

## ***With Nature and a Camera: Cherry Kearton and the Birth of Wildlife Documentary***

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14th - 20th December 2021

Pavilion, Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AR

*"We must remember that to help in the least degree to accomplish the extinction of anything beautiful and interesting is a crime against future generations"*

**Cherry Kearton**

*With Nature and a Camera: Cherry Kearton and the Birth of Wildlife Documentary* is presented in the Royal Geographical Society's Pavilion, on Exhibition Road. The exhibition features 36 photographs and footage by the pioneering wildlife photographer Cherry Kearton.

The exhibition has been conceived to celebrate the career of an ecological and photographic change maker and to raise funds for the charity Fauna & Flora International (FFI). FFI is the world's oldest international wildlife conservation organization, quietly aiming to preserve this planet's wildlife since 1903. With a focus on biodiversity, they aim to save our ecosystem from extinction by raising awareness to the planet's imminent threat and safeguarding the world's biodiversity. With an understanding of the charity's inspiring and historic work this exhibition hopes to raise funds in support, conserving our planet and cementing Cherry's legacy.

Cherry Kearton and his brother Richard are understood to be the pioneers of wildlife photography. Taking some of the first ever photographs of animals in their natural habitats and documenting the lives of countless living organisms – the brothers saw things no one had seen, or even noticed before. On his travels to Africa in the early 1900s Cherry was unique in shooting animals with a camera and not a gun, aiming to preserve and document wildlife rather than cull it for memorabilia.

From the beginning of his photographic career in 1890 until his death in 1940 Cherry devoted his life to documenting and conserving wildlife. The product of his extensive career is ever reaching not only within photography but ecology globally. *With Nature and a Camera* explores a series of never seen before slides by Kearton found by his family. Included in the images seen today is the first ever photo of a Rhino with a flashlight, the only ever photo of a Maasai tribe hunt as well as countless extraordinary images documenting nature and his process.

It is no exaggeration to associate Cherry Kearton with the birth of wildlife documentary, Sir David Attenborough wrote *"the brothers virtually invented natural history photography, Cherry's cinema film about the penguins on Dassen Island captivated me when I saw it as a boy back in the 1930s"*.

Finally, alongside these influential photographs are the images of collaborative duo Olly and Suzi, whose didactic works responds to nature at its most primitive and wild, citing the influence of Kearton's legacy today and exhibiting the powerful marriage of conservation and photography.