

## Academy Award and BAFTA-Nominated Film 'Free Solo' to Premiere Commercial Free on National Geographic March 3

"A Masterpiece Nearly as Impressive in Execution as the Climb Itself"

THE SEATTLE TIMES,

Hailed by The New York Times as "an extraordinary gift to everyone who believes that the limit of human achievement is far from being reached," the Academy Award®- and BAFTA-nominated film **FREE SOLO** will make its global broadcast debut on March 3 at 9/8c, premiering commercial free on the National Geographic channel in the United States, followed by a global rollout in 172 countries and 43 languages. Carolyn Bernstein, EVP of global scripted content and documentary films for National Geographic, shared the news earlier today at the Television Critics Association press tour in Pasadena, California, during a special presentation with film subject Alex Honnold in attendance. Additionally, Fox Home Entertainment will release the film on digital platforms, including iTunes, Google Play, Amazon Prime Video, Vudu and more, beginning Tuesday, Feb. 12. From award-winning documentary filmmaker Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and world-renowned photographer and mountaineer Jimmy Chin, the directors of the Oscar-shortlisted film "Meru," comes **FREE SOLO**, a stunning, intimate and unflinching portrait of the free soloist climber Honnold as he prepares to achieve his lifelong dream: climbing the face of the world's most famous rock ... the 3,200-foot El Capitan in Yosemite National Park ... without a rope. **FREE SOLO** is an edge-of-your-seat thriller and an inspiring story of an athlete who challenges both his body and his beliefs on a quest to triumph over the impossible, revealing the personal toll of excellence. As the climber begins his training, the armor of invincibility he's built up over decades unexpectedly breaks apart when Honnold begins to fall in love, threatening his focus and giving way to injury and setbacks. Vasarhelyi and Chin beautifully capture deeply human moments with Honnold as well as the death-defying climb with exquisite artistry and masterful, vertigo-inducing camerawork. The result is a triumph of the human spirit. Throughout its theatrical run, **FREE SOLO** set several box office records, including the highest per screen average of any documentary during its opening weekend (Sept. 28, 2018) and the highest box office for a documentary in its 19th weekend in release. Now, as it enters its 20th week in release, the film is the second highest grossing documentary of 2018 in the United States (and the top-grossing Oscar nominee), the highest grossing documentary of 2018 in the United Kingdom and one of the top 20 documentaries of all time in the United States and Australia. It has been honored with three Critics Choice awards, three Cinema Eye awards, an ACE award for Best Documentary and a PGA and DGA nominations, among several other industry recognitions. "When we were making this film, we could not have imagined the response we have received," said directors Vasarhelyi and Chin. "While most of us wouldn't dream of free-soloing 3,000 feet, Alex's story of courage, dedication and determination is very relatable. We're grateful to be working with National Geographic and Fox Home Entertainment, and thrilled that Alex's journey will continue to inspire others to dare to dream." The film was named one of the top 10 films of the year by Entertainment Weekly and was praised by critics across the globe as "one of the most arresting documentaries of the year," "extraordinary," "amazing" and "visually staggering." "In addition to being an inspiring message of perseverance and determination, **FREE SOLO** is also a stunning cinematic achievement that showcases the beauty and grandeur of our national parks," said Bernstein. "The film serves as a powerful reminder that it is incumbent upon all of us to protect the natural world around us." To

further spread Honnold's inspirational message, National Geographic, in partnership with Picture Motion and 360 Communications, arranged screenings for over 7,000 students, educators, climbing gyms and community members across 17 cities from 114 schools and 19 organizations. Students especially have been incredibly moved by Honnold's story, with many letters and videos pouring in and one school in New York even re-creating parts of the climb on its jungle gym. **FREE SOLO** first debuted at the Telluride Film Festival, went on to screen at the Toronto International Film Festival to rave reviews and has screened at more than 30 film festivals around the world, including IDFA, Adelaide, Mill Valley Film Festival, DOC NYC and the Savannah Film Festival. **ABOUT NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTARY FILMS** National Geographic Documentary Films is committed to bringing the world premium, feature documentaries that cover timely, provocative and globally relevant stories from the very best documentary filmmakers in the world. National Geographic Documentary Films is a division of National Geographic Partners, a joint venture between National Geographic and 21st Century Fox. Furthering knowledge and understanding of our world has been the core purpose of National Geographic for 131 years, and now we are committed to going deeper, pushing boundaries, going further for our consumers ... and reaching over 730 million people around the world in 172 countries and 43 languages every month as we do it. NGP returns 27 percent of our proceeds to the nonprofit National Geographic Society to fund work in the areas of science, exploration, conservation and education. For more information, visit [natgeotv.com](http://natgeotv.com) or [nationalgeographic.com](http://nationalgeographic.com), or find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Google+](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Pinterest](#). **MEDIA CONTACTS:** Erin Griffin National Geographic 202-316-9707 [erin.griffin@natgeo.com](mailto:erin.griffin@natgeo.com)