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Photography

By Taylor Holliday

Finally, some of the best specimens of the human animal show up in “The Importance of Being” (Arena, 447 pages, \$50) by Christopher Felver. And by this I do not mean the “beautiful people” but the accomplished ones—writers, artists, musicians, activists. No pretense here, just straight-ahead, black and white portraits of a staggering 436 “creative revolutionaries” as Mr Felver calls them, photographed by him over the past two decades.

“My subjects are the people I always wanted to meet,” he writes. Just one degree of separation, and it’s as if we’re meeting them too, everyone from Kathy Acker (“postmodern novelist, biker”) to Franco Zeffereilli (“film director”), including Seamus Heaney, Jasper Johns, B.B. King, Arthur Miller, Toni Morrison, Lou Reed, Susan Sontag—even a jolly Ansel Adams.