

# Holden Blanco

## A South Street Aperture

I've never been very good at drawing or painting. I always used to try to draw pictures of my family and friends, or my favorite fantasy movie characters. My pictures never came out exactly the way I wanted until I discovered photography. I have always found people to be fascinating—how every single one of us is different. It's the same with a photograph. It's nearly impossible to recreate a photograph of a person in exactly the same way each time; each new photo is different from the last. That's why I photograph people.

These images of people on South Street go beyond the paper they're printed on; they represent a story, a history, a lifetime of experience. My photographs do not focus on race, gender, or age; but rather, they focus on my interactions with a wide and diverse array of individuals. The images range from the documentary to the explanatory. The diversity of images helps encompass a representation of the South Street—the commercial street in South Philadelphia is filled with interesting people and stories. This part of the neighborhood acts as a medium to facilitate interactions among my subjects, and subsequently, these photographs.

I have chosen to use 35mm black-and-white film and the grain and aesthetic that comes with it. The production of a black-and-white film image cannot be replicated with digital equipment. Using film also slows down the photographing process, as each image is carefully captured individually and not by a burst of 50 digital captures. Carefully composing one shot at a time connects me with the process of photographing these people.

The portraits when presented together as a collage help create a profile of South Street. The images vary in size, which helps emphasize the most important images. The chosen and matted images selected from the collage create a separate and individualized perspective of my time in the community. They show how South Street isn't a person; it's a place and it's a community. The people who inhabit South Street are what bring it to life.

Making *A South Street Aperture* allowed me to build a relationship with South Street. By comparing the wide array of images with one another, I've created a visual representation of my own experiences on South Street.