



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Tara Keimel

954.713.0904 tara.keimel@mods.net

### **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S FREE SOLO OPENS JANUARY 11, 2019, AT THE AUTONATION IMAX THEATER FOR ONE-WEEK LIMITED ENGAGEMENT**

**Experience Alex Honnold's amazing free solo climb of Yosemite's 3,000-foot El Capitan,  
one of the greatest athletic feats of any kind, on a six-story-high screen!**

**Fort Lauderdale, FL January 8, 2019** - Athletes and non-athletes alike won't want to miss FREE SOLO, the edge-of-your-seat thriller from award-winning documentary filmmaker E. Chai Vasarhelyi and world-renowned photographer and mountaineer Jimmy Chin, the directors of MERU opening Friday, January 11, 2019, at the AutoNation IMAX Theater for a one-week limited engagement. Tickets can be purchased online at <https://mods.org/films/freesolo/> or by calling 954-713-0930.

National Geographic Documentary Film's FREE SOLO is a stunning, intimate and unflinching portrait of free soloist climber Alex 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*. Celebrated as one of the greatest athletic feats of any kind, Honnold's climb set the ultimate standard: perfection or death. Succeeding in this challenge places his story in the annals of human achievement.

For one week only, audiences will have the opportunity to experience FREE SOLO's jaw-dropping cinematography on the largest screen possible at the AutoNation IMAX Theater, Florida's only IMAX with Laser giant screen theater. The IMAX release of FREE SOLO will be digitally remastered into the image and sound quality of The IMAX Experience with proprietary Imax DMR (Digital Re-mastering) technology.

"IMAX's differentiated, immersive theatres make audiences feel as though they are there with Alex in Yosemite National Park, climbing El Capitan, and we're really pleased to be able to bring this incredible, historic story to fans so they can now experience it in IMAX," said Craig Dehmel, head of distribution at IMAX Entertainment.

"When we were making this film, we could not have imagined the response we have received," added directors Vasarhelyi and Chin. "To be able to share Alex's story of courage in the immersive IMAX experience is something we've been working towards for over a year. It's the ultimate reward for us, and offers filmgoers and a chance to now see his historic and remarkable journey on the big IMAX screen."

"The grandeur of El Capitan and the film's breathtaking cinematography will be spectacular in IMAX," said Courteney Monroe, President, National Geographic Global Networks and Documentary Films. "Audiences have been filling theaters for months, uniting together to cheer for Alex's staggering achievement. We are so grateful to IMAX for providing audiences the opportunity to experience the scale and ambition of this film in IMAX theaters."

---More---

## **ABOUT THE FILM**

From award-winning documentary filmmaker E. Chai Vasarhelyi (“MERU”) and world-renowned photographer and mountaineer Jimmy Chin comes National Geographic Documentary Film’s FREE SOLO, a stunning, intimate and unflinching portrait of the free soloist climber Alex Honnold, as he prepares to achieve his lifelong dream: climbing the face of the world’s most famous rock ... the 3,000ft El Capitan in Yosemite National Park ... without a rope.

Celebrated as one of the greatest athletic feats of any kind, Honnold’s climb set the ultimate standard: perfection or death. Succeeding in this challenge, Honnold enters his story in the annals of human achievement. FREE SOLO is both an edge-of-your seat thriller and an inspiring portrait of an athlete who exceeded our current understanding of human physical and mental potential. The result is a triumph of the human spirit. FREE SOLO documents the journey of an athlete who challenges both his body and his beliefs in his 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 succeed in beautifully capturing 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 that represents what the New York Times calls “a miraculous opportunity for the rest of us to experience the human sublime.”

The film also features the original song “Gravity” performed by Grammy award-winning legend Tim McGraw and co-written by McGraw and Grammy award-winning singer-songwriter Lori McKenna

FREE SOLO was honored with three Critics’ Choice awards, including Most Innovative Documentary of the Year and Best Cinematography, and has also received nominations for PGA, IDA and Cinema Eye Honors.

Rated PG-13 for brief strong language.

[MOVIE TRAILER](#)

[OFFICIAL MOVIE WEBSITE](#)

**IMAGES:** [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ebu6dazfw7rz2l2/AAAZOHNaOctr8IsRxy\\_hAoZ8a?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ebu6dazfw7rz2l2/AAAZOHNaOctr8IsRxy_hAoZ8a?dl=0)

### **ABOUT ALEX HONNOLD**

Alex Honnold is a professional adventure rock climber whose audacious free solo ascents of America's biggest cliffs have made him one of the most recognized and followed climbers in the world. A gifted but hard-working athlete, he is known as much for his humble, self-effacing attitude as he is for the dizzyingly tall cliffs he has climbed without a rope to protect him if he falls. Honnold has been profiled by "60 Minutes" and The New York Times, been featured on the cover of National Geographic, appeared in international television commercials and starred in numerous adventure films, including the Emmy-nominated "Alone on the Wall." Honnold is the founder of the Honnold Foundation, a nonprofit that promotes solar energy access worldwide. To this day, he maintains his simple "dirt bag-climber" existence, living out of his van, donating a significant portion of his income to the Honnold Foundation, and traveling the world in search of the next great vertical adventure. He is sponsored by The North Face, among others.

### **ABOUT THE DIRECTORS**

Award-winning filmmaker Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi is the co-director and producer of FREE SOLO, from National Geographic Documentary Films. Vasarhelyi's films as a director include "Meru" (Oscars Shortlist 2016; Sundance Audience Award 2015); "Incorruptible" (Truer Than Fiction Independent Spirit Award 2016); "Youssou N'Dour: I Bring What I Love" (Oscilloscope, 2009), which premiered at the Telluride and Toronto Film Festivals; "A Normal Life" (Tribeca Film Festival, Best Documentary 2003); and "Touba" (SXSW, Special Jury Prize Best Cinematography 2013). Vasarhelyi has directed a New York Times Op Doc, an episode for Netflix's nonfiction design series "Abstract" and two episodes for ESPN's new nonfiction series "Enhanced." She has received grants from the Sundance Institute, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Bertha Britdoc, the William and Mary Greve Foundation and the National Endowment of the Arts. She is a member of the DGA as well as AMPAS. She holds a B.A. in comparative literature from Princeton University and lives in New York City.

Jimmy Chin is a professional climber, skier, mountaineer, 18-year member of The North Face Athlete Team and National Geographic Explorer. As the director, producer and cinematographer of the National Geographic Documentary Film FREE SOLO, which he co-directed with Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, Chin captured rock climber Alex Honnold's nail-biting free solo ascent of Yosemite National Park's El Capitan. Consistently over the past 20 years, he has led or participated in cutting-edge climbing and ski mountaineering expeditions to all seven continents and made the first and only American ski descent from the summit of Mount Everest. Chin is also a filmmaker and National Geographic photographer. He has worked with many of the greatest explorers, adventurers and athletes of our time, documenting their exploits in the most challenging conditions and locations in the world. He has garnered numerous awards shooting on assignment for publications, including The New York Times Magazine, Vanity Fair and Outside Magazine, and has directed commercial work for a wide range of clients, including Apple, Chase, Pirelli and The North Face. His 2015 documentary "Meru," which was also co-directed by Vasarhelyi, won the Audience Award at Sundance and was nominated for best documentary by the DGA and PGA. "Meru" was also shortlisted for an Oscar.

**ABOUT THE AUTONATION IMAX THEATER**

The 300-seat theater AutoNation® IMAX 3D Theater, owned and operated by the Museum of Discovery and Science, opened in 1992. The science of cinema has been raised to the level of Magic at the AutoNation IMAX 3D Theatre now that IMAX with Laser is illuminating the six story screen by lasers. This new technology with dual 4K laser projectors has revolutionized the way we experience 3D films on the big screen. The new laser projector technology offers brighter images, intense colors, and incredible detail that will leave you in awe. There's also a next-generation immersive 12-channel sound system featuring 114 speakers capable of 52,000 watts of digital sound. Whether it's a pin drop or feeling the heart-palpitating force of a volcano, audiences will experience a new kind of visceral sound experience.

IMAX with Laser is a blend of science and art to deliver a cinema experience that suspends disbelief and transports audiences to new worlds. It's the difference between watching a movie and being a part of one. The AutoNation IMAX 3D Theater is the only place in Florida where you can experience the power of IMAX with Laser and is one of only three Certified Giant Screen® theaters in Florida as certified by the Giant Screen Cinema Association. For show times call 954.463.IMAX (4629) or visit [www.mods.org](http://www.mods.org). More information can be found here: <https://mods.org/imax/about-our-imax-theater/>

**Media Contacts:**

Tara Keimel	954.713.0904	<a href="mailto:tara.keimel@mods.net">tara.keimel@mods.net</a>
Marlene Janetos	954.713.0915	<a href="mailto:mjanetos@mods.net">mjanetos@mods.net</a>
Theresa Waldron	954.713.0901	<a href="mailto:twaldron@mods.net">twaldron@mods.net</a>

###