David Breashears is an accomplished filmmaker, adventurer, author, mountaineer, and professional speaker. Since 1978, he has combined his skills in climbing and filmmaking to complete more than forty film projects. A sampling of his film credits include: Producer and Director of NBC Universal’s critically acclaimed feature length documentary Storm Over Everest about the 1996 Mount Everest tragedy (broadcasted on PBS’ FRONTLINE in spring 2008); Producer, Director and Director of Photography for the IMAX film Kilimanjaro: To the Roof of Africa (2001); Co-producer, Co-Director and Director of Photography for Everest: The Death Zone (1997); Director of Photography for Seven Years In Tibet (1996); Co-Producer, Co-Director, Director of Photography, and Expedition Leader for the IMAX film EVEREST (1996); Director of Photography and Field Producer for Mystery of the Inca Mummy (1995), a National Geographic Explorer film shot in Peru; Director of Photography and Co-Producer of Red Flag Over Tibet (1994), a FRONTLINE, WGBH-TV program shot in Tibet, India and Nepal; and Cliffhanger (1993), a feature film starring Sylvester Stallone, for which he was a cameraman, climbing consultant and advisor.

In 1983, Breashears transmitted the first live television pictures from the summit of Mount Everest, and in 1985 became the first American to reach the summit of Mount Everest twice.

In the spring of 1996, Breashears co-directed and photographed the first ever IMAX film shot on Mount Everest. When the now infamous blizzard of May 10, 1996 hit Mount Everest, killing eight climbers, Breashears and his team were in the midst of making this historic film. In the tragedy that soon followed, Breashears and his team stopped filming to assist several of the stranded climbers to safety. He and his expedition members were later recognized for their courageous efforts. Breashears and his team then regrouped and reached the summit of the mountain on May 23, 1996, achieving their goal of becoming the first to attain IMAX film images from Earth’s highest point. Breashears has said that if there is a lesson to be learned from the May 1996 tragedy, it is that for him, success that year was not to be found in reaching the summit, it was that everyone on his team returned safely. The film, titled EVEREST, premiered in March 1998 and has been shown in more than 300 IMAX theaters throughout the world. EVEREST was the most eagerly anticipated and successful IMAX film ever released.

In May of 1997, Breashears performed the first live audio WebCast from the summit of Mount Everest for the PBS science documentary series NOVA. Breashears is the recipient of four National Emmy Awards for achievement in filmmaking.

Breashears is the author or co-author of three best-selling books: Last Climb (National Geographic Books), Everest: Mountain Without Mercy (National Geographic Books), and his memoir High Exposure: An Enduring Passion for Everest and Unforgiving Places (Simon & Schuster). His IMAX film, Kilimanjaro: To the Roof of Africa, is the subject of a National Geographic book of the same title.
In the spring of 2004, Breashears reached the summit of Mount Everest for the fifth time. Equipped with a 35mm motion picture camera, Breashears made his fifth ascent of Everest while leading his handpicked team to the summit. A documentary of Breashears’ ascent, and the extreme challenges of high-altitude filmmaking, was recorded by team members using digital video cameras.

Breashears produced and directed the feature length documentary Storm Over Everest about the 1996 Mount Everest disaster. The film was acquired by NBC Universal and made its broadcast premiere on PBS’ FRONLINE in spring 2008. The documentary includes dramatic interviews with the survivors of Mount Everest’s deadliest storm, and re-creations of the fast moving blizzard that killed eight people in May 1996. This film tells the story of the climbers who perished in that storm, marking the worst climbing tragedy in Mount Everest’s history. But more remarkably, it is the story of eleven climbers caught in the storm and the eyewitness accounts of their astonishing survival in the world’s most unforgiving environment.

Breashears is an accomplished, highly sought-after professional speaker. His lectures are closely tied to his ascent of Mount Everest in 1996 as Leader and Director of the IMAX film team. Breashears’ presentation is a spellbinding blend of first person story-telling illustrated by breathtaking and rarely seen images from the 1996 Everest IMAX filming expedition. By popular demand, he has delivered his presentation throughout North America, Canada, Europe and Asia. David’s extraordinary real-life experiences, observations, practical knowledge, and expertise in many areas allow him to precisely target and interact with the audience he is presenting to. He speaks on a range of topics including leadership, motivation, teamwork, team building, safety, and more.

In addition to David’s corporate speaking engagements, he conducts quarterly lectures each year on leadership, planning and team building at the Advanced Management Program at INSEAD in Fontainebleau, France; widely recognized among the world’s top-tier business schools as the most innovative and influential. David also speaks quarterly to the nations Admirals and Commanders at the U.S. Naval Post-Graduate School’s Center for Executive Education in Monterey, California. David is consistently rated one of the top speakers at both programs.

David is also the Founding Director of the non-profit foundation, GlacierWorks, and Executive Director & Principal Photographer of the foundation’s Glacier Research Imaging Project (GRIP). His work’s mission is to inspire mitigation and adaptation around the world through the power of his imagery documenting the disruption of a reliable flow of water from Asia’s glacier systems. The disturbances documented by David’s photography are the result of the environmental warming trend and its direct impact on melting glaciers. David’s passion for traveling and climbing throughout the mountains of High Asia since his first expedition in 1979 brings to GlacierWorks’ the same curiosity and sense of adventure that has helped him become one of the world’s greatest high-altitude filmmakers.

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