

Getting Curious with Jonathan Van Ness, Cristina Mittermeier, & Paul Nicklen

JVN: Hey curious people, I'm Jonathan Van Ness and welcome back to Getting Curious! **Sings* oooh I'm coming to you from Los Angeles.* But the episode you're about to listen to was recorded in person in front of a gorgeous audience in Santa Barbara, California as opposed to the hotel room that I'm sitting in now. I'm minding my own business this one day, and if you've ever seen my live show, you'll know that I talk a lot about like our explore page and your fyp the algorithms that power our social media. And lately my social media showed me the most incredible pictures I've ever seen in my life. And then when I clicked on the account, it was by Christina Mittermeier and Paul Nicklen. How are they taking these photos? How do you get a picture of an orca like 50 ft in the air in the middle of the ocean? How do you go to a glacier and get these pictures of these like walruses and not like freeze to death? Like what planes, trains and automobiles? How are you even getting there? And how did you get in these positions in the first place? Like I was just flooded with questions and I had to know how wildlife photographers accomplished their work and there's no one better to talk about this than Christina Mittermeier and Paul Nicklen. In fact, you maybe heard about them before, but let's get into their bio. Christine, quote, Mittie Mittermeier is a visionary photographer, marine biologist and avid conservationist. She stands as a formidable force in the realm of environmental advocacy. In 2014, she along with her partner Paul Nicklen co-founded Sea Legacy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a healthy and abundant ocean through powerful storytelling and impactful visual media. Paul Nicklen is a Canadian photographer, filmmaker and marine biologist who has documented the beauty and plight of our planet for more than 30 years. Through the power of the image and just as importantly, emotion and raw power. His work has been singled out for creating a unique connection between image and viewer by featuring wild subjects in some of the most extreme conditions known on Earth. Nicklen is a Sony artisan of imagery and Nicklen has won more than 30 of conservation and photography's most prestigious awards including the BB C's wildlife photographer of the year and the World Press Photo for photojournalism. Oh, wow. And today we're asking, how did you become an iconic nature photojournalist? And stick around to the end of the episode where we reflect on what we learned and how we answered these questions without further ado.

MICHAELA ION: Please welcome to the stage, Jonathan Van Ness, Christina Mittermeier, and Paul Nicklen.

JVN: Ah, hi everyone, **audience cheers** welcome! Paul, Christina, thank you so much for taking your time today and coming out. We're so excited you're here.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: **Whispers* So happy!*

JVN: *Let's ASMR this whole time –*

PAUL NICKLEN: Very excited to be here. Thank you.

JVN: Yes, I'm just even saying ASMR got me triggered. I was like **purrs like kitten** um OK, stay focused Jonathan, we got this. So y'all, I'm so excited. We have not done a live episode of Getting Curious, I think since like pre-pandemic. So, so excited for y'all to be a part of this. Uh, I'm used to doing this in a little room, uh so just bear with me if I'm looking at my notes, I

do have notes. I'm giving you a journalist, I'm giving you Katie Couric, I'm giving you follow up questions. Uh I'm curious about what it's like to be iconic, conservationist slash photographers slash artists who is also a gorgeous married couple, which I think is one of the best things I've ever been curious about on this podcast and you're the perfect guests.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Awe.

PAUL NICKLEN: Thank you.

JVN: So, wait, tell us, take us on a chronic or a chronological journey. Christina. Where were you, what were you just doing?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Right now? I was just coming in from Rapid City, South Dakota. I know this is the land of Rushmore –

JVN: Yes.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And it's a very red part of our country.

JVN: Well, that governor, I mean that poor dog.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Mmmhmm. But I was there at something called the World Wilderness Congress, which happens every four years. And people come from all over the world to talk about how do we protect wilderness? And my job there was to bring the ocean, which is the largest wilderness on our planet. But this congress is also very well attended by a massive number of indigenous people who are often the people that live in this wilderness and they are bringing their wisdom and they're yearning to see a better planet and they're coming together with so much force and so much spirituality and they have honored me by asking me to make their portraits. So I'm pretty excited.

JVN: That's beautiful! It's like, it's like a nature Olympics, like nature and like people who want to make the world better Olympics in the once every four years part.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: In high heels.

JVN: Yes, in high heels. But we don't, we low the high heels. Sometimes we just, I want my feet to have a break.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Yes.

JVN: So I'm gonna kind of go off topic because your work is so beautiful. I mean, if you take three seconds to pull up the two of your Instagrams, it is breathtaking photojournalism, art and it, and it just gives me the chills thinking about the links to with which you both go to to create this art, which makes me just wanna veer off course to ask, how did the universe bring you two incredible souls together? Like what happened? Y'all were just minding your own business? Like being like these incredi – how did it happen?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: He was minding his own business. I hunted him down.

JVN: Ooo, I like her. She's giving me Taylor Swift. She's giving me the archer. She's giving me yes.

PAUL NICKLEN: I'm actually pretty dense when it comes to women and it really did take Chris to be aggressive before I realized that she actually, like, what does she see in me? She actually, she was teasing me so much and uh I it was like kindergarten at one point, I'm

like, wait a minute, does she like me? Like, she's just constantly picking on me. But that's how we, but it was actually how we met was I was shooting for National Geographic. We had the annual seminar at National Geographic. I had already heard about Christina. She was already a legend in the space for, she had founded the International League of conservation photographers. So she took a basically 100 of the, the world's biggest name photographers got them all working, throwing, donating their time and their equipment to do conservation projects. And I could not believe that she galvanized these people together with, you know, photographers. I don't know if you know this but sometimes have egos but to, to, to tame 100 of these basically big name photographers doing these conservation projects. So I was in a and she knew who I was because I was, you know, we were at this big Nat Geo event. I had just done the keynote on stage and then – you want to say something?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: You're so cute. He was of course one of the most iconic National Geographic photographers –

PAUL NICKLEN: No.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And he had just come back from Antarctica to do the famous leopard seal story –

JVN: Hot.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I know.

JVN: But cold!

PAUL NICKLEN: So hot.

JVN: So cold, it's hot.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I know, and so of course, everybody knew who Paul was.

PAUL NICKLEN: And then I walked into the cafeteria and I was wearing my –

JVN: Oh I have a question really quick. I'm sorry.

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah?

JVN: Just because like my grandma, she had to be able to picture it. I just want to know what year this was? So I can imagine like the outfits.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: **Laughs**

PAUL NICKLEN: 2007.

JVN: Ooo.

PAUL NICKLEN: And I was wearing a Canadian plaid shirt with corduroy pants and walked into the National Geographic Cafeteria and Christina is sitting there with a beautiful Mexican dress and all her jewelry and her and she goes, hello, my name's Christina Mittermeier. Sit next to me here and flirt with me. First words out of her mouth and I was just sitting there like, like a deer in the headlights and I'm just staring at her. I'm like, ok, and I sat there terrified and that's sort of how we met.

JVN: I love your little blushy cheeks talking about it right now. I mean, I get it though, honey, not to come on to your husband in front of everybody, but you're giving me like a Mr. Clean

like little Canadian, like, you know, like saving the world you know, like, yes, I love, I get it because he's in good taste. I love it.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: At the time, Paul liked calling himself a journalist. You know, because that's what was, you know, very respected in National Geographic. But he had also just finished doing an expose of the hunting of Narwhals in the Arctic which got you exiled from the community that you lived in.

PAUL NICKLEN: It was a modern day ivory trade. It was, had a, they, they were, they were my friends. I grew up with them up in the Arctic and they were killing Narwhals and I talked to fisheries and oceans about it, but they're essentially killing and sinking six for everyone they landed and all they were doing was keeping some of the, the skin, none of the meat and just taking the ivory. So it was a imagine going to Africa and just seeing dead rhinos and elephants just lining the, the Savannah. And that's what it was with these Narwhals and nobody knew about it. But because I grew up there, I spoke the language and I was confronted with this dilemma of do I do this story? Basically an expose and tell all my friends and, and some people were horrified by it. Take sort of guts and you have to put your name out there. And it was Christina who came to me and said, you know, you've done something heroic, you've done, you know, you put your, we had I had death threats. I had, it was –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Because the story in National Geographic actually got ivory trade banned from Canada for a few years! **Audience cheers** and right?! And it takes a photographer that has the will to do the advocacy work. It's easy to take pictures. We all do it so well. Right? But it is a lot of courage to actually take those photographs to a place where they can create change.

JVN: Is it too in my face **adjusting microphone** sorry, honey.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So I have the hots for him.

JVN: I mean, so that makes sense. So it's 2007 Bush administration dark times –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Dark times.

JVN: But the bright spot is the universe brings you two together. And I mean, when you say National Geographic, it evokes so many visceral images. Like in my mind, I remember growing up going to the grocery store and like seeing Nat Geo and like the magazine island, it just was such a source of imagination and possibility and connection with nature. I mean, I grew up on the Mississippi River like this was pre internet –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: You did?

JVN: I did, from a little town in Illinois. But um I would have never seen so many of these images and known any of these stories that you know, Nat Geo just transports you to. So it's such an incredibly iconic important uh publication. So being two people that have worked in that space, why do you think photography is so effective in conservation work?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Um I have a few thoughts about it. Um do you want to say something?

PAUL NICKLEN: No, but around the same time that we had, we had met, I had done a story for National Geographic in 2001. One of my first stories um that I ever did for them on the, the Phoenix Islands in the country of Kiribati in the middle of the South Pacific, halfway

between Fiji and Hawaii. And, you know, I did the photo shoot. Actually, the pictures weren't very good. It wasn't a very good story in National Geographic. I almost got fired for it because the pictures, it was such a hard shoot and I only had uh –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: You guys should look for it, it's terrible.

PAUL NICKLEN: 14 days, 14 days to do the coverage and the scientists had priority. But it was, it was through meeting all these scientists and the conservationists and then it was Christina who was also part of this. But through the efforts of so many after that assignment that around the time that I met Christina, they had fi – it took four or five years, but they declared the largest marine protected area in the world at the time. But the photography was such an important conduit to get that, to start the conversation, to show the beauty, to show the place that we're trying to protect. But Christina comes from the conservation international world and she knows the blueprint to achieve conservation with.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So what it is is photography has the power to stop people in their tracks. And when the photographs are really good. They become memorable and iconic. And we all have these photographs in our mind. You know, if I say to you Che Guevara, you know exactly which photograph I'm talking about Afghan girl, you know, Vietnam War, like these images become part of our collective consciousness. And as photographers, we're always trying to make those iconic moments that people remember, I'm looking at your life here and thinking about Muhammad Ali. Uh these are photographs that collectively become part of society and photography does something that video doesn't do. We internalize the information and we remember it, you know, video kind of comes to one side and leaves the other. But that's the power of photography. And the most important thing that it does is that it, it's a language that everybody speaks. Everybody now carries a device that makes us photographers, you just show me this beautiful aurora borealis. He nailed it!

JVN: She did say it was good you guys!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I said it could be better.

JVN: Yeah, she did. **Audience laughs** she said if I like made it a little bit more clear but like on the whole like good composition, you know what I'm saying?

PAUL NICKLEN: That's a compliment from Christina, well done.

JVN: She also didn't say that I just gave myself a compliment, which I shouldn't do but we're live. But anyway, anyway –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: But that allows me to ask you questions and for you to ask me questions, you know, what did it feel like to be there, you know, and you told me this amazing story and that's a human conversation that is not polarizing, it's not political, it's just inviting another human into something I saw and experienced. And that's the first step.

JVN: So it's 2007, you all meet. But this is actually more of like uh yes love story, but also this can come from wherever. So how does that work? You're like, you're like editing photos, like working on a story and then like does like does the editor call and they're like, we've got a story or do you pitch this story? Like, how do you put together one of these shoots from idea to creation?

PAUL NICKLEN: You know, just a very quick story um for National Geographic in the beginning, they assign stories to you and then you, you, if you earn their respect and their

trust, then they'll say, OK, here's your budget or what do you want to go shoot? You propose some ideas like leopard seals, you know, they weren't going to grant me permission to that, but they did and they were glad they did. So, you know, and then all of a sudden you gain their trust and you go off, but I just want to say something so important. I remember this is a very quick story, but I was young, I was being mentored by Flip Nicklin different spelling of the last name. And I was, you know, he was trying to get me into National Geographic. I was 26 years old and, you know, I went and did all this salmon photography and I was jumping in this river every day. I had no money. I pushed my wheelbarrel of all my equipment up and down this river every day. And I was there for a month, I got all of these pictures. And on my way to the lab, I stopped for a meeting, somebody smashed into my vehicle in Vancouver and stole all the 70 rolls of shot film. They had thrown it away into the bush somewhere. I told the police it was in the newspaper four months later, um the police call and they say we found this film and so I took it to the lab, got it processed. I go to, to headquarters at National Geographic and just because I just picked up this film, I'm on my way to DC to just meet people and all of a sudden there's Mike Yamashita and all these, these icons of photography. And I'm just like this starstruck kid and Mike, um said to me, hey, are you gonna show some pictures tonight at the works and prod there was David Duba Flip Nicklin and these are like the icons of the industry. And I'm like, well, of course not. He says, well, you should show, do you have any pictures with you? And I said, well, I got a few salmon pictures and um he goes take show five, show five. So I put five in the little carousel and I showed him I was trembling, I'm almost passed out, uh and then showed those pictures. And then a few weeks later, Kent Kobersteen, director of photography said, do you want your first story for National Geographic on Atlantic Salmon? So my, my point in that is like, it's so important to help our peers. So if you see a chance to mentor, to give advice, to give direction, to be a cheerleader, to help young photographers, it's so important to give them that little push.

JVN: That was such a good story, **audience applause** yes!

PAUL NICKLEN: Thank you.

JVN: So of all of the shoots that you guys have done. What has been your favorite one and to and preferably like together's because I'm sure there's like some funny like stories. Um and what was the one that was like the most challenging?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Well, I, I don't know, I have a few favorites because, and you will resonate with this Jonathan because you're an earth loving human. It is all about being out in nature with animals. That's really our love story. That's what, that's where I get my tank field. And you too. And so we've done so much, you know, grizzly bears in Alaska. We've done Wolves in British Columbia and we recently were swimming with southern right whales in Australia!

JVN: Ah!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I know, that is an appropriate sound.

JVN: What part of Australia?

PAUL NICKLEN: The Australian bite on the southern coast. Yeah, and it was just a really epic moment where a friend of ours got these special permissions that nobody else had access. But we're in the water with these, these third largest whales in the world all day long and their mothers bringing up the calves –

JVN: Oh my god.

PAUL NICKLEN: And dropping off a 20,000 pound. I mean, it sounds fun but these calves are running you over and beating you up and pushing you into the sand –

JVN: Oof.

PAUL NICKLEN: And yeah, it was very exciting. And in fact Sony, with Tanya, with Chivo Lubetzky filmed a really beautiful little piece about it for Sony with the launch of the Brano. But that was a fun project.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So that's what it is. You know, it's incredibly beautiful. You're in awe, you're with these animals and then you're like, oh my God, you know, I'm going to die here.

JVN: Wait, but what part of Australia were off of? You said the southern coast, but like what –

PAUL NICKLEN: Like Esperance off the southern coast. So about 300 kilometers south and east of Perth.

JVN: Oh, I love Perth.

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah.

JVN: Not to name drop, but I've been there twice and not to go off and not to go off topic. But have you ever been to Adelaide?

PAUL NICKLEN: Yes.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Yes, I've been to Adelaide.

JVN: You guys, I'm gonna, we're gonna focus, I swear. But Adelaide, it's on a half an hour time zone.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Why?

JVN: Yeah!

PAUL NICKLEN: That's like Newfoundland, Canada.

JVN: It is?! Newfoundland is too?

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah, half hour.

JVN: Yeah, I read that there was three. So that must be one of the other ones.

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah.

JVN: I just can't get over a half an hour time zone. I think it's so iconic.

PAUL NICKLEN: Like TV shows at four but 4:30 in Newfoundland.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So complicated.

JVN: Yes! I know. Ok. Focus. Ok, so I did it.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: The two of you have ADHD.

JVN: We were talking about it before we came out here and it won just now. But I did so good up until that point.

PAIL NICKLEN: Squirrel!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: We're rocking this. We're rocking this. We're doing this.

JVN: OK so, one of the favorites was go back because I got OK. Oh, that one, the Australian I got off track because of Adelaide.

PAUL NICKLEN: That was amazing. I think for me, you know, with National Geographic, my first three assignments were extremely difficult. It's, it's, it's like being in the NFL, but there's only one team and you're a contract photographer and they'll fire you so fast. So you, you always feel and they, they lead by fear like they, they want you to be scared because they want you to work so hard and push and come back with these coverages. And, and it was the fifth story I did on leopard seals that I went there expecting to fail. It was a very hard story. A woman had just been killed by a leopard seal in Antarctica. And I was, you know, nervous and, and to go there and to have this 1000 pound leopard seal on the first day, befriend me, fall in love with me with OCD and started to feed me penguins obsessively for four days straight. And all I had to do was lie in the water with this huge leopard seal, like she'd show her teeth and lunge at me and do all that stuff. But she just started to drop off all these penguins and I, I shot my entire assignment in the first four days and that's never, never happened before where something is, you're so scared but it just that you're going to fail the fear of failure and to have it just all unfold so easily for you.

JVN: So that's interesting because like when you, when you go to do something, you don't know if it's going to take you four days or like three weeks. It just, it's like you gotta go until you get the shot.

PAUL NICKLEN: We did a wolf assignment together on, on these sea wolves in British Columbia and we had a big budget. We had 90 days to do the assignment. We saw wolves for five days out of 90 for 85 days. We saw nothing. So that's where you're like, ok, the whole time you're like, I mean, National Geographic reminds you all the time. We're a magazine. We publish pictures, not excuses because you're like, well, we didn't see the wolves. The weather wasn't good. We couldn't find them.

JVN: Ouch.

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah. You know, that's so, but we ended up pulling it off barely. But that –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So you asked about the most, the most exciting. Of course, being with these big animals and the opportunity to be with animals that almost nobody gets to see. That's always amazing. But then for me, I'm a Mexican girl and to follow Arctic boy here to uh to the polar regions diving in Antarctica, you know, Huskies in Greenland and every night, I'm like, what the hell am I doing here? So cold. But you do learn that these things are just psychological, right? Being cold is a psychological fear and you overcome and you learn how to do this. So while Paul was working on assignment for National Geographic, I was, you know, kind of like a housewife still raising my children, dabbling in photography, really struggling to, to figure out what kind of photography I wanted to do. And I was spending time in remote villages because my ex-husband before Paul was an anthropologist. And so we would go to these places and one day bell rings, I live in Virginia at this time and there's a box out there with a little note from Sony that says, you know, we

have a brand new camera and uh we were wondering if you would like to, to try it. And I said, yeah, and I became one of the first artisans that Sony that Sony created. This is 2007, 2008, long time ago. And all these photographers from National Geographic are looking at me with my little Sony camera and they're laughing, they're like what the hell are you doing with this? And so it was a challenging thing, you know, to pick up a brand new piece of equipment and champion it. But for me, it's been an amazing ride. Sony changed my career, it changed my life.

JVN: Thanks Sony for doing that.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Yeah, thank you so much! **Audience cheers**

JVN: Yes. Wait, so like within like wildlife photography, like, like some photographers would be like, hm, I don't really do that one and I was like, no, I really like that –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Oh they were laughing baby. Nobody laughing now.

JVN: Yes! Werk!

PAUL NICKLEN: No, but it's, it's so true, Jonathan. I, I mean, I saw it firsthand. You, you know, you hear about, you know, it's, it's a male dominated industry and all this stuff. But Christina basically empowered all these mostly male photographers. We were on this, we were photographing the spirit bear. This is a, a bear that's a black bear, but it's pure white. It looks like a polar bear living in the rain forest. Very difficult to find in British Columbia, Christina brought in ABC News, CBC News, NBC. She brought in 20 of the best photographers in the world to come in and really try and keep big oil and oil pipelines out of this beautiful –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So the Canadian government was building a pipeline through the Canadian rainforest and through Indigenous villages –

JVN: There's a Canadian rainforest?

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah the Great Barrier rainforest of British Columbia, it's the largest in the world.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Beautiful rainforest. And so right through the territories of Indigenous people all the way to the ocean. And then they were gonna put the oil in ships, take it to China to refineries and then bring it back. It was like the dumbest idea and Paul was there working for National Geographic, doing a beautiful story on spirit bears. But I had been called in with the International League of conservation photographers to try to stop the big oil. And so we partnered up,

PAUL NICKLEN: We partnered up and it was funny that two of these photographers that Christina had brought in, you know, to, to be the specialist photographing. They took me aside one day and Christina and I were just friends and working together and they said, we see you're close to Christina. I said sure. Yeah. They said, can you please remind her that she's not a photographer, she is here to empower us and that was tough.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Mm I know, I know it's a male dominated industry. At least it was because look at this room now, girls raise your hands. **Women cheering**

PAUL NICKLEN: I can tell you that shit really pisses me off when I hear that.

JVN: I can see it. Your little baby face.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I think you're cute!

JVN: Yeah, but it's like, I mean, it's like it's just, I mean, I don't want to get, I don't want to let my ADHD win again but –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Do it, do it.

JVN: Uh well, no, I mean, it just, it's really difficult navigating these sort of situations and I think so often, especially when you have, when you're a public figure who's also trying to accomplish a lot so often, like, no one ever hears the background and hears about the things that you have to navigate that, you know, you're like, I want to create images and I wanna create art and –

PAUL NICKLEN: It's hard, it's hard enough.

JVN: Yeah, but then we run up against capitalism and patriarchy and trans misogyny and homophobia. We run up against, you know, race, all of it –

PAUL NICKLEN: All of that.

JVN: Um, ugh!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: But together we will conquer this!

JVN: Yes we will! Yes we will! We're not going back, um, not fucking doing it. Um OK, wait uh uh sidebar, we're gonna go. I let my ADHD win when I was writing this question because you guys have traveled so much and you travel so much, any packing tips for us, like any space saving tips, any, any um, yeah.

PAUL NICKLEN: A lot. So really work on your core strength because when you stand at security, you don't want them to know that you carry on weighs 85 pounds because it's full of drones and batteries and four camera bodies –

JVN: We have to edit that out. TSA is gonna hear this you guys. No, because we can't, we can't tell your secrets. Um but no, but what about like more toiletry wise? Like I'm a glamour girl. Like is there any like do you just like you're not really a toiletry king like or what do you like? What do you, how do you save space?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So here's, here's a real skill set. So when you do the work that we do because you really out what you're doing is you're being a diplomat an ambassador for nature. And so one day you may find yourself, you know, diving or trekking hiking with your backpack and your boots and your dirty clothes. And the next day the Prime Minister or the President might wanna have dinner with you. And so you have to have something –

JVN: How do you pack for that?!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: An outfit, right?

PAUL NICKLEN: You're the expert, one black t-shirt –

JVN: Oh.

PAUL NICKLEN: And then a little jacket to go over it. And that's it.

JVN: Oh that's cute.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Paul's always puzzled, you know, like, why do you have a dress?

JVN: Well you need it!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I need one, right?

JVN: That is giving me spectrum. You got to be ready for freaking anything,

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: For freaking anything yeah, at any given point.

JVN: Yeah. Now, before we started, I was regaling Christina and Paul about this time when my husband and my mom and I almost got killed in this Alaskan um uh we, we went, we were trying to see the northern lights and then we went off the street into a walking trail in the SUV and then got stuck –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: In the middle of the night!

JVN: Yeah, it was like 10 o'clock at night and it was like negative 30. It was in March in Fairbanks and it was not a good look. Uh we should have listened to our host and she said you don't need to leave the house to see the northern lights, but we knew better. We were gonna go to Esther Pass or Esther Dome and it was not smart. So we were telling this story. I was really scared. I like and when they like when the tow truck came, I was like, oh my God, thank God. But I mean, there was like a good 20 minutes there where my husband and my mom were like, if you don't shut up, like we're gonna be fine. And I was like, I got my pants wet out there, I'm gonna freeze to death. But I was like taking like the tailpipe out of the snow. Has there ever been a time when you guys were working where you were like, proper scared?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Oh yeah!

PAUL NICKLEN: I crashed my airplane into an Arctic lake at 70 miles an hour and I was trapped inside the cockpit upside down in the water and it was cold and, and I couldn't get out, um, because I had these special bungee doors –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: This is where being a diver is helpful –

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah, and there's a 98% mortality rate with that incident in aviation, but I've had so many diving accidents that I was pretty calm underwater that I just kept going up and getting some air in my feet and going back down and I had to smash the rivets out on the door. But I wouldn't say I was ever the more scary it gets, the more focused I get and it was my second plane crash. So I had already had one. **Audience laughs** so it was like –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So it's almost like an unwritten agreement. You know that the work that we do is dangerous. Um we do a lot of diving in remote places where there's no coast guard, there's nobody to help and we don't do regular scuba diving. We do rebreather diving.

JVN: What's that mean?

PAUL NICKLEN: Rebreather diving is, is basically recirculating your breath. So you never have any bubbles, so –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So you avoid the chorizo in the morning. **Audience laughs**

PAUL NICKLEN: So you have a pure oxygen on board and then you exhale and it goes through a soften the line scrubber like what firefighters use. And so it goes to the softener, it scrubs out the CO2 and then it adds pure O2. So you can be down for six hours diving fairly deep with a high concentration of oxygen, which is good for your brain uh when you're underwater. And so it's, it's just, it's, it just has a lot of risks and a lot of people die from it.

JVN: But the point is no bubbles because you don't want to scare the fish or something?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: No bubbles!

PAUL NICKLEN: It's a navy, it's from the navy seal industry is how it started for like blowing up ships and doing landmine stuff and stuff like that. But we just use it for wildlife.

JVN: So yes, you like, don't scare them, honey. So you just have like a little like like a little, yes, you just like, don't know you're there as much.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: You're like Harry Potter with the invisibility cloak.

JVN: I used to more like Harry Potter as much, but we still do love the invisibility cloak that part's cool.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Exactly.

JVN: So, wow. So when you're diving deep, like what, like if it breaks and you guys gotta do like buddy breathing or something?

PAUL NICKLEN: Well, yeah, you have to be self-sufficient. So you have to have enough bailout gas. So like when we're diving for three hours at 200 ft, you have to have about 22 cylinders of gas on a safety line. If that fails, you have to be able to exit.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: It's complicated.

JVN: So you're, that plane like escaping the upside down plane, you weren't, you guys weren't together in that?

PAUL NICKLEN: I was alone in that.

JVN: OK.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: We sold the plane when we got together.

JVN: Yeah, I don't love a little tiny, scary. So, what about like, um, what about like, uh, well, no, because I want you guys to get in troubs.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: OK. So both of us have been lost at sea when you come out from a dive and there's no –

JVN: Ah! Together?

PAUL NICKLEN: Nope, separate.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: No, a year apart in the same spot.

JVN: Where? The Bermuda Triangle?

PAUL NICKLEN: No the very northern tip of Darwin Island in the Galapagos has very strong currents and you can get flushed out there very quickly and there's, yeah, it's a, it's a healthy shark population. It's just, it's cool to see how quickly you become –

JVN: You guys, what are the Galapagos like?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Ah, the best.

PAUL NICKLEN: Beautiful. It's amazing.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Underwater, it's the best.

JVN: What kind of like interesting things are there that isn't anywhere else?

PAUL NICKLEN: The biggest, the biggest whale sharks in the world? Big pregnant whale sharks that are 55 ft long, you know, they're they're, you know, they're huge. They take up half this room. They're just big pregnant females.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: But you know what it is Jonathan? It's a place that has been protected for so many years, decades. It's like nature comes back and there's large schools of fish and there's all the sea lions are there. And big Galapagos sharks –

PAUL NICKLEN: That huge male orca we were swimming with, beautiful.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Just like the whole ecosystem is happening around you and you're just like, I can't believe this.

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah.

JVN: I have, you know how your algorithm is always changing based on what you finish watching on your Instagram and Tik Tok, what's on your guys algorithm?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Oh, you don't want to know.

JVN: Is it just like, because like sometimes I get the, like the kind of like the, like whenever it's like a, you know, like whenever like it's like a lion's like chasing like somebody, like I, I can't, I always watch it. It's like I have to, I need to see what happens and –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So what's on yours?

JVN: Sometimes, well, so right now it's like the my Tik Tok is like the North Sea, DermaPlaning hair, a lot of hair beauty. And then there was a lot of Olympics and then there's always like a oh and then true crime and there's definitely a lot of nature I have like. But the nature that I see is usually like uh sort of like a, like a discovery channel, like predator chasing prey because that's the one I can't stop because I'm like, oh my God, run!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So, so I'll tell you what's on mine. Very similar. So I, I was uh looking at how to put my hair up in a positive way.

PAUL NICKLEN: Me too. **Everyone laughs**

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Because hair is a big problem in my life.

JVN: Why?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Because I'm an old lady. I'm gonna be 50 something.

JVN: Because it's so thick and fucking pretty and perfect and gorgeous while you're out there exploring and photographing, honey it like looks so good.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Honey, I've been to my girl and so she's doing her thing.

JVN: Oh your blow dry? I gotta get you some Airdry Cream so we can work –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: No, no, no it's the gray hair we're talking about.

JVN: Oh well, it's OK.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Is it?

JVN: I mean, yeah, throw it out queen. Who cares? You're so like this skin and this face looks so fucking gorgeous. You could rock his silver hair. But also this hair looks really good to you.

PAUL NICKLEN: Thank you so much. Yeah, I haven't paid for a haircut in 23 years.

JVN: Well, you know, we also, before we started, we were talking about how great some wigs would sit on you if you don't have to fight all that hair to really get it on there could really get a really nice flat lay on there. Be pretty. **Audience laughs**

PAUL NICKLEN: That would be nice.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So then anyway, so hair and a lot of Olympics. I'm I'm obsessed with Ilona Maher the uh –

JVN: Oh my god, I met her last night! I met her last night!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: No, no.

JVN: I literally you guys, I literally had this birthday party because my hair care company turned three. So we had like, our third birthday party and we were like, line dancing. It's a long story. But I looked up and she was there and I was like, and then she was like, no, you and I was like, **screams** it was so amazing. We love her. She's so, she's like, she's so stunning. I can't get over it.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Right?!

JVN: Yeah, I'm like, bisexual.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So I'm obsessed with her.

PAUL NICKLEN: Who is she?

JVN: She's like, she got the bronze medal in rugby in seven on seven –

PAUL NICKLEN: Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah

JVN: And uh Paris Major. OK. I have to get back on track.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Anyway, so a lot of Ilona, a lot of Trump and a lot of cameras.

JVN: Yes, because that's like, also, I mean, you guys, I did an episode of the podcast, where I was talking about this last week on my podcast about, I did an episode about Tradwives and gay Republicans last year and my algorithm has not recovered.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: There are some?

JVN: Yes. No, gay republicans or this whole thing. I didn't know either. And um yeah, my algorithm is really taking a hit from that because I watched a lot and now it thinks that I want a lot of that.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So I'm being fed a lot of Republican stuff and I, I really have to control myself to not answer because I do have a little blue check mark and I, I'm a public figure and so I can't swear –

JVN: Oh no, you can. I do it. It's well, you know, it's a lot –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And so that's what's going on in my algorithm, Paul?

PAUL NICKLEN: Uh unfortunately, being a conservationist, I follow a lot of dark stuff and it seems to be all, you know, dogs and animals, animals in distress –

JVN: No!

PAUL NICKLEN: And, you know, you know, and then a lot of, a lot of environmental stuff, so –

JVN: That's good, that part's good.

PAUL NICKLEN: It's good. But I find myself sometimes I'm like, I'm feeling kind of down and, and then I realize that my social media is just all –

JVN: You know what you should search?

PAUL NICKLEN: It's all Amazon is burning and the Great Barrier rain or the um the Great Barrier Reef and you know, a 50% mortality event this year –

JVN: Paul I can help you. I got it.

PAUL NICKLEN: Thank you.

JVN: I can help you with the doom scroll. You need to look up a mukbang. People eating is very calming and very positive and very amazing. And I, I do, I forgot my mukbangs. I love watching people eat is like very much happy. And so you can look up muckbangs.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: OK. OK.

JVN: I'll write it down for you. I'll dm it too and you'll love it.

Is there anything that the two of you are not doing? Like, is there anything we, we're not going to climb on the skyscraper to take a picture of the bird from up there? Like is there anything that you don't do?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I don't think we've ever had that. But these southern right whales, they were particularly scary and we never want to make the animals to be bad guys because they're not. But these whales, they're truly nomadic. You know, they go all the way to Antarctica, they cross the right passage and then they come back and they have their babies in Australia, in New Zealand and in South Africa and these whales don't see humans. So they're like aggressively curious and of course, they don't have hands so they wanna come and check you out. Jonathan. Oh my God.

JVN: Are they very face?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I have never seen a whale that, you know, we were first day, both of us like kneeling in the bottom because it's pretty shallow water and kind of like looking in this direction and out of the corner of my eye, I see something dark. It's this whale that's coming right between the two of us.

PAUL NICKLEN: And the whale's, you know, 100,000 pounds and 55 ft long and –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And then Paul is mad at me and because he thinks that I hit him but it wasn't me.

PAUL NICKLEN: I thought she hit me really hard in the back and it was this female, adult female um mother southern right whale who took her peck, which weighs more than a pickup truck and she hit me in the back but gentle, you know, but it like pushed me forward. I'm like Christina is a better diver than that, you know, and I turned around and then her eye is right here and she's from Christina to me. She's just stopped and I'm just staring at her eye and we're just kneeling together and we just have this moment, you know, it's beautiful.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So for a month that we spent diving with these whales, I mean, that's what they would do. They would come check you out and then go away and then you would see it, make a U turn and come right back to check you out again. It was just like, oh my God, it's like a boss coming at you.

JVN: We got to do an episode about sharks a few weeks ago and I'm getting some flashbacks. I just yeah. So you just like, like you just like, like, but when she came, you were just like, I'm not swimming away. So she doesn't get confused and think I'm a seal.

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah, you never, well, you never were with, with all animals. You never wanna act aggressive, obviously and you never wanna act scared. You always wanna act calm even if your heart rate's beaten a little faster. If you have a big tiger shark next to you water, whatever it is, you still have to act calm with leopard seals. You couldn't when the leopard seal was swinging this 12 pound penguin so violently –

JVN: No!

PAUL NICKLEN: She swung it and it hit me in the side of the head and I –

JVN: And it was all dead?

PAUL NICKLEN: It was all it was dead. But like, I'm wearing the whole penguin, the guts and everything all over my head. And I'm starting, I'm getting knocked out like, I'm starting to get tunnel television, I'm blacking out and she, she stopped what she was doing and she came right to my mask and she was just staring because an animal, like that might change its behavior if you look wounded or, and so –

JVN: Like what would it do if it thought you were wounded –

PAUL NICKLEN: I don't know, I mean, I mean, one had just eaten a woman –

JVN: Because it loved you. And so it was like, oh my God, I broke my toy.

PAUL NICKLEN: Yeah. Or just maybe they, I mean, they're not, I don't think feeling a lot of emotion but very behavioral at that moment. But you had to just make sure you don't black

out and, and then just continue to stare at her and but be calm and be sweet and but don't act scared and don't be aggressive. So it's, it's always this balanced with wildlife.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: But to answer your question. Um so the right whale. So we were filming and we were doing this uh launch for a new camera at the Venice for Sony. And so they have uh –

PAUL NICKLEN: The Burano

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Sorry Burano and they're flying a drone over us. And so we're kind of like pretending to be photographers, right? You're kind of like floating and you're trying to look pretty, you know –

JVN: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And mother whale comes and then her baby comes and I'm not moving, you know, I'm floating horizontal pretending to shoot and then the baby comes close to me and mom didn't like that. And so the last thing I hear is Paul saying, LOOK! And this whale just swung her tail at me and it could have killed me, but it went just right over my head.

PAUL NICKLEN: The tail is 20 ft wide, almost the width of this stage and then –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Like people die like this –

PAUL NICKLEN: Weighs way more than a big pickup truck –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And then Paul just grabbed me and pulled me –

PAUL NICKLEN: And the tail went, just hit her in the head, but it bounced off the top of her head and I pulled her far enough but it came back and hit her in the ribs. The film crew thought she was – Chivo Lubezki was flying the drone and he thought she was dead –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Do you know who Chivo Lubezki is? He's a cinematographer and he's a Mexican, fellow Mexican. And so he has like five Oscars and he was doing this film with us. And so he showed me the clip on the throne yesterday and you hear him saying, is she dead? **Audience laughs**

JVN: You guys, I keep realizing that my mouth is agape and I'm like holding on to my chair as hard as I can.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: But you look cute, but you look cute!

JVN: I'm like, but I'm like white knuckling this chair right now.

PAUL NICKLEN: It's not, none of this is as dangerous as driving in traffic or getting in a vehicle or –

JVN: I don't know, honey. I mean, I don't know –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: But the answer to the question is that's the only time in our entire careers that I've said to Paul, you know, I need to get out of the water like I've had it with these whales.

JVN: Oh! Follow up um from earlier. Uh you remember the story about like, how the, like the, the in Canada they were gonna like take the things to the, the dumb idea that you found out they were like gonna take the oil to China to bring it all the way back –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Oh yeah.

JVN: How did you find out?! Just giving like good old investigative journalism?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Oh no, it was all over the news.

PAUL NICKLEN: All these proposals and obviously there's a lot of power in the oil industry and, and then working with all the local first nations and the local nonprofits, we never have a conservation win by ourselves. It's always is a group effort and everybody coming together. But often it's, it's the first nations that really in British Columbia, for example, who really took the lead on this and we were just there helping them tell their story to help them protect their territory.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So I, I brought in Paul was there shooting his story in beautiful spirit bears. He got the cover of National Geographic and I had these 10 other photographers so you can only get there by boat or in floatplane. And so I have all these photographers and they're, you know, dealing with their gear and there's a tiny little dog, this is an indigenous village in the middle of nowhere and all the first nations have come down and they're gathering around looking at, you know, do our thing and I heard one of them say the cavalry has arrived and this time they're on our side.

JVN: Awe.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So yeah, we ended up with a cover for National Geographic Paul had the Spirit Bear and then we had the story on a pipeline through Paradise and that pipeline ended up being canceled.

JVN: Yes! *Audience cheers*

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Hell yeah!

JVN: OK one other like off subject question, I'm gonna go back to my schedule questions. I swear. Um what about that whole rule? Like if you're ever like shooting something and you see like like isn't it so hard if like the bigger animals going like hurt the littler one? And don't you ever just like want to be like get away from her! Like like give the little littler one like a little head start or something? We just have to like shoot it and you're not literally just like picture it, photograph it and then you're like, uh!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Oh I want, I want Paul to tell the story of these sperm whales, these matriarchal societies in Dominica that we were filming.

PAUL NICKLEN: That's, that doesn't answer the question, does it?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Yeah, because –

JVN: So you really don't interfere then, right?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: No, no, no –

PAUL NICKLEN: Well I do all the time. But I mean, I though –

JVN: Ah! I would too!

PAUL NICKLEN: But no like if it, if I'm what you're talking about, if a lion is chasing a gazelle, of course, I'm not going to go racing out there –

JVN: But I'd trip the lion. Like if you could –

PAUL NICKLEN: No, I, I let nature unfold in that. But if I ever see, like when I'm in Antarctica and, um, if there's been a, a dry spell or, I mean, a wet spell where a lot of penguins have fallen into cracks in the ice and they're dying and they're down as wet. Of course, I'll spend my whole day rescuing penguins and you're not supposed to, or we had a, a piece of this levy sort of dam break this natural dam in Antarctic with katabatic winds and all these elephant seal babies that are just born were flushed out to sea and they were all gonna die. And my sister and I, we just spent hours in the water till we were exhausted and these babies are born like 80 pounds. And so you're trying to haul these like 80 pound footballs back up into the beach and we save them all. But it's like, I mean to say, well, I'm not gonna get involved with nature. It's like if I can be of assistance at a moment in need for an animal, I'm gonna do it. **Audience cheers**

JVN: So what is the hardest thing when you have to be on an extended shoot?

PAUL NICKLEN: I think when it comes to nature, it's, you know, I think the one thing that we have, you know, when again our own boat or whatever it is, one thing that was great about National Geographic, for example is, and now we're, we're, we're, you know, because of the support of Sony, we have the luxury of time, time in the field. And it's when it comes to wildlife and nature, when people say let's just go shoot whatever for three days, it doesn't happen. So like when I did that Narwal story, I was on that assignment for five years, I went there every year and I finally, you know, on the, on the fifth year learned that I needed to have my own airplane, I need to land on this floating drifting ice and I failed for five years. And then on the last two days of the last season, we finally figured out how to get pictures of Narwhals and nobody's really done it since or before. And it was, you know, we got all these shots, we landed on these drifting pans of ice with my airplane, we got in the water, got our shots. Um and in two days we got the entire assignment for Geographic. But I think the hardest part is the fear of failure. You're like as a wildlife nature photography, you're really failing about 98% of the time.

JVN: Mmm.

PAUL NICKLEN: And it's just like believing in yourself, believing in your team, believing that you're gonna, you know, to stay positive and energetic and encouraging and rally your team to, to maybe have those two good days at the end of five years. And, you know, and, and if you fail, you're likely going to be out of work. And it's, it's, it's to just to keep going and going and persevering and overcoming the challenges and the uh the adversity. Like on that great day with the Narwhals, it was so amazing. We went back to camp but the sea ice was rotten. It was an inch thick. We landed our plane on the ice and got to camp and I'm, you know, tiptoeing across the ice to get some fuel to put on the airplane, I fell through the sea ice and as I was going through, which is not a big deal, except this ice was rolling like big chunks and I reached up and dislocated my shoulder and as my assistant's resetting my shoulder, I'm wincing in pain on the ice and, and all I could see were Narwhals and Tusks and I knew that we got to shoot, but like, it's sort of like that fail, fail, fail success. And it's like, you know,

that's the hardest part for me is that you don't know you're gonna succeed. And it's, it's, it's challenging.

JVN: I think my first full sentence as a child was, I hate uncertainty. I've never been a big fan of that. So kudos to you for being able to keep that resilience and keep yourself so goal oriented with so much uncertainty. That is just so resilient. Christina. What about you?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I was just going to say that the hardest thing is that we've had such a long and successful career and we're both about to hit our sixties. I mean, we're becoming the older photographers here and it is hard to go away from home. Like I love being at home. I grow my vegetables. I have my dogs and when it's time to pack it up and go on the boat and this time we're gonna go for, I don't know, 6, 9 months, it's just so hard to go once I'm in the boat, I'm OK. You know, we have an amazing crew. Uh we have two Brazilians on crew, one of them helps me with my hair.

JVN: Yes!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And once I'm there, I'm OK, but it's the, the transition is really hard and I just really, I, I see the younger photographers, I'm looking here at Emmet Sparling, seeing the **unintelligible** uh Lizzy Gadd, I mean, there's amazing younger photographers coming behind us and we need to make room for them to be the next generation of conservation heroes.

JVN: Ah, but being away from home for that long, that is really hard. That is just, I mean, but you're doing such important work and I feel like if your dog spoke English, they would totally understand.

PAUL NICKLEN: I think they're pretty upset. I think they're pretty upset.

JVN: Um OK, so let's OK. So let's OK. So beyond capturing, stunning images and because of capturing the stunning images that you do create such a broad pot uh impact. What was the conservation goal with the Baja Peninsula project? Is that like the SOC?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: The Biosphere reserve. So they used to call it El Calceatin the SOC. And I'm like, no, no, no, no, no, we need branding here. So I suggested Dos Mares and it's stuck. So it's a better name I think.

JVN: It's a much better name. But so that was the main goal and you accomplished that goal.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: That's the main goal. And for me because I'm Mexican because I went to university in the Gulf of California. This is very personal and I am going to see it through.

JVN: Yes. Come on, Queen. **Audience cheers**

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Yes! We've been trying for 30 years!

JVN: Oh my God. Well, is there, is there anything for either of you that like you feel like once you accomplish that you'll be like, I'm, that's the thing I want to hang my hat on and then, or do you think there will always be something that's going to be like pulling your heart that you're gonna wanna accomplish?

PAUL NICKLEN: I mean, I, we, you know, being a, having been a biologist and then 20 years at National Geographic and then working in conservation now with Sea Legacy and doing these stories with Sony like nothing – I don't care how many awards you've won or what photos have been well received or what, where you've been recognized. Nothing matters as much as a conservation win. And that's like, that's what feeds my soul. But you know, it, it, that's also the, the double edged sword is that every time you have a win. And it's like, as you're hearing, it's a lot of work, a lot of policy work, working with scientists, teams and then you, you have this victory and you feel so good and it's wonderful to, to win these battles in conservation. But you realize that ultimately we're losing the war for our planet. And that's the hardest part for me. They, they, you sort of, you have these highs and then you go back down and you're back in the trenches again and you have the next win. And it's just overall, you just have this sort of like, you know, friends of ours, like Pete McBride –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Look at you all journalist, writing, follow up questions, love it.

PAUL NICKLEN: You know, like friends like Pete McBride who work on the river systems around the United States and does incredible work in the Colorado River and just to watch –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Melissa Gross, she stands up to people that uh rent wild animals for photographers. Melissa are you here? She's a hero, yeah.

PAUL NICKLEN: There's so many heroes here are doing great work and, and you know, they, they know exactly what we're talking about, you know, because it's like you're, you're on the front lines, you're like a war photographer, you're on the front lines, witnessing this stuff all the time and you sort of have to keep picking yourself up and putting yourself back in the game and, you know –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: It is this community, honestly, I mean, it, it can be so hard. I often think about conservation photography, a little bit like singing in a chorus. You know, when everybody's singing and every once in a while you have to catch your breath, the music doesn't stop everybody else around you keeps on singing. So it's a wonderful thing to have, uh, all of you that are doing this work out there.

JVN: Y'all, thanks for coming today and for being present, now, I don't want you guys to get jealous. Do we have some time for questions from the audience? Does anyone have any q's? Yes?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I want to say what I'm working on right now.

JVN: Oh, we're gonna do, we're doing the guest wrap up and then we do –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Oh OK alright, you're the boss.

JVN: But we can have and we'll do that and I'm giving you a moderator with the most tests. Um but I do think we have some time for community questions if anyone has any. Yes, we're so we're flying in a microphone for you. Queen.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi, my name is Cassandra Benson and I am someone who constantly sees the news, the articles about how the earth is being destroyed and we're constantly being told to recycle or to eat this way or to do these things. When in reality it seems like there's a lot that corporations could be doing that they're not, I guess the question is number one, is it on the individual or is it on the corporations? And from the individual

level, what's the number one thing that you think each of us can do? To try to leave the world better than we entered it?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Jonathan, do you have an answer?

JVN: Oh no, these are for you two! **Audience laughs**

PAUL NICKLEN: Great question.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: This is, this is such a great question because it really is both. And the only way that we're gonna change corporations is by, you know, ganging up against them and demanding. Right? The most important thing that each and everyone can, can do is to just have the courage to declare yourself for planet earth and become a superhero for our planet. I mean, I, I look at you Jonathan and I think you're a celebrity on television. You don't have to do this. There's lots of your peers working on TV, that don't have the courage to do this. It's not popular, right? And here you are declaring yourself, you have your superhero suit, you look gorgeous in it.

JVN: Hat.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And we, we each have to have the courage to say, you know what I'm gonna be. We have no friends anymore. Nobody wants to invite us to dinner because we're constantly reminding people. But it's not fair to say, oh, Paul and Christina are on it. You know, the doctor Sylvia Arro, she'll do it, Jane Goodall. She's on it. All of us. You know, we are so close to catastrophic changes on our planet that we don't even understand and we really need to start speaking loudly but politely and demure, cute! But to everybody, you know, and just make sure that they know without preaching and without judging that you care about this deeply. This is your North Star. **Audience applause**

JVN: Mmh.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: And 1, 1 for Jonathan. Um number one tip for repairing a damaged curl pattern? I love your curls and mine are not on your level.

JVN: Oh my god, thanks!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: He's gonna send us some product!

JVN: Um, well, I do. But that back to your question. I, whenever I always say, like whenever I get a question, like is it this or is it that I'm like as a non binary person? I'm always very leery when someone tells me that there's only two ways that you can do something. So I loved your answer of both. So I think that was so good. Um as far as curls go, it's all our Air Dry Cream and Prewashed Scalp Oil from JVN Hair you guys. Um OK. But I mean, these are just two of the most iconic. Yes, come on, what's your question?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi, can you hear me?

JVN: Yes.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm from Alaska. My name is Maria Chama of Sea Stories. And uh we've seen that indigenous communities have often been pitted against conservation communities historically. And it seems like you guys are connecting these two efforts. So could you just speak to that a little bit in your experience?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Well, I mean, we, we both have very strong points of views on this, but conservation like almost everything else has been colonized. And I, I just came from the Wilderness Congress and half of the presentations in the last couple of days. Were from indigenous people saying, you know, here comes a big conservation NGO to tell us what to do, how to do it and most of all to move out of our lands because they need to protect them. And I am pretty convinced that you cannot achieve conservation if you don't work very closely with the communities and indigenous people really are the last people on our planet that still know how the operating system works. And it's not that they have some hocus pocus knowledge, wisdom is that they have a system of values that's pretty universal across the globe. And those values guided humanity for thousands of years until we came with our colonial exploitation, capitalistic points of view. Indigenous people are so scared and they understand so deeply and so personally, what's happening that all we need to do is to be allies to what they're trying to do. Paul, you grew up with indigenous people.

PAUL NICKLEN: No, that's well said, yeah.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: OK. **Audience applause**

JVN: Thank you for your question.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi, I'm Charlie Wild. Um hi, Christina. We just had a zoom recently.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Yes, hi!

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Um I'm also from Alaska.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Cute hat!

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you. Um my question is um I'm in the early stages of founding my own um nonprofit for poaching of wild dogs and cheetah in Africa. And I'm obviously, you know, it's a lot and I just was wondering if you had any advice for, you know, starting your nonprofit like Sea Legacy and any tips?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Oh no honey, you know, I was talking to Amber Bird about it as well. I thought for the longest time that the only way that we could have an impact was by starting nonprofit. I thought, you know, people wanna give money and we need to be able to give them a tax deductible receipt. And I hate to say to you, you know, that we failed. Paul and I tried the hardest to build a beautiful brand that was positive and hopeful. But just in the last couple of weeks, we had to close our US nonprofit because we could not raise the money for Sea Legacy. And so we had to let go 12 of our employees. And you know, we're gonna go back to being a small organization in Canada, not be able to get tax deductible receipts and all that stuff. But this is what I learned. Art is such a powerful medium and the artist exists to power the revolution. So they don't want Sea Legacy. You know, there was not, not a foundation really, Sony was one of the few corporations that supported us. What they want is the artist, they want Paul and they want me doing out the thing that we do and they're gonna want you for the same reasons. The minute you start a nonprofit, you become an administrator and it's gonna, I mean, it dragged us into a place that we were no longer creative. We were fighting with each other and we were not able to raise the money to keep it going. So think about it very carefully.

AUDIENCED MEMBER: Um I –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Ah, it's Brooke Shaden!

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi my friends!

PAUL NICKLEN: Oh my God is Brooke Shaden here. Oh my god, stop, turn on the lights, stop the press.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And I have to say there's so many photographers here including Brooke who donated to 100 for the ocean, which was our fundraiser this year.

PAUL NICKLEN: And we raised half a million dollars for that.

JVN: Wow!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Thank you. Thank you, Moheim. There's so many of you and thank you to Sony for supporting us with that too.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: This is my question. So, um you are both incredible photographers and everybody knows that and, and that's obvious –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Oh stop it, stop it.

PAUL NICKLEN: Keep going.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: But I think you're even better people and part of that is your ability to be confident about what you're doing and what you're saying and specifically the stories that you tell around it. So I'm curious, what, how do you rank storytelling in its importance in the process?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Well, I, I love that. It is you who's asking this question, Brooke because it, it always comes from a deep personal level, you know, and I've known you for so many years and I know of your journey to be a foster parent, to raise all these children that you may never see to grow up. And it's such a painful thing that you so generously and candidly and warmly share with us. But I think you're the good human, you know, and, and, and that's what I mean by wearing the superhero suit, you put on your superhero foster mom suit and you fucking own it and we do the same. And so that's all it is being a good human, right Jonathan? That's all it is a good citizen of planet earth. And that's, those are the best stories. I think that's why I'm captivated by your social media.

PAUL NICKLEN: But storytelling is, is so crucial. I mean, without a great story, you're gonna fall flat without powerful imagery, you know, you're gonna fall flat. So you need that pacing, that rhythm of those, those I, I mean, I'm not even a baseball player but like you need those home runs that, that start off the conversation based on a great story and there's so much noise in the world right now. So you need those best in the class, best in the world for like, I look at your stuff all the time and I'm obsessed with you and your work. Um I love your photography and um and you always have a great story. So you draw me in and now I'm like one of your big, biggest fans and I love what you're doing. And so it's like, but you grew that with great storytelling and great photography. You know, it's like –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Leaning into the vulnerability, I think Pete Pete McBride, you have a question. This is exciting, another, another conservation hero!

PAUL NICKLEN: Pretty good pickleball player too.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And dance partner.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Um Jonathan. Thank you. This is great and thank you guys for your commitment and dedication for so many years. Um I flew out here from Colorado and we had the, the, the benefit, the luxury to fly over one of the seventh natural wonders of the world. Um Glen Canyon and the Grand Canyon. And I sat on the left side of the airplane and we flew the entire length of it and I was the only person with the window open. Um so my question in the follow up on storytelling is we have a problem with apathy. We have a lot of noise and we have a lot of amazing content. Thanks to Sony and their amazing cameras. How do we break through that and start to shatter that um shield of apathy?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I think we give applause and thanks to people like Jonathan who comes from a different industry, a different, you know, part of our society to open a door and a window in the attic for us to reach new audiences. And we need to find more people like you, you like you to help us share our stories with different audiences. Um and of course Instagram, who, who are we talking to? Where's Chris Burkhart? We were talking about, you know how we once believed that Instagram was gonna be this amazing vehicle for us to share directly with the world. And for a little while we were doing that, weren't we? And then Meta decided that that's not going to be the case. And so we have lost that and we need to find new allies. I mean, you're absolutely right. It's apathetic, it's terrible.

PAUL NICKLEN: The reason I mean, most of us shoot, I'm, I'm guessing and we tell stories is because we want to have a microphone. I mean, we're on stage right now because we're photographers, you know, you guys, I mean, Pete, you go around the world speaking because you're a photographer, you do the work you do because you want, you want to ultimately break down the walls of apathy and all we can do is keep beating that drum over and over. And that's the part where you sure you get a little down sometimes because you, you, you think everybody cares, I'm the same as you, I want to scream out on airplanes when I hear, you know, all the windows are shut and you're flying over whatever and it's just so beautiful. But you know, your only job is to not get angry, not get depressed, not get miserable, not get aggressive, but stay somehow find the strength and the energy and the courage to stay positive and to stay in the fight and keep telling great stories and keep breaking down the walls of apathy. It's all we can do.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I want Jonathan to answer that too, yes.

JVN: I actually did have for the first time. I actually have an answer to that. Um I think for me, at least I think it's about giving hope and finding a piece of the story to make the person who's consuming your content see why it relates to them. It reminds me a lot of like work on racism and transphobia. It's like a lot of people don't get involved. So like how does this affect me? And so that's kind of where like the apathy comes because you don't see how it affects them. So getting people to understand what, how it affects them and then giving them hope. And I think again, bringing in the non-binary thing, like, I love a hopeful story, but I also love a true crime podcast. So, and because of our like survival instinct and because of our like negativity bias, I think it's not one or the other. I think it's like, it's figuring out like how to give like the cheddar on the broccoli, you know, like the broccoli is like the world, it's fucking heating up. And, you know, we have so many issues that we're facing, but the cheddar is like the hopeful stories, you know, so finding that balance in your storytelling to like, actually break through and create momentum. Um but echoing on the social part and the meta part, and I mean, I do think one thing we cover on the podcast is a lot is techno chauvinism and

the evolution of tech. And it is very clear that and I'm very frustrated by like short attention spans. Like I'm on the podcast. I want to cover sometimes more niche topics, sometimes more nuanced topics. And there are things that, like, you know, you're not gonna get it necessarily in 20 minutes. It's like a little bit, you know, things can be complicated and there's just not that much of an appetite for that. So I think it, until we start trusting audiences to be nuanced and to give, give them the cheddar, give them the broccoli, like give them, give them your stories, tell them about the Grand Canyon. And I think we'll like find our audiences, but it's disheartening when we spend so much time on things and you know, the tech gods that we show it to four people. So that's upsetting and, but I do think that the way, especially when I think about the photography because I mean, I hear so often like it's very not nature but on social. If I like, take a photo that was taken on an iphone and post it like the metadata like won't support that even if it's the most beautiful picture. But you know, it will a really good caption. Like there's ways you can like trick the algorithm to like still feature things that you want to. But you just, it's really frustrating because you just want to be able to share your shit and have it go far. Um But no, I think it's the hope and how it affects people.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And can I elaborate

JVN: Yes!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Just the time and I think this is my time to say a huge thank you to Sony because when, when I first came to Sony many, many years ago, you know, as a brand new artisan and you're like tippy toeing around this big corporation. And I, and I told them, you know, this is what I care about. This is what I wanna talk about. This is what I need support with and they said, oh, yeah, yeah. And I'm like, but I'm gonna talk about climate change. Sure. Sure. Yeah. Go. And I wanna talk about extinction –

PAUL NICKLEN: Sure, whatever it is.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: They have always said yes to me. They have always supported me whereas I worked with other corporations including Nat Geo at some point in history where they said like, don't talk about climate change because it'll upset people. And so I just wanna say a huge thanks to Sony and to you in particular, Kayla, to Mikayla, to Matt Parnell, to uh uh my, my Sony family, you guys, you guys built my career for me. Thank you.

JVN: All right. So we're going to bring it back in you guys. Um I just saw the note where it said 3 to 5 questions. Sorry about that. Uh OK, so we're going to wrap this up but I do have some rapid fire uh follow ups that we just need to do quick because I think I talked too long are you ready for this?

PAUL NICKLEN: Ready.

JVN: When you saw the 700 pound tuna did any of them like come up and give you like a tuna snack? Like were any of them? Were you scared or, or were they just kind of chill?

PAUL NICKLEN: No, just so in awe and it was just so beautiful. No, not, not scared at all.

JVN: I had a vision of a tuna just being like girl, I don't know why. Um uh seasick. A lot of, lot of we're out on the boats a lot. Have you guys ever gotten just like writhing seasick at any tips?

PAUL NICKLEN: So, uh Christina is we will be in 30 ft seas or 20 or 10 ft seas, whatever it is. And I'm just, I'm dying and she is down in the kitchen making spicy uh tacos for the whole

team and, and I get very seasick and the first time I went to Antarctica to do the leopard seal shoot. I was on a 48 ft boat in the roughest seas in the world and my room was up in the very bow of the boat and I had that type of bed where you're strapped in like a hammock bed. I had all these bags in my bed and it was so rough as this boat would go off of 30 ft waves. I would fly out of my bed and at once there was a boat motor strapped in my room up to the roof it, I was vomiting just constantly vomiting in my bed and I couldn't even get it. And I was, and I got almost delirious and my diaphragm was starting to go into spasm because I could – **gasps for air** couldn't breathe. And then at one point it bucked me out of bed and I hit the boat motor on my leg and I cut my leg open –

JVN: Ah!

PAUL NICKLEN: And I hit the floor and there's diesel fuel spilling out of the keel into my room. And then they're also trying to light the kerosene stove and it's belching kerosene smoke into the boat. And I'm just vomiting on the floor, sliding around in my blood and my diesel. And just to be able to crawl back into my bed and to vomit back into my pillow was like the most beautiful moment. And, and I was, I started to yell because I, for 48 hours, I was dry heaving and I was, I was getting to the point where I was getting scared because I couldn't breathe –

JVN: You needed an edible.

PAUL NICKLEN: And I started to, and I started to yell and say help, help. And this, this assistant Captain Gil, he, he the Frenchman. He finally came to me and then he goes, Paul, Paul, I can hear you. And he goes, you know, en France, we have an expression at first you pray to live and now you pray to die. No, ha ha ha. And he walked off and, uh –

JVN: Oh shit honey. That's –

PAUL NICKLEN: So I've been seasick.

JVN: That was, I love when I ask you follow ups and they're even worse than I thought it could be. Um this has been so good. OK, so I, I, I think I got that. I got that, I got that. I got that. I got that. Oh OK. I got that. Ok. Wait, so OK, we got the hope. Thank you. Uh Christina, what are you working on now?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Um so –

JVN: What's next?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: So I'm working on a very, very exciting project. Uh that's born out of hope. Uh you know, he's a little negative sometimes and he can get me a little down and then I have to do the work of lifting both of us up –

PAUL NICKLEN: Thanks girly.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: And so I was feeling pretty depressed and I thought, you know, where can I find hope and the, the way that you find it is we find it in each other, you look at the works and the deeds of others. And I thought, you know, I'm gonna do a book about hope. And so I'm working on a book and I wanted to make it a crowd funding project. So my followers paid for my book and we are now in print and it is the most beautiful book because it's a community built around. Hope. So, thank you. And thank you because Sony helped me with this project too. So thank you.

JVN: Ah!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: I know!

JVN: Honey, what about you?

PAUL NICKLEN: Um I did get kind of down this summer. And, and so for my, my birthday month, I give myself a month, I've been kiteboarding and dancing on the waves with a big kite in British Columbia. But then I escaped to Patagonia and, and just spent, uh 10 days with the Pumas hiking with big Wildcats in the mountains and just, you know, sitting 10 ft away from these Pumas and mothers and kittens and big males –

JVN: Ah!

PAUL NICKLEN: And, and then I was out doing aerial photography and, and drone photography of the beautiful Lencios Maranhenses in Brazil and these beautiful braided rivers. And just to, just to remind myself of what we're fighting for, just to get lost back in nature without putting so much pressure on myself, not having a team, not having to shoot with a whole bunch of stuff, but just me and my camera and just getting lost in the creative process of spell celebrating nature. And that's, that was sort of just fed my soul this summer.

JVN: Well, Paul, I'll tell you, last week I saved a baby newborn rat and, um I found it in my backyard. Uh and –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Did you put it in our backyard? We're having an infestation.

JVN: I didn't, I didn't, I, I took it to the wildlife rescue in Austin. And I, well, and I also, I thought it was a squirrel –

PAUL NICKLEN: **Laughs**

JVN: And then when I got it there, the man was like, that's a rat and I was like, doesn't matter he's a fucking fighter. He's a fighter. You guys, I found this rat at like four in the afternoon. It was a tiny, little pinky, it was like this and it was like, and it's like little eyes and um and, but I read online that like you should like, you know, like leave it outside, like, so that it's like mom can try to find it. So I was like, oh my God. So I left outside and I made a little bed and then um very chic, understated. Um and so I put, I put it in its little bed and then I was like, oh my God, please don't die, please don't die. Oh my God. Oh my God. And the next day I woke up, I made Mark my husband like every few hours I was like wake up, go check on the fucking rat or I didn't know his rat. I was a squirrel still but he was like, no. Um And so then the next, this morning though it was still alive and I was like, oh my God, like this really is like a fighter ass little baby. Like it made it all night with no mom, no dad, no food. And um and so then yeah, we got it all the way to the wildlife place and it lived. So that's my conservation –

PAUL NICKLEN: Well done!

JVN: Um yeah, I did. We saved the rat, you guys. Um no. Uh I, I, I don't know why I told you that. I don't know why I ended on that.

PAUL NICKLEN: It's a beautiful story.

JVN: I just, I, I freaked out.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: We just tried to save a crow and he didn't make it.

JVN: No!

PAUL NICKLEN: We tried.

JVN: But yeah, that's the important part. OK. Wait. Um now uh OK, so we talk about you guys the most active on the gram. Are you guys on the TT yet? Are you on the TikTok or anywhere else? No, we just strictly Instagram or photographers don't fucking do that TikTok.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: No, our generation –

JVN: Although can I tell you, you guys doing a TikTok like where you guys are just like together and like the same background and like talk about all of your stories and you could use your pictures, the fucking green screen background and talk about how you capture that image would probably be –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: You are hired to be our producer!

JVN: You guys. Is that not the best idea I've ever had? You probably would like break the app for like fastest growth. If you guys would be like the Meghan Markle and Prince Harry, like 2018, remember? And they like broke the Instagram for most like new people. I feel like you could do that on TikTok.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: How are we gonna go diving?

JVN: I just, or, or, or TikTok the journey. I want to see you guys on TikTok. I have to say I know you're already like saving the world and traveling everywhere. But I think a TikTok would be really fun. I would, I would just consume the shit out of it. If you have extra time,

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: you might be our only followers.

JVN: No that's not. I'm, I'm just telling you, it's like delulu, you're on delulu and everyone wants to, everyone wants to follow your TikTok, right? **Audience cheers** Don't you guys want to see? Yeah, I really want to see. Well, I'm just obsessed with you guys. I fell so deeply in love with you, Christina and Paul. I think, I think there's, I think I just wanna make sure I got everything I think. I think I did. Thank you so much for your work and for your time and for coming on, Getting Curious for being here, give a round of applause you guys **audience cheers.**

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Thank you!

JVN: Christine, I love you so much. I can't wait to see what you do next!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: We love you!

JVN: You, you guys are amazing. I love you guys. Thanks for coming on.

PAUL NICKLEN: Thank you so much, thank you!

JVN: Yeah. OK. Yeah, we did it. Yay. Thank you guys. That was so fun. I think I got all my things.

PAUL NICKLEN: Thank you so much, Jonathan.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: You're so good at this man!

JVN: Really? You thought so?

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: You should start a podcast or something!

JVN: I'm so glad that you thought it was good. You guys like whenever I interview people that are as like on this level of smartness, I'm like, get it together. Can you imagine that this is my version of getting it together.

PAUL NICKLEN: Question question for you is like, you're a master of all these platforms. Now, you've been on television, you, you know social media, Instagram, TikTok. What what would you rank them as your favorite way to communicate with your base right now?

JVN: Stand up comedy. Yeah, I think I'm, I'm the most myself. I feel the most myself on stage.

PAUL NICKLEN: OK. So a live audience.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Not nerve wracking?

JVN: What is a little bit, but I just, it's such a, like, cool experience, like, especially when I can tell that someone has been, like, drug against their will and I don't really want to be there and then I like, just watch myself winning them over and it's fun.

PAUL NICKLEN: And then what about, would you say, where would you say you have the biggest reach where you make the biggest difference? If you're trying to make a point to the world?

JVN: Probably between Instagram and TikTok, I'd imagine.

PAUL NICKLEN: OK, somewhere between those two.

JVN: Yeah. But I think also, but, you know, it's interesting because Instagram and TikTok is like such a sidebar. But if someone's willing to sit, so I think actually where I've had so much uh impact and not to like, talk about myself like this. But really the podcast, I've had so many people reach out to me over the years, whether they like ran for office when they listen to me interview like Elizabeth Warren or um Julian Castro. And um people who have like gotten into cosmetology school because they listen to me talk about something on the podcast. So I think when a listener is willing to like, spend that much time with you and grow with you on this journey. Then I think there's like a larger ability to like really get in there. Whereas like social media, it's like kind of, it can be more in and out. Look at you, journalist.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Well, we think you and Mark are lovely.

JVN: Oh we think you guys are lovely.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: guys make this planet a better place.

JVN: Honey, let's go on a um –

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Come diving with us!

JVN: I was gonna suggest more of a glamp. More of a Yeah. Yeah. I don't know if we're, I don't know. I don't know, but I, I would love to go to a great, like a like a little hotel.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: OK!

JVN: Let's go to, din – let's go stay at the hotel, you guys! Thank you guys so much!

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER: Have dinner and coffee.

JVN: This, did we ever learn the thing? Honey? In the words of Ariana DeBose, uh we learned the thing and it was Christina and Paul they do the thing. They have made the most incredible photos that are quite literally saving the earth. And I think what really inspires me about their story is the ways that we all show up in the fullness of our talents and our hopes and our dreams and then that can inspire so many other folks like for some people that could get them into biology or, or conservation or there's just so many ways that you can approach being a part of the solution and it's artists that bring people into the fold. And I just think that they, the ripples of their creation, I think have gone so far and their story is so inspiring. It was also really interesting being there because Paul and Christina are such amazing mentors and the audience was filled with young photographers and up and coming photographers. It so looked up to their work and seeing all of their interactions in the Q and A I thought was really beautiful. Um oh and also this episode just generally made me think about an episode from the past with Doctor Sarah Aarons and how like Doctor Sarah Aarons like traveled all the way to like, I think it was a South Pole and got these like ice blocks that are were like shows like 40,000 years of ice. I just, I love that episode and it was giving a lot of like climate justice and climate change and just scary like nature adventure. So if you want to go into the past, on a journey to the past, on that episode is a really good one. OK, but I love you guys another episode of Getting Curious in the books. Um yeah, cutie pie, we love the fall and we'll see you next time on Getting Curious,

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