

Grove Gone Photo

Contributed by The Editors

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Backcountry: For starters, how'd you get into shooting?

Garrett Grove: I started shooting more when I started getting outside more. I did my first mountaineering trip my freshman year in college with a few buddies, and we went up Mount Baker. I took a roll of slides with me just for fun and ended up getting some shots. I still have them. It was the first time I ever caught a sunrise, and I was mesmerized by the photos as much as the whole experience.

I got married seven years ago now, and a wedding gift was a digital SLR. I started taking pictures like twice as much, three times as much, and it kept growing from there. I started basing my life around being outside and started taking photos of more and more. And it just kept growing naturally, without any real hope of going professional.

BCM: When did you start thinking that you could go professional with photography?

GG: Probably four, maybe five years ago now. I moved to Salt Lake and had a blog for family and friends, and started getting a few inquiries from random people asking if I wanted to submit photos. They started putting money behind their offers and I was like, "Huh. I can make money off this." It kinda was thrown at me. I wasn't really ever like, "I'm gonna be a professional photographer."

BCM: How did you learn how to shoot?

GG: Lots of just trial and error. The beautiful thing about digital is it's kind of a photography teacher in your hands. You can shoot something and immediately look at the screen and the histogram and know exactly what you did right or wrong. I think the biggest tool was just shooting as much as I could and learning from my mistakes or what I was doing right.

BCM: You said you got a nice DSLR as a wedding present. When did you move up to your Nikons?

GG: My first DSLR was the cheapest, lowest end you can get with a kit lens. It took probably like six or seven years to move up to what I would consider professional equipment. As I started getting into it, I kept buying more equipment and techy gadgets and all this stuff. Now, I feel like I'm pairing it down more and more. I barely ever using flashes and am not using remotes...just simplifying the whole process and getting back to the root of it again.

BCM: Tell me about your last year.

My wife [Bridget] and I bought a big ol' diesel truck, and we put a camper on the back, and we sold all our furniture and decided that we were going to drive around and see where it took us. We lived out of the camper for four or five months. Actually, we ended up selling it 'cause we moved into a house in Revelstoke for the winter for four or five months. We were vagabonds after that for two or three months until we finally moved to Leavenworth. It gave us a lot of cool opportunities and we met a ton of cool people.

It was the best winter I've ever had in my life. Revelstoke is a pretty special place. There always seems to be good snow up there, and it's a super active community so you can't really go wrong. We definitely lucked out that we decided to move up there for that random winter when everybody else in the Lower 48 was getting pretty hosed.

BCM: Chris Rubens is in your cover shot of the November issue. Tell me about your relationship with him.

GG: Chris lives in Revelstoke and he's been in the ski industry way longer than me. Moving to Revelstoke, I heard his name and knew that we had some mutual friends, so we had a couple random opportunities to go on some fun ski trips this winter. One to Nelson, for a story with a Swedish ski magazine, and later with Sweetgrass Productions to a random cabin up in the Selkirks.

Chris is a super fun guy. Really low key. It turned out to be a pretty natural fit, which goes a long way toward photos. You feel really comfortable together. So the trips we went on ended up being hyperproductive. We came away with some of my favorite shots of the winter.

BCM: What's the story behind that cover shot?

GG: That was in the middle of our trip in Nelson, and we had gotten some fresh snow. That day, we knew it was going to be blue. There was no other day that was like it that entire week, so we woke up at sunrise and did a big loop around the Whitewater area, the whole time out of bounds. We toured to this burn where the shot was taken. Got a bunch of cool shots in the burn, but that's definitely one of the standouts. At sunset, we got that shot that's on the cover of Skiing right now. It was all in that one day. Those days happen maybe three to five times a year. We were out all day and every shot seemed to be working.

BCM: What's your favorite sport to photograph?

GG: Skiing. That's where the whole passion started and where it lies. I find it to be the most dynamic thing to shoot 'cause

the snow is always different, the light is always different, and the way the snow and the light interact.... I'm always amazed by what those two elements can do together with a human going through it.

For more of Garrett's work, check out his blog, or pick up the November issue of Backcountry, now available on the iTunes newsstand.

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