



KODAK 4001X

# SEBASTIAN COPELAND

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IMAGES RETOUCHING BY PRIMARY PHOTOGRAPHIC

The Arctic isn't at the top of most people's holiday destination list. Whether you picture a treacherous, frozen wasteland or the spot where Santa's elves get everything ready for Christmas, chances are you've never planned on going there. But for environmental advocate Sebastian Copeland, who visited frequently in his childhood dreams, the Arctic means something else. The North Pole was the destination for a real-life exploration to mark the centennial of Admiral Robert Peary's 1909 expedition and to experience the rapidly vanishing environment first-hand. This remarkable endeavor was captured on film by Sebastian and can be seen in *Into the Cold: A Journey of the Soul*. This cinematic account of his four-week, 400-mile frostbitten trek sees Sebastian and adventure junkie Keith Heger trade civilization for the physical challenge of minus fifty-degree temperatures and the mental hardships of isolation and endurance. Through stunning visuals and ambitious musical accompaniment, the documentary captures the tragic beauty of this desolate place while delivering a poignant message about our gas-guzzling, RIP-planet lifestyles. Sebastian continues to convey that message with his most recent kite-skiing adventure to Greenland. Arctic pilgrimage partner Keith caught up with Sebastian while he was packing up for the expedition to talk environmental impacts, internal peace and their incredible (and incredibly cold) journey.

KEITH HEGER—Sebastian, how are you doing?

SEBASTIAN COPELAND—I'm good, buddy. How are you?

KH—I'm well. Where are you at, right now?

SC—I'm in LA.

KH—How is it there?

SC—It's fantastic. I'm in the final stages of preparation for the Greenland trip, so I've got clothes hanging all over the house and packs of food, technology and camera equipment. It's a mess out here. I leave in a couple of days... How are you doing?

KH—I'm very well. I'm here in Chicago. It's warm and sunny and I'm wearing my Canucks shorts and thinking about *Into the Cold* and your next journey to Greenland.

SC—I'm bummed that I'm not doing this trip with you. You're going to be missed on this one. We had such an amazing time in the Arctic. It was as amazing a time as you can get while you're trekking across, you know, frozen icescape.

KH—Yeah, it definitely was amazing.

SC—It's time to do an expedition to Los Angeles, Keith, and come visit.

KH—I know it's about time. Some place warm.

SC—But now you've got another little kid coming and I can't help but think of the responsibility that this means in terms of climate change and the responsibility we have to the generations of the future. I want to have a child, and hopefully in the next couple of years it'll be on the table, but I can't disassociate the responsibility of a child with the responsibility that we have for advocating on behalf of the planet.

KH—Every time I go traveling in the Arctic with team members, there's no stronger sense of purpose in me than encouraging people to be ambassadors. When they go home, they can share the story of the Arctic, however they make that story up. Certainly with *Into the Cold* you told a compelling story. You're so focused on the journey and the accomplishment, the hardships and the daily challenge. It takes a moment to step away and recognize your sense of place. That's the question I have for you: How does traveling to the Arctic and these inhospitable corners of the world strengthen your space in LA? How do you relate the two to each other?

SC—I come back with rich content about these places, which are often perceived as the corners of the world. They seem so far away and almost otherworldly, and the reality is that they're very much part of our world. They're an inherent, necessary, symbiotic part of our existence on this planet, and as we see the melt occurring - as we see these regions being impacted so dramatically by climate change many see that as a sentimental tale, but in fact it's really a cautionary one, because as the ice goes, so goes humanity.