

# PRESS KIT



BBC earth

# ANTARCTICA

NARRATED BY BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH

An  
**SK Films**  
Release



Logistical support provided by  
  
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



WITH SUPPORT FROM THE  
**British Antarctic Survey**  
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL

# ANTARCTICA

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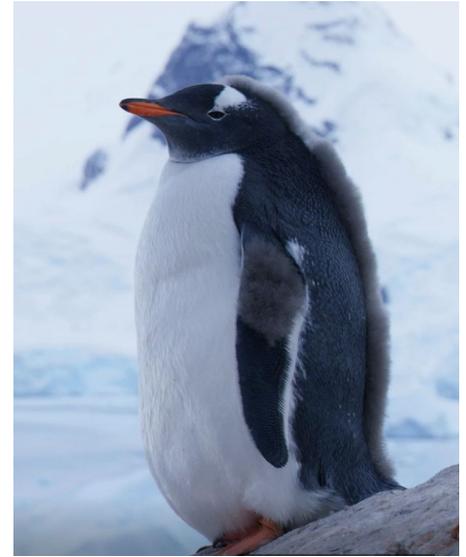
## ABOUT THE FILM

### Synopsis

It is a land of mystery and yet what happens here affects every single one of us. With never-before seen footage, our story brings audiences to the farthest reaches of this wild and majestic continent. It is the coldest, driest and windiest place on Earth with the roughest oceans and yet, weird and wonderful creatures thrive here in astounding abundance. Antarctica is the perfect fit for the Giant Screen.

Using the latest underwater filming techniques, dive beneath sea ice, more than 6 feet thick, to experience the alien world of its seafloor - thousands of purple starfish scuttling to escape being entrapped by growing ice and elaborate jellyfish dancing a deadly dance. Swim alongside playful seals, soar above mountain peaks and vast penguin colonies and witness the largest congregation of fin and humpback whales ever filmed.

Although so remote from us, Antarctica and its surrounding Southern Ocean play a vital role for the entire planet, regulating ocean currents, sea levels and its wildlife-filled waters can absorb huge amounts of carbon. New science is revealing that dramatic changes are occurring and rapidly warming this pristine land of snow and ice. No one owns Antarctica but it will take global cooperation and collaboration to protect it and ensure the future health of our planet.



### Key Messaging

At the bottom of the world is a magical continent which is remote and hostile, beautiful and awe-inspiring. It is thousands of miles away, but what happens here affects us all.

### Key Themes

Antarctica is anchored around three editorial themes which run through the whole of the film:

- **Discovery** - We're only just starting to understand and reveal Antarctica's secrets and the stories of the animals who survive and thrive there.
- **Connection** - Antarctica is the most extreme continent on our planet and although it is thousands of miles away, **what happens here affects us all**.
- **Hope** - The story of Antarctica is that of global unity. It's the only place on earth where science and nature come above everything else, with tangible conservation success stories.

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## FILM CREDITS & LOGOS

### Credit Block

BBC Earth Presents  
A BBC Studios Natural History Unit Production  
"ANTARCTICA"  
Distributed by SK Films  
Narrator, Benedict Cumberbatch  
Original Music Score, Hans Zimmer & Jacob Shea for Bleeding Fingers Music  
Editor, Dave Pearce  
Supervising Producer, Myles Connolly  
Executive Producer, Jonathan Williams  
Producer, Jonny Keeling  
Director, Fredi Devas

### Film Logo Strip - All logos must be included in anything larger than a business card

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## BBC EARTH BOILERPLATE & GUIDELINES



BBC Earth is a global portfolio brand that invites audiences everywhere to engage with the wonders of our universe. We bring amazing premium content, television and experiences to the world, across multiple platforms including branded channels, live events, digital and social media, AR/VR, theatrical releases for cinema and Giant Screen films and consumer products. We believe that celebrating and connecting with our world is more important than ever, across nature, science, space and the human race.

Along with our partners we are continually innovating to find new stories and experiences to bring insight, enlightenment and fresh perspectives to inspire us to think and feel differently about our world. From the epic to the everyday, BBC Earth brings you face to face with heart-pounding action, mind-blowing ideas and the sheer wonder of being part of this amazing planet we call home. Visit [bbc.com/earth](http://bbc.com/earth) for more info.

### BBC Earth Brand Guidelines

The BBC Earth logo has been crafted to evoke the beauty of the natural world. Curves represent the lines of the earth whilst the accompanying gradient brings together forest, sea and sky.

The master logo is used across all off-air executions. Alternatives are used only if size or color restrictions apply. In order to ensure legibility of the marque, please observe the minimum size shown. This has been determined by the minimum allowable size of the BBC blocks.



In order to keep the brand consistent, the logo must not be modified in any way. Please only use the supplied versions of the logo.

The horizontal logo is a single color version of the logo outside of the patch. This logo exists in white or black, and is primarily used on air for many navigational elements. The minimum size is determined by the BBC blocks as shown. This should only be used in an execution where there is insufficient space for the patch logo.



**It is mandatory to use the BBC Earth logo above the Antarctica title treatment. It cannot be cut off for any reason.**

BBC Earth is always written as shown here. Earth is never written without the preceding BBC, and there is always a space between BBC and Earth. BBC exists in all caps and Earth in title case. Please keep BBC Earth together and not split over two lines where possible.

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## LOGOS & BOILERPLATES

### SK Films

#### An SK Films Release

SK Films is an award-winning content provider and a global leader in the IMAX®/Giant Screen industry. SK works across various genres and platforms, including theatrical, television and digital media, with a special emphasis on creating high impact natural history and science related content.

SK has a reputation as one of the most accomplished and respected producers and distributors supplying 3D, 2D and Dome product to IMAX and other Giant Screen theaters worldwide, with a mission to entertain and inspire audiences and immerse them in the awe and wonder of the world we live in. For more information, please visit [SKFilms.ca](http://SKFilms.ca)

### Production Partners

Logistical support provided by



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent US federal agency that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering. NSF funds reach all 50 United States through grants to nearly 2,000 colleges, universities and other institutions. For more information, please visit [www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov).

The *Antarctica* filmmaking team was given access to the McMurdo Field Station, thanks to logistical support from the National Science Foundation, which led to the Weddell seal and under sea-ice filming. In the early stages of post production, the team was also lucky to be supported by Valentine Kass, former Program Director at the NSF, who is now retired.

In the NSF multimedia gallery there are over 490 items on Antarctica, this includes high resolution images, videos and articles. All items are free and available to the public to download.

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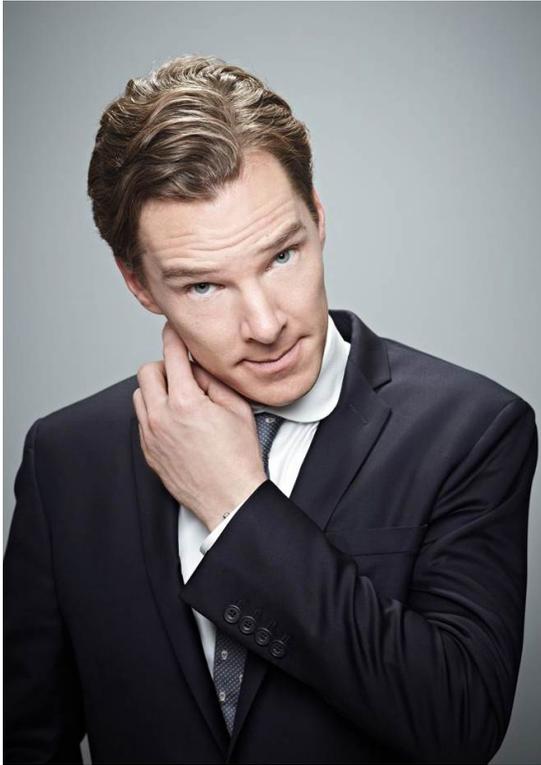
The British Antarctic Survey (BAS), an institute of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), delivers and enables world-leading interdisciplinary research in the Polar Regions. Its skilled science and support staff based in Cambridge, Antarctica and the Arctic, work

together to deliver research that uses the Polar Regions to advance our understanding of Earth as a sustainable planet. Through its extensive logistic capability and know-how BAS facilitates access for the British and international science community to the UK polar research operation. Numerous national and international collaborations, combined with an excellent infrastructure help sustain a world leading position for the UK in Antarctic affairs. For more information visit [bas.ac.uk](http://bas.ac.uk)

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## MEET THE NARRATOR



### Benedict Cumberbatch, Narrator

Academy Award Nominee Benedict Cumberbatch is known for playing the title role of “Sherlock Holmes” in a role that has earned him international acclaim and several awards including The Primetime Emmy. In 2015 Benedict portrayed Alan Turing in the multi award winning film *The Imitation Game* which earned him a BAFTA, Golden Globe and Academy Award nomination as Best Actor.

Other big screen performances include the role of the dragon Smaug and the Necromancer in Peter Jackson’s *The Hobbit*, Khan in JJ Abrams’ blockbuster *Star Trek: Into Darkness*, Julian Assange in *The Fifth Estate*, Little’ Charles Aiken in *August: Osage County*, Ford in Steve McQueen’s Oscar winning *12 Years A Slave* and Billy Bulger in *Black Mass*.

Early TV roles included his incredibly powerful performance as Stephen Hawking, in the BBC’s highly acclaimed drama ‘*Hawking*’ which earned him his first BAFTA nomination. A second BAFTA nomination came in 2010 for his portrayal of

Bernard in the BBC adaptation of ‘*Small Island*’. Benedict also starred as Christopher Stejens in the Tom Stoppard’s BBC/HBO drama ‘*Parades End*’ based on the acclaimed novels, also earning him an Emmy nomination.

In 2016 his depiction of Richard III in the BBC’s ‘*Hollow Crown*’ series cemented his place as one of the finest actors of his generation earning him another BAFTA nomination. Benedict joined the Marvel Universe as the titular character in 2016’s *Doctor Strange*, reprising his role as Dr. Strange in *Avengers: Infinity War* and *Avengers: Endgame*. More recently, Benedict’s performance in David Nicholls’ adaptation of Edward St. Aubyn’s beloved ‘*Patrick Melrose*’ has earned him a BAFTA for Best Actor and Emmy and Golden Globe Best Actor nominations. Last year, he appeared in the HBO/Channel 4 political drama ‘*Brexit: The Uncivil War*’ and filmed the Cold War spy-drama *The Courier* and a film about the English artist *Louis Wain*. Benedict is currently in New Zealand filming the Jane Campion film ‘*The Power Of The Dog*’.

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## FILMMAKER HEADSHOTS & BIOS



### Fredi Devas, Director

Dr. Fredi Devas is a wildlife filmmaker who cares deeply about the natural world and the challenges it faces. After completing a PhD on Chacma baboons in Namibia, Fredi did research on the bushmeat trade in Equatorial Guinea and then spent time living with the San bushmen in Southern Africa.

Having worked on *Meerkat Manor* and Nick Baker's *Weird Creatures*, he joined the BBC to work on *Frozen Planet* and then *Wild Arabia*. He's been lucky enough to film polar bears feasting on a whale carcass, camel racing with robotic jockeys, and be surrounded by nearly half a million King penguins.

On *Planet Earth II* he decided to leave the wildernesses behind to produce and direct the 'Cities' episode. Highlights included filming langurs and macaques in India, and hyenas roaming the streets in Ethiopia, where he was struck by the harmonious relationship between people and the potentially dangerous animals they shared their cities with.



### Jonny Keeling, Producer

Having completed a Zoology degree at Cambridge University and PhD at Bristol, Jonny went on to pursue a career with the BBC and share his passion for the natural world. Jonny has 20 years filmmaking experience in the Natural History Unit spanning a wide range of output - from blue chip landmarks to live broadcasts, observational documentaries to presenter-led formats.

He was researcher on the *Natural World*, assistant producer on David Attenborough's *Life of Mammals* and producer on *Planet Earth*. He has produced and directed a variety of wildlife documentaries for BBC One and BBC Two and was the series producer on *Expedition Tiger*, *Expedition Wolf* and *The Dark*.

In 2012 Jonny took on the role as Executive Producer of Children's Natural History. Recent projects for CBeebies and CBBC include

*Andy's Dinosaur Adventures*, *Andy's Prehistoric adventures*, *Wild, Deadly Pole to Pole*, *Wild and Weird* and *Naomi's Nightmares of Nature*.

Alongside his children's portfolio, Jonny has also Executive Produced two series for BBC four: *The Wonder of Animals* with Chris Packham and *Secrets of Bones* with Ben Garrod.

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## FILMMAKER HEADSHOTS & BIOS



### Jonathan Williams, Executive Producer

Jonathan Williams is the Head of Commercial for BBC Earth and manages BBC Earth's giant screen business. He was the Executive Producer of *Oceans: Our Blue Planet 3D*, BBC Earth's award-winning 2018 giant screen film.

He has an extensive track record of developing multi-platform content and experiences that offer global audiences new ways of enjoying BBC Earth's premium natural history content. He is a strong believer in the power of the immersive giant screen format to excite and inspire audiences, and has spearheaded BBC Earth's strategy in this industry.

Jonathan grew up in South Africa where he developed a passion for the natural world. He spent his early career working in book publishing and, after completing an MBA, then moved to BBC Studios in 2013.



### Myles Connolly, Supervising Producer

Myles has filmed in more than forty countries during his thirty-year career and filled a number of production and post-production roles along the way including producer, writer, picture editor and VFX supervisor. Myles has worked extensively in the feature documentary and IMAX genres on more than fifty films including some high profile projects like *Everest*, *The Living Sea*, *Samsara*, *Enchanted Kingdom*, *Flight of the Butterflies* and *Oceans: Our Blue Planet*.

Working alongside some of the best talent in the film business, his efforts have helped garner numerous awards, including four Cine GoldenEagles, the Grand Prix du Festival at the Theater du La Geode in Paris, the Best 3D/Immersive award at the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival and two Academy Award nominations in the Short Documentary category.

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## FILMMAKER HEADSHOTS & BIOS



### Abi Lees, Assistant Producer

Currently a BBC Natural History Unit Assistant Producer whose background includes a Bachelor of Journalism/Bachelor of Science (majors Botany and Zoology) double degree.

Abi is working on the *Antarctica* and *Australasia* episode of the next Attenborough bluechip series, '*One Planet, Seven Worlds*', which requires long periods in the field in remote locations.

The background of the top section is a photograph of a snowy Antarctic landscape. In the foreground, there are large, jagged ice formations. In the distance, a line of people is visible on a snow-covered slope. The BBC Earth logo is in the top left, and the title 'ANTARCTICA' is in large, bold, white letters with a blue outline. Below the title, it says 'NARRATED BY BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH' in smaller white letters.

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**ANTARCTICA**  
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## FILMING LOCATIONS & ANTARCTICA FACTS

### Filming Locations

- McMurdo Station, Antarctica - Weddell Seals
- St. Andrew's Bay, South Georgia - King Penguins
- St. Andrew's Bay, South Georgia - Elephant Seals
- Cierva Cove, Antarctica - Gentoo Penguins and Leopard Seals
- McMurdo Station, Antarctica - Under The Ice Narnia
- New Zealand Islands - Southern Right Whales
- Elephant Island, Antarctica - Whale Aggregation

### Antarctica Facts

- Antarctica was first sighted by humans just 200 years ago.
- It is the most hostile of all the continents on Earth.
- 98% of mainland Antarctica, an area one and a half times the size of the United States, is covered by ice.
- When a newborn Weddell seal first touches the ice, it is the sharpest drop in temperature any animal ever faces.
- Elephant seals have blubber that is 15cm (about 6 inches) thick.
- It is estimated that there are four hundred trillion krill in the Southern Ocean and that their combined weight is greater than that of any other animal species on the planet.
- Winds in the Antarctic can reach 70mph (over 100kmph).
- Gentoo penguins are the fastest penguins in the sea and can swim at 22mph (over 35kmph).
- Every day in winter, 40,000 more square miles of sea freezes over, by the end of winter the continent has doubled its size.
- Antarctica is the largest desert in the world.
- The largest animal ever to have existed was a 33m (over 100 feet) blue whale and it was over 100 years old.

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## FILMING FIRSTS & PRODUCTION STORIES

### Firsts

- The largest aggregation of great whales ever filmed.
- Jellyfish being caught and eaten by sea anemones in Antarctica.
- Leopard seal hunting gentoo penguins filmed with a drone.

### Production Stories

1. Footage of the largest great whale aggregation ever shot, nearly didn't make it. After 7 weeks searching it all came together on one day but the helicopter was broken and the drone malfunctioned.

After managing to film the fin whales feeding, camera operator Bertie Gregory had to crash the drone into the ship to save the memory card and to avoid damaging the helicopter.

2. I had a real James Bond moment on our shoot to film the fin whale aggregation in Antarctica. To keep our carbon footprint down we asked one of our film crew leaving Antarctica to store our kit at a Russian scientific base, who agreed to keep the kit for us.

Our ship, the German scientific research vessel the Polarstern, was anchored in a separate bay so we had to use the helicopter to pick up our equipment. Touching down at a Russian base in Antarctica to pick up a load of hard black cases felt very spy movie. Even more so when I was invited inside to drink a customary tippie of vodka whilst the gear was being loaded!

I sat there with the station leader, a Ukrainian scientist and a Russian orthodox priest drinking shots of vodka sweating in my helicopter survival suit!

3. Filming underwater with Southern Right Whales was an amazing experience. They are so trusting and curious of humans they'd come right up to us. They really enjoyed the bubbles that our gear expelled, so much so that they would stretch out their bellies above us so that the bubbles would hit their undersides giving them a tickle...or perhaps a massage!

One whale - which we named Patrick - was so keen on us he followed us around. When we had finished filming him, we swam away but when I looked behind me instead of seeing water, I saw a huge head and eye next to me. The difference between a playful dog and a playful whale however is about 60 tonnes so we had to be very careful! They were extremely gentle for their size and it was a privilege to be in their presence.

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## PHOTO SELECTS

Images and captions can be provided to the media and used to promote the film.



[CLICK HERE](#) to view and download all photo selects with captions.



## TRAILERS & BEHIND THE SCENES VIDEOS

### 90 Second Trailer

Official trailer for the film, "Coming Soon" version hosted on the BBC Earth YouTube Channel.



### Meet the Director

Meet Fredi Devas, the film's Director, as he recounts his favorite on-location moments and unique interactions with animals completely unafraid of humans. Fredi shares his excitement for working in the Giant Screen medium and passion to inspire audiences to help protect this incredible and fragile ecosystem.



### Filming for IMAX® and Giant Screens

Sit down with the film's Supervising Producer, Myles Connolly, and discover what goes into creating a spectacular Giant Screen film. Learn about the challenges and obstacles the filmmaking team faced while working in one of the most isolated places on the planet - capturing stunning landscapes and astounding animal behaviors for the world's largest screens.

