

ADVENTURE PHOTOGRAPHY

From California to Nepal, these photographers shoot action sports on location.

BY JACK CRAGER

Outdoor adventure photographers are by nature travel photographers: they go where the action is, which tends to be the world's most extreme, often uninhabitable, environments. "You have to be a participant—you're part of the adventure," says Corey Rich, who shoots action, adventure, portraits and points in between. "If it's a rock-climbing environment, I'm hanging off the side of that wall just like the athlete is. If we're skiing, I'm skiing down the same terrain. And I love

that. I often joke that I get most creative when my heart is beating 150 beats per minute and sweat is dripping into my eyes."

Shooting adventure athletes is not exactly for the faint of heart. "You've got to get to the places where they go, which can be pretty extreme," says Kevin Winzeler, a commercial photographer specializing in outdoor sports and active lifestyles. "And your fitness level has to be where you can keep up and even be a step

ahead of these elite athletes."

Accordingly, most adventure photographers have a deep passion for the sports they cover. "I was a climber and skier first," says Jimmy Chin, who documents extreme expeditions for his production company, Camp 4 Collective. "The drive to push the edge applies to both photography and being an athlete. They go hand in hand. Both require a lot of creativity, endurance and problem solving."

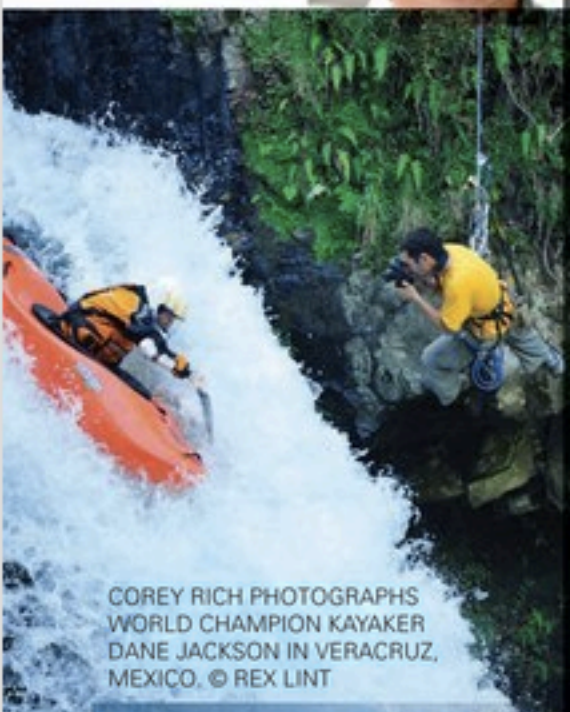
Corey Rich



VISUAL STORYTELLING

Corey Rich started his photo career the old-fashioned way: working for daily newspapers in his native Southern California. "There's no substitute for shooting on deadline five days a week," Rich says. "It's the ultimate way to grow as a visual storyteller. But I had an epiphany that I didn't become a photographer to cover parades for newspapers. So I turned to a subject matter near and dear to my heart: rock climbing."

Now based in Lake Tahoe, Rich shoots images and short films for clients including Nike, Apple Computer, Ford Motors and NBC, in locales ranging from the depths of the Pacific Ocean to the peaks of Patagonia (visit www.coreyrichproductions.com). "Now that we have DSLRs that faithfully capture motion and sound, the trend is to shoot both stills and video," he says. "Still photographers tend to have a high level of aesthetic. If you apply that perfectionism to motion, what's going into that rectangle, then video by a good still photographer can be spectacular. But they may need time to master the rules of motion and the technical stuff a film student might learn."



COREY RICH PHOTOGRAPHS WORLD CHAMPION KAYAKER DANE JACKSON IN VERACRUZ, MEXICO. © REX LINT



JAKE DORE AT HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT IN LAKE TAHOE, CALIFORNIA. © COREY RICH



JAKE DORE IN LAKE TAHOE, CALIFORNIA. © COREY RICH



ALEX HONNOLD IN JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA. © COREY RICH

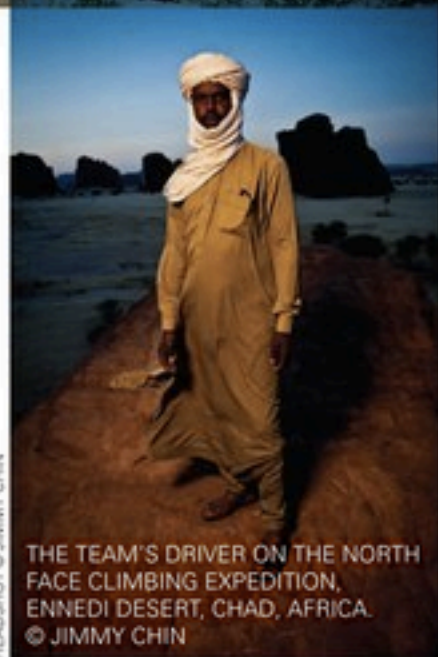
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— Corey Rich

Jimmy
Chin



JIMMY CHIN ON ASSIGNMENT IN THE KARAKORAM MOUNTAINS OF PAKISTAN. © BRADY ROBINSON



HEADSHOT © JIMMY CHIN

THE TEAM'S DRIVER ON THE NORTH FACE CLIMBING EXPEDITION, ENNEDI DESERT, CHAD, AFRICA. © JIMMY CHIN

EYE OF THE EXPEDITION

A visit to Jimmy Chin's website (www.jimmychin.com) reveals the breadth of his global treks—from first ascents of stubborn peaks such as India's Shark's Fin to skiing descents from the summit of Nepal's Mount Everest. "Photography has been an amazing vehicle for me to see the world," Chin says, "and I love being able to share the world I see with others. I can't think of anything I'd rather be doing."

Chin thrives on the inherent challenges of these intrepid journeys. "Capturing a great image, climbing a new route or skiing an exciting line all provide me with a great sense of accomplishment, especially when a lot of different variables had to come together for something to happen," he says. "The more challenging the struggle, the greater the reward."

Shooting photography and video for clients ranging from *National Geographic* to The North Face, Chin seeks to inspire viewers and "open people's eyes to a different world." He has pithy advice for folks who'd like to check it out themselves: "Don't talk about it. Do it."



JAMES PEARSON CLIMBING THE ARCH OF BASHIKELE, ENNEDI DESERT, CHAD. © JIMMY CHIN



DEAN POTTER WALKING A HIGH LINE ABOVE YOSEMITE FALLS. © JIMMY CHIN

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Kevin Winzeler



BEHIND-THE-SCENES SHOT

A SKIER FLIES THROUGH THE AIR AT ALTA SKI RESORT IN UTAH. © KEVIN WINZELER

HEADSHOT COURTESY OF KEVIN WINZELER



FOLLOWING THE HEART

After studying aviation and earning a pilot's license, and then serving time in a corporate job, Kevin Winzeler started making pictures of the outdoor adventures he revels in on weekends. "One day I was sitting in an office, and I thought, 'I need to be outside taking pictures!'" Winzeler recalls. "It was a natural fit for me to shoot sports and the active lifestyle—what I grew up doing and what I love to do."

What advice would he give to someone who wants to do what he does? "Don't!" Winzeler answers with a laugh. "No, seriously, I encourage people to do what they are passionate about in life. That's what's really going to drive you if you want to make a career out of it. A lot of people are looking for the magic bullet in anything. In photography, it's simple: Get out there, shoot a lot, and work your butt off."



UNDERWATER, ON THE STREET AND IN THE AIR, WINZELER GOES WHEREVER HIS SUBJECTS GO. © KEVIN WINZELER



BOTTOM LINE: PREPARE AND ADAPT

TAKE ALONG WHAT YOU NEED "You have to have the right gear," says Chin of preparing for extreme locales, from isolated deserts to Himalayan peaks. "It's not always easy to travel light when you're photographing on assignment," Winzeler notes. "For instance, I usually have lighting equipment. I don't always need to light on location, but I like to have the option."

RESEARCH CAREFULLY "Never underestimate the terrain and conditions you are heading to," says Chin. "It's always good to do your homework and research all aspects of a location, whether that's culturally or environmentally. Oftentimes, the most challenging aspect of visiting a new location is just being culturally sensitive and aware—the most obvious rules of being respectful toward people apply." ●