



KOKORO

Brooks Jensen Arts ~ August 2017, Vol 3, No 1



Contents

Perhaps Lafcadio Hearn will not protest too much if I paraphrase (almost word for word) from *Kokoro*, his 1895 book of Japanese life. He explains this important Japanese term far better than I ever could:

The entries comprising this volume treat of the inner rather than the outer life, — for which reason they have been grouped under the title *Kokoro* (heart). Written with the above character, this word signifies also *mind*, in the emotional sense; *spirit*; *courage*; *resolve*; *sentiment*; *affection*; and *inner meaning*, — just as we say in English, 'the heart of things.'

#077


Searching for Su T'ung Po

*Searching for
Su Tung Po*

A Meditation in the Rain

Brooks Jensen





Walking in the garden shadows
seeking the poetry of Su T'ung Po.

What paths did he wander
a millennium ago?

What poetry did he hear
rising from the depths?

Where do I begin my search?





*To what can our life on earth be likened?
To a flock of geese,
alighting on the snow.
Sometimes leaving a trace of their passage.*

~ Su T'ung Po



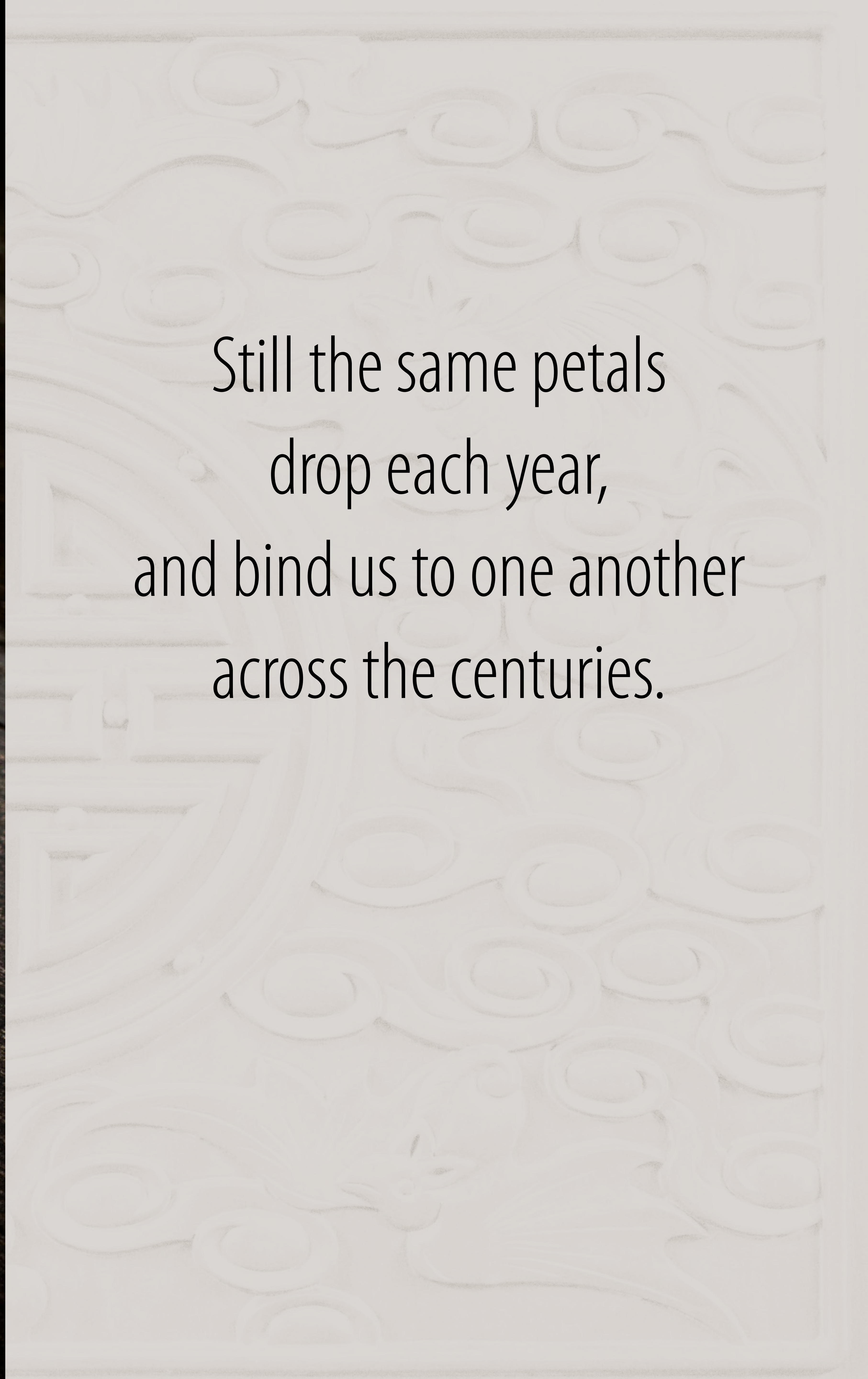


Still the rain falls,
no matter the generations
that separate us.

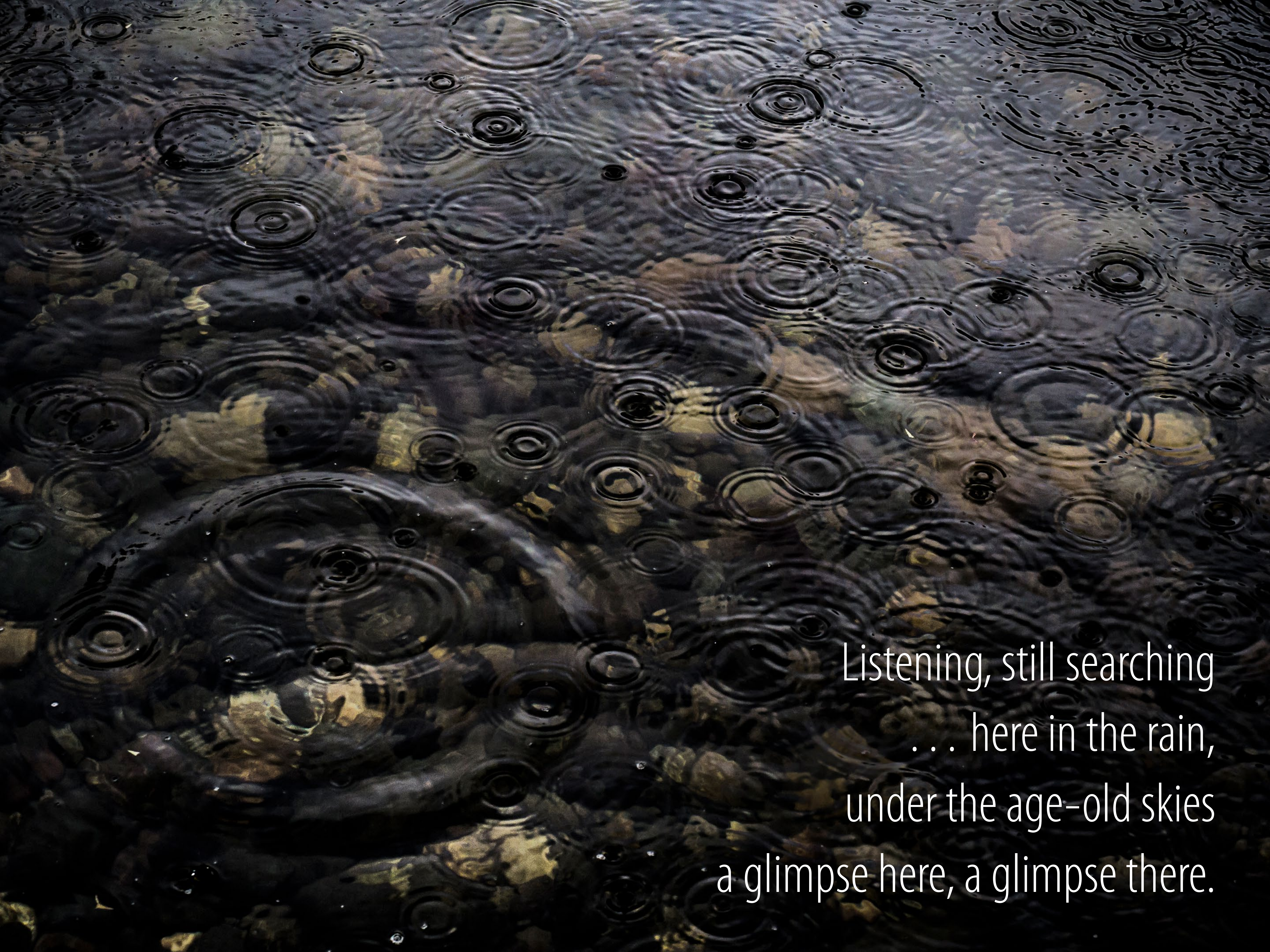




Still the same petals
drop each year,
and bind us to one another
across the centuries.







Listening, still searching
... here in the rain,
under the age-old skies
a glimpse here, a glimpse there.

#078

A Skyful of Joy



A Skyful of Joy

Brooks Jensen



It is said that the Chinese invented fireworks in the 7th century. Since then, they have become a world-wide symbol of celebration.



Fireworks ring in the new year, shout a new betrothal, sing the birth of a nation, and announce celebrations of all kinds, large and small.



To me, they are a manifestation of Newtonian physics, a metaphor for the cosmological Big Bang, an explosion of patterned graphics and symmetrical geometries . . .







. . . a symbol of life, constantly bursting anew with each successive moment, each minute, each generation, through the billions of years.





But, most of all, they are just plain fun
— fire blossoms in the sky, a dance of
color and light and smoke, a perfect
extension of a joyous heart.



#079

The Boatwright's Challenge



THE BOATWRIGHT'S CHALLENGE

Brooks Jensen

Fence posts and popsicle sticks I understand. Like lumber, they are straight, flat, and identical. Boat planks are a mystery — each one bent, curved, twisted in its own unique three dimensions. That they fit together is a miracle; repairing them seems a nightmare. That the final assembly can be *leak-proof* is a gift from God.

Or perhaps the unfathomable skill of the wooden boatwright.

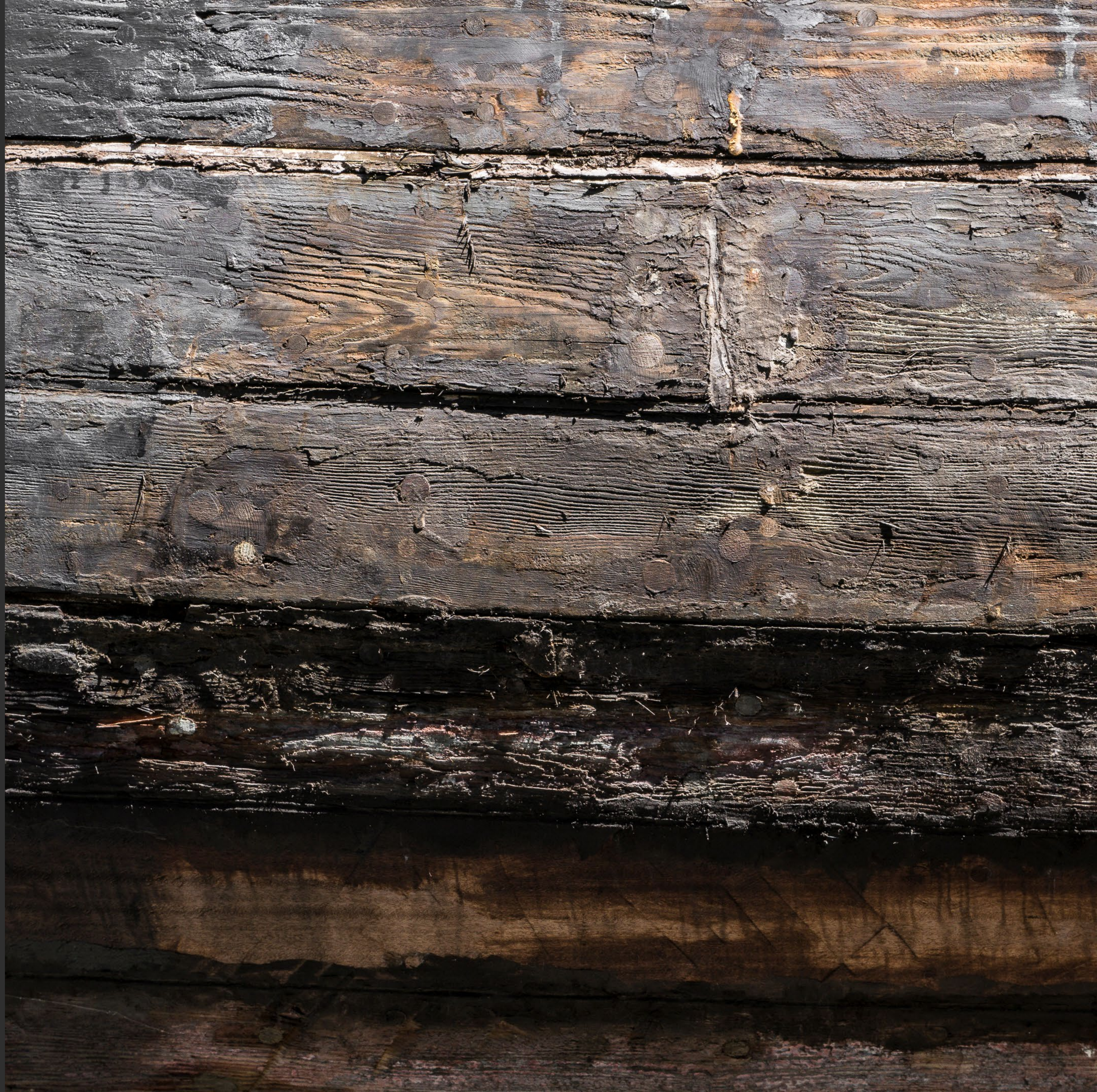
























#080

The True Form

The True Form

In the Shadows We Cast

Brooks Jensen



There is the surface we show,
and the shadow we cast.

Just as the mountain and its shadow
are not the same, so it is with all
things. The ripple is not the same as
the pebble; the consequence is not
the same as the intent. The beginning
calligrapher watches the ink, but the
master watches the paper.

Pay attention to the form, but it is
the shadow that deserves our utmost
care, for in the shadows it casts, there
we see the true, deeper form.





















Informational text panel on the pedestal.





Notes

Kokoro

The first issue of *Kokoro* was released in January 2015. Part way into the second year, I decided to redesign the publication. This issue is the first of the newly redesigned monthlies. *Kokoro* is now formatted for landscape orientation on 4:3 aspect ratio tablets like the iPad and Samsung S3. It now uses larger images, easier-to-read text, and a visual table of contents with live links.

In the first year, I released each “chapter” separately; the monthlies were a compilation. Starting with this issue, only the monthly compilation will be issued. Think of it as a monthly e-magazine showcasing my personal work!

Tech notes: I’ve resisted adding tech notes to *Kokoro*, but in response to all those who have repeatedly asked, I’m capitulating. Besides, it might be fun and useful. All the images in this issue were processed using Adobe Lightroom CC only. The layout and design, typography, and PDF generation were all done using Adobe InDesign CC.

Searching for Su Tung Po

These images all come from a single session at the Lan Su Chinese Garden in

Portland, Oregon. I had set aside a day for photography after the conclusion of the Photolucida conference in April 2017. I woke to a very wet and drippy day — and almost skipped the photography. Reluctantly, I ventured out into the weather and was rewarded with a spectacular day in the garden, almost entirely by myself. Once again, the old maxim proved true — bad weather makes for better photography.

Tech notes: All shot using a Panasonic G85 camera with either the Lumix 12-35mm f/2.8 or the Lumix 35-100mm f/2.8 lenses. Mostly handheld.

A Skyful of Joy

A single session of photography on July 4, 2017 in my hometown of Anacortes, Washington. I’ve always thought that fireworks photography demonstrates the important role that *luck* plays in the artmaking process. That said, it is true that luck favors the prepared. Fortunately, I was both.

Tech notes: Panasonic G85 camera using a Leica DG 12-60mm lens. All stabilized with a tripod, exposures in the 1-4 seconds range.

The Boatwright’s Challenge

From the boatyard at Port Townsend, Washington. All photographed on September 9, 2016. I originally composed all of these as rectangles, but I simply couldn’t eliminate the unattractive blurred corners created by boats’ curves. Experimenting, I tried one with a square crop. Problem solved.

Tech notes: Panasonic G7 using the Lumix 12-35mm f/2.8 lens. All shot using a tripod.

The True Form

Two photography sessions, both at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. I saw the original vision on the first visit, August 8, 2014. I needed more before I could complete the project, so I returned June 1, 2017. Three years in the making; so much for photography being an “instant” art medium.

Tech notes: The first session, I used a Panasonic GM1 and the 12-35mm f/3.5-5.6 compact lens. The second session was using a Panasonic G85 and the Lumix Vario 35-100mm f/4-5.6 compact telephoto lens. All handheld.

Folios, Chapbooks, Prints

Folios and Chapbooks

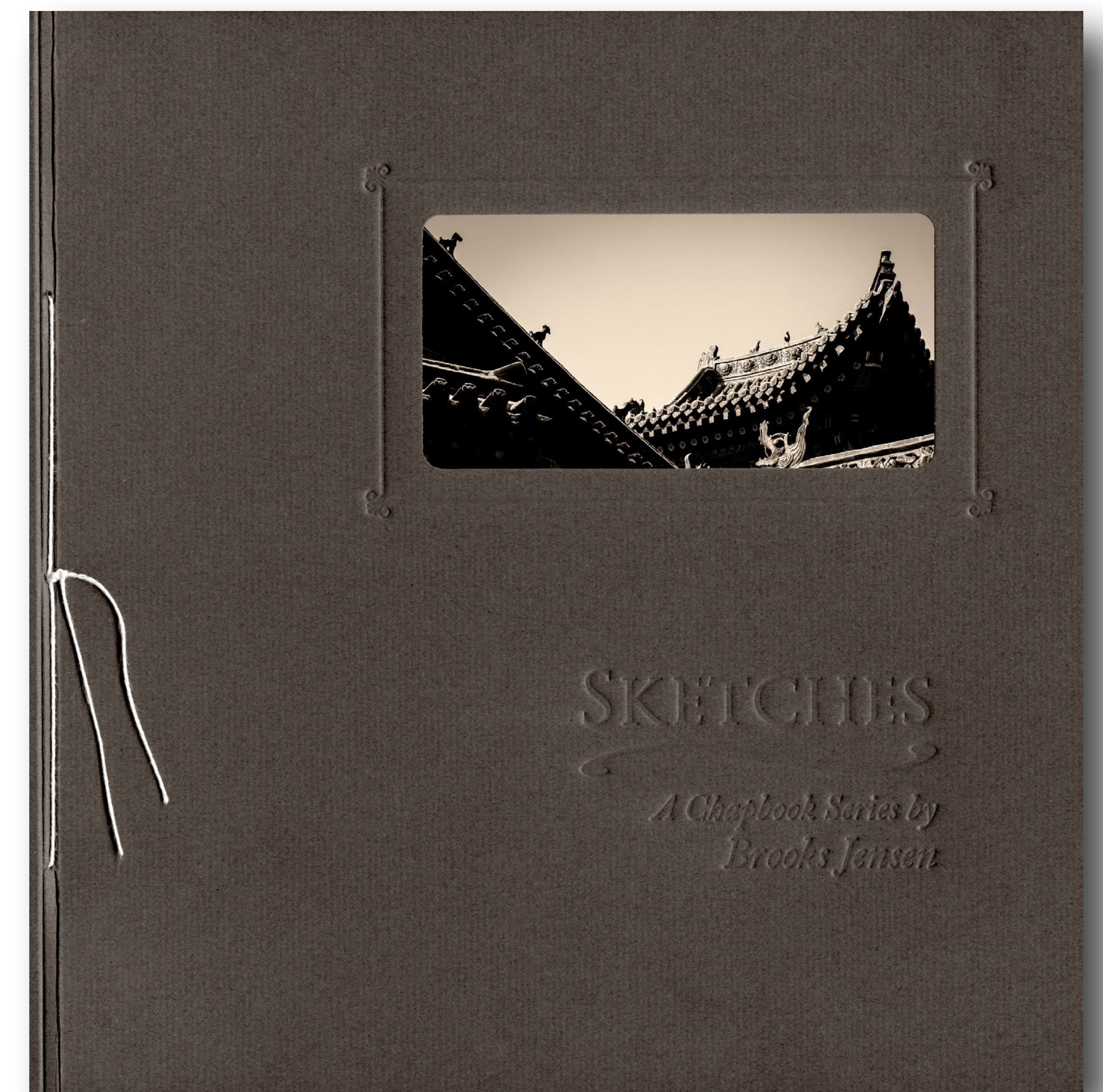
My primary media for physical artwork are handmade folios and chapbooks. These media allow me to provide a hands-on, tactile, off-the-wall viewing experience.

Folios are sets of unmounted sheets, typically related by theme or place. Folios include an introductory text sheet or folded signature. The art-paper enclosure is embossed. These are numbered and signed.

Chapbooks are sewn, handmade books that present more flexible possibilities for storytelling and predetermined sequencing. Chapbooks use two-sided printing and are typically between 8 and 12 pages. The covers are made from embossed art-paper. Chapbooks also are numbered and signed.

I do not use the artificiality of “limited editions” — a marketing strategy that conflicts with the very nature of photography’s reproducibility.

Currently available titles are listed at www.brooksensenarts.com.





Brooks Jensen is a fine-art photographer, publisher, workshop teacher, and writer. In his personal work he specializes in small prints, handmade artist's books, and digital media publications.

He and his wife (Maureen Gallagher) are the owners, co-founders, editors, and publishers of the award winning *LensWork*, one of today's most respected and important periodicals in fine art photography. With subscribers in 73 countries, Brooks' impact on fine art photography is truly worldwide. His long-running podcasts on art and photography are heard over the Internet by thousands every day. All 1,000+ podcasts are available at [LensWork Online](#), the LensWork membership website. LensWork Publishing is also at the leading edge in multimedia and digital media publishing with *LensWork Extended* — a PDF-based, media-rich expanded version of the magazine.

Brooks is the author of ten best-selling books about photography and creativity: *Photography, Art, & Media* (2016); *The Creative Life in Photography* (2013); *Letting Go of the Camera* (2004); *Single Exposures* (4 books in a series, random observations on art, photography and creativity); *Looking at Images* (2014); *Seeing in SIXES* (2016); *The Best of the LensWork Interviews* (2016); as well as a photography monograph, *Made of Steel* (2012). His next books will be *Those Who Inspire Me (And Why)* and *Seeing in SIXES 2017*. A free, monthly PDF e-magazine of his personal work, [Kokoro](#), is available for download.

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