

WHITNEY JOHNSON

DIRECTOR, VISUALS
& IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

Whitney Johnson, director of visuals and immersive experiences at National Geographic, walks through how her team adapted to produce the Year In Pictures, a first for the 133-year-old *National Geographic* magazine. Johnson also led the effort to expand storytelling methods in the midst of unexpected production challenges and physical limitations. "By embracing new ways to create and distribute our stories," she says, "it was possible to share these empowering moments with millions of people."



MARK THIESSEN/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

About Whitney Johnson

Whitney Johnson is the director of visuals and immersive experiences at National Geographic. She leads the visual and immersive staffs, overseeing photography, video, Instagram, and podcast teams. She joined National Geographic in 2015 as the magazine's deputy director of photography.

From 2007 to 2015, Johnson was on the staff of *The New Yorker*, first as a picture editor and later as the director of photography. Prior to joining the magazine, Johnson worked at the Open Society Foundations, where she was a founding member of the Documentary Photography Project and managed an international grant competition and exhibition for documentary photographers.

Her work has earned numerous awards from the American Society of Magazine Editors, the Society of Publication Designers and the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences (the Webby's). In 2011, Johnson — together with *The New Yorker* staff photographer Platon and Human Rights Watch — received a Peabody. In 2018, Pictures of the Year International honored the National Geographic photo staff with the Angus McDougall Overall Excellence in Editing Award and recognized Johnson with an Award of Excellence in the Magazine Visual Editor of the Year category. In 2019, National Geographic was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Photography. Johnson received her Bachelor of Arts from Barnard College and continued with graduate work in American studies at Columbia University.

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