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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“2016 Sun Valley Film Festival Announces Competition Finalists for The Film Lab, Screenwriters Lab High Scribe, Nat Geo WILD TO INSPIRE, and One Potato”

Sun Valley, Idaho... The 2016 Sun Valley Film Festival (SVFF), presented by Zions Bank, has announced the finalists for its signature competitions including The Film Lab, Screenwriters Lab High Scribe, Nat Geo WILD TO INSPIRE and the One Potato. The winners of these competitions will be selected and announced during the SVFF, March 2-6, 2016.

The Film Lab: Trevor Groth, the highly respected Director of Programming for Sundance Film Festival, will serve as host of The Film Lab, which presents two finalist films in their final post-production stage [Work-in-Progress]. The creative forces behind the two selected films - the director, producer, and writer – will be on hand, and The Film Lab’s audience will have the opportunity to meet the filmmakers, give feedback, and participate in voting for the top WIP. The Lab’s winning film will receive \$5000 in finishing funds courtesy of Tito’s Handmade Vodka.

The Film Lab finalists:

11:55

Directors: Ari Issler, Ben Snyder

Writers: Ari Issler, Ben Snyder, Victor Almanzar

Producers: Danny Mendoza, Joshua Blum, Gia Walsh, Kara Baker, Matthew Thrum

Cast: Victor Almanzar

U.S. Marine Nelson Sanchez has run out of time. After being honorably discharged and returning to his economically depressed hometown, Nelson must face the consequences of the violent past he thought he had escaped. Trying desperately to survive the day, Nelson charts an unlikely path to redemption. In a place where the only options appear to be the street or the military, 11:55 captures a young man’s escape from the cycles of violence that have defined him.

80 min./U.S.A.

***WORK-IN-PROGRESS SCREENING**

BUNKER77

Writer/Director/Producer: Takuji Masuda

Creative Supervisor: Stephan Gaghan

Co-Producers: Art Brewer, C.R. Stecyk III

Featuring: Bunker Spreckels, Ellie Silva, Tony Alva, Laird Hamilton, Johnny Knoxville

The Chronicle of the wild and brief life of a 1970's most controversial surf star and international playboy from Los Angeles, Bunker Spreckels.

87 min./U.S.A.

*WORK-IN-PROGRESS SCREENING

Sun Valley Screenwriters Lab and High Scribe: The Screenwriters Lab, sponsored by Boise State University, is one of SVFF's unique signature educational forums. Hosted by Award-winning writer, director, actor and producer of independent film and television, Mark Duplass, and judged by Academy-Award® winning screenwriter Nat Faxon, the Lab is a two hour glimpse into everything screenwriting, and includes the 'High Scribe' screenplay competition with submissions of original screenplays and TV pilots from aspiring writers. The Lab opens with a talk by Duplass about his career followed by a Q&A with the audience. The High Scribe Award, presented by Silver Creek Writers Residency, is announced during the Lab where a scene from the winning script is brought to life during a live table read with professional actors and a cash prize of \$1000 is awarded. This is a very high-profile interactive event that draws crowds, generates buzz and launches careers.

High Scribe finalists:

- Michael Tyburski (*Palimpsest*)
- Ben Nabors (*Dream Feeds*)
- Kerry McPherson (*All the Pretty Ones*)
- Nikki Braendlin (*Pampered*)
- Karen Tenkhoff (*Welcome to Oregon*)

Nat Geo WILD TO INSPIRE: 2016 marks the third year of this unique international competition by Nat Geo WILD, in partnership with the Sun Valley Film Festival. One lucky winner will get to try their hand at filmmaking National Geographic style as they depart on an expedition to Africa to document wildlife for Nat Geo WILD viewers. The winner will share their experiences through video diaries, photos, social media and more, giving Nat Geo WILD viewers a taste of what it's like to be a Nat Geo WILD filmmaker.

The top four finalists will attend the Sun Valley Film Festival to screen their films for festival attendees, a panel of judges and Nat Geo WILD executives. The winner will be announced at the festival's closing ceremony, and will receive an expedition to experience and document wildlife in some of the most exotic corners of the world for Nat Geo WILD viewers. The 2015 WILD TO INSPIRE winner, Filipe de Andrade, will also premiere his new short Nat Geo film, *Girls Can Be Scientists?*, created over the past year as a result of winning this unique competition.

WILD TO INSPIRE Finalists:

"Conowingo Dam Bald Eagles" by Mike Lemery (Schenectady, NY)

- Mike is a video producer and filmmaker based in Schenectady, New York, with more than eight years of professional video experience in documentary style and television production.
- In "Conowingo Dam Bald Eagles" viewers witness the resurgence of the bald eagle population at the Conowingo dam in Maryland, where hundreds of bald eagles fiercely fight for stunned fish who make it through the dam's turbines.

<https://vimeo.com/groups/wildtoinspire/videos/152926627>

"In Search of a Moment" by David Fontneau (Honolulu, HI)

- David is a self-taught photographer and cinematographer who seeks to inspire others through his passion for nature and photography.
- In his film, "In Search of a Moment", David describes his search for what he can best describe as the purity of a moment.

<https://vimeo.com/groups/wildtoinspire/videos/153736999>

"To the Explorers" by Alex Goetz and Justin Grubb (Toledo, OH)

- Alex Goetz and Justin Grubb are filmmakers who focus on telling the stories of conservation and wildlife around the world, in an effort to raise awareness of the issues that affect our planet.
- This short film is an ode to all the adventurers, explorers and conservationists that dedicate everything they have to conservation, wildlife and the outdoors. It is also a 'thank you' to those who inspire us to tell our stories as filmmakers.

<https://vimeo.com/groups/wildtoinspire/videos/153679417>

"Wild Heroes of Uganda" by Marlina Moreno (Los Angeles, CA)

- Marlina is a freelance cinematographer with a passion for sharing the stories of people doing wonderful things to protect our planet's biodiversity. This fall she will graduate with a Master's in conservation biology.
- In "Wild Heroes of Uganda" Marlina pays tribute to the wildlife conservation heroes she met while exploring Uganda.

<https://vimeo.com/groups/wildtoinspire/videos/153866662>

One Potato: The SVFF launched the *One Potato Film Initiative* in 2015 to support emerging filmmakers and to encourage and incentivize filmmaking in the state of Idaho. Last year's winning screenwriter, Christian Lybrook of Boise, Idaho, received \$2500 towards producing his short film *Carbon* and he then raised another \$25,000 to complete it. *Carbon* was shot in Idaho this fall and will have its world premiere during the 2016 SVFF. The winning 2016 *One Potato* script will receive \$5000 towards filming their story on location in Idaho and will have its world premiere at the 2017 Sun Valley Film Festival, along with a host of other benefits including hands-on mentoring from industry professionals. As a producing partner on the film, SVFF will connect the winner with seasoned filmmaker participants, award-winning filmmaker advisors, broker deals on production resources, and help build a presence for the film.

One Potato Finalists:

- Kevin Nielsen - "Death by Acquaintance"
- Eva Konstantopoulos - "There is No Arthur"
- Dusty Aunan & Cody Gittings - "Man In A Dress"
- Kristen Mico - "This Ole Highway"
- Stephen Heleker - "The Holdup"

About the 2016 Sun Valley Film Festival

The Fifth Annual Sun Valley Film Festival, presented by Zions Bank, will run March 2-6, 2016, and will feature a curated slate of more than 60 cutting-edge films and TV premieres, engaging Coffee Talks with top industry insiders including legendary filmmaker Oliver Stone, (recipient of the 2016 SVFF Lifetime Vision Award), fabulous parties and panels, a Screenwriters Lab led by award-winning writers – host Mark Duplass and judge Nat Faxon - and the spectacular SVFF/Tito's Handmade Vodka Awards Bash. The combination of cutting-edge programming and bona-fide insider access in a fun, relaxed atmosphere is making the Sun Valley Film Festival a rising star in the world of destination festivals. This coming spring, filmmakers from around the world will bring their vision to the Sun Valley Film Festival, and movie lovers are invited to watch it come into focus.

For Sun Valley Film Festival details and tickets, visit: www.sunvalleyfilmfestival.org.

Get Festival updates on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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Images available for download at <http://sunvalleyfilmfestival.org/media/>