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# Full Frame in the Big Apple: An episode of “epic” proportions

## Full Frame

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**March 9, 2015**

*Full Frame* is in New York City this week and our guests are truly worthy of “the Big Apple.” They’re raising awareness about elephant poaching, combatting bullying in schools, and teaching host Mike Walters a few courtside tricks. They also happen to be some of the most iconic basketball players of all time.

Basketball, one of America’s favorite past times, has become one of the fastest growing sports around the world. For the 2014 season, the National Basketball League (NBA) boasted a record 101 international players representing 37 countries. The increasing diversity of the players is a reflection of the worldwide reach of the sport. Take for example, the 2013 NBA Finals between the Miami Heat and San Antonio Spurs; the game was broadcast in over 215 countries and in 47 different languages. Perhaps the best indicator of basketball’s global impact is its ranking as the most popular youth sport, which means a growing pool of talent and an even larger fan base.

With basketball’s increasingly global presence, many of the sport’s stars have used their platform on the international stage to become advocates for issues such as conservation, education, and human rights.

This week, *Full Frame* examines the global phenomenon that is basketball and how “the world’s game” is empowering its players to do more.

**Tune into Full Frame on CCTV America at 7:00 pm ET on March 14, 2015. Or watch the live stream of the program [here](#).**

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### **Yao Ming: An Athlete of Stature**

When you hear the name “Yao Ming,” you probably think of the 7’6” center of the Houston Rockets. But Yao’s greatest achievements extend beyond his performance on the court. In many ways, the moment Yao

was selected as the number one NBA draft, he became an ambassador for China.

At a recent U.S.–China relations conference, former NBA Commissioner David Stern **reflected** upon Yao’s newfound role after being drafted, “...All of a sudden, Americans were going to learn more about China than they knew in other ways through Yao Ming. And he took to that responsibility. And in an interesting way through television our Chinese fans were going to learn more about America through Yao Ming.”



Through his role as a cultural and sports ambassador, Yao has not only worked to promote basketball, education, and wellness through NBA’s Basketball Without Borders program, but he has also contributed to a number of humanitarian causes, raising money for underprivileged children in China and donating to relief work in the wake of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake.

Now, Yao is maximizing his international influence as an animal activist, joining **Wildaid** in 2006 to give up **shark fin soup** and, more recently, to end the ivory and rhino horn trade. In “**Saving Africa’s Giants with Yao Ming**,” Animal Planet follows Yao as he investigates the brutal and systematic poaching of endangered rhinos and elephants in Africa. The ivory trade has seen a revival in recent years, driven in large part by growing demand from Chinese consumers whose new found wealth has created a growing market for luxury goods, including ivory which is a traditional symbol of wealth and prosperity in Chinese culture. The documentary seeks to create awareness of the ultimate repercussions of the trade.

The eight-time NBA All-Star joins host Mike Walters in Full Frame’s New York City studio to talk about his career, his role in bridging the culture gap between the United States and China, and his work as an animal activist.

Follow Yao Ming on Twitter to learn more about his work: [@YaoMing](https://twitter.com/YaoMing)

### Harlem Globetrotters: Ambassadors of Goodwill

Listen to “[Sweet Georgia Brown](#)” and see if you can find a way to not smile. That’s one of the many reasons why the [Harlem Globetrotters](#) have continued to impress and entertain audiences around the world. For almost a century, the Globetrotters have been—as their name indicates—globe-trotting around the world, performing in over 200,000 exhibition games in 120 countries. In 2011, the organization opened offices in Beijing to increase their presence in China, one of the fastest growing basketball fan bases in the world.



When they’re not showing off their mastery of ball-handling on the court, they use their talents to engage with kids in hospitals and schools. Through the [Smile Patrol](#), players visit 200 hospitals annually, using their tricks and charm to lift the spirits of patients and their families. As professional basketball players, the Globetrotters have a unique advantage when it comes to leaving a lasting impression on kids, which is one of the many reasons for the success of the [ABC’s of Bullying Prevention program](#). Through the program, players teach students the ways to prevent and stop bullying, hoping to inspire them to stand up for themselves and others.

Cheese Chisholm and Scooter Christensen join Mike to talk about what it means to be a Globetrotter and the impact of their Goodwill programs, and they even teach Mike one of their signature tricks.

Follow the Globetrotters on Twitter: [@Globies](#)

Follow Cheese Chisholm on Twitter: [@11\\_SayCheese](#)

### **Basketball: A Global Phenomenon**

Over 35 years ago, former NBA Commissioner David Stern agreed to provide free broadcasting rights to China Central Television (CCTV). The risky agreement paid off, helping to build an estimated fan base of 450 million in China. Today, notable NBA players, such as Yao Ming, LeBron James, and Kobe Bryant are household names across much of Asia.

The booming popularity of basketball in China has echoed around the world, with the games regularly

broadcast in over 215 countries and over 400 million social media followers. But why has basketball taken off globally in a way that other sports have not?

NBA analyst Jared Zwerling has the answer. The lifelong basketball fan has been featured on CBS Sports, Sports Illustrated, and ESPN for his in-depth and behind-the-scenes sports journalism. Currently, his insightful reporting can be found at [BleacherReport.com](http://BleacherReport.com).

Zwerling joins Mike in the studio to talk about basketball’s global presence, NBA’s creative strategies, and other growing trends in the sports world at large.

Follow Jared Zwerling on Twitter: [@JaredZwerling](https://twitter.com/JaredZwerling)

### **Kelly Towles: Embracing Differences, Fighting Intolerance**

Finally, in this week’s Close-Up, Full Frame visits the studio of [Kelly Towles](#). In the 1990’s, Towles began his street art career as an outlet for his troubled high school life. He started with traditional graffiti, but then started to incorporate characters, developing his own, unique style.

Towles’ characters are usually inspired by real life incidents, often with people that can only be described as bullies. He’s been able to channel these experiences and characters into his work for the [Human Rights Campaign](#)’s Anti-Bullying Initiative. Tune in to see how Towles brings his characters to life to bring comfort and encouragement to others.

Follow Kelly Towles on Twitter: [@kellytowles](https://twitter.com/kellytowles)