

MORE THAN THE RAINBOW

A FILM BY DAN WECHSLER

83 min / English / Digital (BluRay) / 2014 / Documentary



FIRST RUN FEATURES

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ABOUT THE FILM

After three decades turning his lens on New York City, taxi driver turned street photographer Matt Weber has seen it all. *MORE THAN THE RAINBOW* not only chronicles the life and times of Weber, but becomes a vibrant conversation about the photographic medium, artistic expression, and New York City. There is no telling how many stories Weber has attempted to capture since he first started taking pictures out of the window of the cab he used to drive. But his quarter century-plus devotion to candidly depicting the lives of his fellow New Yorkers, many of them from the fringes of society, has yielded a remarkable document of a New York that most of us will never experience.

Shot partially in gorgeous 35mm and largely scored to the music of Thelonious Monk, *MORE THAN THE RAINBOW* interweaves verité, still photography and revealing interviews with Weber and fellow photographers like Ralph Gibson, Zoe Strauss, and Eric Kroll, as well as designer Todd Oldham to create an evocative documentary that is a poetic celebration of the world's greatest city and the individuals who walk its streets.



CREDITS

Produced and Directed by	DAN WECHSLER
Edited by	JOHN ROSENBERG
Director of Photography	ARLENE MULLER
Associate Producer	JUDITH MIZRACHY
Music by	THELONIOUS MONK KEITH GURLAND
Sound Designer	WILLIAM SWEENEY
Additional Photography by	MARCIN NADOLNY
Camera Operators	ARLENE MULLER MARCIN NADOLNY
Assistant Editors	JOSEPHINE MARTORANA MICHAEL ROSENBERG
Re-recording Mixer	DOMINICK TAVELLA
Machine Room Operator	DROR GESCHEIT
Music Editor	JOHN ROSENBERG
Music Clearances	ANNIE LIN ISAAC MITCHELL
Featured Musicians	MATT ROCCHIO- BASS ROGER MURDOCK- DRUMS TOM BECKHAM- VIBES
Titles by	BENJAMIN FINE
Visual Effects	MICHAEL ROSENBERG
Colorist	BRIAN HUTCHINGS
Online Editor	MATT RADECKI
Featuring	MATT WEBER DAVE BECKERMAN BOOGIE RALPH GIBSON ERIC KROLL ZOE STRAUSS JEFF MERMELSTEIN JEFF LADD JULIO MITCHELL TODD OLDHAM BEN LIFSON

BIOS

Matt Weber

From 1978-1990, Matt Weber drove a New York City taxi. It was during these years that he transitioned from being a taxi driver with a camera, to a photographer with a taxi, eventually taking up full-time the life of an artist. Among his solo exhibitions have been with Harper's Books in East Hampton, New York. He occasionally gives talks on photography and his work, and he never leaves the apartment without a camera.

Dan Wechsler, Director

A native New Yorker, Dan Wechsler works as a rare bookseller, publisher and filmmaker. He first met Matt Weber after opening a secondhand bookshop on Manhattan's Upper West Side in 1995. Mr. Weber's monograph, *The Urban Prisoner*, was the first book he published. More recently, he edited and published *Strange and Wonderful: An Informal Visual History of Manuscript Books and Albums*, with an introduction by Jed Perl. He co-wrote the award-winning short, WAITING FOR WOODY ALLEN and is president of Lespedi Productions.

Arlene Muller, Director of Photography

Arlene Muller is a graduate of the prestigious cinematography program of the Polish National Film School in Lodz. Her cinematography work includes D.W. Young's NOT INTERESTED and THE HAPPY HOUSE, Kei Ishikawa's DEAR WORLD, Dan Wechsler's MORE THAN THE RAINBOW, and Rodney Evans' THE HAPPY SAD. She works and lives in both New York and Los Angeles.

John Rosenberg, Editor

For over twenty-five years, John Rosenberg has worked as a film editor, as well as a producer and production executive. As an editor, he has worked on over two dozen feature films including MAN TROUBLE, MADE IN HEAVEN, MAC AND ME, BELOW UTOPIA, THE CONVENT, and PRANCER. He was also an editor on National Geographic's acclaimed documentary series EXPEDITIONS TO THE EDGE. He teaches editing at USC and is the author of *The Healthy Edit* (Focal Press, 2011), and the award-winning novel *Tincture of Time*.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

We accumulated an enormous amount of footage, and wrestled to the very end with the challenges of structure and pace. For me the essential thing was to create something that would have its own feel. We tried to address the issues of structure and pace by interspersing musically driven montage sequences (some in color, some in black and white) where the audience could feel itself moving along the sidewalks and through the subways, the city that our main subject has been roving for the past quarter century, with a camera around his neck at almost all times.

FESTIVALS

World Premiere: DOC NYC 2012

Official Selection: San Francisco DocFest

Opening Night Film: Coney Island Film Fest
WINNER! Best Documentary



More Than the Rainbow: Film Review

11:26 AM PST 11/25/2012 by John DeFore

The Bottom Line: *Doc holds appeal for New York-ophiles and aspiring photogs.*

Dan Wechsler follows a photographer who'd like to be the Cartier-Bresson of New York City.

NEW YORK — Great street photography differs from everyday stuff in that it "can't be recreated," according to the die-hard shooters in **Dan Wechsler's** *More than the Rainbow*, a doc centering on the work of cabbie-turned-photog **Matt Weber** but offering his colleagues (and a critic or two) plenty of time as well. Frozen-in-time magic abounds here, as do glimpses of vanished corners of New York; NYC-infatuated festivalgoers will appreciate its attitude, while amateur shutterbugs of all stripes may find inspiration.

Self-taught and looking more like a sports bar patron than a gallery denizen, Weber speaks of his obsession at a rapid clip: How he spent years in the '80s behind the wheel of a run-down cab, marveling at what was out his window and thinking "I gotta get a camera!" He kept driving for a while after he started taking pictures, but eventually (to his wife's chagrin, it seems) sold his hack medallion and made haunting street corners, taking scores of shots for every one worth keeping, his main vocation.

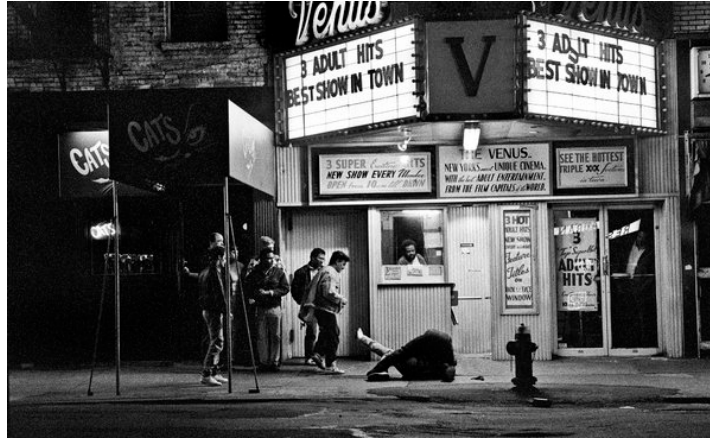
Weber's B&W images have drawn fans including **Todd Oldham**, seen here designing a book to showcase the work. Others, like sex-fetish specialist **Eric Kroll**, are unconvinced: Weber's sensibility is "too obvious" and "kinda makes me wanna barf," he says. (Establishing his credibility on issues of taste, Kroll chooses to be interviewed in the company of an almost silent, lingerie-clad model.)

Weber's personality is robust enough to fill a small doc, and pairing his atmospheric images with old **Thelonious Monk** tunes doubles their appeal. But Wechsler is wise to spend so much time with others who troll the sidewalks for material: semi-kindred spirit **Dave Beckerman**; lauded Philadelphia native **Zoe Strauss**; and **Ralph Gibson**, who defends the abundance of street photography with the lovely quote, "in the long life of a city, each man on the street becomes his own archaeologist."

Together, these veterans discuss the concerns of their profession: film versus digital, monochrome versus color, how to know when an appealing subject really, really doesn't want a stranger to take his picture. Along the way, we see signs (including a show in a Hamptons art gallery) that Weber's career may be on the uptick. Maybe he wasn't dumb to sell that taxi medallion after all.

The New York Times

Oh, the Bouts He Has Seen



MATT WEBER

By COREY KILGANNON
September 20, 2013

“Hunting a moment” is how Matt Weber, 55, describes his approach to photographing New York City street scenes for the past three decades, and many of those moments have been distinguished by the flying fists, stinging obscenities and cheering crowds of the New York City street fight.

It is a subject that, whether for real or play, makes for a powerful photograph because it has “motion and emotion,” Mr. Weber said.

Mr. Weber began driving a yellow cab in 1978 at age 20, and what he saw through the windshield of his wheezing Dodge Aspen taxi, including a knife fight near the Port Authority, convinced him to buy a \$150 Canon. It was a purchase that “saved me from a boring life,” said Mr. Weber, who would often shoot right from the driver’s seat, develop the film at home and then hang prints in the hallway of his building on West 86th Street.

Mr. Weber is the subject of a new documentary, “More Than the Rainbow,” directed by Dan Wechsler, which was to be screened Friday night at the Coney Island Film Festival.

Driving a cab, Mr. Weber said, he “went from being a taxi driver with a camera, to a photographer with a taxi.” And fight pictures became just one genre of his wide variety of candid city shots. He became dedicated to catching elusive moments that could not be staged or even predicted. All you can do is, like a fisherman, put your time in — skills honed and equipment ready, he said.

He also enjoys shooting couples kissing. “It’s the two ends of the spectrum, love and anger,” he said. “Both show people when they’re peaking.”



THE PHOTO BLOG SEPT. 30 2013 1:08 PM

Capturing Lovers on the Streets of New York

By Jordan G. Teicher

In three decades as a street photographer in New York, Matt Weber has seen it all: homelessness, violence, the daily strangeness that gives the city its character.

But he's also seen a softer side of New York, a place where people fall in love and couples display their affection in moments sometimes public and other times seemingly private. "That's the good thing about New York street photography," Weber said. "You get sad, happy, funny—the whole spectrum. And they can all be good."

Weber said he often looks to capture emotion in his photos. Often, in a city with as short a fuse as New York, that means documenting the anger and raw physicality of a street brawl. But it can also mean showing a couple cuddling on the beach at Coney Island, kissing on the subway, or standing together under a street light. "Occasionally, it's over the top. Young people tend to do that—spend half an hour groping," Weber said. "Maybe it's not exhibitionism so much as being overwhelmed. The first time you fall in love as a teenager is a really powerful thing."

Weber began photographing in 1978 when, while working as a taxi driver, he could no longer resist the urge to capture the incredible moments he saw from his window. His life story is featured in the documentary *More Than the Rainbow*, which screened as part of the Coney Island Film Festival in September.

Weber doesn't stage his photos. He doesn't ask people for permission to photograph them. And he doesn't like shooting from the hip, because it means he can't control the composition. "You really are looking for those special images. They come when they come. You can't force them," Weber said. "It's a matter of luck, timing, and good fortune. When I leave my door, I don't know what I'm going to get. The thing with street photography is you often get something better than you imagined."

When Weber sees a shot he wants, he goes for it. As a result, he's found himself in his fair share of confrontations. "I can normally talk my way out of it," Weber said. "I've never been decked or lost my teeth, but I have been shoved into a lamp post. I've been threatened a lot. So far I've been able to diffuse things."

Weber said that he generally likes to make photos that pose questions about their subjects: What is the relationship between the people pictured? What are they doing? Why?

But when it comes to romantic couples, Weber said, he's simply interested in capturing a genuinely happy moment amid all the pain and loneliness of New York. "There are so many miserable people," Weber said. "You see a lot of people not looking very content. With happy people, I try not to worry why they're happy."

Weber's work is collected in *The Urban Prisoner*, published by Sanctuary Books.



Perfect Kiss, 2003 Matt Weber

Romance at the core of the Big Apple: Photographer spends three decades capturing tenderness between couples on the 'mean streets' of New York City

By [ALEX GREIG](#)

PUBLISHED: 20:35 EST, 3 October 2013 | UPDATED: 03:24 EST, 4 October 2013

Photographer Matt Weber became fascinated by the images that flashed past his window as he cruised the streets of New York City as a taxi-driver more than 30 years ago and wanted to capture the moments in time that disappeared in an instant.

He began documenting urban life in the Big Apple in 1978, and street life in New York has continued to fascinate him.

The grittiness of the big city, captured in black-and-white, is revealed in his images of homelessness, poverty, violence, the loneliness of city life - but Weber has also captured a softer side of the city.

His photographs of couples in love - sneaking kisses through closing subway doors, hand-in-hand in Central Park - are genuine moments of happiness.

Weber told [Slate](#) his photography inspires curiosity about the subjects - who are they? What are they doing and why?

But when it comes to couples, he really just wants to capture moments of romance and happiness amidst the everyday struggle of the city.

'There are so many miserable people,' Weber told Slate.

'You see a lot of people not looking very content. With happy people, I try not to worry why they're happy.'

Weber's photography is captured in a new book, *Urban Prisoner*, and available for purchase on his websites [NYC Street Photography](#) and [Matt Weber New York Photography](#).



Making history: A couple embraces in Midnight Kiss, taken in 1989 (left), and a woman kisses a man following the election in Obama Victory Kiss, taken in 2008 (right)