



THE MODERN ANALOGUE YOUTHS

Words & Photographs **Georgia O'Neill**

Everything is readily available on the glass screen under the fingertips of the 21st century youth. Music, photography, games, it's all there. But it's all senseless. And now they want more. So as the air thickens with a craving for physical experiences, the digital generation drives it and the world embraces it. Make welcome the analogue revival.



Big news. IKEA has come out with a catalogue. A 328 page, tactile catalogue.

"It's not a digital book or an e-book," announces chief design guru, Jorgen Eghammer, "It's a book book."

With features including "easy bookmarking," (by bending the corner of a page), "eternal battery life," with no cables needed, and pages that "load instantly, with zero lag," IKEA is celebrating the beauty of analogue in an overtly digital age.

And the celebration doesn't stop at a 328 page catalogue. Film photography, vinyl records, board games and even typewriters are experiencing a revival as we thrive for more holistic, multisensory and intimate experiences.

For the generation who have grown up in front of pixels on screens and technology at their fingertips, a reversion back to the time of tangible experiences is in full force. Nostalgia whims in the air as the younger generation revert back to the technology their grandparents pioneered.

This generation is insightful, they are curious and now they are hungry for authentic experiences. They are the modern day analogue youths.

In a recent study conducted by Ilford photo, it was found that nearly one third of all film photographers are younger than 35. This means that one third of all film photographers grew up in the digital age.

Case in point is 21 year old Brisbane based analogue photographer, Savannah Van der Niet.

Ever since shooting her first roll of film at the age of 15, Van der Niet has developed a love for the process and tangible aspects of analogue photography. "I love every moment of the shooting process. From a more definitive shutter sound to the experimentation it allows," she said, "the feeling I get when I shoot film. There's nothing like it."

She goes on to explain what growing up in the digital age has incurred, "I think that the rise of technology has turned everything virtual and made some aspects of our human experiences a little less authentic."

"But we seem to look back for 'real' feelings and experiences," she said, "I feel like these things (film photography) offer that. They force us to slow down. They are something we can hold and feel and experience."

"We seem to look back for 'real' feelings and experiences"

This nostalgically driven resurrection of film photography has invited people to step away from the screens of their smartphones and be more present in the moment. With limited frames to shoot, capturing moments are more sentimental and authentic.

This practice of limited shooting and more living is what led Stuart Chapman to create his Brisbane born art initiative, 'The Indisposable Concept.'

The social project invites people worldwide to capture the world around them through a disposable camera. Each contributor is challenged



with capturing 24 frames in just 1 week of the things they consider 'indisposbale'. A concept which seems to become more and more ephemeral as the digital age progresses.

"I guess I started the concept to try and build a community of people that wanted to embrace old techniques and mediums, to take time out and have a look at the beauty and space that exists in their world," Chapman says, "I love the fact there's only so many shots to a roll of film, you can't see the results as you go and you can't delete any of them. It creates an experience and process that has been lost in the digital era."

"It creates an experience and process that has been lost in the digital era"

With the project receiving nearly 1900 rolls of film since its establishment in December 2012, Chapman believes that the growing interest in film photography is what has attracted such a vast array of young people to get involved, "I think the project has connected so well with the youth through both the film aspects and the growing popularity of film photography."

Chapman ends with his thought that, "Its intriguing for a younger generation to hold something in their hands. Something with layers of meaning."

With film rolls, records, books and board games personal and physical connections are what sustain their appeal. It lets people produce their own physical collections, something they can see, touch and admire.

This notion compliments what Ric Trevaskes, owner of Egg Records in West End said about the younger generations interest of vinyl records, "it's cool to have something and collect something".

Selling new and used vinyl records, Trevaskes said that "For many years people would come

into my shop and walk around as if they were in a museum. Most of them had never spent even \$1 on music in their life."

It's youths like these who want to bring back the tactile times. Youths are nostalgic. Its embodied in the analogue products they buy through to the vintage way they dress. They yearn for a simpler and more intimate time. One which is not developing at fleeting rates.

Ultimately, this nostalgia is like an act of rebellion. Rebelling against times continuous progression.

Through interaction with products from the past they are taking that step back when everyone is pushing to move forward. They are refusing to surrender the irreversibility of time.

So as the cameras keep winding and the records keep scratching we create a new era. One which is a hybrid of the analogue and digital ages. A hybrid of virtual and physical worlds co-existing. One which resurrects 'real' experiences.

Now doesn't that sound a little bit unreal.

