

THE BAMBOO CUTTERS OF JINYUN XIANDU, CHINA



Brooks Jensen

A Brooks Jensen Arts Publication



There were some 200 photographers — mostly Japanese tourists — photographing the spires and scenic views of Jinyun Xiandu from the “photo spot” on the bank of the shallow river. A stone walkway allowed costumed villagers to dutifully lead the miserable-looking water buffalo across the river and back, across and back again, pausing now and again for the benefit of the photographers. Each trip was met with a whir of camera shutters and admiring applause from the tourists. I couldn’t get away fast enough.

After lunch, I walked upriver and crossed on a stone bridge. Unexpectedly, I found some workmen harvesting bamboo and immediately recognized them as the actors from the water buffalo scene. In their work clothes and away from the tourist photographers, I felt I’d found a genuine corner of China not constructed for the entertainment of foreigners. Fortunately, they kept busy while I admired their skill and dexterity.

I have no idea what had become of the water buffalo, but I’m sure he is one of the most photographed creatures in all of China.





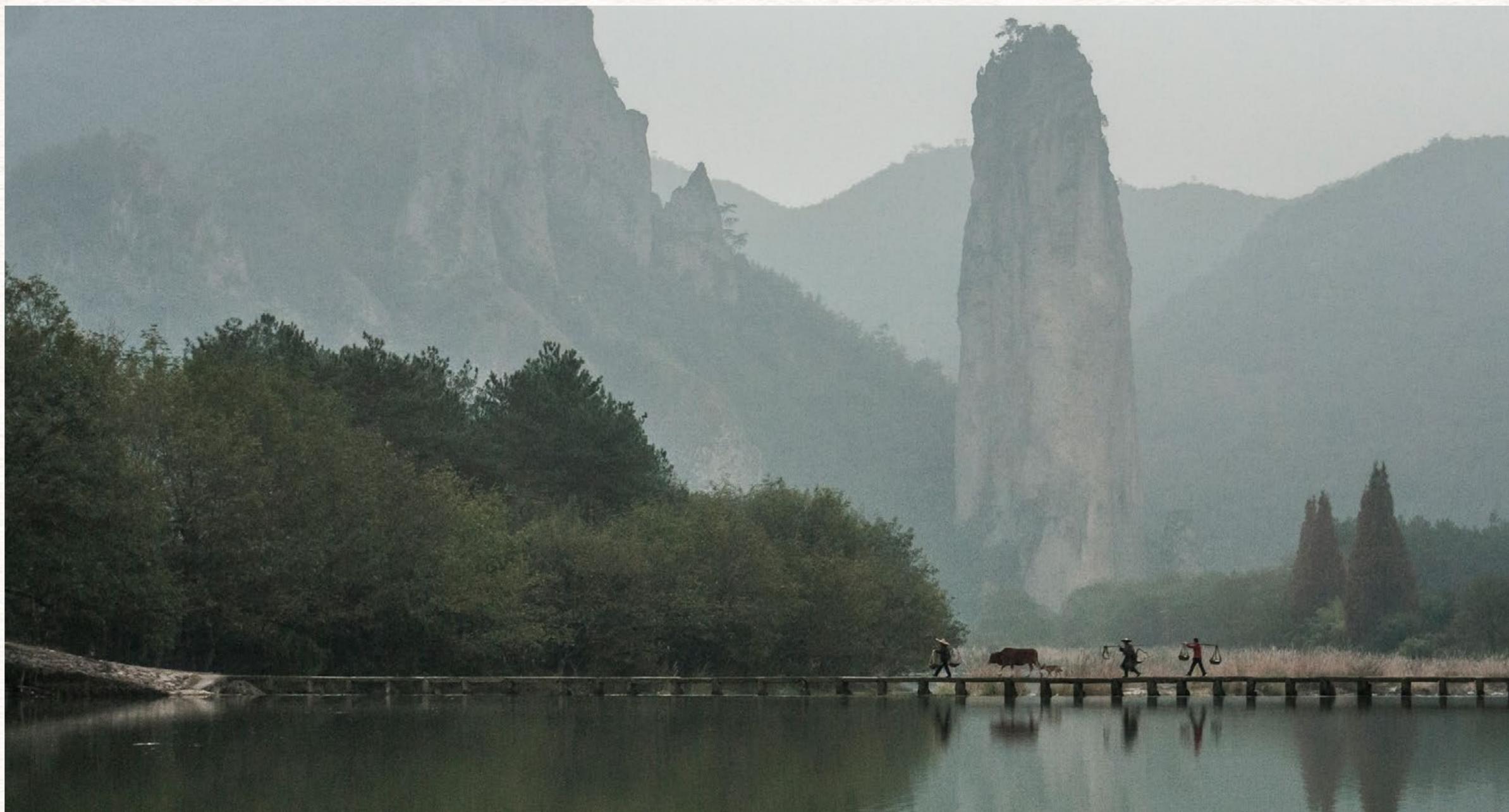












I couldn't get away fast enough, but I not before I made one photograph just to prove I was there. You didn't think I was kidding, did you?



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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