

2019 Film Descriptions – Travelling World Community Film Festival
SOME FULL DESCRIPTIONS STILL TO COME

The 100 Year Old Whale 14 min. 2018

Middle Child Films

Director: Mark Leiren-Young

Orcas live in a matriarchal society. The matriarch of the southern resident orcas, known as 'Granny', lived to be 105 years old. She survived the eras when whales were on everyone's menu and her family members were harpooned, shot, captured and put on display. What will be the future for her family?

1948: Creation and Catastrophe 85 min. 2018

Collective Eye Distribution

Directors: Andy Trimlett & Ahlam Muhtaseb

Through riveting and moving personal recollections of both Palestinians and Israelis, *1948: Creation & Catastrophe* reveals the shocking events of the most pivotal year in the most controversial conflict in the world. It tells the story of the establishment of Israel as seen through the eyes of the people who lived it. This documentary was the last chance for many of its Israeli and Palestinian characters to narrate their first-hand accounts of the creation of a state and the expulsion of a nation. While Israelis mark Independence Day, it is known as the Nakba (Catastrophe) for Palestinians.

Being the Change: A New Kind of Climate Documentary 58 min. 2018

www.treehugger.com

Filmmakers: Mary Grandelis and Dave Davis

Is it possible to move away from fossil fuels and live a more joyful life? That is the question NASA atmospheric scientist Peter Kalmus explores in the film, *Being the Change: A New Kind of Climate Documentary*. Peter, his wife Sharon and their two sons reduced their carbon emissions by more than a factor of ten between 2010 and 2014, going from emitting an estimated 20 tonnes annually to 2 tonnes. They did so by making changes in their own lives and found more happiness and satisfaction in the process.

Call of the Forest: The Forgotten Wisdom of Trees 52 min. 2018

Treespeak Films

Director: Jeff McKay

We follow visionary scientist, conservationist and author, Diana Beresford-Kroeger, on her journey to the most beautiful forests of the northern hemisphere. From the sacred sugi and cedar forests of Japan, the ancient Raheen Wood of Ireland, the walnut and redwood trees of America to the great boreal forest of Canada, Beresford-Kroeger tells us the amazing stories behind the history and legacy of these ancient forests while also explaining the science of trees and the irreplaceable roles they play in protecting and feeding the planet.

Celling Your Soul 48 min. 2017

McNabb/ Connolly

Filmmaker: Joni Siani

Celling Your Soul is a powerful and informative examination of how young people actually feel about connecting in the digital world and their love/hate relationship with technology. It provides empowering strategies for more fulfilling, balanced and authentic human interaction within the digital landscape. The film reveals the effects of "digital socialization" by taking viewers on a personal journey with a group of high school and college students, through a digital cleanse, to discover the power of authentic human connectivity. There is 'no app' or piece of technology that can ever replace the benefits of human connection. **Silver Spotlight Independent Documentary Award**

Cooperativa 40 min. 2018

carswellfilm.ca

Filmmaker: Ed Carswell

Journey to organic coffee farms in the jungle highlands of Nicaragua (the source of World

Community Coffee). Using 4x4 vehicles, co-op staff visit several mountain farms to discuss their fair trade arrangements. These intimate visits reveal how the cooperatives and fair trade policies have brought some security to family life. This observational film also follows the process of both cacao and milk production through remote regions of what is considered the poorest country in Central America.

Defiant Lives 85 min. 2017

Women Make Movies

Filmmaker: Sarah Barton

Defiant Lives is a triumphant film that traces the origins of the world-wide disability rights movement. It tells the stories of the extraordinary individuals who bravely put their lives on the line to create a better world where everyone is valued and can participate. Featuring interviews and rarely seen archival footage, the film reveals how these activists fought to live outside of institutions, challenged the stigmas and negative image of disability portrayed by the media, demanded access to public transportation and battled to re-frame disability rights as a social responsibility relevant to us all.

Dust n' Bones 45 min. 2018

Less Bland Productions

Director: Leslie Bland

Dust n' Bones examines the challenges and mysteries of dealing with the discovery, preservation, and re-interment of First Nations artifacts and remains. These themes are realized through traditional gravedigger, filmmaker and archaeology assistant Harold Joe as he works to re-dedicate human remains to sacred burial sites on the Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island. *Dust n' Bones* brings to light the legal, political, historical and spiritual challenges faced by First Nations leaders and archaeologists as they fight to give disinterred ancestors their proper reverence.

Ecology Transforms Youth 35 min. 2018

youthecology.ca

Filmmaker: Ed Carswell

Travel with several youth as they explore the rivers and estuaries of the Comox Valley. Created by Wendy Kotilla in 2004, the Youth & Ecological Restoration (YER) program has had over 330 participants. Young people work with local researchers and environmental groups, while learning ecological restoration, wildlife rehabilitation and scientific methods. Guided by the power of nature, YER employs ecotherapy practices and mentoring support for youth to gain a sense of worth, belonging and place.

Fertile Ground: Brewing Change in Northeast India 5 min. 2018

www.fertile-ground.org

Filmmakers: Tom & Amy Skelton Since 2003, Fertile Ground East/West Sustainability Network has provided educational and technical support to farmers and growers in Assam, India. They do this by creating opportunities for people from northeast India and the west coast of Canada to work and learn together - to grow healthy food, care for the soil and celebrate cultural diversity. This short film celebrates the important work they all do.

Flying With Ravens 14 min. 2018

Filmmaker: Ed Homer

Flying with Ravens is the story of Mick Maxted and the two ravens that he has been feeding on Mt Washington since 2010. Mick and his partner Lynn have a close relationship with these two characters affectionately known as Jekyl and Heidi. Mick and Lynn's days on the ski hill are as much about feeding ravens and whiskey jacks as skiing and boarding. These intelligent ravens enjoy flying around Mick as he boards down the hill. *Flying with Ravens* is a delightful story with the underlying theme of our relationship with nature.

Gurrumul 100 min. 2018

Blue Ice Docs

Director: Paul Damien Williams

Celebrated by audiences at home and abroad, indigenous artist Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu was one of the most important and acclaimed voices to ever come out of Australia. Blind from birth, he found purpose and meaning through songs and music inspired by his community on Elcho Island in far North East Arnhem Land. Living a traditional Yolngu life, his breakthrough album 'Gurrumul' brought him to a crossroads as audiences and artists around the world began to embrace his music. *Gurrumul* is a portrait of an artist on the brink of global reverence, and the struggles he and those closest to him face in balancing two distinct worlds.

Gurrumul's final masterwork is his collaboration with composer Erkki Veltheim to translate Yolngu traditional music into a Western orchestral arrangement. Some of his songs are adapted from music and stories up to 10,000 years old. As the score plays and images of Elcho Island people splash with beauty across the screen, something transformative happens. The very current of this vibrant and enduring ancient culture blends and echoes through the soaring score. A shimmering tribute to an amazing singer.

Audience Award, Perth Film Festival; Asia Pacific Screen Awards

Haiti Betrayed 90 min. 2018

Director: Elaine Briere

Haiti Betrayed is a point-of-view documentary revealing how Canada, in contravention of international law, allied with the US and France to overturn the democratically elected government in Haiti in 2004. This brought an end to a decade of democracy in Haiti and progressive reforms for the impoverished majority. It is the first time Canada has played a strategic and military role in the removal of a democratically elected government.

Holly Near: Singing for Our Lives 63 min. 2018

www.filmfreeway.com

Director: Jim Brown

Singer, songwriter and social activist Holly Near has been performing for over 50 years and in the process created what Gloria Steinem called, “the first soundtrack of the women’s movement.” From small-town California to sold-out shows on iconic stages to million-person peace marches, *Singing for Our Lives* documents the story of the activist and her art. It also serves as an important testament to a time of protest and coalition building, and the weaving of a multicultural consciousness always rooted in contemporary activism. Featuring Gloria Steinem, Jane Fonda, the late Ronnie Gilbert and others, this music-filled film elevates Near to her deserved status of iconic artist and activist, and speaks to anyone who believes in peace, justice, feminism and humanity.

Kus-Kus-Sum: Unpave Paradise 7 min. 2018

www.projectwatershed.ca

Filmmaker: Jessica Speck

The community of the Comox Valley is banding together to tackle a large and ambitious restoration project - unpaving paradise at Kus-Kus-Sum. The project aims to purchase an abandoned sawmill site and restore it to natural habitat. Since 2006, the site has remained as 8.3 acres of vacant cement in the heart of the community and 440 meters of steel wall along a critical salmon migration route. The video showcases the history of the area, the many benefits of restoration and offers everyone a chance to be a part of this initiative.

Love and Bananas: An Elephant Story 75 min. 2018

Cargo Film and Releasing

Director: Ashley Bell

Elephant rescues in Thailand are rare, unpredictable and often life threatening. There is no need to abuse an elephant to control it; conservationist Lek Chailert shows that you can motivate an elephant to follow your lead simply with love and bananas. Director Bell and Lek Chailert work to save a blind, aging elephant named Noi Na from the rampant abuse at an elephant trekking park and take her across Thailand to Chailert's rescue park. *Love & Bananas* will hopefully provide a solution to keeping this species alive. The film ignites a sense of hope, while exposing the plight of Asian elephants and the people who

work tirelessly to save them.

Metamorphosis 95 min. 2018

NFB

Filmmakers: Nova Ami & Velcrow Ripper

A poem for the planet, Nova Ami and Velcrow Ripper's film *Metamorphosis* takes the pulse of our earth and bears witness to a moment of profound change: the loss of one world, and the birth of another. *Metamorphosis* captures the true scale of the global environmental crisis. Forest fires consume communities, species vanish and entire ecosystems collapse. Economic growth, tied to increased speed of resource extraction, has created a machine with the capacity to destroy all life.

But this crisis is also an opportunity for transformation. This stunningly beautiful documentary aims to capture both the monumental havoc humankind has wreaked and our extraordinary capacity for redemption.

Nothing Without Us: The Women Who Will End AIDS 67 min. 2017

Women Make Movies

Filmmaker: Harriet Hirshorn This is the story of the inspiring women at the forefront of the global AIDS movement. Combining archival footage and interviews with female activists, scientists and scholars in the US and Africa, *Nothing Without Us: The Women Who Will End AIDS* reveals how women not only shaped grassroots groups like ACT-UP in the US, but have also played essential roles in HIV prevention and the treatment access movement throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The film explores the dynamics that keep women around the world at risk of HIV, while introducing the remarkable women who have some of the answers to ending this 30-year old pandemic.

Pacific Herring: Small Fish, Big Problem 10 min. 2018

Lotus Eater Films

conservancyhornbyisland.org

Pacific Herring need our help if we are to save the salmon, killer whales and other marine species in the Salish Sea. This film explains why we need to stop the commercial herring roe seine fishery around Hornby Island, one of the most important spawning areas on the B.C. coast.

The Radicals 55 min. 2018

www.theradicalsfilm.com

Filmmakers: Brian Hockenstein & Tamo Campos

With breathtaking cinematography, *The Radicals* follows four snowboarders and surfers driven to become social and environmental stewards through their connection with the environments in which they play. These awakened athletes introduce us to some of the world's most dedicated activists and game-changing wilderness initiatives. *The Radicals* inspires us to shift our perspective, rise above the challenges of modern society and dig into our roots to create radical waves of change and a sense of real purpose, while still enjoying nature and the thrill of gravity.

The Reluctant Radical 77 min. 2018

www.thereluctantradicalmovie.com

Director: Lindsey Grayzel

If a crime is committed in order to prevent a greater crime, is it forgivable? Is it, in fact, necessary? The documentary, *The Reluctant Radical*, follows activist Ken Ward as he confronts his fears and puts himself in the direct path of the fossil fuel industry to combat climate change. All of the traditional legal avenues were not making a difference so he made the difficult decision to take non-violent direct action to shut down all the US tar sands pipelines on October 11, 2016. The film reveals both the personal cost and also the fulfillment that comes from following one's moral calling – even if that means breaking the law – an implicit challenge to all of us. This is a story of heroism, full of love, anguish and humour.

Satan & Adam 80 min. 2018

Cargo Film and Releasing

Filmmaker: Scott Balcerek

Sterling Magee experienced firsthand the music industry's exploitation of black musicians. So he walked away to play music on the Harlem streets. Re-inventing himself as Mr. Satan, he spread his gospel of joy. One of those he converted was a white kid named Adam Gussow, who gave up the ivory tower life to play alongside this streetwise musician. Their improbable bond made them a sensation, and their journey a tale of tragedy, survival and miraculous rebirth. *Satan & Adam* is a celebration of the transformative power of music, and the bonds that develop when worlds collide and artists collaborate. "The best third act of any music doc since *Searching for Sugar Man*."

JB Spins

Nashville Film Festival 2018: Best Music Documentary

Save Space Nugget 41 min. 2017

Director: Trish Neufeld

Save Space Nugget is the story of the determined community of Cumberland coming together to save their forest from the timber company who intended to harvest it for profit. It's a David and Goliath story with inspiring personal tales about what can be achieved when people take action, and sometimes great personal risks, to achieve a common goal. There are many challenges, stereotypes and perceptions that each side, both corporate and community, needs to overcome. It's also the story of a community reinventing itself, determining who they are and what values they share.

Threads 32 min. 2017

Collective Eye Films

Director: Kathy Stevulak

Torn from her family, her paintings, and her beloved Calcutta after the partition of India,

artist Surayia Rahman finds a new life in Bangladesh teaching impoverished mothers to embroider her beautiful story-telling designs. An inspirational example of the power of art and the impact of empowering women and girls around the world, *Threads* takes us on an intimate journey into the heart of an artist and celebrates an unconventional path to dignity and independence.

Treeline 40 min. 2018

Patagonia

Director: Jordan Manley

Treeline celebrates the forests on which our species have always depended, and around which some skiers and snowboarders have based their entire lives. Follow a group of snow-seekers, scientists and healers as they explore the birch forests of Japan, the red cedars of British Columbia and the bristlecone pines of Nevada, delving deeper into the ways we are connected to trees and to how trees network with each other. A beautiful, meditative film.

Soufra 72 min. 2018

Hydro Studios

Director: Thomas Morgan

Executive Producer: Susan Sarandon

Soufra follows the inspirational story of intrepid social entrepreneur Mariam Shaar, a refugee who has spent her entire life in the 69 year-old Burl El Barajneh refugee camp, south of Beirut, Lebanon. The film chronicles Mariam and a diverse team of fellow refugee women from throughout the Middle East, who share the camp as their home as they set out to change their fate by launching a catering company called 'Soufra' and then expand its reach outside the camp, through an astonishing Kickstarter campaign, with a food truck business. Together, these determined, hardworking women heal the wounds of war through the unifying power of food, while taking their future into their own hands.

Feature Film Award, Galway Film Fleadh; Audience Award at several film festivals

WAJD: Songs of Separation 88 min. 2018

www.wajdfilm.com

Director: Amar Chebib

Wajd: Songs of Separation introduces us to three men—Ibrahim, Abdulwahed, and Mohamad—all talented musicians, who have fled war-torn Syria and are re-assembling their lives in Turkey and Holland. Forced to rebuild their lives in exile, they turn to their love of music to help them find meaning. Footage of their daily lives is woven together with bittersweet musical performances, extremely rare Sufi ceremonies and poetic imagery of pre-war Syria. The film is a moving testament to the heartbreak and loss of war and the resilience of individuals. It is a beautiful meditation on the healing and life-affirming power of music. **Audience Award, Arabian Sights Film Festival**