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HAWAII'S EXPLOSIVE POWER IS REAWAKENING IN NATURE'S KILAUEA: MOUNTAIN OF FIRE

On Hawaii's Big Island, Kilauea is one of the world's most active volcanoes. Perhaps a hundred thousand years old, it is today generating some of the largest explosions experts have ever witnessed. Red hot molten lava shooting up in the air a thousand feet or more is one of nature's greatest displays of power. It is also part of an age-old process that creates even as it destroys. *Kilauea: Mountain of Fire* premieres nationally Sunday, March 29, 2009 at 8 p.m. (ET) on PBS (check local listings). Academy Award-winning actor F. Murray Abraham narrates.

“Being in the wrong place at the right time is a necessity when filming volcanoes,” says Fred Kaufman, executive producer of *Nature*. “Unlike wild animals that tend to run and disappear at the first sight or smell of a human, lava flows are unpredictable, quite dangerous and come right at you.”

Kilauea is today experiencing the kind of activity that experts have not seen in 25 years or more. In four years, the amount of magma flowing through the volcano has doubled. Scientists track its paths deep in the earth and across its surface as it travels from summit to sea. They are seeking answers, hoping to predict when it will erupt again. One of their tools is a revolutionary 3D imaging device called LIDAR, which allows them to take scans of the crater floor. From those images they are able to learn about the hydraulics of the system, how pressure is built and

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displaced, where and when millions of gallons of lava are released.

Geophysicist Milton Garces records the sounds of the vents created by the volcano, capturing an entirely new form of “rock music,” and in the process, tracking eruption, explosions and other volcanic events. The tonal harmonics create an ongoing song he calls “Pele's chant.”

Molten lava, unleashed, transforms the earth, sculpting a surreal moonscape. But even in its fiery path, life continues in small oases of life called kipukas. These ecological time capsules shelter a variety of creatures living in genetic isolation. The Hawaiian state bird - the nene - finds haven here, as do Hawaiian honeycreepers and a plague of yellowjacket wasps that threaten to topple the ecological balance maintained there. A few undaunted biologists fight a continuous battle to keep their numbers in check, wiping out dozens of massive colonies every year, with no end in sight.

Underneath Kilauea is the longest, deepest lava tube yet discovered on Earth, a vaulted chamber rising eighty feet - a cathedral of ribbed floors and twisting mazes. The creatures that live here are called troglobites, insect cave dwellers adapted and wholly unique to this place.

Perhaps the most spectacular moment of creation is when lava pours into the ocean, an enormous force of nature meeting its equal in the sea. Filmmaker Paul Atkins employs 25 years of skill and experience documenting Kilauea to take on the extremely dangerous challenge of capturing Kilauea's grand entry underwater on film. The rare footage of this cataclysmic meeting of 2000 degree lava and 75 degree ocean water is truly a sight to behold.

Nature has won more than 450 honors from the television industry, the international wildlife film communities, and environmental organizations - including 10 Emmys, three Peabodys and the first award given to a television program by the Sierra Club. Most recently, the series won a Peabody Award for Silence of the Bees.

Nature: Kilauea: Mountain of Fire is a Production of Pangolin Pictures and Thirteen in association with WNET.ORG and National Geographic Channel International for PBS. Available

in HD. Fred Kaufman is Executive Producer; William Grant is Executive-in-Charge. Major corporate support for *Nature* is provided by Canon U.S.A., Inc. and SC Johnson. Additional support is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the nation's public television stations.

Nature video podcasts, available on iTunes and at *Nature Online* (www.pbs.org/nature), range from two to 10 minutes in length and feature behind-the-scenes interviews with filmmakers and producers, program excerpts, and outtakes.

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