

时尚 Life & Style

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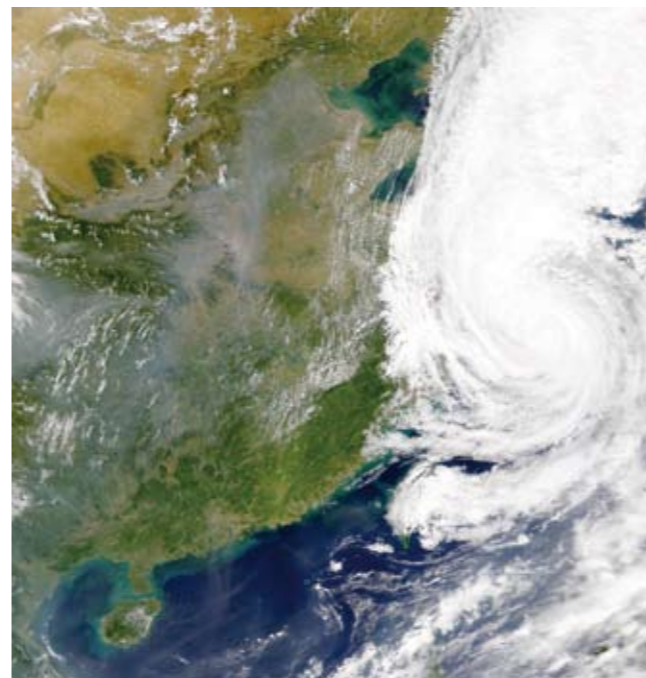
EDITED By Jade Bremner & Raemin Zhang
lifestyle@urbanatomy.com



James Reynolds wrestles with a tide wave

“Last Christmas there was a volcano eruption in the Philippines, I thought it would be a nice place to spend the holiday, so I packed off down there with my camera. Luckily, it did not produce a big bang, but it still put on a really good show with lava and ash exploding into the air.” Reynolds says most volcanic eruptions are “just like a giant fireworks display.”

While we imagine him in the middle of a 2012-like disaster zone, Reynolds says there are calculations that go into his work to mitigate the risk of being hit by flying objects. “Though,” he warns, “you can’t always account for everything. Things can spiral out of control. You will be in a



most dangerous in populated, less developed areas. “In this situation you may have loads of flying debris to deal with. It’s like watching a war unfold in front of you, a war of natural forces.”

We were curious as to what Reynolds’ family thinks of his profession. “They’re cool,” he says. “They know I won’t do anything too stupid to get hurt.”

For now, Reynolds is gearing up for the next big natural disaster. “I’m hoping for a category five storm on a

small island next,” he says. “I’d want it to be uninhabited or have safe shelter of course, because I wouldn’t want to wish death and destruction on people.”

In fact, Reynolds’ video footage and reporting actually saves lives. He often does telephone interviews during a heavy storm, typhoon or volcanic eruption, which sends out much needed evacuation messages or prompts aid from other parts of the world.

// To follow Reynolds’ storm-chasing adventures log on to Typhoonfury.com



controlled situation, but suddenly things happen.”

“I was in the Philippines last November and I was filming a storm on the extreme north coast, and the storm hit and passed by when we weren’t ready for it. We were in the middle of a road and the electric power lines were hitting our car. Then we got snagged in live power lines. We had to deal with flooding, which almost washed our car away. We spent most of the time trying to get out of the shit, rather than actually filming it. Obviously we will try to minimize each situation, but I felt a bit rattled after that one.”

Reynolds says it’s often

Rider on the storm

By Jade Bremner

James Reynolds’ day job puts him in the kill zone of extreme weather

Look at the picture. Most people would run for the hills to escape a tidal wave like that, but not James Reynolds. He goes in search of them for a living. Nor does he stop there: tsunamis, hail storms, typhoons, lightening, volcanic eruptions – you name it, he chases it. Most people would call him mad. Reynolds settles for the term ‘storm chaser.’

“I try to capture the forces of nature, earthquakes, volcanoes, that kind of thing, on video camera,” says the softly spoken Reynolds. “I’ve turned intercepting the world’s most powerful storms and volcanoes into a profession.”

The 26-year-old grew up in Britain, a nation to whom the weather is a preoccupation, but a country not known for its extreme climate. “This is why I think I’m so fascinated,” he says. China’s diverse landscapes, weather conditions and easy access to the rest of

“We spent most of time trying to get out of the s**t, rather than actually filming it...”

Asia make it the perfect base for this line of work.

Reynolds’ regular day starts with checking blogs, weather charts and the MET office website to locate extreme weather he hopes to film and relay to local and international press. But it’s not always easy. Most of the time his job involves traveling thousands of miles to remote locations in anticipation of a big show which, more often than not, has already passed or never actually arrives. “There have been plenty of times where I’ve gone somewhere, spent quite a lot of money, and got nothing,” he says.

Lately he’s had more luck. “I’ve seen two typhoons



recently. Living here at this time of year there are typhoons coming into Taiwan and Hong Kong.”

Natural disasters kill around 180 people per day around the world. But Reynolds enjoys being in the midst of extreme weather conditions and the continuous adrenaline rush it gives him. “It’s awesome. Simply spectacular,” he says.



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