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'WILD' BY MICHAEL NICHOLS AT THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART

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The Philadelphia Museum of Art is presenting “Wild” by Michael Nichols, the first major exhibition of the work of one of the world’s leading wildlife photographers.

Michael Nichols has collaborated with scientists on groundbreaking projects about great apes, elephants, and big cats, as well as the landscapes of Africa’s Congo Basin and the American West. In this in-depth survey, his photographs are presented along with paintings, sculpture, and other media selected from the Museum’s collection to demonstrate the enduring importance of the wild as a subject for artists across time.

Nichols has always approached the photographing of his subjects with great imagination, using innovative camera trap work and other technology in service of his goal: to photograph the wild without disturbing it, a strategy he calls “not being there.” “Wild” is organized around two themes that have preoccupied Nichols throughout his career and that form the titles for two of his book projects, *Brutal Kinship* (1999) and *The Last Place on Earth* (2005). *Brutal Kinship* explored the relationship between humans and chimpanzees documenting chimps in captivity, in sanctuaries, and in the wild. In *The Last Place on Earth*, Nichols documented scientist Mike Fay’s trek across the Congo Basin — the largest untouched area on the planet — recording its rich biodiversity. An image of surfing hippos in Gabon from *The Last Place on Earth* was included in *Time* magazine’s “100 Most Influential Images of All Time” and is among the photographs on view.

Nichols photographed for many publications including *Geo* and *Rolling Stone*, and was also a member of *Magnum Photos* for 13 years before becoming a staff photographer for *National Geographic* magazine in 1996. His first story for *National Geographic* was published in 1991. Since then, he has completed 26 stories for the magazine and was named *Editor-at-Large* in 2008. In 2007, he founded the annual *LOOK3 Festival of the Photograph* in Charlottesville, Virginia. Nichols currently resides in Sugar Hollow, Virginia, with his partner and wife of 40 years, Reba Peck.