

FLUX WIKI

DISPATCH

THE FLUX DISPATCH — 24-FRAME THERMAL ACCORDION FIELD DOCUMENT, THE MANILA FOLDER ARCHIVE STRUCTURE, EPHEMERA PROTOCOL, AND THE LAYERED DOCUMENT SYSTEM.

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FLUX DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM Layer 3 – FIELD | dispatch
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STATUS – 2026-05-25 – HISTORICAL/CONCEPTUAL The FLUX Dispatch is a documented concept, not a built output format. There is no generator path for the 24-frame thermal accordion. A FLUX issue is always 36 frames – this is a locked protocol constant (DECISION-001). The Dispatch concept – urgency, field-report character, the logic of the shorter roll – remains valid as a way of thinking about a shooting session. It does not name a FLUX output format and has never been built.

DISPATCH

The FLUX issue preserves.

The FLUX Dispatch moves.

1. TWO OBJECTS

FLUX produces two distinct physical objects.

They are not the same thing.

	FLUX ISSUE	FLUX DISPATCH
Frames	36	24
Print method	Laser	Thermal
Structure	Staple-bound zine	Accordion / fanfold
Format	Codex	Strip / scroll
Duration	Permanent	Temporary
Character	Archival	Operational
Purpose	Memory	Movement
Feel	Case file	Field report

Neither replaces the other.

FLUX ISSUE = MEMORY
 FLUX DISPATCH = MOVEMENT

One preserves.

One circulates.

One is the record.

One is the evidence.

2. THE FLUX DISPATCH

A FLUX Dispatch is a 24-frame thermal-printed accordion document.

It is not a zine.

It is not a book.

It is not a pamphlet.

It is a field report.

3. WHY 24

24 frames is the capacity of a standard 24-exposure film roll.

36 frames is one roll.

24 frames is the other roll.

The 24-frame dispatch inherits the logic of the shorter roll: faster, tighter, more urgent. A 24-frame session is not a lesser 36-frame session. It is a different operation.

24 frames imposes:

- urgency - there is no room for redundancy
- completion - the dispatch is done when the 24th frame is made
- discipline - every frame costs more when there are fewer
- speed - a 24-frame session moves faster than a 36-frame session

The constraint is not a limitation.

It is a calibration.

4. THE ACCORDION STRUCTURE

The dispatch is printed on a single continuous strip of thermal paper, folded accordion-style.

Each fold contains one frame.

24 frames = 24 folds.

The accordion behaves as two objects simultaneously:

When folded: - compact - portable - flippable like a book - fits in a coat pocket - fits in a manila folder - fits inside an envelope

When unfolded: - one continuous visual strip - a linear timeline - a film strip - a scroll - can be pinned to a wall as a single uninterrupted sequence - can be laid flat on a table and read left to right

The accordion is not a compromise between book and scroll.

It is both, simultaneously.

5. THERMAL PAPER AS MEDIUM

Thermal paper is the medium of:

- receipts

- parking tickets
- police reports
- UPS delivery confirmations
- hospital wristbands
- medical test results
- lottery tickets
- shipping labels
- evidence tags

These are documents of transaction, of event, of official record.

The thermal dispatch borrows this language.

The aesthetic is not a style choice.

It is a documentary positioning.

A thermal print of a photograph looks like:

- evidence
- a field record
- a document from a machine
- something produced in the field, not in a studio
- something that happened, not something that was made

The high contrast, the slight grain, the slight flatness – these are not flaws.
They are the honest qualities of thermal output.

And thermal fades.

Over time – months, years – thermal prints will fade. The image degrades.

The dispatch is not meant to last forever.

That is the point.

The dispatch is temporal.

The issue is permanent.

The dispatch documents the moment of movement.

The issue preserves the session for the archive.

One fades.

One does not.

6. THERMAL PAPER SPEC

Standard thermal paper roll:

Width:	3.125 in (standard POS/receipt roll)
Image area:	2.875 in (after edge margins)
Frame height:	~2.0 in per fold (accordion fold depth)
Folds:	24
Total strip:	~48 in unfolded (4 feet)
Folded size:	~3.125 × 2.5 in (fits in a chest pocket)
Color:	Black on white thermal coating

The images print at high contrast.
No gray tones.
No color.
Exactly right.

7. DISPATCH HEADER AND FOOTER

Each dispatch carries a header printed at the top of the first fold:

```
FLUX DISPATCH  
[ISSUE NUMBER or ASSIGNMENT CODE]  
[DATE]  
[LOCATION]  
[PHOTOGRAPHER]  
[ASSIGNMENT TYPE if applicable]
```

The final fold carries:

```
24 / 24  
[timestamp of final frame]  
[FLUX_DISPATCH_v1]  
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```

Nothing else.

8. THE MANILA FOLDER

The FLUX issue is a zine.

The FLUX archive object is a manila folder.

The distinction is important.

The zine is the formal record – structured, laser-printed, staple-bound, archival.

The manila folder is the **container** – and the container is the archive object.

Everything that happened that day, in that session, at that location, goes into the folder.

The folder accumulates.

The folder layers.

The folder becomes a case file.

The manila folder is not packaging.

The manila folder IS the archive object.

9. FOLDER IDENTIFICATION

Each manila folder is labeled on the tab:

```
FLUX_[ISSUE NUMBER] – [DATE] – [LOCATION]
```

Example:

FLUX_305 - 2026-05-16 - READING TERMINAL MARKET

Written by hand, or stamped, or printed on a label and affixed.

The handwriting is not sloppy. It is deliberate.

The label is part of the document language.

10. FOLDER STRUCTURE - THE LAYERS

A fully assembled FLUX folder contains distinct layers.

Each layer has a specific role.

Each layer is physically distinct.

Each layer adds to the record.

MANILA FOLDER

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■■■■ LAYER 1 - CANONICAL RECORD

- The FLUX issue.
- 36-frame laser-printed zine.
- Staple-bound.
- This is the formal archive.
- Place this at the front.

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■■■■ LAYER 2 - FIELD REPORT

- The FLUX Dispatch (if applicable).
- 24-frame thermal accordion.
- Paper-clipped to the inside front cover.
- This is the operational record.

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■■■■ LAYER 3 - DOCUMENTATION

- Contact sheet (standalone print or PNG printout).
- Manifest page (standalone, if pulled separately).
- Metadata sheet - date, time, location, conditions, equipment.
- Place behind the issue.

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■■■■ LAYER 4 - EPHEMERA

- Physical material from the session.
- Paper-clipped, tucked, or loose.
- See: EPHEMERA PROTOCOL.

■

■■■■ LAYER 5 - ANNOTATION

- Notes added after the session.
 - Handwritten. Stamped. Marked.
 - Corrections, observations, cross-references to other issues.
 - These are added over time.
 - The folder is never fully closed.
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11. THE PAPER CLIP

The paper clip is a specific tool in this system.

It is not decoration.

The paper clip signals:

- **temporary attachment** - this material is associated with the folder but not absorbed into it
- **supplemental evidence** - it came from outside the formal record
- **modularity** - it can be removed, relocated, or replaced
- **field origin** - it arrived from somewhere and was clipped here for a reason

The thermal dispatch is paper-clipped.

The ephemera is paper-clipped.

The annotation notes are paper-clipped.

Only the canonical FLUX issue is not paper-clipped.

It simply lives inside the folder.

It is the only thing in the folder that is final.

Everything else is still alive.

12. EPHEMERA PROTOCOL

Real ephemera - not scans - goes into the folder.

This is the rule.

A scan of a receipt is a photograph of a receipt.

A receipt is a receipt.

They are not the same object.

The actual material carries:

- aging
- texture
- the particular paper weight of that object
- folds, creases, tears
- ink that was once wet
- the physical residue of its moment
- time

A receipt from the day of a session smells like the place.

A photograph of a receipt does not.

12.1 WHAT TO COLLECT

Before, during, and after the session:

Transit - SEPTA ticket or transfer slip - train receipt - platform-level flyer or handout - schedule page

Food and consumption - receipt from where you ate during the session - wrapper, ticket, stub - napkin with a handwritten note - menu page

Street material - torn poster fragment - sticker pulled from a surface - newspaper headline - date-matched to the session - pamphlet from a street table - business card found or received - leaflet, flyer, circular - matchbook - found paper

Personal record - handwritten field notes from the session - the assignment brief (if applicable) - map with handwritten route marked - weather printout from that date

Found objects (flat) - ticket stub - receipt - pressed leaf or plant matter - torn label - any flat object that will fit inside a closed folder

The rule: if it was part of that day and it fits in the folder, it belongs in the folder.

12.2 WHAT NOT TO COLLECT

Digital screenshots.

Printed-out Instagram screenshots.

Laser-printed "recreations" of ephemera.

These are not ephemera. They are documentation of ephemera.

The folder has enough documentation.

It needs material.

13. THE NEWSPAPER ARCHIVE

A long-term archive contains a running collection of newspaper headlines and front pages.

Headlines are matched chronologically to sessions by date.

A session from October 15 has: - its FLUX issue - its dispatch (if applicable) - and the front page or headline from that morning's newspaper

The newspaper does not illustrate the photographs.

It does not need to be related to what was photographed.

It is a timestamp.

It says: this session happened on the same day as this headline.

The world was in this state when these photographs were made.

The newspaper transforms the archive from a personal photographic record into a **layered historical document**.

The photographs show what the eye found.

The headline shows what the world was doing.

Both are true simultaneously.

14. THE FBI CASE FILE AESTHETIC

A well-assembled FLUX folder looks like a case file.

Not a photography portfolio.

Not a coffee table book.

Not an artist book.

A case file.

The FBI case file contains:

- a formal typed report (the FLUX issue)
- field agent notes (the dispatch)
- photographic evidence (the contact sheet)
- physical evidence (the ephemera)
- timestamps and coordinates (the manifest)
- cross-references to related cases (handwritten annotations)
- supplemental material clipped to the outside (related documents)

This is not a metaphor.

It is a structural model.

The FLUX folder follows this logic because the logic is correct.

A case file is an honest document.

It accumulates what it needs.

It does not perform.

It does not curate.

It contains.

15. HANDWRITTEN ANNOTATION

After a session, the photographer may add handwritten notes to the folder.

These notes do not belong in any digital system.

They are physical.

What to annotate:

- a note on weather that the metadata missed
- a name or description of a person in the photographs
- a cross-reference: *"see also FLUX_297 - same corner, winter"*
- a correction: *"frame 014 - mislabeled GPS, actual location: 40th and Walnut"*
- an observation made weeks later when reviewing the issue
- a date when the folder was reviewed or exhibited
- a mark - a rubber stamp, an ink mark, a smear - that says a human touched this

The annotation is never finished.

A folder may be annotated once.

Or annotated over a decade.

16. THE FOLDER AS LIVING DOCUMENT

A FLUX folder is never fully closed.

The canonical FLUX issue inside it is final.

The photographs are fixed.

The sequence is locked.

But the folder can always receive:

- a new headline added years later ("found this - same date, different year")
- a note from someone who borrowed the folder
- a cross-reference to a later session
- a new photograph added loose (not stapled into the issue)
- additional ephemera that surfaces after the fact

The folder is a living container.

The issue inside it is the permanent record.

They are different things.

The issue is done.

The folder is never done.

17. ASSEMBLING A FOLDER - PROTOCOL

1. Print the FLUX issue. Staple it. Place it at the front of the folder.
2. If a dispatch was generated: fold it accordian-style. Paper-clip it to the inside front cover.
3. Print the contact sheet standalone. Place it behind the issue.
4. Collect ephemera from the session. Paper-clip, tuck, or lay flat in the folder.
5. Write the session identification on the folder tab: FLUX_[NUMBER] - [DATE] - [LOCATION]
6. Add field notes if applicable. Paper-clip to the front of the folder.
7. Match a newspaper headline to the session date. Insert behind the ephemera.
8. Close the folder.

The folder is assembled the same day as the session.

Do not wait.

Ephemera disperses.

Receipts are thrown away.

Tickets are lost.

The assembly happens today.

18. PHYSICAL LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Object	Material	Function	Permanence
FLUX issue	Laser print, plain paper, stapled	Canonical archive	Permanent

FLUX dispatch	Thermal print, accordion fold	Field record	Temporary – fades
Contact sheet	Laser print or inkjet	Visual index	Permanent
Manifest	Laser print	Frame log	Permanent
Ephemera	Found material	Physical evidence	Aging – authentic
Annotation	Handwriting	Living record	Accumulates over time
Newspaper	Newsprint	Timestamp	Aging – authentic
Manila folder	Standard stock	Container	Persistent

19. WHY THIS MATTERS

The standard photography workflow produces:

- digital files
- a hard drive
- possibly a printed book, years later
- more likely, nothing

The FLUX folder workflow produces:

- a physical document the same day the photographs were made
- a layered archive object that accumulates over time
- material that carries the residue of its moment
- an object that can be held, handled, annotated, passed to someone else

The difference is not aesthetic.

The difference is ontological.

A hard drive contains files.

A folder contains evidence.

Files can be deleted, corrupted, lost.

Evidence accumulates.

The FLUX folder system turns a photography practice into an **evidence practice**.

The city leaves traces.

The photographer collects them.

The folder holds them.

The folder is the proof that it happened.

SEE ALSO

Document	Layer	Relationship
PHYSICAL	Layer 6 – Physical	The autonomous printing pipeline that produces the issue inside the folder

ZINE SPECIFICATION	Layer 2 – Protocol	The 36-frame zine that goes into the folder
PRESERVATION	Layer 7 – Preservation	The digital complement to the physical folder system
FIELD ASSIGNMENTS	Layer 3 – Field	The constraints that generate the sessions the folder captures
GALLERY PROTOCOL	Layer 3 – Field	The single-image exhibition object – the other end of the physical spectrum

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