

*For Immediate Release*

## Arts Commons Presents's National Geographic Live Series Hosts First Indigenous Explorer, Kiliiii Yüyan, at the Jack Singer Concert Hall at Arts Commons

May 2, 2024 - CALGARY – In the far North, ice is vital to the way of life of the Indigenous tribes who call it home. Join Arts Commons Presents for the final event in the 2023-24 season of National Geographic Live and journey beyond the Arctic Circle with **Kiliiii Yüyan: *Life on Thin Ice*** on **Sunday, May 26 at 2 p.m. and Monday, May 27 at 7 p.m.** in the **Jack Singer Concert Hall** at **Arts Commons**. Tickets are available now at [artscommons.ca/thinice](https://artscommons.ca/thinice).

In the Arctic, sea ice is synonymous with sand in the desert. And while the temperatures may seem inhumane, the Arctic is teeming with life. Indigenous tribes call this frosty land home, but they're not alone. Polar bears, muskox, whales, and caribou are some of the Arctic animals co-existing with more than 40 different ethnic groups in the north. Through beautiful images and awe-inspiring interactions in the field, National Geographic Explorer, Kiliiii Yüyan, shares the complex stories of the native peoples of the Arctic and their relationship to the land and its animals.

*"Growing up in the United States far away from my ancestral lands, I found myself divorced from my culture. The heroes from my grandmother's stories lived in my imagination. As I grew older, I found myself drawn to traditional ways of subsistence, especially with fishing and boats,"* says Kiliiii Yüyan. *"Trying to understand my ancestry led me on a lifelong dive into Indigenous perspectives and ultimately guided me into storytelling."*

Kiliiii Yüyan is an award-winning photographer capturing the human experience in some of the world's harshest environments. Along with developing Arctic survival skills, he has escaped collapsing sea ice, survived a stalking polar bear, and found kinship at the edges of the world. Yüyan has a unique talent for showcasing stories of the Arctic and the human communities connected to the land. He leans on his ancestry that is both Nanai/Hezhe and Chinese-American as he explores other cultures and shares Indigenous ways of knowing in his presentations.

Kiliiii Yüyan is a 2023 recipient of National Geographic's Eliza Scidmore Award for Outstanding Storytelling. In addition to National Geographic, Yüyan is a contributor to Vogue, Bloomberg Businessweek, The Guardian, and Nature Conservancy. His cover image of model and activist Quannah Chasinghorse became one of National Geographic's top images of 2022. Joyful and powerful, Yüyan's image flies in the face the traditional portrayal of Indigenous people as victims. Watch the [behind-the-scenes video of that photo shoot here](#).

*"I am looking forward to welcoming National Geographic Live's Kiliiii Yüyan to Calgary. Steeped in his Nanai and Chinese American traditions, Kiliiii Yüyan is a photographer who trains his eye on the world through his singular lens,"* says Sarah Garton Stanley (SGS), VP of programming at Arts Commons. *"He has a unique perspective to share, not just around the fragile ecosystem that is the Arctic, but also about the power to be found in Indigenous ways of knowing. It is going to make you want to think differently about EVERYTHING!"*

# MEDIA RELEASE



**National Geographic Live** has captured the imagination of Calgarians, inspiring a love for science and the natural world since its launch in 2012. Our 2023-24 season of National Geographic Live concludes with **Kiliii Yüyan: *Life on Thin Ice* on May 26 & 27, 2024**. From the frozen poles and ocean depths, to jungles and mountain peaks of India, and even millions of years in the past, this powerful season awed audiences with personal stories of discovery. Tune in this spring to learn what we have in store for the 2024-25 season of National Geographic Live from Arts Commons Presents at [acpresents.ca](http://acpresents.ca).

**What:** Arts Commons Presents – Kiliii Yüyan: *Life on Thin Ice*  
**When:** Sunday, May 26 at 2 p.m. and Monday, May 27 at 7 p.m.  
**Where:** Jack Singer Concert Hall at Arts Commons  
**Tickets:** 403-294-9494 or visit [artscommons.ca/thinice](http://artscommons.ca/thinice)

Arts Commons wishes to express our sincere appreciation to ACP Signature Series Presenting Sponsor **ConocoPhillips Canada**, student engagement sponsor **Enbridge**, EXPLORE National Geographic Sponsor **MEG Energy**, EXPLORE National Geographic Supporting Sponsor/Partners **Cabra Consulting Ltd.**, **geoLOGIC Systems Ltd.** and **Teatro Fund for Arts Commons Education**, as well as Hospitality Sponsor **Teatro Ristorante** and the **Government of Canada** through **Canadian Heritage**, the **Government of Alberta** through the **Alberta Foundation for the Arts**, 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, the largest performing arts centre in Western Canada, Arts Commons Presents is one manifestation of this mandate, achieved through the programming and presenting of our in-house series: BD&P World Stage, Classic Albums Live, National Geographic Live, the TD Amplify series, as well as 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 to perform, exhibit, reach new audiences, and grow on a multitude of levels.