

## 2018 FILM COMPETITION WINNERS

### Grand Prize



Sponsored by MEC | \$4000

### *The Weight of Water*

(USA, 2018, 80 min)

Director and Producer: Michael Brown

Production Company: Serac Adventure Films

Erik Weihenmayer has climbed the tallest peaks on each continent and his latest undertaking is to kayak the Grand Canyon. His blindness doesn't hold him back – and together with his friend Lonnie, who also happens to be blind, the two face Lava Falls, the toughest rapid in the canyon.

**“In the end, we selected the film that touched us most deeply – the one that caused us all to shed some tears. The human achievement that was the focal point of this work gripped us and the emotional journey of the main protagonist as the narrative unfolded was palpable, while also being exquisitely subtle. We were moved. We were immensely inspired. And we were drawn into the story so intensely, we felt a part of the exhilaration of an unimaginably hard-won accomplishment.”**

— *Rebecca Martin, jury member*

## Award for Creative Excellence



Sponsored by Rumble Supershake | \$2,000

### *Cielo*

(Canada, 2017, 78 min)

Director: Alison McAlpine

Producers: Alison McAlpine, Paola Castillo, Sean Farnel and Carmen Garcia

Production Company: Second Sight Pictures, Errante Producciones

Drifting between spirituality and science, *Cielo* is a cinematic reverie on the crazy beauty of the night sky, as experienced in the Atacama Desert, Chile, one of the best places on our planet to explore and contemplate its splendour.

**“Using the night sky above Chile’s Atacama Desert as backdrop, and metaphor, this sublimely visual tone poem combines Romanticism, folk tales, and hard science making all seem equally valid. A beautifully filmed existential meditation on what exists above us, its larger theme, patiently played out scene by heavenly scene, is what exists within us.”**

— *Jim Herrington, jury member*

## Best Film: Exploration and Adventure



Sponsored by ROI Recreation Outfitters | \$2,000

### *Plan C-14 II*

(Argentina, 2018, 47 mins)

Director: Nico Muñoz

Producers: Nico Muñoz and Nadina Goldwaser

Production Company: El Mano Films

Martin Pueyrredon is an industrious man of 83 years old and he is running out of time. Against all odds and doctor's recommendations, he is determined to have one last adventure before the end.

**“What we realize through this film is that our most profound journeys can happen at any time in life – and perhaps the later we take them, the more rich and meaningful they become. And, no matter the challenges we face in life, there is always joy to be found – even in the most fleeting moments.”**

— *Rebecca Martin, jury member*

## Best Film: Mountain Culture



Sponsored by Helly Hansen | \$2,000

### *The Silver Branch*

(Ireland, 2018, 74 mins)

Director: Katrina Costello

Producer: Ken O'Sullivan

Production Company: Sea Fever Productions

The Silver Branch is a philosophical visual poem on the life of a peasant farmer/poet Patrick McCormack, descendant of generations of farmers who lives off the wild mountains in the West of Ireland. Patrick and his rural community are drawn into a divisive battle with the Government, leading him to the European supreme courts to decide on the fate of this iconic wilderness .

**"This film is both a lyrical portrayal of a place and an individual's philosophical take on life. It moved us by its nuanced and layered narratives, visual poetry, and its consistent and creative vision."**

- Ramyata Limbu, jury member



## Best Film: Climbing



Sponsored by Alpine Club of Canada | \$2,000

### *Free Solo*

(USA, 2018, 119 min)

Directors: Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin

Producer: Evan Hayes

Production Company: Lonely Films

From award-winning Documentary filmmaker E. Chai Vasarhelyi (MERU) and world-renowned photographer and mountaineer Jimmy Chin comes National Geographic Documentary Film's Free Solo, a stunning, intimate and unflinching portrait of the free soloist climber Alex Honnold, as he prepares to achieve his lifelong dream: climbing the face of the world's most famous rock, the 900-metre El Capitan in Yosemite National Park... without a rope.

**“The film we kept returning to was not marked by any single strength, but rather by its stunning completeness. Visually staggering, emotionally overwhelming, epic in scale and ambition, the effect was so strong that I found myself lingering in silence till the end of the credits, unable to move.”**

— Bruce Kirkby, jury member.

## Mountain Sports



Sponsored by Smartwool | \$2,000

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**“Perhaps more important than the story itself is the growing understanding, empathy, and solidarity bonding the members of the expedition. This film lacks the propaganda of success which can be illustrated by the words spoken by the main character Erik: “I hate it when they say that nothing is impossible”. Erik’s face tells more than a thousand words – something the jury will never forget.”**

— Paweł Wysoczański, jury member

## Best Film: Snow Sports



Sponsored by Boréale Explorers | \$2,000

### *This Mountain Life*

(Canada, 2018, 77 min)

Director: Grant Baldwin

Producer: Jenny Rustemeyer

Production Company: Peg Leg Films

A mother-daughter team set out on a six-month ski traverse in the Coast Mountains. A group of nuns inhabit a mountain retreat to be closer to God. A couple lives off the grid for nearly 50 years. All feel the pull so strongly that their lives must revolve around mountains. Shot in cinematic detail, *This Mountain Life* is a riveting portrait of human passion set high in the snowy peaks of Canada.

**“While many films this year delivered such staggering footage, we found ourselves drawn to the more simple and yet powerful stories in this film, which documents a handful of souls who have chosen to live amid the mountains, and cultivate a relationship to the land; including a snow artist, a former Nordic champion turned Dominican nun, and perhaps most impressively, a mother-daughter team tackling a six-month ski traverse of the Coast Mountains.”**

— *Bruce Kirkby, jury member*

## Best Film: Mountain Environment & Natural History



Sponsored by ChopShop | \$2,000

### *Bird of Prey*

(USA, 2017, 95 min)

Director: Eric Liner

Producers: Eric Liner and John Bowman

Production Company: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Wildlife cinematographer Neil Rettig embarks on what could be the most challenging assignment of his career: to find and film the rarest eagle on the planet – the Great Philippine Eagle.

**“Beautifully shot, and in incredibly challenging circumstances, this film focused on one man’s return to document an iconic species on the brink of extinction. Woven finely into the context of a nation’s political history, the threats of ongoing deforestation, and scientific research of the world’s largest and most rare eagle, the film is a brilliant example of how a perfectly crafted story not only informs, but, ultimately has the power to make us to care.**

— *Rebecca Martin, jury member*



## Best Short Mountain Film



Sponsored by Sherpa Adventure Gear | \$2,000

### *Facing Sunrise*

(Canada, 2017, 8 min)

Director: Julia Kwan

Producers: Yves J. Ma, Lainey Mullins, and Jeff Thomas

Production Company: MEC

While dealing with one of the darkest times of her life, Azzah overhears a conversation around the question, “what do you want to do before you die?”

**“The film is far more authentic than the number of films boasting superheroes with enormous muscles. Azzah has a genuine interest in experiencing the world and through doing that she delivers an important message – everyone has the right to connect with nature.”**

— Paweł Wysoczański, jury member

## Best Feature-Length Mountain Film



Sponsored by The North Face Banff, owned and operated by Highline Outdoors | \$2,000

### *The Dawn Wall*

(Austria/ USA, 2017, 100 min)

Directors: Josh Lowell, Peter Mortimer

Producers: Josh Lowell, Philipp Manderla, Peter Mortimer

Production Company: Red Bull Media House in association with Sender Films

In January 2015, American rock climbers Tommy Caldwell and Kevin Jorgeson captivated the world with their effort to climb The Dawn Wall, a seemingly impossible 900 - metre rock face in Yosemite National Park, California. The pair lived on the sheer vertical cliff for weeks, igniting a frenzy of global media attention. But for Tommy Caldwell, The Dawn Wall was much more than just a climb. It was the culmination of a lifetime defined by overcoming obstacles.

**"Make no mistake, this film provides a gargantuan serving of the doing, but the true success, and story, of this multi-layered epic is its main protagonist and the trilogy of challenges that come his way - equal parts body, mind and heart -and the deeply human way he deals with them."**

*- Jim Herrington, jury member*

## People's Choice Award



Sponsored by Osprey | \$2,000

### *The Bikes of Wrath*

(Australia, 2018, 101 min)

Directors and Producers: Cameron Ford and Charlie Turnbull

Production Company: Doss Flamingoss

The Bikes of Wrath tells the story of five friends as they attempt to cycle from Oklahoma to California in honour of the mighty westward migration undertaken by the Joad family of Steinbeck's famous novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*.



## SPECIAL JURY MENTION



### *Ascending Afghanistan*

(USA, 2016, 50 min)

Director: Erik Osterholm

Producers: Erik Osterholm and Alyse Walsh

Production Company: Vice Media

Follow the first female Afghan mountaineering team as they navigate their first expedition and fight for recognition as athletes amongst their country, culture, and families.

**“A film that reminds us how trivial our aspirations and achievements are. A film that humbles us. The jury unanimously agreed that this powerful film could not go unrecognized... it is a reminder of how far we still have to go in the journey to make this a just and equal planet for all, and it casts a new light on the unexpected role mountain sports can play in those efforts.”**

— *Bruce Kirkby, jury member*



## SPECIAL JURY MENTION



### *Mama*

(Poland, 2017, 45 min)

Director and Producer: Wojtek Kozakiewicz

Production Company: Vacaspurpur Outdoor Films

Kinga Ociepka-Grzegulska is one of the most important figures in Polish sport climbing and the mother of two kids. After 20 years of living her passion, she sets herself a new goal – to climb a route that no woman has ever done before.

**“What does it mean to climb? To take on challenges? To discover or rather re-discover yourself? How do you balance life’s mundane realities with your passion? This film is an insightful and honest portrayal of a mother of two who sets herself a goal and who is determined to reach it.”**

— *Ramyata Limbu, jury member*