

URSUS

A black and white close-up photograph of a bear's face. The bear's eye is visible, looking slightly to the right. The fur is thick and textured, with some strands of hair appearing to be blowing or moving. The background is out of focus, showing some light-colored shapes that could be trees or rocks.

Andy Skillen

URSUS

a life with bears

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For many, the concept of “wilderness” is unattainable. It is merely a notion, a dream, an opportunity for mental escapism when the confines of the day-to-day become too much. For Andy, however, this Eden is tangible. It is a place to work, absorb and photograph and for more than 25 years he has traversed this environment in search of images to evoke the same depth of feeling in a reader or viewer that he experienced when a scene first presented itself. In that respect, bears have been Andy’s constant companion, and as he has always stated, there’s nothing that defines the physical barrier more between the normal and the idyll than the knowledge that, somewhere, one of these ursine giants is roaming unfettered.

Published in December 2021, and crammed with nearly 150 photographs, “Ursus” is a unique work that showcases Andy’s lifelong empathy with all things “bear”. Predominantly featuring brown, grizzly and polar bears, this lavishly illustrated coffee-table book will stir the senses and open readers’ eyes to a world beyond the status quo.

“Bears have been a constant feature in my life and career, and I hope that from within this once-in-a-lifetime book, the understanding that I have developed of these icons, their moods and characters, will spring from the pages. Even now, after all these years, when I step foot on a trail, walk by a river, stand on the ice or lay in wait in a forest where I know these behemoths roam, the adrenaline courses in my veins. For me, there is nothing more emblematic of a long lost, almost forgotten world, than the persistent amblings and investigations of these long-nosed denizens of the hinterland.”

The first 500 copies of the book will be signed and personalized (if requested) by the author.

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