

Speaking to Everyone on the Planet

Self-portrait of John Hatheway shooting a sunset in the Nebraska badlands

The combination of John Hatheway's love for the outdoors and his talent in the arts has led to a personal and professional goal of exciting people about environmental issues.

Over the course of four months, Hatheway was an intern to "The Photo Ark." The Photo Ark is a project that was started over a decade ago by National Geographic photographer Joel Sartore. It has grown into a lifelong commitment to "document the incredible diversity of life on this planet before it vanishes." It is estimated that around 12,000 different species are in human hands today; Sartore has already

photographed 8,500 of them.

Sartore's photos capture the "intrinsic beauty and the harrowing plight of animals in the modern world" in a more emotional way than what we may find in textbook pictures or scientific journals. His audience should "look the animals in the eye and fall in love." This love at first sight is achieved by the simplicity of the photographs. The animals are photographed on black or white backgrounds, neutralizing any distractions.

Hatheway's role was to organize and produce short videos from the footage Sartore took during his shoots.

Video "often floats to the surface of people's social media feeds," so it has been important to make it "a more integral part of The Photo Ark's work." The project is reaching more and more people by staying up to date in media, such as posting the videos that Hatheway has made.

Despite serious environmental challenges, the changes he sees in people makes the project worth it. In one example, Hatheway took a trip with Sartore to a wildlife rescue center.

"The first thing I noticed when we arrived was that the veterinary nurses

“I am passionate about the visual communication of stories and ideas and how they can mend our broken relationship with the planet.”



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stopped what they were doing to help ensure that Joel got the images he needed. I got the impression that they see Joel's work as an effective way of telling the world about the amazing work that they do every day."

Another impact that Hatheway witnessed was Sartore's defense of zoological parks and aquariums. "Zoos and aquariums often get a bad rap for keeping them (animals) in captivity, but the reality is that these facilities are the only line of defense against extinction,

and they do a great job of keeping the animals happy and comfortable. Accredited facilities do incredible work to ensure the longevity of species in peril. It was fascinating to listen to Joel dispel the negative myths about zoos; he is one of their most enthusiastic cheerleaders."

Throughout his internship, Hatheway grew and learned in multiple ways, leading to his interest in a future career in nature and wildlife documentaries. He hopes to combine his interest in

the environment with visual art and storytelling, "because they are languages that everyone can speak and understand. They're things that everyone on the planet can relate to."

For now, Hatheway wants people to hear the statement that Sartore gives to his audiences: "Make every decision count, influence others, make it permanent, think green, vote early, vote often, spend your money well, care, tell others, wake up the neighborhood. Is that enough? Yes, it is. You bet it is. That's more than enough. That's plenty."

On the Web

**Learn more about The Photo Ark
and see some of John's videos at
www.sgs.org/magazine**

