

LIFE LIVED IN MOMENTS



Brooks Jensen

A Brooks Jensen Arts Publication



Our group of photographers was spending three weeks in the sub-freezing edge of the Gobi desert in inner-Mongolia. I have fond memories of the people and events, but *this moment* — about 30 minutes, alone in the desert, photographing the skiff of new snow on the dunes — is the most intense memory of the trip.

I walked away from the chatter, the hubbub, away from the structures and machines. I walked across the snow toward the freshly-covered dunes. I can still hear the scrunching-squeak of the dry snow as it compressed under my boots. The sun dropped below the horizon of the dune above me. The silence became all-enveloping. The Moment swallowed me. The universe distilled to Now. Crunch, crunch, pause — patterns in the dry snow and cold sand. The beep/snap of my camera. Then crunch, crunch, crunch, pause, more patterns in the dry snow and cold sand.



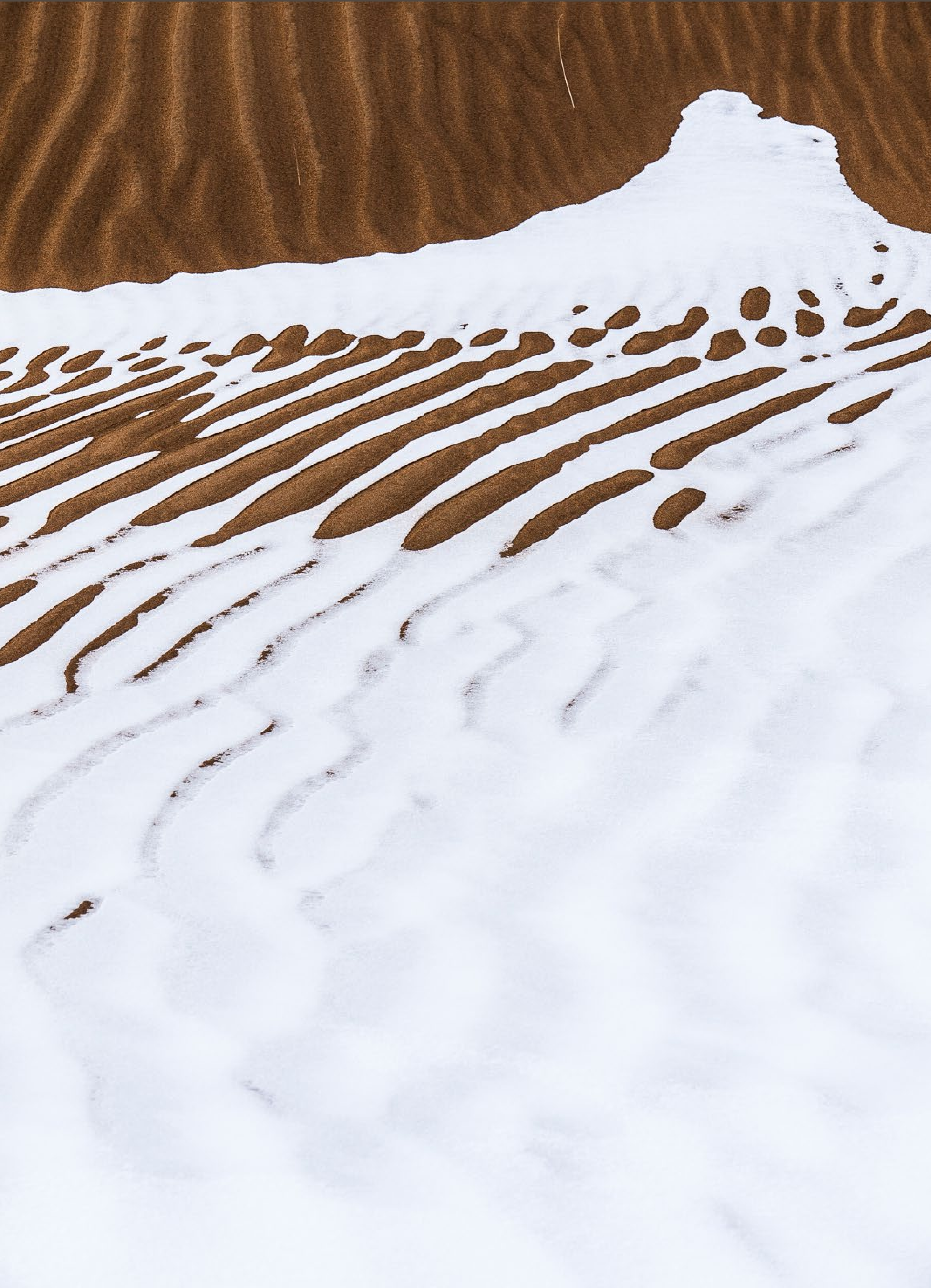




It may not be true, but I've heard that passionate golfers can remember every shot on every hole they've ever made. Sounds a bit far-fetched, but as a photographer I can see the kernel of possibility in the tale.

Photographs function as a kind of visual diary of my life. I can remember the making each one upon seeing it. More than that—I can *feel* it, *hear* it, as though it were now. Crunch, crunch, patterns in the dry snow and cold sand.





The image narrative in my photographs recounts my life — not for anyone else, but clearly and with precision for me. The narrative intensifies certain moments — or do I have that backwards? The more I think about this, the more it feels as though the moments spent with my camera are somehow more real, more intense, more engaging than so much of the rest of daily life. Is it that looking intently impregnates the memory more deeply? Is it that the act of artmaking clarifies the moment so that we are more present and available for The Immediate to affect us? I'm not sure. I just know that somehow these moments of my life seem more real to me than others. Crunch, crunch, patterns in the dry snow and cold sand.



Life is experienced as a conscious stream, but *memory* is a series of moments, connected only by the most gossamer of threads, separated by wide, wide gaps of — nothing.

*To be an artist
is a life lived in moments.*





Brooks Jensen is a fine-art photographer, publisher, workshop teacher, and writer. In his personal work he specializes in small prints, hand-made 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 world-wide. His long-running podcasts on art and photography are heard over the Internet by thousands every day. All 900+ 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 seven best-selling books about photography and creativity: *Letting Go of the Camera* (2004); *The Creative Life in Photography* (2013); *Single Exposures* (4 books in a series, random observations on art, photography and creativity); and *Looking at Images* (2014); as well as a photography monograph, *Made of Steel* (2012). His next book will be *Those Who Inspire Me (And Why)*. A free monthly compilation of of this image journal, [Kokoro](#), is available for download.

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Anacortes, WA, U.S.A.

Email brooks@brooksjensenarts.com

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