

Avalanche Vocals

Megan Costello

Throughout my studies of photojournalism, I have developed a strong interest in documentary photography. *Avalanche Vocals* contains street photographs of people I happened upon by chance. These images were created while I was living in Italy and France this past fall. As a foreigner to the lands, I wanted to understand the identity of the native people. I found that much like the United States, France and Italy have a collage of identities and cultures. As a result, I decided to use street photography as a method of understanding the concept of individual identity. I found that the identity of strangers is difficult to define. Identity is a blend of unlimited characteristics and is often our own projection of ideas and cultural values onto a person.

I shot these photographs using a 55mm lens that forced me to get close to my subjects. In doing so, there was an inevitable interaction between the subject and myself. I realized that as a photographer, what I imagined to be my subject's identity was in part a projection of what I wanted it to be. Therefore, these images are in a way my own interpretation of who these people are. The only thing I know for certain about my photographic subjects is the circumstance in which our paths crossed.

The photographic works of Mary Ellen Mark inspired my interest in street photography. Her images never cease to evoke a sense of mystery despite the information she often provides about the photographic subjects. In this collection, I strive to capture the same mystery, in which the subject's identity is uncertain and ever changing through the eyes of the viewer.



The Confrontation
Digital photograph



The Things We Remember
Digital photograph



Untitled
Digital photograph



When I Was Young
Digital photograph