

cole thompson photography newsletter

Issue 132 - December 13, 2024



Run Aground

My Friend!

How's your Vision? In this issue you can read about my Vision Blockers and why you should identify yours.

And why did I feel a searing pain as I photographed an air potato plant down in Florida?

And of course quotes and images!

Cole

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Quotes

"My advice to young filmmakers is this: don't follow trends, start them!"

Frank Capra

"Looking back, my life seems like one long obstacle race, with me as the chief obstacle."

Jack Paar

"If you're not failing every now and again, it's a sign you're not doing anything innovative."

Woody Allen

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Then quit. No use being a damn fool about it."

W.C. Fields

"A fool thinks himself to be wise, but a wise man knows himself to be a fool."

William Shakespeare

"A statue has never been set up in honour of a critic!"

Jean Sibelius

"Happiness is not achieved by the conscious pursuit of happiness; it is generally the by-product of other activities."

Aldous Huxley

"Keep your thoughts positive
because your thoughts become your words.

Keep your words positive
because your words become your behavior.

Keep your behavior positive
because your behavior becomes your habits.

Keep your habits positive
because your habits become your values.

Keep your values positive
because your values become your destiny.”

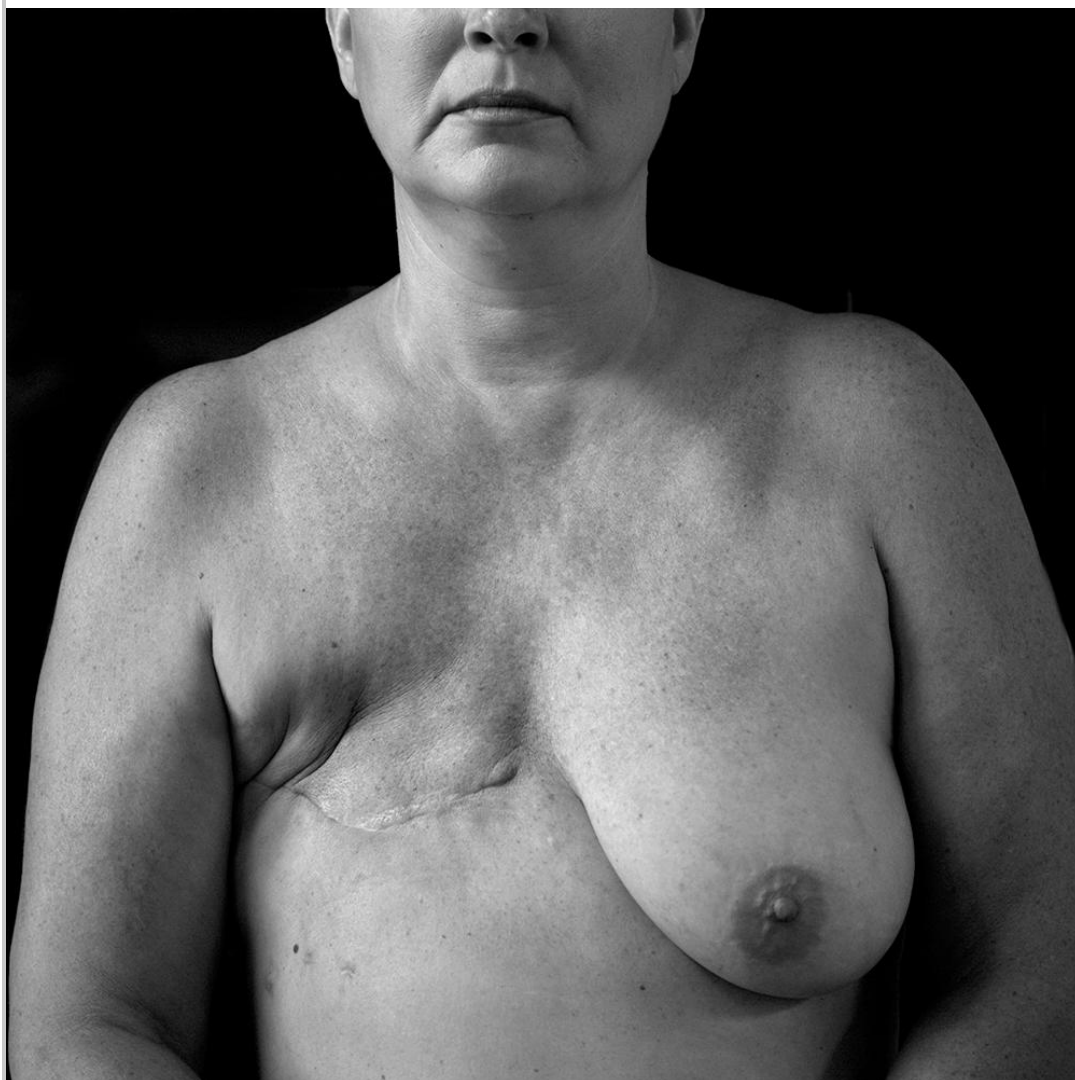
Mahatma Gandhi

Linnie, A Portrait of Breast Cancer

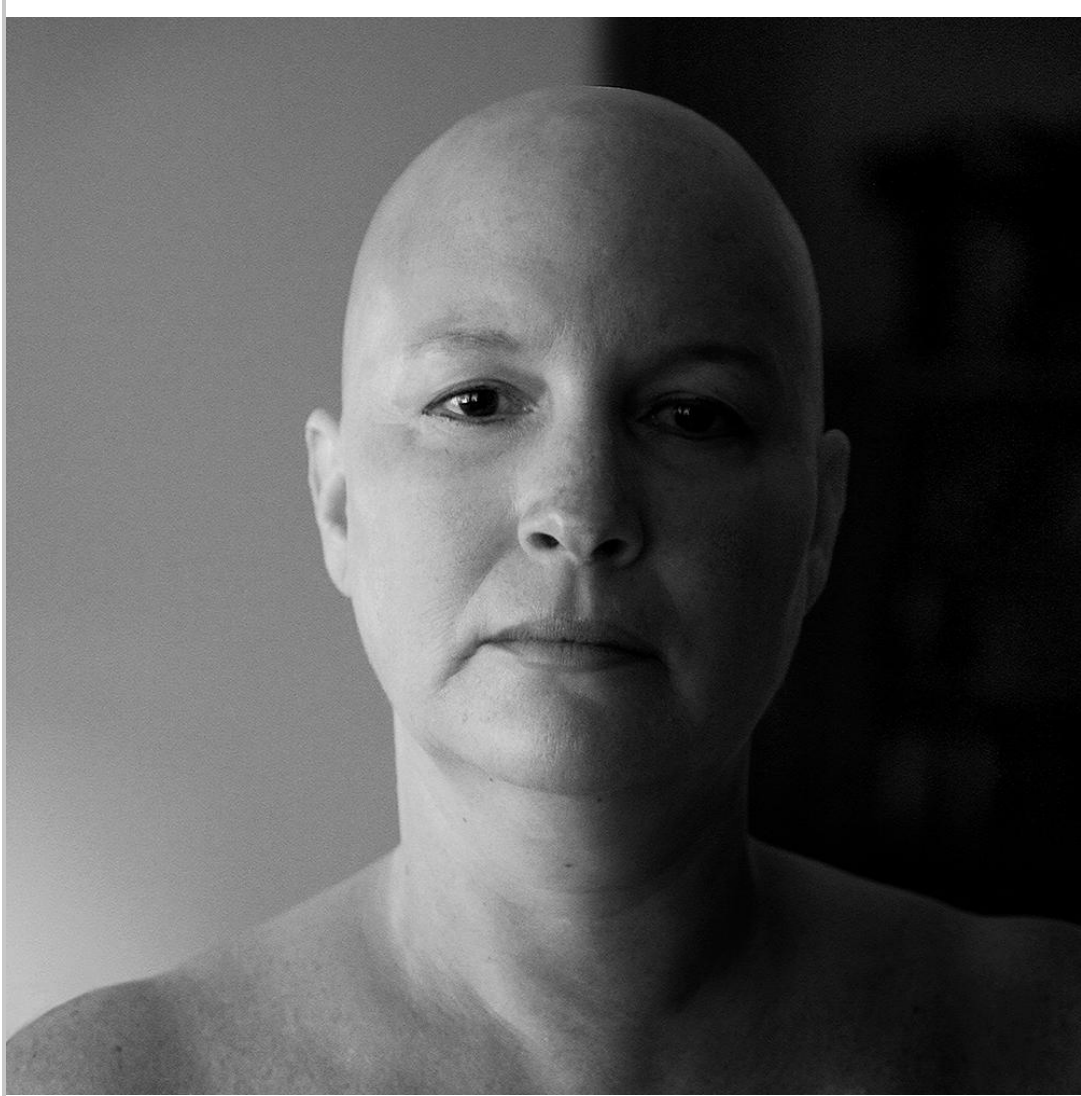


Linnie No. 1

If you'd like to learn more about how this project came about, you can listen to the "Story Behind the Image" [here](#):



Linnie No. 2



Linnie No. 14



Linnie No. 3



Linnie No. 6



Linnie No. 7



Linnie No. 9



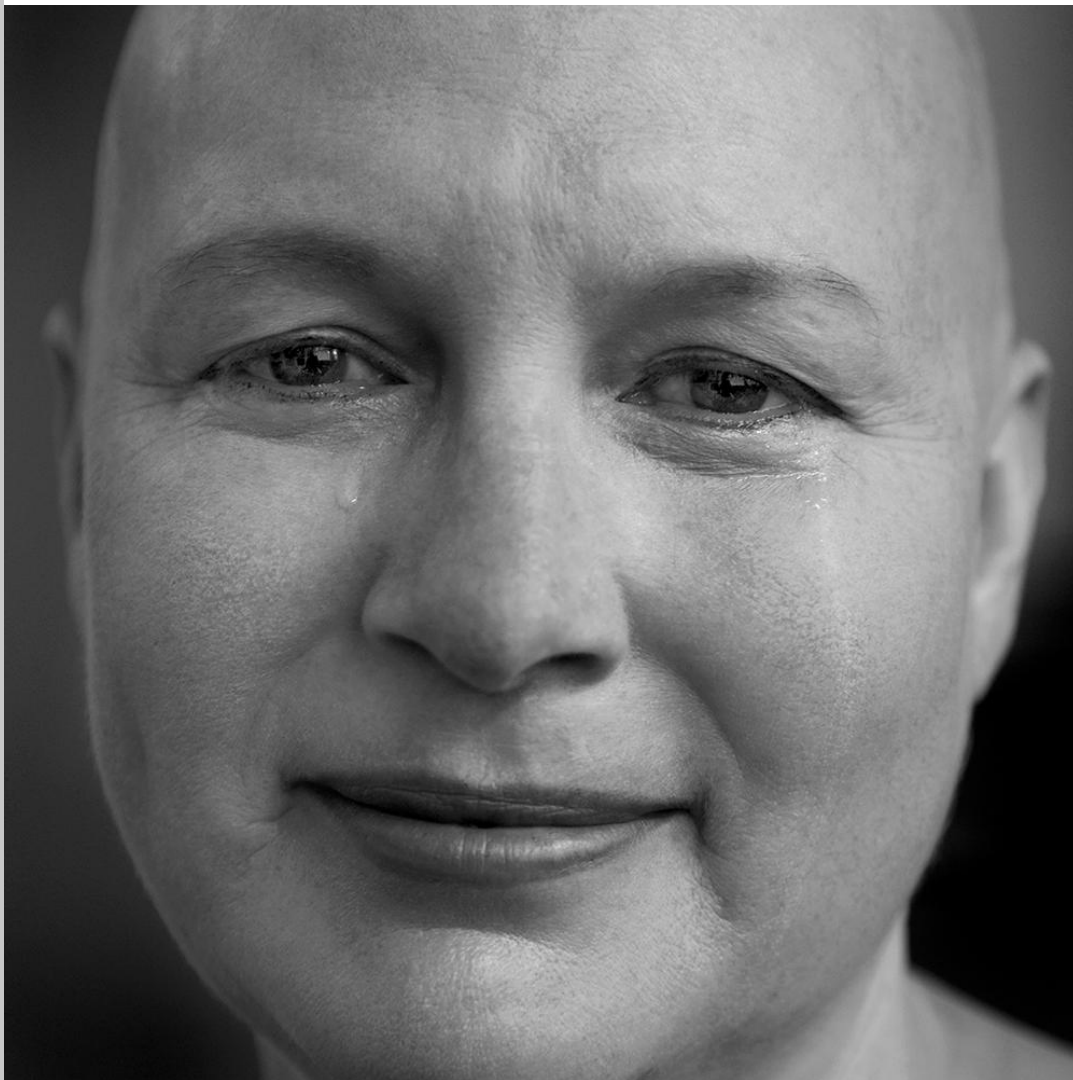
Linnie No. 8



Linnie No. 4

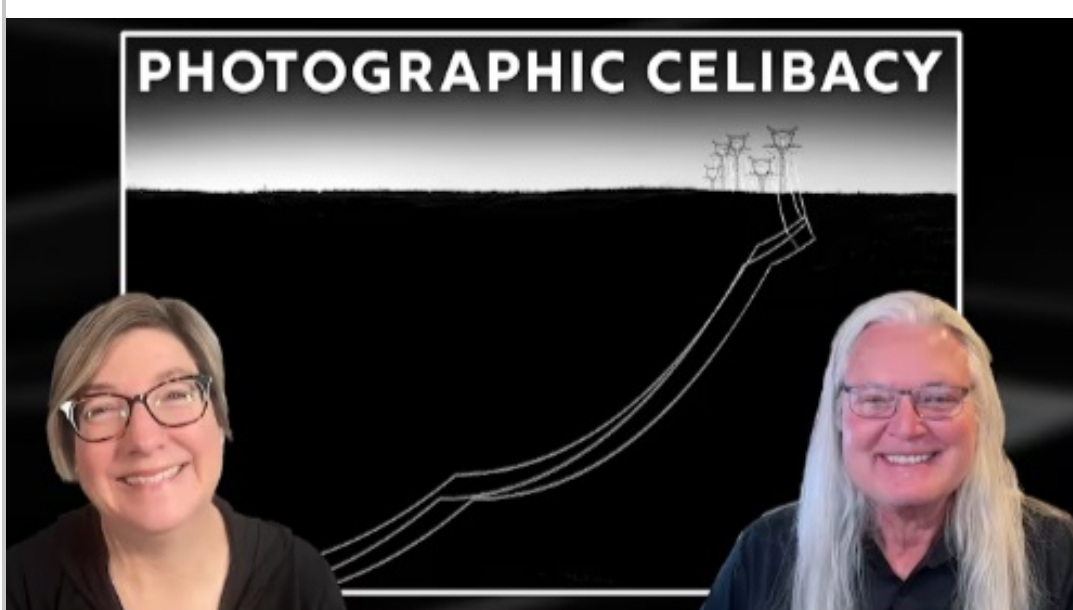


Linnie No. 5



Linnie No. 11

Beth Buelow Pixels Interview



I had the good fortune to be interviewed by Beth Buelow on her Pixels YouTube channel. And what was one of the main topics? Photographic Celibacy (oh no, here we go again!)

You can watch it here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrITY_XnXsY

Vision Blockers

The World's Most Popular Sunglasses.



National TV exposure.

If you have watched our half hour TV commercial then you've seen our most popular pair of BluBlocker sunglasses on display. Millions of pairs have been sold. On our TV show, we try our nylon model on a variety of people—everyone has a different size face and head—but this popular BluBlocker style fits them all. And comfortably.

If you're looking for a rugged yet lightweight pair, order the most popular BluBlockers ever made—our ultra-light Nylon pair.

Nylon BluBlockers (00400) \$49.95



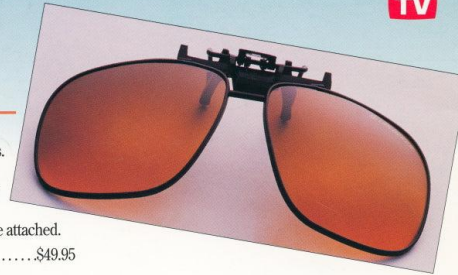
Prescription wearers enjoy BluBlockers.

They clip easily onto prescription glasses and turn them into BluBlockers.

The small metal frame surrounding the lens gives them a quality frame-like appearance.

The BluBlocker clip-on flips up, while attached.

BluBlocker Clip-Ons (00700) \$49.95



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Phone: 702-597-2000 FAX: 702-597-2002

Do you remember the infamous BluBlocker sunglasses that blocked out the blue light? There's something similar in photography called Vision Blockers, but instead of blocking out blue light, they block out our Vision.

When I look at my images from age 14 to 19, I can see that I had been creating from my Vision. At the time I did not know what Vision was or what it did, but it was there operating silently in the background, helping me to create the way that I saw the world.



"My Vision Blockers got darker, and darker and darker..."

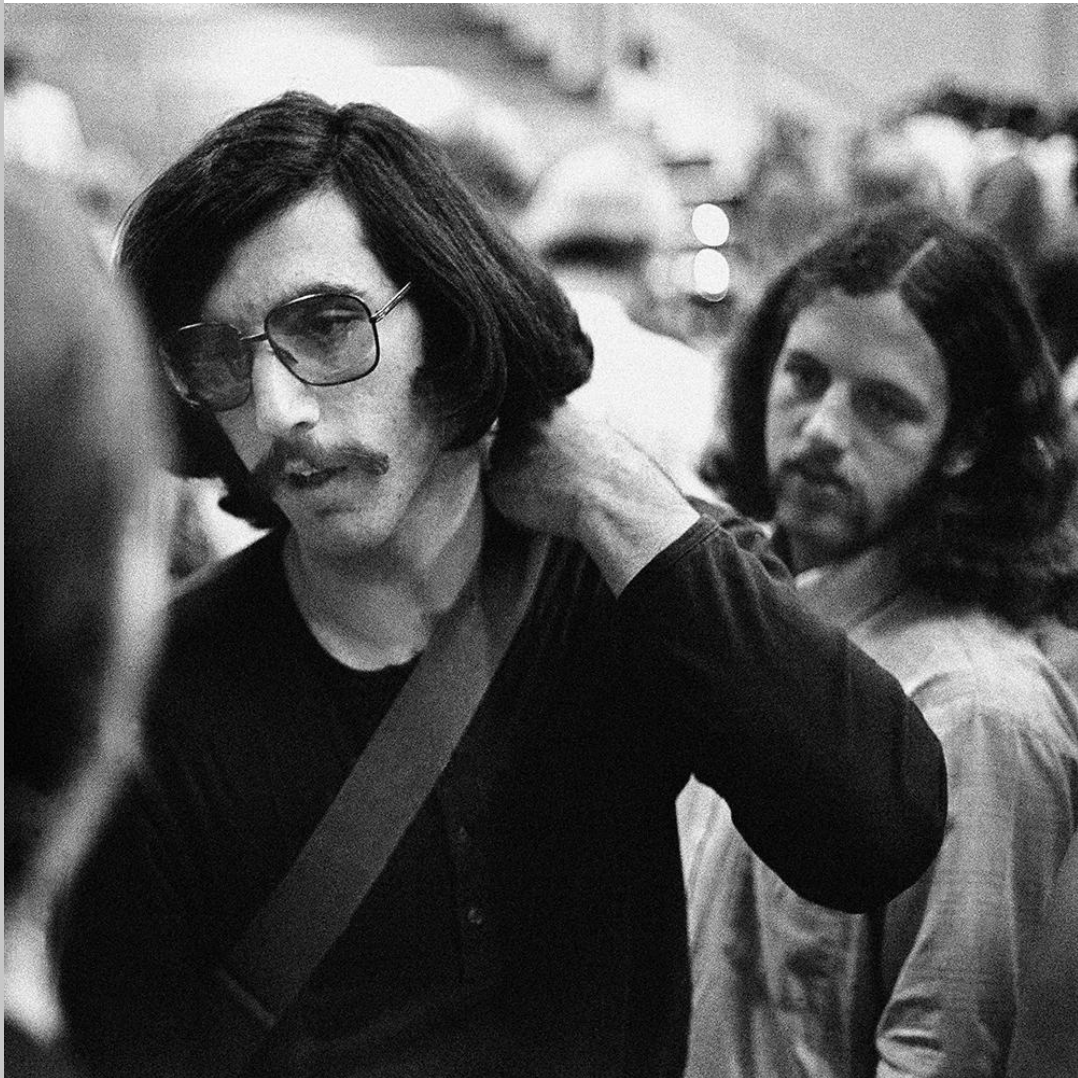
But then I started wearing Vision Blockers.

What are Vision Blockers? They are things that I did that weakened my Vision, and as I continued to do those things, my Vision Blockers got darker and darker, and darker until my Vision was completely blocked (creative constipation?).

To understand how Vision Blockers work, you must first understand what Vision is; it's simply your point of view, a **unique** point of view formed by all of your unique life experiences. In photography, it's how you see when you ignore all the other "voices" telling you how you should photograph, such as:

- Rules and conventions
- Articles telling you how to take great photographs
- The local expert or judge in your photo club
- Internet influencers and experts
- Even mentors (if they're telling you how you ought to photograph)

Each time I deferred to those other voices over my own instincts, my Vision atrophied and eventually disappeared. In other words: use it or lose it.



Two Hippies, 1969

To find my Vision again I had to identify my Vision Blockers, and here they are:

- Creating for the approval of others
- Conforming to fit in
- Caring what other's think about my work
- Creating for likes, wins and sales
- When posting an image, choosing one that I think others will like

- Creating images that I don't REALLY love, but I know will be popular
- Focusing on what others are doing, and not on what I am doing
- Comparing my number of likes to John Barclay's number of likes
- Not deciding if I like my image until I hear what other's think of it



Shoes, 1970

Once I had identified my Vision Blockers, I had to come up with a way to keep them in check, and so I created an approach to my photography that I call "creating honest work," which I define as:

- The idea is mine (not borrowed or stolen)
- It is created from my Vision
- It is created for myself, with no thought as to how others will receive it
- It is work that I love

When I follow this approach, I feel good about my images and my Vision is strengthened. This gives me the confidence to create images that I love, regardless of what others may think of them.

As I have lived with my Vision for a few years now, I have been surprised to learn that Vision isn't just about photography, but it's also about how one lives their life. It has given me the strength to think more independently and to be my honest self.

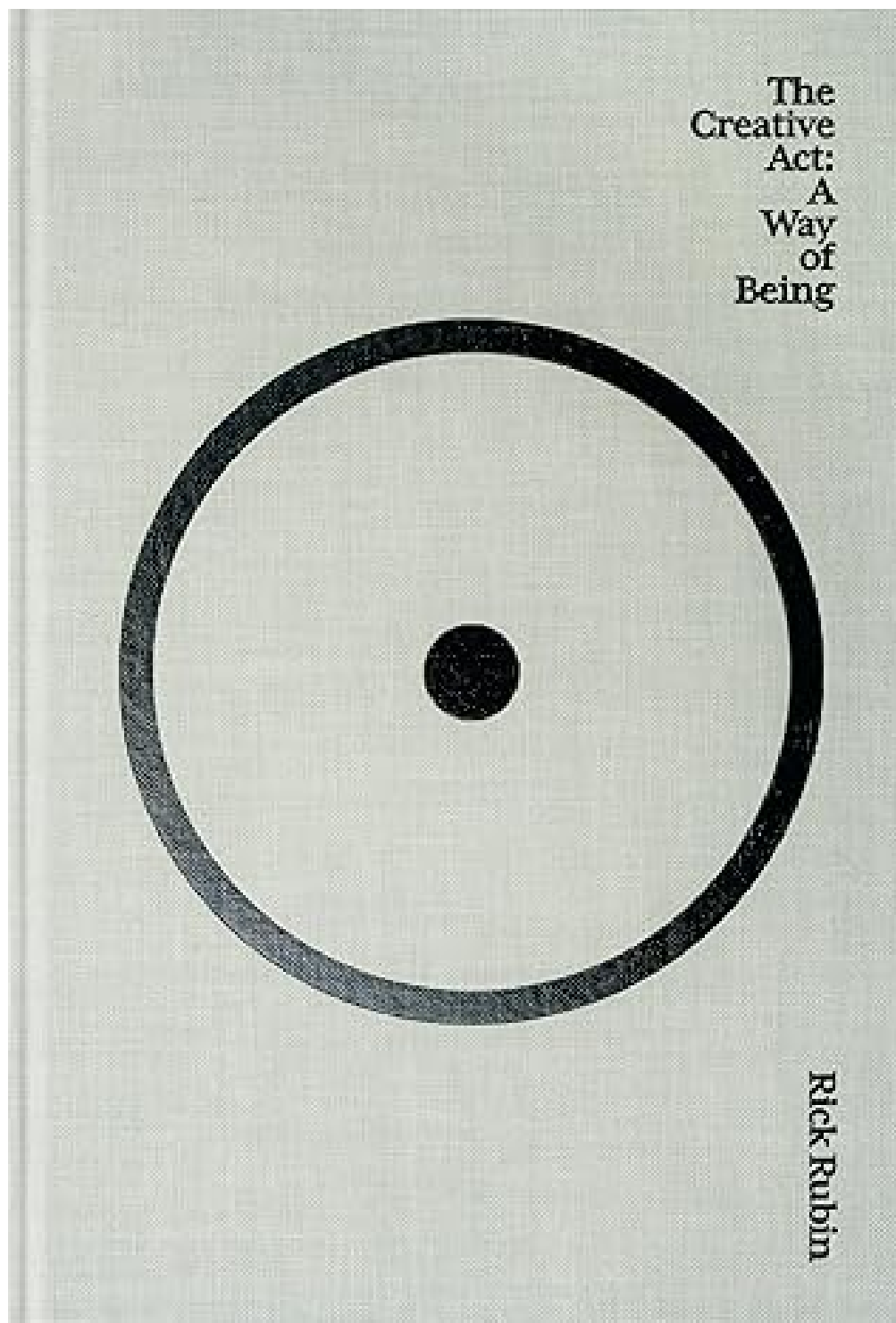
So here are two questions for you:

- What are your Vision Blockers?
- What can you do to minimize their influence on your Vision?

I'd love to hear how you answer these questions, write me!

Cole@ColeThompsonPhotography.com

Rick Rubin - The Creative Act



There have been three books that have greatly influenced my photography and my life:

- Aku Aku, by Thor Heyerdahl
- The Fountainhead, by Ayn Rand
- The Day Books of Edward Weston

And now I am adding a fourth:

[The Creative Act: A Way of Being by Rick Rubin](#)

I could try to describe how important this book is to anyone seeking to find their Vision and be more creative, but I would not do it justice. Instead, click on the link above and listen to an audio sample from the book.

I have also purchased it on Audible and listen to it every day. And every day I learn something new and revelatory about Vision and Creativity.

You would be wise to put this on your Christmas list!

The Story Behind the Image: A Searing Pain!



Leaves, Horizontal

I was on a business trip in Florida and had brought my gear along so I could stay a couple extra days to photograph. As I walked down a rural road in shorts and flip flops, looking for something to photograph, I saw this air potato plant with wonderful leaves that I envisioned in silvery black and white.

I stopped and photographed it for a few minutes when I was stuck with this terrible searing pain! And the worst part of the pain was that I couldn't tell where it was coming from.

I quickly did a body check to see if I had been injured (gunshot wound? alligator bite? hit by an elderly Florida driver?) but there was nothing obvious. And then I saw the problem; my bare legs were covered in these tiny, tiny ants.

That was my first (and only) introduction to fire ants. They seemed to appear out of nowhere and within minutes were trying to devour me, one tiny bite at a time!

Was the image worth the pain? Certainly, because the pain is long gone and I still have this image.

Lesson learned: watch where you step in fire ant country.

LensWork Online



I suspect everyone reading this newsletter knows about LensWork, the magazine. But I'll bet not everyone knows about LensWork Online.

LensWork Online allows you to view LensWork (including the Extended and Bonus Editions) as well as having access to these additional features:

- Here's a Thought Audio Recordings
- Looking at Images
- Finding the Picture
- After the Interview
- Those Who Inspire Me (and Why)
- Downloadable Monographs
- Backstories
- LensWork Visual Workshops
- Every Picture is a Compromise

- Audiobooks and eBooks
- Photography, Not Cameras
- Creative Labs
- Darkroom Tours
- Editor's Comments
- Exploring the Back Issues
- Exploring the Possibilities
- Feedback
- Interview with Photographers
- Photoshop and inDesign Templates
- Q&A with Brooks
- Special Interviews
- Voice of the Masters Audio Archives

Want to sample these offerings? Click on the link below and try each one out. It's an amazing cornucopia (cor-nu-co-pi-a...five syllables John Barclay!) of photographic wisdom.

<https://www.lenswork.com/>

If you'd like try LensWork Online for just one month, you can do so for \$10. My hope is that you would find it tremendously inspirational and then purchase a subscription.

LensWork and Brooks Jensen are national photographic treasures. Let's all support this resource.

Print Drawing



Harbinger No. 22

For this month's print drawing I'll be giving away "Harbinger No. 22." This image is a favorite of mine because it combines two things that I love; Easter Island and Harbingers.

To enter: send an email to Cole@ColeThompsonPhotography.com and put "Harbinger No. 22" in the subject line.

Thanks for entering!

Email Cole and Enter the Drawing!

The winner of my last print drawing is Pauline Chiarelli who will be receiving a print of "Monolith No. 62."

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

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