



## JONATHAN TUCKER

Jonathan Tucker started taking photographs in 2009. The Whitehorse-based artist has won various awards and had his work published in magazines, books, and newspapers. Tucker is self-taught and uses photography as a way to express himself.

### SUNSET AT KUSAWA LAKE

"I have always loved the dock on Kusawa Lake, which is just outside of Whitehorse. The lighting and mood was perfect to capture this silent and peaceful shot."

A wide-angle landscape photograph of Kusawa Lake at sunset. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds in shades of pink, orange, and blue. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the water. In the foreground, a wooden dock extends from the right side into the lake. The water is calm, reflecting the colors of the sky. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under the twilight sky.

# RECOGNIZING THE BEAUTY

**Photographer Jonathan Tucker on appreciating northern landscapes**

Photos and captions by Jonathan Tucker | Foreword by Tara McCarthy

Entering the art world was unexpected for Jonathan Tucker. Growing up in the Yukon, he set his sights on playing college football, but everything changed when he shattered his ankle in Grade 12. Then, in 2009, he was gifted a digital SLR camera from a family member, and with it came new ambition.

“I never planned on taking pictures,” Tucker explains. “I had no idea what I was doing, so I put the camera on manual mode and experimented with everything from people to product photography. I tried to figure out what I liked to do and eventually fell in love with landscapes.”

It’s not surprising that Tucker gravitated toward the outdoors. He’s always loved being in nature and is mesmerized by the mountains. Born in St. John’s, Newfoundland, he moved north with his mother when he was 7 years old to live just outside Whitehorse.

Once he had that camera in hand, the northern vistas took on new meaning. And as a self-taught photographer, the learning curve was steep.

“It still is difficult. You’re never done learning,” he says. “It’s not so much about the camera anymore—I understand ISO, shutter speed, f-stop, and all that—but it’s learning about lighting, what filters to use, and what effect you want to make.”

The 30-year-old photographer has found comfort in simple compositions that evoke the peacefulness and solitude of the territory.

“I try to show how quiet it is and how beautiful it is here if you just take a second to look,” Tucker says. “Even some people who have lived in the Yukon for a long time don’t look at the mountains anymore. They forget; they just drive. It’s like everyone is on auto mode. I try to let people stop for a second, see what I’ve seen, and hope they enjoy it.”

In only six years, Tucker has received an impressive amount of attention. He was awarded second place in the “Discover The World” category in the Trierenberg Super Circuit photography competition. His work was also featured at the California Academy of Sciences, in San Francisco.

Tucker’s northern lights photographs were published on the NASA and NBC News websites. Plus, the cover photo on this *YNoO* issue was featured in National Geographic’s *Getting Your Shot* book released last year. Tucker also regularly posts to [yourshot.nationalgeographic.com](http://yourshot.nationalgeographic.com).

“At the end of the day, I’m humbled. I just love to take pictures,” he says. “It doesn’t matter what award I’ve won or where I’ve been published. I just do it because I love it and thank God for the gift he’s given me.”

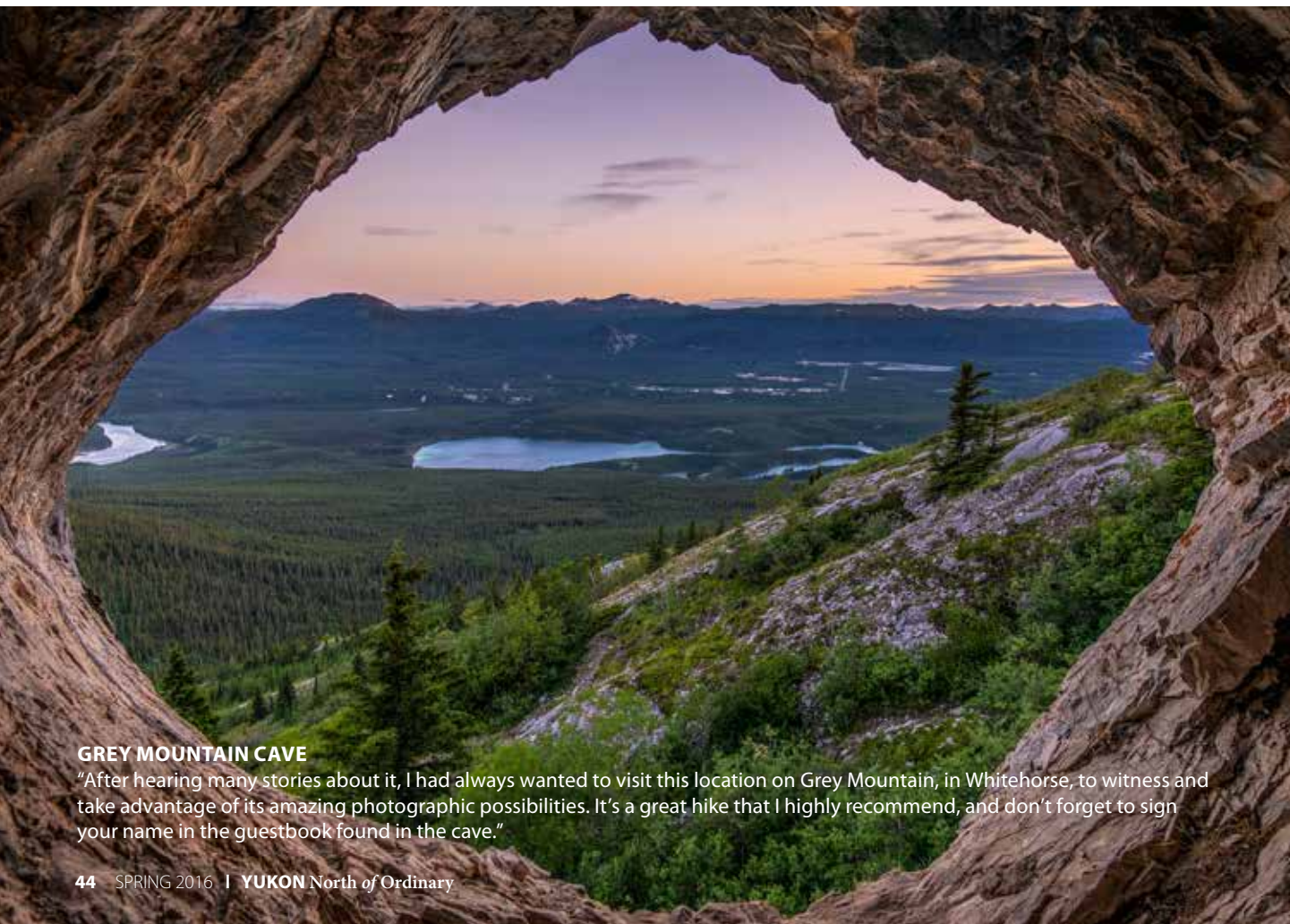
Tucker has travelled throughout Canada, but has a long wish list of places he’d like to photograph, from Patagonia to Spain, Ireland, and Nunavut. Camera gear, gas, and flights aren’t cheap, but his goal is to eventually earn a living touring the world and teaching others how to photograph the surrounding beauty.

In this photo essay, Tucker shares some of the ways he’s captured the Yukon’s breathtaking splendour.



#### **CARCROSS NORTHERN LIGHTS**

"On this evening, I set up my camera in Carcross just minutes before a massive burst of gas and magnetic field hit our atmosphere, causing aurora borealis to take over the sky. Another beautiful night I will never forget."



#### **GREY MOUNTAIN CAVE**

"After hearing many stories about it, I had always wanted to visit this location on Grey Mountain, in Whitehorse, to witness and take advantage of its amazing photographic possibilities. It's a great hike that I highly recommend, and don't forget to sign your name in the guestbook found in the cave."



**KATHLEEN LAKE DRIFTWOOD**

"While exploring around Kathleen Lake, waiting for the sunset, I spotted this piece of driftwood that had washed ashore. I thought it would make for a creative composition in capturing this beautiful spot."



**NORTHERN LIGHTS CABIN**

"This old cabin was found in one of my favourite spots for photographing the northern lights. I've always loved the angles and composition possibilities the cabin offered, which is why I'm glad I had the opportunity to photograph it before it was torn down last year."



**YUKON LIGHTS**

"This photograph has reached people across the globe and is one of my most sought-after images of the northern lights. I'm lucky I was able to witness this firsthand."



#### **YUKON CREEK**

"The opening of this creek caught my eye as the clouds were slowly rolling in. I took my chances and set up for my shot. The soft streaks of aurora mixed with the clouds to create a beautiful scene."





**CARCROSS SUNSET**

"I was returning home to the Yukon from Skagway, Alaska, when I spotted an interesting colour in the clouds. Naturally, I wanted to seize the opportunity and photograph it. I found a piece of ice in Carcross for the foreground of the shot and was not disappointed with the end result."





**KATHLEEN LAKE**

"While at Kathleen Lake, in Kluane National Park and Reserve, the weather took a turn for the worse, which forced me to get creative. The soft light created by the cloud cover over the St. Elias Mountains made for a beautiful final composition. This is one of my favourite photographs I've taken." **Y**