

*For Immediate Release*

## Brian Skerry & James Cameron’s Emmy-Winning Film Series Concert Adaptation Makes a World Premiere Splash at the Jack Singer Concert Hall at Arts Commons this April

March 20, 2024 - CALGARY – Just in time for **Earth Day**, Brian Skerry’s Emmy Award-winning Disney+ series that touched the hearts of millions comes to the stage with the world premiere concert performance of *Secrets of the Whales*. This powerful evening of film and music will be narrated, live on stage, by Calgary’s own Jann Arden. Join Arts Commons Presents for **National Geographic Film Concert: *Secrets of the Whales*** on **Sunday, April 21 at 2pm** and **Monday, April 22 and Tuesday, April 23 at 7:00 p.m.** in the **Jack Singer Concert Hall at Arts Commons**. Learn more [artscommons.ca/whales](https://artscommons.ca/whales).

*“Secrets of the Whales has been the most ambitious project of my career! I have been diving and exploring the world’s oceans and telling stories for decades - almost 25 years now - for National Geographic,”* says Brian Skerry. *“With Secrets of the Whales, it was a perfect confluence of using the latest and greatest science revealing human-like traits of these charismatic ocean animals. To me, this idea of looking at the ocean and our planet through the lens of culture with another species is a bit of a game changer - understanding that whales are doing things much of the way humans do.”*

Celebrated National Geographic Explorer and photographer Brian Skerry has spent nearly four decades exploring and documenting the world’s oceans. For this monumental project, he turned his lens to one of the world’s most beloved animals – whales – to investigate their unique cultures like never before. For this world premiere concert presentation, *Secrets of the Whales* has been distilled into two hours of the most awe-inspiring moments, underscored by new orchestrations by composer Raphaëlle Thibaut. The score will be brought to life by a 40-piece orchestra led by acclaimed conductor Anthony Parnter.

Canadian icon and passionate environmental advocate Jann Arden returns to the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage at Arts Commons for this world premiere. She has sold over 10 million albums with numerous awards and accolades to her name including 19 JUNO Award nominations and eight wins. Her comedy TV series based on a fictionalized version of her life, *Jann*, launched in 2018 and became the "most-watched" Canadian television series and comedy of the year. She has written five books, including 2017’s Canadian best-seller, *FEEDING MY MOTHER: Comfort and Laughter in the Kitchen as My Mom Lives with Memory Loss*, which spent a combined 44 weeks on The Globe and Mail bestseller list. She has a star on Canada’s Walk of Fame, has been appointed to the Order of Canada, and is a Canadian Music Hall of Fame inductee. Earlier this season, she performed at the Jack Singer Concert Hall at Arts Commons for the sold-out two-night engagement of *A Jann Arden Christmas*, and now returns for the world premiere of National Geographic Film Concert: *Secrets of the Whales*.

*“Brian Skerry was the first Explorer to come to Calgary as part of National Geographic Live. To have his Emmy Award-winning film return for this world premiere performance, narrated by Jann Arden and performed by members of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra – it couldn’t be a more perfect way to celebrate Earth Day.”* says Sarah Garton Stanley (SGS) VP of Programming at Arts Commons.

# MEDIA RELEASE



The 40-piece orchestra will be conducted by Anthony Parnter, Music Director of the San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra in San Bernardino, California. Praised as being “a versatile, open-minded conductor” in a New York Times profile, Parnter has set himself apart as a classical music juggernaut and mainstay of Hollywood studios. Along with guest conducting for many of the leading orchestras in North America, Parnter is also a prolific conductor of scoring sessions for motion picture, television, album, and video game scores including *Encanto*, *Arcane*, and *The Mandalorian*. He also conducted *Marvel Studios Presents Black Panther in Concert* in May 2023 with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra.

*“For film fans, orchestra music fans, and National Geographic fans – this is a must-see performance,”* says Stanley. *“A celebration and ode to the natural world in all its complexity and beauty.”*

Arts Commons Presents is the programming arm of Arts Commons, presenting a diverse line-up of concerts, speaker presentations, youth programming, and emerging artist showcases. Outside of the three signature series of BD&P World Stage, Classic Albums Live, and National Geographic Live, Arts Commons Presents also shares special presentations that are just too good to pass up including the **National Geographic Film Concert: *Secrets of the Whales* on April 21 - 23, 2024** and **Dinosaur World Live on May 25, 2024**. To learn about all the shows in the 2023-24 season of Arts Commons Presents, visit [acpresents.ca](https://acpresents.ca).

**What:** Arts Commons Presents – National Geographic Film Concert: *Secrets of the Whales*  
**When:** Sunday, April 21 at 2pm and Monday, April 22 and Tuesday, April 23 at 7:00 p.m.  
**Where:** Jack Singer Concert Hall, Arts Commons  
**Tickets:** 403-294-9494 or visit [artscommons.ca/whales](https://artscommons.ca/whales)

Arts Commons wishes to express our sincere appreciation to ACP Special Presentation Engagement Sponsor **Swiftsure Foundation**, Narrator Sponsors **Rodney & Karen McCann**, and Supporting Sponsor the **Calgary Foundation** as well as **Government of Canada through Canadian Heritage**, the **Government of Alberta**, and our friends at **The City of Calgary**.

**For media inquiries or more information contact:**

Alex Bonyun, Communications Manager  
403-294-7429 [abonyun@artscommons.ca](mailto:abonyun@artscommons.ca)

##

**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, TD Amplify, 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.