



For Immediate Release

National Geographic Explorer Lee Berger Expands on New Discoveries in Human Origins at Werklund Centre

April 29, 2026 – CALGARY, AB, CANADA

Deep in a cave system, virtually inaccessible except by the most intrepid explorer, lies a collection of fossils that throw into question everything we thought we knew about our ancient ancestors. Internationally renowned, award-winning paleoanthropologist Lee Berger returns to Calgary to shed light on these latest discoveries and share his unique perspective as one of the world's foremost paleoanthropologists. **Lee Berger: Cave of Bones** takes place on **Sunday, May 31 at 2:00 p.m.** and **Monday, June 1 at 7:00 p.m.** in the **Jack Singer Concert Hall at Werklund Centre**. For more information visit werklundcentre.ca/berger.



Since the discovery of *Homo naledi* in the Rising Star cave system in South Africa, anthropologist Lee Berger has been challenging our views of human evolution. His team's latest find now suggests that the small-brained *Homo naledi* intentionally buried their dead, a practice long thought to be exclusive to *Homo sapiens*.

National Geographic Explorer in Residence Lee Berger is known for some of the most important archaeological discoveries in history. His relationship with National Geographic



began with a grant in 1996, and he received the Rolex National Geographic Explorer of the Year award in 2016. He is an Honorary Professor at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa.

“Exploration is a marathon, not a sprint,” says Berger. “We have mis-defined exploration, because I think there's a sense that exploration is just going places where others have not been, seeing things for the first time. Getting there first doesn't matter. What matters is being the first to understand, to comprehend, to truly be aware of what you have seen and recognize what no one else has before you. That should be the definition of exploration. And that's why I say never stop exploring.”

Lee Berger: Cave of Bones concludes Werklund Centre's 2025-26 season of National Geographic Live. After 15 years, this partnership between National Geographic and Werklund Centre continues to bring expansive stories and stunning visuals from the pages of National Geographic magazine to Calgary.

“It's an honour to welcome Dr. Lee Berger back to Calgary. His work brings the distant past into sharp, human focus—challenging assumptions and inspiring new ways of thinking,” says Werklund Centre President and CEO Alex Sarian. “At Werklund Centre, we see our stages as classrooms as much as they are performance spaces. Presenting explorers like Lee reflects our commitment to lifelong learning and to creating cultural experiences that inform, inspire, and belong to everyone.”

National Geographic Live

Lee Berger: Cave of Bones

Sunday May 31 and Monday, June 1, 2026

Presentation: 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Jack Singer Concert Hall at Werklund Centre

Tickets available by calling 403-294-9494 or visit werklundcentre.ca/berger.

Werklund Centre wishes to express our sincere appreciation to presenting sponsor ConocoPhillips Canada, student engagement sponsor Enbridge, innovation sponsor Keyera, EXPLORE National Geographic supporting sponsors CABRA Consulting and Geologic as well as our public sector supporters the Government of Alberta and our friends at The City of Calgary.

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Werklund Centre

Werklund Centre (formerly Arts Commons) is the steward of Western Canada's largest arts centre and the artistic and civic cornerstone of Calgary's downtown core that fosters the arts through live performance, educational opportunities, and artist development programs. For 40 years, it has been a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians—a commitment that is being renewed through the Werklund Centre Transformation project, the largest cultural infrastructure project in Canadian history. It is home to five resident companies, including Alberta Theatre Projects, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, Theatre Calgary, and One Yellow Rabbit. It houses six gallery spaces, five theatres, a concert hall, rehearsal and education spaces, costume and scene shops, and a restaurant.