

For Immediate Release

Bioengineer Kakani Katija Takes Audiences into the Depths in Search of Technological Inspiration from Arts Commons Presents

National Geographic Explorer Kakani Katija shares her undersea explorations that will leave audiences astonished, bringing the 2024-25 season of National Geographic Live to a close.

April 29, 2025 - CALGARY – This month, Kakani Katija answers the question: “what does an aerospace engineer, deep sea diver, and aspiring international figure skater have in common?” Early in her career Kakani Katija expected to be exploring the far reaches of space, but now she spends her time illuminating the “twilight zone” 1,000 metres below the waves - all in the name of science. Join Arts Commons Presents for **Kakani Katija: *Designed by Nature*** on **Sunday, May 25 at 2 p.m. and Monday, May 26 at 7 p.m.** in the **Jack Singer Concert Hall at Arts Commons**. Tickets are available now at artscommons.ca/design.

A former member of the U.S. International Figure Skating Team, bioengineer Dr. Kakani Katija now studies the graceful movements of life below the ocean surface. Receiving her doctorate in bioengineering at the California Institute of Technology, it wasn't until she had the opportunity to collaborate on a research project studying the fluid dynamics of jellyfish that she found her true calling. She quickly discovered a passion for developing underwater technologies to better observe biological and physical processes right where they happen: in the ocean. She is currently a principal engineer at the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, and she heads the Bioinspiration Lab.

“When I moved from Hawaii to Oregon, my connection to the water was something that I maintained, but never something I thought would inspire me professionally,” says Kakani Katija. *“The data we collect includes beautiful and engaging images that not only allow us to connect with others and bring people into the ocean with us, but also inspire people to learn about these systems and places. We can understand the deep sea and the most unexplored places in our ocean or on our planet, thanks to technology.”*

Dr. Katija launched her career with National Geographic with an auspicious start: she was named National Geographic Emerging Explorer in 2011. The award included a research dive in Panama filmed in 2012 by the National Geographic Society whether work was at the forefront. Since then, she has continued to distinguish herself with awards and accolades, including most recently the 2023 Marine Technology Society's Compass Distinguished Achievement Award, which recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of marine science and marine technology throughout their careers.

National Geographic Live has captured the imaginations of Calgarians, inspiring a love for science and the natural world since its launch in 2012. The series highlights Explorers at the forefront of their fields, traversing the planet with stunning video and photography projected on the high-resolution screen that spans the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage. The 2024-25 season of National Geographic Live took us from the treetops with Nalini Nadkarni to the bubbling lava flows with Andrés Ruzo and most recently to running with the pack in North America's first National Park. We close the 2024-25 season with **Kakani Katija: *Designed by Nature*** on **May 25 & 26, 2025**, details at artscommons.ca/design. Also! Stay tuned for our announcement of the next exciting season of National Geographic Live artscommons.ca/ngl

MEDIA RELEASE



What: Arts Commons Presents – Kakani Katija: *Designed by Nature*
When: Sunday, May 25 at 2 p.m. and Monday, May 26 at 7 p.m.
Where: Jack Singer Concert Hall at Arts Commons
Tickets: 403-294-9494 or visit artscommons.ca/design

Arts Commons wishes to express our sincere appreciation to ACP Signature Series Presenting Sponsor **ConocoPhillips Canada**, student engagement sponsor **Enbridge**, BluWater Partner **Swiftsure Foundation**, EXPLORER National Geographic Sponsor **MEG Energy**, and EXPLORE National Geographic Supporting Sponsor/Partners **Cabra Consulting**, **geoLOGIC Systems** and **Teatro Fund for Arts Commons Education**, as well as **the Government of Alberta** and our friends at **The City of Calgary**.

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Arts Commons Presents invites you to discover the transformative power of the Arts. As the programming arm of Arts Commons, Arts Commons Presents programs and presents the signature subscription series: BD&P World Stage, National Geographic Live, and Classic Albums Live, as well as TD Amplify and a number of special presentations. Through this work, we are able to do our part to further enrich our city, as well as create opportunities for Calgary-based artists on many levels.