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The Last Roll



Synopsis

"A few days before Christmas, 2004, I was diagnosed with lymphoma," writes Jeff Jacobson in his preface to *The Last Roll*. The NY Times LENS Blog described Jacobson as "pushing the visual boundaries of photojournalism" in this work providing a first-person depiction of a cancer patient's changing perspectives on life, death, art, and the world at-large. A former Magnum photographer known for his quirky style, Jeff Jacobson was one of the first art photographers to use color film exclusively. For his 1991 book *My Fellow Americans* he traveled the country, capturing the look and mood of a decade. Over time, Jacobson refined his style by using Kodachrome 200. He pushed it two stops in the developing process, which yielded a grain more typical of black-and-white film. This became his look, his signature. After his chemotherapy treatments, confined indoors at his home in Mount Tremper, New York, he started making a visual diary. At first, he was just thinking in terms of individual images. Then Kodak announced it was ceasing production of Kodachrome, and the project acquired new layers. No longer just about moments of grace amid personal loss, it was now also about enshrining a part of photographic history. His new book, *The Last Roll*, was born.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After being diagnosed with lymphoma in 2004, Jacobson turned to his photography as mental therapy; when his beloved Kodachrome was discontinued in 2010, he savored his last roll. "I have outlived my film," he writes. These images reflect longing, and gratitude, amid glimpses of beauty.

(Jack Crager American Photo)

Beautiful book by the master of color, Jeff Jacobson. The end of Kodachrome represents the end of an era in photography. Jeff Jacobson mines his journey through his last rolls of the film which his work has been intimately involved, and exposes the graceful gems of photographs that make this world a more wonderful place. There is no one more attuned to the poignancy of color and emotional interplay than Jeff Jacobson. There are a few true photographers, and Mr. Jacobson is at the pinnacle. His photographs are a true gift to be gently considered.

These mysterious pictures fall on a broad continuum between the figurative and the abstract. The mind dives into each photo, trying compulsively to make sense of it. Is that a face or a contortion of light? How could the bed and the distant man appear side by side? But like the photographer grappling with his own mortality, the mind must finally let go of logic in order to really grasp the image. More than beauty, this book furnishes an experiential lesson. Isn't that what the best art does for us?

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