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## **KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS ANNOUNCES FIFTH NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LIVE SEASON**

*The 2016 season includes a special engagement presentation and Adventure Circle membership*

Kansas City, MO – Entering into its fifth season in 2016, the Kauffman Center’s popular *National Geographic Live* speaker series will feature entertaining and visually spectacular presentations by photographer Steve Winter, climber and photographer Cory Richards, climber and explorer Mike Libecki, astrobiologist Kevin Hand, photographer Ami Vitale and special engagement presentation featuring master photographer Michael Nichols.

*National Geographic Live* speakers share their journeys of exploration from being on assignment around the world. Illustrated with award-winning photography and video, each evening concludes with a question and answer session and an opportunity to meet the presenter.

Season subscription packages for the five-part series are currently available; single tickets for the five events go on sale Tuesday, September 1st.

National Geographic Live will present two free matinee performances specifically geared for students as a part of the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts’ Open Doors program. Schools can find more information about these matinees at <http://www.kauffmancenter.org/kids/community-tickets/>

*The 2016 National Geographic Live Series is generously supported by Teresa and Tom Walsh.*

### **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LIVE SERIES INFORMATION**

#### **Steve Winter**

Photographer

*‘ON THE TRAIL OF BIG CATS: TIGERS, COUGARS AND SNOW LEOPARDS’*

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Muriel Kauffman Theatre

7:30 p.m.

Go around the world in search of big cats with award-winning photographer Steve Winter. A determined explorer, Winter will lead audiences from Asian jungles where resilient tiger populations persist, to the Himalaya, home of the rare snow leopard. Follow him into the rainforests of Latin America to view the elusive jaguar - and to Hollywood in pursuit of the American cougar. He’ll share both dangerous and lighter moments: from getting stuck in quicksand to mishaps with remote-controlled cameras. Co-author of the new *National Geographic* book *Tigers Forever*, Winter’s mission is to share the beauty of big cats while working to save them.

One of Winter's snow leopard images won him the BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year award. His decade-long project to document the world's shrinking but resilient tiger species recently culminated in the stunning *National Geographic* book, *Tigers Forever*, co-authored with Sharon Guynup. Spend an evening daringly close to tigers, snow leopards, jaguars, and cougars - through the unforgettable stories and images of Steve Winter.

**Cory Richards**, Climber and Photographer

**Mike Libeck**, Climber and Explorer

'*UNTAMED ANTARCTICA*'

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Muriel Kauffman Theatre

7:30 p.m.

Few had seen it, and no one had ever set foot on it. And when they got there, they found out why. "It" was Bertha's Tower, a 2,000-foot spire in Antarctica's Wohlthat Range. And "they" were Cory Richards, a photographer, filmmaker and climber who participated in (and filmed) the first winter ascent of Gasherbrum II, and Mike Libeck, a veteran of over 60 climbing expeditions and first ascents on seven continents, plus Oceania.

Irresistible to Libeck and company for its remoteness and snow-free summit, Bertha's Tower was nearly inaccessible, surrounded by a solid sheet of ice that was almost impossible to traverse. As if that wasn't enough, furious katabatic winds of near-hurricane force pummeled them, shredding gear and burying supplies in snowdrifts. An experiment with a snow kite went disastrously wrong. And all this was before they even started to climb.

With humor and enthusiasm to match their courage and resolution, Libeck and Richards will bring you along with them through their hair-raising adventure. Join them for a "by-the-campfire" style of presentation that is uniquely theirs, filled with behind-the-scenes and stories that couldn't make it into the account published in the September 2013 *National Geographic*.

**Kevin Hand**

Astrobiologist

'*THE SEARCH FOR LIFE BEYOND EARTH*'

Tuesday, April 26, 2016

Muriel Kauffman Theatre

7:30 p.m.

Astrobiologist and National Geographic Emerging Explorer Kevin Hand searches for life beyond Earth. He is currently helping plan a NASA mission to Jupiter's moon Europa to investigate evidence of a vast subsurface ocean – a body of water which could sustain primitive forms of life on this alien world nearly 600 million miles from our planet.

Based at Pasadena's world-famous Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Hand is designing instruments for the probe that will travel to Europa. To gain perspective on the conditions these instruments will have to endure and to see how microbes eke out a living in our world's harshest climes. Hand has traveled to the most forbidding environments on Earth. He has conducted studies on the glaciers of Mount Kilimanjaro, the valleys of Antarctica, and the depths of our oceans. Join Hand for a firsthand report on the search for real extraterrestrials.

**Ami Vitale**

Photographer

*'MY EYES, YOUR WORLD'*

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

Muriel Kauffman Theatre

7:30 p.m.

Experience our world through the eyes of an award-winning photographer whose career has brought her face-to-face, not just with violence and conflict, but also with surreal beauty and the enduring power of the human spirit. Ami Vitale's work has taken her to more than 90 countries. She's lived in mud huts and war zones, contracted malaria, and donned a panda suit – all in keeping with her philosophy of “living the story.”

Early in her career, her focus was on conflict, such as the war in Kosovo, and the tense border situation between India and Pakistan. Her first *National Geographic* story documented the last rickshaws in Kolkata, India. More recently, she has turned her lens to wildlife stories, including efforts to reintroduce white rhinos and pandas to the wild. Her coverage of Kenya's northern white rhinos, and the indigenous communities working to protect them, earned her World Press Photo recognition in 2015.

Vitale will share her personal odyssey, told through the images and adventures that have transformed her from a shy young woman to a determined professional going the extra distance to get the story.

### **Michael Nichols**

Photographer

*'A YEAR IN YELLOWSTONE'*

Tuesday, June 7, 2016

Muriel Kauffman Theatre

7:30 p.m.

Take an intimate look at America's most iconic National Park through the lens of a master photographer. One of the most important wildlife photographers of our time, Michael “Nick” Nichols has captured images that have made a difference in the battle to save endangered species. He has documented the brutal struggle against elephant poaching in Chad, the family life of lions in the Serengeti, and Jane Goodall's work on behalf of chimpanzees.

Early in his career Nichols was known as “the Indiana Jones of photography” for taking risks in order to get amazing images most photographers wouldn't dare try for. He documented the world's longest rappel and joined first descents of wild rivers—despite having little ability to swim. Now, he continues to seek new ways to realize his artistic vision, from creating a detailed composite portrait of a 300-foot tall Giant Sequoia (from 84 separate images), to using a robot controlled “mini-tank” to get close-ups of African lions.

Recently, for a *National Geographic* project celebrating the centennial of the National Parks Service, Nichols spent over a year in Yellowstone, adapting to the rhythms of its seasons, and getting to know this great American icon and its creatures from the inside out. He'll share his images of and reflections on life in our first National Park, delivered with his trademark mix of charm and passion.

*Special thanks to our event sponsor: Henderson Engineers, Inc.*

## HOW TO PURCHASE SEASON TICKETS

The *National Geographic Live* series subscription package includes ticket discounts and priority seating, making this an affordable option for all. Series tickets for the National Geographic Live speaker series are currently available. Prices for the four-part series package range from \$76 - \$152. There is a special pick-three package priced from \$63 - \$135. Season package upgrades are available to include the special engagement presentation “A Year in Yellowstone” at a discounted price. Tickets for single events will go on sale Tuesday, September 1st.

Subscription packages can be purchased through the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts by calling (816) 944-7222, or visiting the Box Office located at 1601 Broadway in the Kansas City Crossroads Arts District. Visit [kauffmancenter.org](http://kauffmancenter.org) for information and box office hours.

## ADVENTURE CIRCLE

Kauffman Center offers the Adventure Circle membership. In return for a tax-deductible gift to support the National Geographic program in Kansas City, Adventure Circle members receive an invitation to a private reception with a National Geographic speaker and acknowledgment of their support. To learn more, call the Kauffman Center box office at (816) 994-7222.

## ABOUT THE KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts – a major not-for-profit center for music, opera, theater and dance designed by Moshe Safdie – opened in 2011. Serving as a cultural cornerstone for Kansas City and the region, the Kauffman Center delivers extraordinary and diverse performing arts experiences. Honored as one of the World’s 15 Most Beautiful Concert Halls, the Kauffman Center attracts some of the world’s most renowned performers and entertainers.

Through educational outreach programs and community enrichment, the Kauffman Center supports Kansas City as a cultural destination. More information on the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is available at [kauffmancenter.org](http://kauffmancenter.org).

*The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts would like to thank our official building sponsors, Aristocrat Motors and Mercedes-Benz of Kansas City and extend special thanks to Sprint for its generous support of our 2015–2016 season.*

Follow the Kauffman Center on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to get details about upcoming performances and behind-the-scenes access.



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