



THE BANFF CENTRE

MEDIA RELEASE

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Banff Author Celebrates Launch of Arctic Book

Book Launch – *The Horizontal Everest*
Thursday, March 7, 2002, 7:00 p.m.
Eric Harvie Theatre West Lobby, The Banff Centre

Jerry Kobalenko's heart may be in the high Arctic, but like many adventurous souls, his home is here in Banff. On March 7, the acclaimed Banff photojournalist will celebrate the launch of his second book – *The Horizontal Everest* – with a reception at The Banff Centre, hosted by the Leighton Studios. Part travelogue, part historical research, part natural science, part adventure mystery, *The Horizontal Everest* brings to life Kobalenko's obsession with Ellesmere Island in Canada's far north.

Both the heaven and hell of the high Arctic, Ellesmere Island lies a mere 450 miles from the North Pole. The island's mountainous landscape features the highest peaks in the Western Hemisphere east of the Rockies. In *The Horizontal Everest*, Kobalenko examines what possesses people to go there, often repeatedly, sometimes to suffer and die. On a personal level Kobalenko, who over the past 15 years has walked and skied some 5600 kilometers on Ellesmere Island, reflects upon the meaning of extreme adventure and his own complicated relationship with this frozen landscape. The result is what best-selling author Simon Winchester calls "...a refreshingly honest book – a portrait of remarkable people and harsh landscapes, and the siren-like allure of both."

Kobalenko completed some of his work on *The Horizontal Everest* during a residency at The Banff Centre's Leighton Studios. The Leighton Studios for Independent Residencies fosters the creation of new work by professional artists. Residencies provide an opportunity for concentrated focus in a retreat environment.

The Horizontal Everest book launch takes place Thursday, March 7 beginning at 7 p.m. in the Eric Harvie Theatre West Lobby. The event will include a brief presentation by the author, a book signing and refreshments.

The Horizontal Everest is published in Canada by Penguin Books Canada Ltd., and in the United States by Soho Press, Inc.

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