

cole thompson photography newsletter

Issue 131 - November 8, 2024



Light Poles No. 11

My Friend!

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Quotes

"Even though I appear 93, I never lost my child-like view of the world."

Norman Lear

"Looking back, I see that the best thing my parents did for me was simply not to get in my way. That's sound advice for a parent trying to encourage an artistic child. If you can provide him or her with pen, paper, colors, a table and a place to work, you've done it all."

Charles M. Shultz

"Artists can color the sky red because they know it is blue. Those of us who aren't artists must color things the way they really are or people might think we're stupid."

Jules Feiffer

"Success is dangerous. One begins to copy oneself, and to copy oneself is more dangerous than to copy others. It leads to sterility"

Pablo Picasso

"Follow the masters!
But why should one follow them?
The only reason they are masters
is that they didn't follow anybody!"

Paul Gauguin

"Be what you is, not what you ain't
cause if you ain't what you is,
you is what you ain't."

Luther D. Price

"Most of the advice we receive from others...is evidence of their affection for themselves."

Josh Billings

"If the critics say your work stinks, it's because they want it to stink, and they can make it stink by scaring you into conformity with their comfortable standards."

Jack Kerouac

New Images



Ancient Stones No. 68



Shooting into the Sun



Monolith No. 108



Harper Jumping

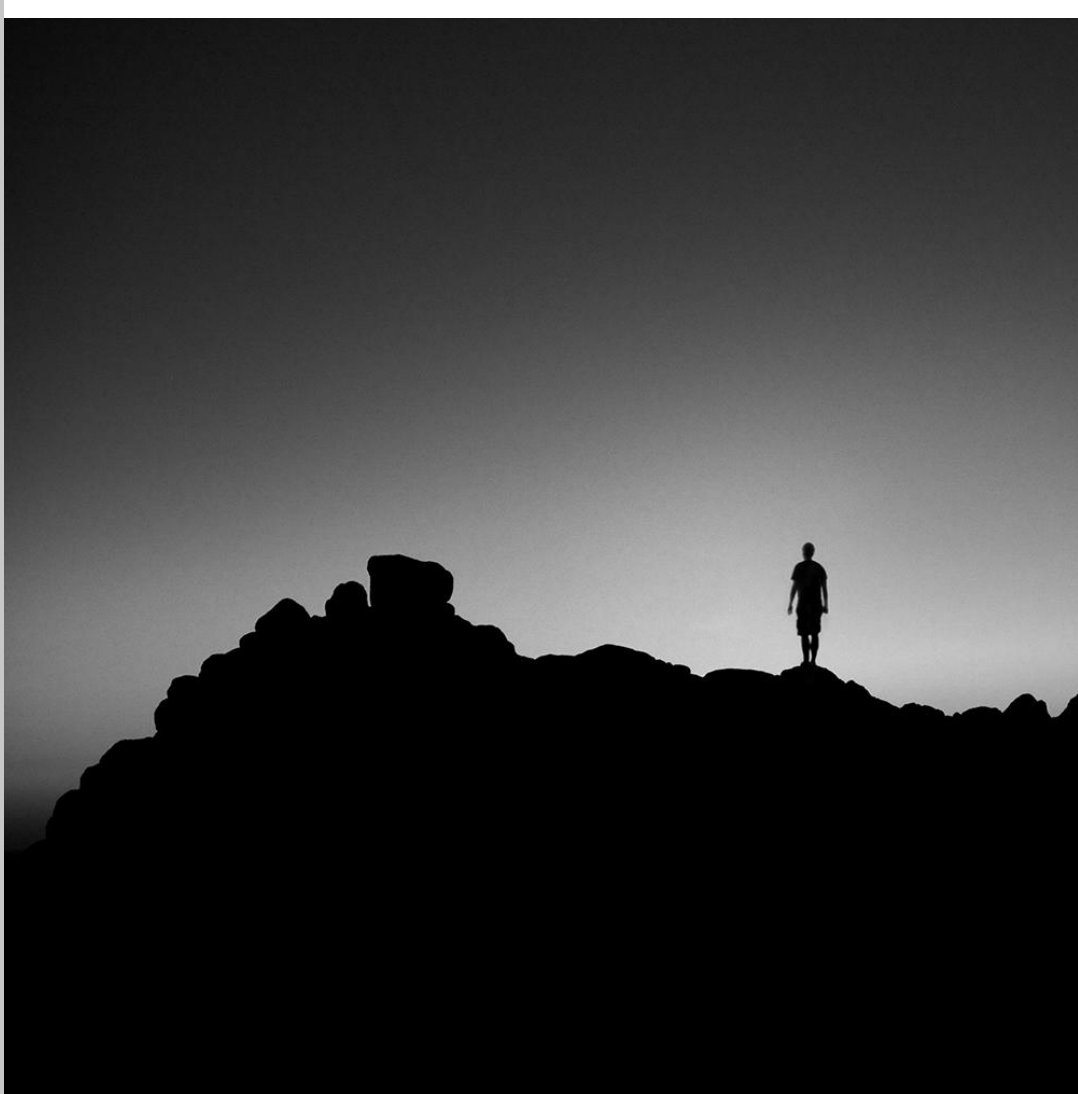


Oregon Coast No. 7



Monolith No. 109

A "Vision" Workshop



Lone Man No. 7

John Barclay and I have been tossing this idea around for a couple of years: a "Vision" workshop. It would be something very different than what we have done in the past.

This would take place at a non-iconic location with daily classes on Vision and shooting at the same location each day. The objective is to not focus on the location, but on developing one's Vision.

The class size would be small and we are thinking of meeting in my home and then traveling to a close location in Wyoming. It would probably take place in the fall of 2025.

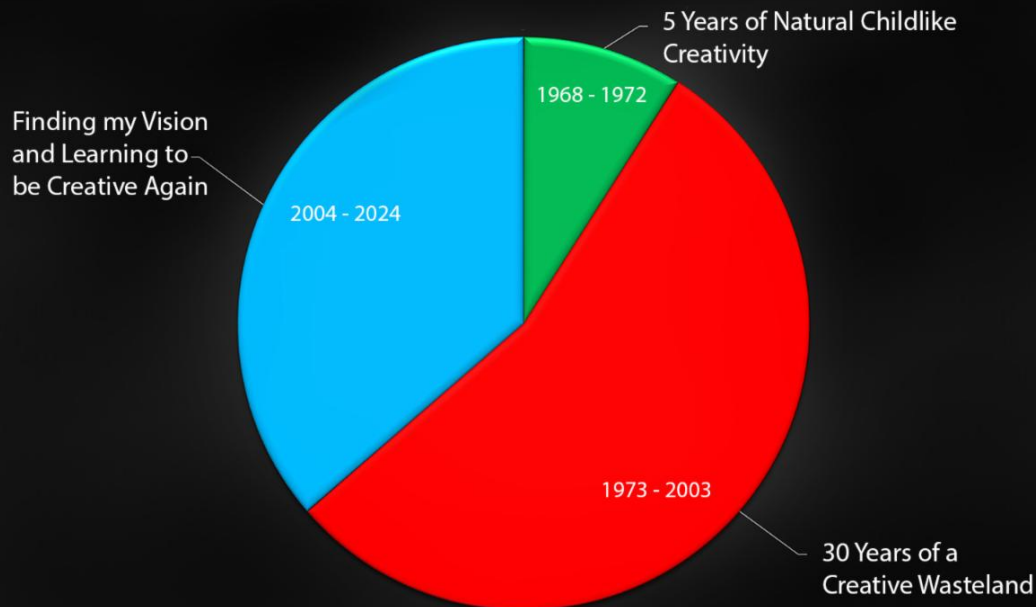
If you have an interest in such a workshop, would you drop John a note and let him know? He can be reached at:

johnbarclayphoto@me.com

Once we commit to doing this, we would provide more information to those who are interested.

10 Things I've Learned in 55 Years

My Photographic Life



The Three Phases of My Photographic Life

If you read this title and think that I'm 55 years old, you would be mistaken mon amie! I'm MUCH older (and wiser?) than that. But I've been a photographer for 55 years and these are the ten things I've learned during my photographic lifetime.

I divide my photographic life into three phases: the first 5 years which were wonderfully creative, then a 30 year wasteland, and finally the last 20 years where I found my Vision and returned to creating like a child.

And most of my photographic life-lessons have been learned in those last 20 years.

This is a summary of a new presentation I'm giving to Camera Clubs. If you'd like to see the full presentation, ask your Photo Club to invite me to speak.

Here are the 10 things I've learned in my 55 years of photography:



1) Vision is everything!

Finding my Vision changed not just my photography, but my life (this is not an exaggeration!) Vision is simply how "I" see when I ignore all the other voices in my head that are telling me how I should photograph (mentors, teachers, judges, social media and rules).

Vision gives you power and the strength to be independent, and to not care what others think about your work. It gives you internal satisfaction, which is the exact opposite of external validation which only lasts for a short time.

And I learned that Vision is not just about photography...it's about life.



2) Follow your Passion.

Finding subjects that I am passionate about is critical to creating a successful project. When I am passionate about the subject, it opens up new opportunities, new ways of seeing and it helps me to be creative.

I believe my best work is created at the intersection of Vision and Passion.

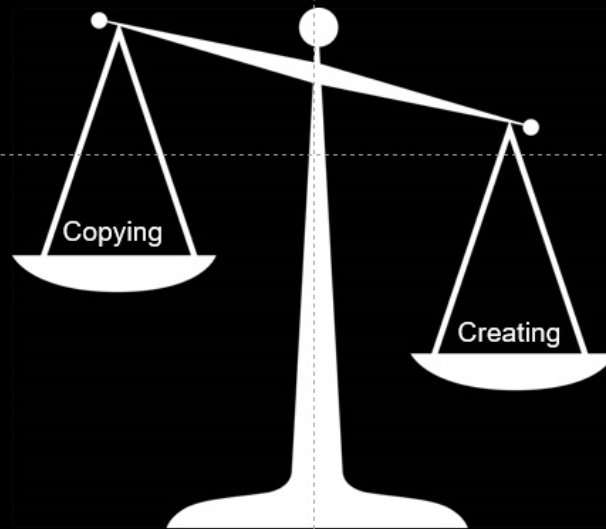


3) Be open to inspiration and then follow it.

Several times in my photography I have felt inspired, and I've learned that when this happens, I must act immediately...not next week or tomorrow. But right now!

How do I know when I'm being inspired? I just feel it.

Create honest work



4) Create Honest Work.

I do not believe in the philosophy that “good artists borrow, great artists steal.”

I want to create honest work where the idea is mine, the Vision is mine and I’m creating for myself. Only then do I feel good about my creation.



5) Understand why I photograph and then define success for myself.

Once I honestly identified my motives (and that was soooo very hard), was I was able to define what success looked like to me. And it turns out that it wasn't fame, fortune, a big name gallery and a book deal.

My definition of success: to create images that I love.



6) Listen to myself.

Much of the advice (often unsolicited) that I received over the years just didn't feel right. It took me over 35 years to learn to trust my instincts and to listen to myself.

(see quote above by Josh Billings)



7) Rules are for fools.

Rules are derivative and were created by observing the work of creative people. However, following rules is the exact opposite of being creative.

(see quote above by Paul Gauguin)



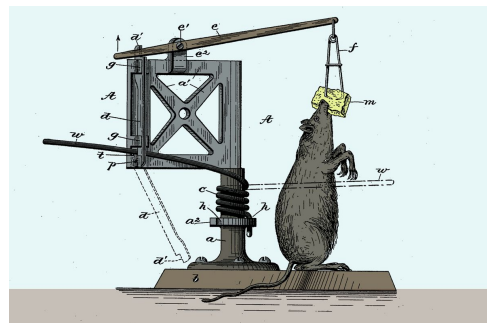
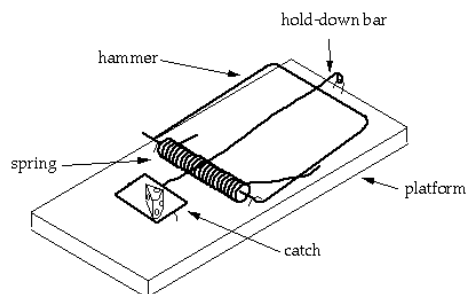
8) I am creative!

I spent most of my life believing that I was not creative...and so my work reflected that. Once I found my Vision, I was surprised to find myself becoming creative and realized that I had been holding myself back.

I believe that I am creative.

I believe you are creative.

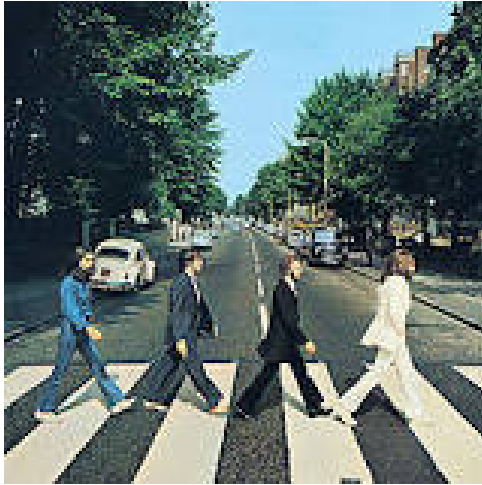
I believe that we are all creative.



9) Simpler is better than complicated.

Einstein said: "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler." I have learned that the simplest approach is generally the best approach, and I have

applied this “simple” philosophy to my equipment, my processing and unexpectedly...it has spilled over to my images.



10) Projects are better than greatest hits.

Creating greatest hits is fun and easy, but working in projects has caused me to explore, to see deeper and to become more creative.

I am now addicted to projects!

Base Camp 2024 Landscape Photography Summit



I'm honored to once again participate in Angel McNall's Landscape Photography Summit! This year I'll be speaking on my three favorite subjects: Vision, Passion and Projects.

I love working in projects and have created many over the years, and I've learned that the key to success is creating from **your** Vision, on a subject that **you're** passionate about.

In addition to my presentation, Angel's assembled a great group of photographers (and some of my friends) who will be speaking on a variety of landscape related topics.

I love how Angel has organized this event: you can attend for free or you can upgrade for additional access and content. How cool is that?

Here are the details and a link to sign up:

Base Camp Landscape Photography Summit

Starting November 15th, 2024

What's in store?

- 12 Days of Learning, starting 11/15/2024.
- Free to Attend: Each day, you'll receive a new presentation in your inbox, available to watch for free for 24 hours! (this is how you'll be notified when I'm speaking)
- VIP Access: Want unlimited access to every presentation and exclusive bonus content? Upgrade to the VIP package for only \$97
- Free Gifts: We're giving away exclusive resources to support you on your creative journey!

· Inspiration & Community: Connect with a passionate community of photographers, gain new perspectives, and improve your skills.

Reserve your spot today and get ready to be inspired!

[Click here to RSVP](#)

If you have any questions, reach out directly to Angel at:

Angel@BaseCampPhotoClub.com

The Story Behind the Image: My Big Mistake



I had created Harbinger No. 60 just before I published my last newsletter, and even though I knew better, I rushed the image so I could include it in the newsletter.

Big mistake.

My normal procedure is to process it, let it sit for a few days, then look at it again and make more changes. I repeat that process over and over and over again until I no longer make any changes, and that process sometimes can take a month.

Only then do I know that the image is finished and ready to be released.

But in my haste to get it into the newsletter, I only made two processing passes. As I included it, I had this subliminal feeling that there was something wrong with the image, but I pushed that thought into the back of my mind, rationalizing that the image was "good enough."

Then I showed the image to a friend who kept looking at the bottom of the image, and then he asked if the ground was right below the crop line. At that moment I realized what was wrong with it; it was poorly cropped.

It just felt wrong.



And so I re-cropped it to include the ground, and that made all the difference in the world! I hope that I would have figured this out eventually, if I had followed my normal routine of revisiting the image over and over and over again.

But I was in a hurry.

And so I've learned (once again) to slow down, take my time, there's no rush.



What a big difference such a little thing like a crop can make!

Print Drawing



Monolith No. 62

For this month's print drawing I'll be giving away "Monolith No. 62."

To enter: send an email to Cole@ColeThompsonPhotography.com and put "Monolith No. 62" in the subject line.

Thanks for entering!

Email Cole and Enter the Drawing!

The winner of my last print drawing is Diana Magor who will be receiving a print of "Chamarro No. 2, Convergence."

Congratulations Diana, please contact me and arrange for your print to be delivered!

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