



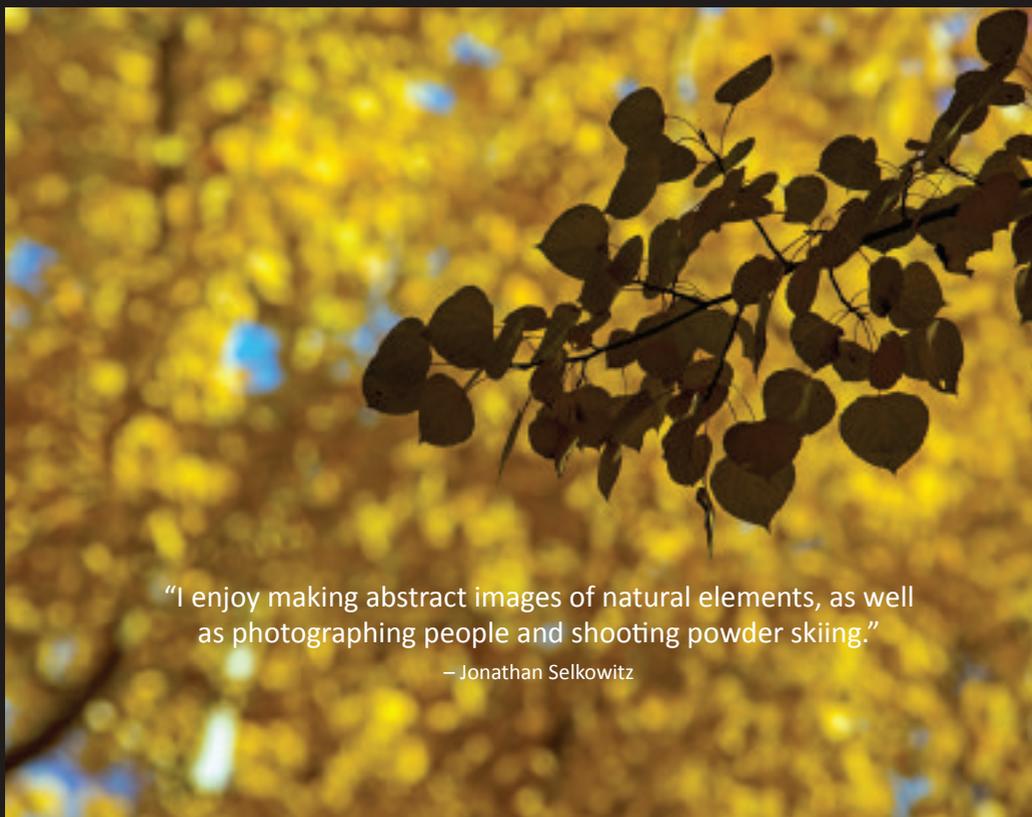
FROM SKIING

TO SUNSETS Selkowitz Shoots Lasting Images



WORDS KRISTEN POPE | IMAGES JONATHAN SELKOWITZ

Photographer Jonathan Selkowitz never has a dull day, whether shooting ski photography around the globe or taking pictures of neighborhood kids, dogs and sunsets near his home in Victor, Idaho. Most summers, he travels to Chile, where he can snap photos of top ski racers from throughout the Northern Hemisphere training for the upcoming ski season. He even had the opportunity to stand slopeside as racers carved turns to Olympic glory in Nagano, Japan in 1988.



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— Jonathan Selkowitz



However, one adventure was more harrowing than most. A decade ago, Selkowitz joined a Warren Miller crew on a trip to the Atlas Mountains in Morocco where athletes skied and kayaked. Tension was high in Morocco during the filming and the nation was about to erupt into war. “We were getting lots of threatening looks,” Selkowitz recalled. As the group was heading out of the mountains, one team member became separated from the larger group by a few mountain switchbacks. “He was threatened with a knife by two local goons traveling with their mother on the back of a donkey,” Selkowitz recalled. One of their Moroccan guides saw the danger and, seizing an ice axe from the gear stashed on one of their donkeys, raced down the switchbacks and reached them just in time to fend off the assailants without injury.

These days, most of Selkowitz’s foreign work is in the Andes, photographing ski teams in training, including teams for the U.S., Norway, Canada and Austria. While on location, he spends all day taking photos and then all evening downloading, organizing and editing the images. He has worked with the U.S. Ski team for over a decade, at one point traveling 270 days a year to photograph them.

Before he delved into the world of ski photography, Selkowitz had a number of different jobs in Jackson, including working as a ski instructor and coach right after moving to town in 1988. “I became a ski instructor by default,” Selkowitz said. “The reality was that after moving to town and paying first, last and deposit, I needed to find a way to get a ski pass, so I became a ski instructor.”



He coached and taught at the Jackson Hole Ski School and Ski Club where he taught race clinics and coached many well-known skiers, including Crystal Wright and Resi Stiegler. He was taken away from skiing for a time with a torn ACL that required surgery. “I was a ski coach who couldn’t ski,” Selkowitz said. During his recovery, he took a local photography class and met a number of local photographers, including David Swift, who became his mentor. Selkowitz learned about film and filters and soon found himself with an assignment as an assistant on a photo shoot.

Originally, he hoped to be a fashion photographer but gravitated back towards ski photography, shooting World Cup races in Park City, Vail/Beaver Creek and Aspen where he made more connections in the industry. For the last 15 years, ski photography has served as the majority of his business, while a curiosity with light, composition and gesture compels him to shoot photos of many sorts. “I enjoy making abstract images of natural elements, as well as photographing people and shooting powder skiing,” Selkowitz said. ■