

# JIMMY NELSON

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## Jimmy Nelson at the World Economic Forum

Davos House - 2020

**Amsterdam, The Netherlands, January 14, 2020 - The World Economic Forum, which will be held in Davos this month, will be manifested around the theme “Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World”. It will bring together 3,000 decision-makers, philanthropists and corporate activists from around the world, and aim to assist governments and international institutions in tracking progress towards the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. Jimmy Nelson will be presenting the first-ever Blink Test, an eye locked film showcasing a portraiture of the world’s last indigenous people. The ultimate aim is to provoke thought and spark conversation on the importance of safeguarding indigenous cultures in order to manifest a cohesive and sustainable future.**

Artist Jimmy Nelson is sending a warning that the world is at risk of losing its global cultural heritage as their family trees, rivers, forests and habitats are destroyed in the quest for human progress. The artist brings out a bid to preserve cultural diversity by issuing the caution: ‘BLINK. AND THEY’RE GONE’. A unique AR-Human interface challenges the viewer not to blink. If you blink, the film stops playing. A warning that if we don’t engage with indigenous cultures now, they will be gone forever and so will the world’s cultural diversity.

Our world is changing rapidly. Our ever-growing population and urge for bigger economies have led to both positive and negative developments, such as improved technology and industrialisation, globalisation, consumerism and global warming. Due to technological advances, it feels like we are accelerating into the future faster than ever before, but every day it becomes clearer that we are damaging our planet.

**Indigenous peoples represent less than 5% of the global population, however, they manage 25% of the world's surface and are ultimately responsible for 80% of the global diversity left in the world.**

The forests under their stewardship store more than a quarter of all the world's above ground tropical carbon. From tropical forests in Asia and Latin America, through to the Arctic tundra or cloud forests of the Pacific Northwest and Patagonia environments that acts as the planet's vital organs, its lungs, its heart, its kidneys, its liver and for many of us its very soul have been protected by indigenous people the world over for thousands of years.



As we enter the decade of delivery, and all other global goals become contextualised by increased extreme weather events, natural disasters and an increasingly fragile ecosystem, piling more and more pressure on urban centers we believe it is only logical that those with the most experience of living in harmony with the natural environment have the most to teach us and the most to contribute.

*“The time is now to acknowledge and celebrate the world last Indigenous communities as our new role models. They are the living example of how humans can live in perfect harmony with themselves, their unique cultures and the natural world.”*

— Artist Jimmy Nelson

Indigenous peoples are the ones who best protect nature because it is their work tool. In the heart of the tropical forests, it is in the areas populated by hunter-gatherer communities that we can find the most biodiverse areas. In the remotest deserts communities have learned to live with resources at their most minimum. In the coastal areas, from the Central American Kuna to the Pacific Maori, traditional fishing methods preserve corals, mangroves and other unique ecosystems that are the most effective barrier to rising sea levels.

Indigenous are ready to share their traditional knowledge, and to (re)teach humankind how to live in harmony with nature. But for this, it is imperative that all major polluters in the world respect their commitment, made in Paris in 2015, to do everything to limit global warming to below 1,5 degrees Celcius.

**By attending the World Economic Forum in Davos, Jimmy Nelson will convey the importance of protecting what's left of the last pristine nature and the connection of human beings living in harmony and respect for the natural world and each other.**



*The [World Economic Forum](#) has announced the theme and details for its 50th Annual Meeting, to be held 21-24 January in Davos, Switzerland.*

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#### ABOUT JIMMY NELSON

Jimmy Nelson is a Dutch- British photographer who began his photographic journey in 1987. He has spent over 30 years traveling the world to visit and photograph some of the last indigenous communities. His work has subsequently been used to garner support and help restore a sense of pride around the indigenous way of life. What started as a naive engagement with the peoples he met during work assignments, has over a period of three decades turned into a personal project. The book 'Before they pass away' is a homage to the cultures he will probably never fully understand, but who will never stop luring him to visit. The book's success and the responses to it have enabled and encouraged Jimmy to continue this journey.

In October 2018, Nelson published the first interactive book 'Homage to Humanity', for which he visited another unique 34 indigenous cultures around the globe. The book is accompanied by the Webby Award-winning 'Companion App' that makes it possible to scan every image in the book and brings it to life with exclusive films, interviews, and 360° film material. This allows people from all generations to experience the making and context of the image and opens the doors to step into another world where wealth has a different meaning.

Jimmy strongly believes that if you change the way you look at people, the people you look at change. And if that change is powerful enough, it will gather momentum to affect the whole of humanity. A message that today he is promoting through talks at international conferences and museum exhibitions. With the proceedings of his art projects, the [Jimmy Nelson Foundation](#) was set up to take it a step further in supporting the communities on the ground.



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