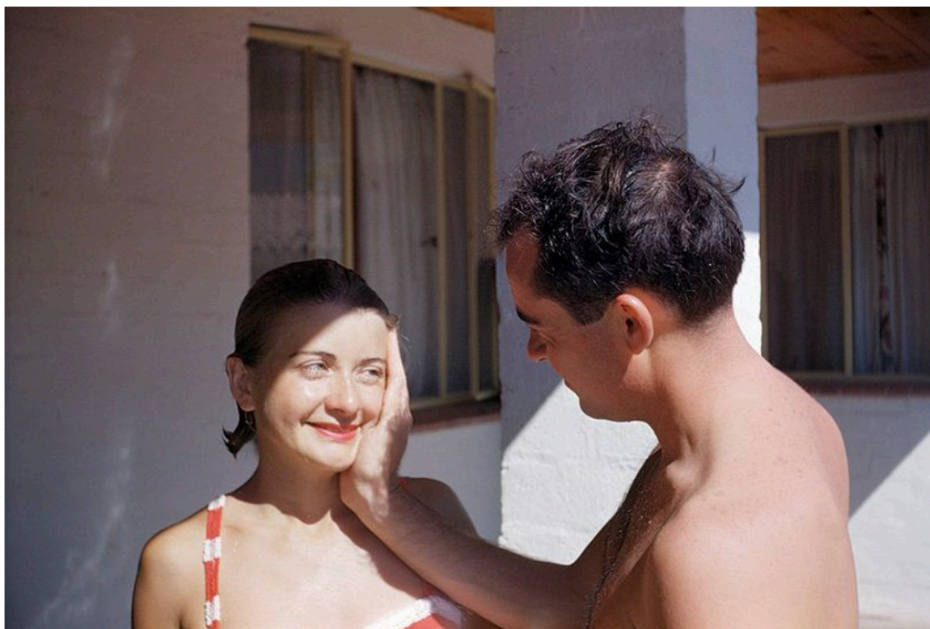
(Credit: The Anonymous Project)





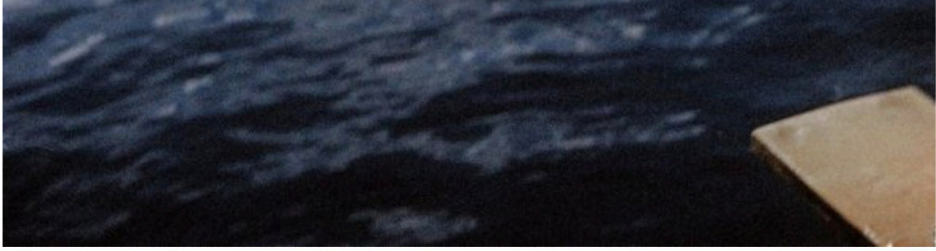


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