



## **BIG & Digital and Afterglow Studios Invite Giant Screen and Fulldome Audiences to “Touch the Stars”**

**Las Vegas, NV (January 16, 2019)** - BIG & Digital and Afterglow Studios are pleased to announce *Touch the Stars*, the follow-up to the highly acclaimed 2015 giant screen film *Space Next* will release February 2, 2019 at Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum.

Produced by Afterglow Studios and distributed to giant screen and fulldome theaters by BIG & Digital, *Touch the Stars* is the second in a planned trilogy showcasing humanity’s exploration of space. Rendered in stunning 8K resolution, the film chronicles the valiant exploration of the solar system by unmanned robotic spacecraft with well-known names like Mariner, Voyager, and Galileo.

According to the film’s director, Luke Ployhar: “While *Space Next* was mostly about the future of human exploration of space, *Touch the Stars* looks at the history of robotic space exploration, how these spacecraft helped us understand the solar system in which we live, and how they prepared us for the next generation of explorers, those that will transform us from a one planet species to an interplanetary species.”

Lockheed Martin Space engineers joined Afterglow as Technical Producers regarding NASA’s Orion spacecraft, Lunar Gateway, and the company’s Mars Base Camp concept – providing an exciting climax to the film as humanity returns to the Moon and moves on to Mars. “I was very excited working with Lockheed Martin,” says Ployhar, “to learn that they’re not only involved in developing crewed systems to visit other worlds, but they had a hand in each of the historic robotic spacecraft featured in the film.”

“It’s exciting to see *Touch the Stars* conclude with our Mars Base Camp vision as it’s a culmination of decades of exploring our solar system with robotic vehicles and soon, human deep space exploration, which together will accelerate and revolutionize scientific discovery,” said Lisa Callahan, vice president and general manager for Commercial Civil Space at Lockheed Martin. “Around the world, public excitement in space exploration continues to rise and this film tells a beautiful story about these amazing spacecraft and spectacular missions. We’re delighted to have worked with Afterglow Studios on this wonderful film.”

Over a three-year period, Ployhar and his team at Afterglow Studios set out to honor each of the missions profiled in the film with extensive animation based on original spacecraft photography. The final results jumps in vivid detail off the giant screen. To accomplish this, the filmmakers filled a 32-terabyte server and over 60 Intel processors were utilized nonstop for over a year just to produce the film’s renderings.

Robotic space exploration has entered another golden age, with missions to destinations as close as Mars and as far away as Pluto regularly making the evening news. *Touch the Stars* is a timely film certain to enthrall and engage audiences of all ages. It’s not just

about where we've been, but where we are now and where we're headed. For more information, visit the *Touch the Stars* website at [TouchtheStarsMovie.com](http://TouchtheStarsMovie.com).

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### **Social Media:**

Facebook - [www.facebook.com/touchthestars](http://www.facebook.com/touchthestars)

Twitter - [@TouchStarsMovie](https://twitter.com/TouchStarsMovie)

### **About Afterglow Studios**

Afterglow Studios, founded by Luke Ployhar in 2007, is an award winning animation and post production studio based in Minneapolis, MN providing cutting edge Visual Effects, Animation, Design and Film Production. After working on several Giant Screen films providing Effects and Post solutions, Afterglow Studios produced the GSCA award-winning film, *Space Next* with a Release in 2015 and *Touch the Stars* (February 2019), in partnership with Lockheed Martin. Luke Ployhar, a 20 year veteran of Visual Effects and Computer Graphics, has VFX credits including *Minority Report*, *A.I.*, and *Planet of the Apes*.

### **About Lockheed Martin**

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs approximately 100,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

### **About BIG & Digital, LLC**

BIG & Digital specializes in distribution of 4K Films for Flat Screens and 4K and 8K Shows for Fulldome (FD) Theaters and Planetariums. BIG & Digital was founded in 2009 by Tina Ratterman, a veteran in the giant screen (GS) industry with over 20 years of successful marketing and distribution experience. New releases include *In Saturn's Rings* (GS/FD), *Touch the Stars* (GS/FD), *Ningaloo: Australia's Other Great Reef* (FD), *Expedition Chesapeake* (GS) and *Legends of the Northern Sky* (FD). The company has over 12 Films/Shows currently in distribution, including *Space Next*, 2015 Best Visual Effects Winner - Giant Screen Cinema Association. More information can be found at [www.biganddigital.com](http://www.biganddigital.com).

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