

STEPHEN GORMAN

Biography

“FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES, AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHER STEPHEN GORMAN HAS TRAVELED WITH INUIT COMPANIONS ACROSS THE NORTH AMERICAN ARCTIC TO DOCUMENT THE ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD. THESE IMAGES HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING INUIT TRADITIONS AND THE INUIT CONNECTION TO NATURE WHILE ADAPTING TO CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE.”

- UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

Stephen Gorman’s imagery and books tighten the bonds between people and place. His powerful connection to his subject matter results in evocative stories and images that offer a unique artistic perspective on the cultural and environmental issues of our time. His work focuses on understanding how we depend on the ecosystems we inhabit to sustain our material and spiritual lives; how we adapt to and modify the landscapes in which we live and work; and how our cultural values and our national mythologies shape our relationships with the world we live in and the diverse societies we share it with. With profound empathy, knowledge, and respect, Stephen works where culture and the environment come together.

Raised in Europe and educated in French, at an early age Stephen developed a deep longing to explore and understand his own native land, people, and culture. He searched for and confronted his American identity and engaged with the stubborn facts of our history. Working on a cattle ranch in Wyoming, in remote mining camps in Alaska and Nevada, and as a wilderness guide throughout the North American wilderness, he relived the foundational American experience of the mythical Frontier, and his art asks that the viewer do the same through his work. His art inspires us to look in the mirror and acknowledge who we are and how our national legacy of conquest, exploitation, and individual gain continues to shape our actions and beliefs.

Stephen holds a master’s degree in environmental studies from Yale University, where he studied the mythology of the American Frontier and how it shapes the American worldview to this day. American art and literature tell the story of our national Genesis: how the conquest of nature and the subjugation and displacement of the Indigenous peoples were central to the creation of our national identity. The iconic art and literature of the American Frontier continues to fuel our unshakeable expectation of limitless natural resources, an ever-expanding economy, a belief in the promises of our God-given Manifest Destiny, a fundamental faith in infinite progress, and the conviction that it is mythical rugged individuals, and not real vibrant communities, that matter.

Working in the tradition of artist-explorers such as Alexander von Humboldt, George Catlin, Frederic Church, William Bradford, Rockwell Kent, and Edward S. Curtis, Stephen has literally spent years in the field. Using the power of his words and visual images to help shape the way

we think about nature and culture, he sets off into the outback for days, weeks and sometimes even months at a time in search of compelling stories and striking images of the natural world and the men and women who live and work upon the land. To portray the spirit of these special and endangered wildlife populations, landscapes, and traditional cultures, Stephen uses his sharply honed photography, writing, interpersonal, and wilderness survival skills, journeying deep into remote regions, returning from each expedition with stories and photographs that can only be crafted in our planet's last truly wild and historic landscapes.

From 2006 to 2010 Stephen was Artist-in-Residence aboard an Inuit operated Arctic expedition vessel. In that position he was invited to explore the farthest reaches of the Canadian and Greenlandic Arctic and to portray the land, wildlife, and people of the Inuit homeland. The photographs for his book, *Arctic Visions - Encounters at the Top of the World*, which was commissioned by the Inuit of Nunavik, were created during that residency.

In 2017 Stephen was the only American photographer chosen by the U.S. Department of State to be featured in *Eyes on the Arctic - U.S. - Canadian Cooperation in the North*. His Arctic photographs in that exhibition toured the United States Embassy and U.S. Consulates across Canada.

A Benjamin Franklin Award winner, Stephen is the author and photographer of many books, including *The American Wilderness: Journeys into Distant and Historic Landscapes*; *Thoreau's New England*; *Wild New England*; *Northeastern Wilds - Journeys of Discovery in the Northern Forest*, which was a finalist for the IPPY Award in 2003; and *Arctic Visions - Encounters at the Top of the World*, which was commissioned by the Inuit of Nunavik and which won the Benjamin Franklin Award. Stephen has been featured on the Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC) and NBC, and he has been a frequent guest on National Public Radio (NPR) programs about both his books and humans and the environment.

Throughout his career Stephen has worked on cultural and environmental assignments for leading periodicals such as *National Geographic*, *Discovery Channel*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Men's Journal*, *Sierra*, and *Audubon*. He lives in Vermont with his wife, Mary.

His exhibition *Down to the Bone*, a collaboration with legendary *The New Yorker* staff artist Edward Koren, was on view at the Peabody-Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts from the Spring of 2022 to the Spring of 2023. Stephen's next traveling exhibition, *Last Days Of The Great Ice*, is produced by David J. Wagner and will be available in 2025. For availability email davidjwagnerllc@yahoo.com or phone 414-221-6878.

Stephen Gorman
504 Hawk Pine Road
Norwich, VT 05055
603-717-2227
steve@stephengorman.com
www.stephengorman.com