

## 2019 FILM COMPETITION WINNERS

### Grand Prize



Sponsored by MEC | \$4000

### *Piano to Zanskar*

(UK, 2018, 86 min)

Director: Michal Sulima

Producer: Jarek Kotomski

Facing his future in retirement, “sitting in deck chairs and eating lemon drizzle cake”, 65-year-old piano tuner, Desmond O’Keeffe, decides instead to take on the most challenging and perilous delivery of his four decade career: transporting a 100-year-old, 80-kilogram, upright piano, from bustling London to the remote heart of the Indian Himalayas.

**“This film unites a set of lovely characters so individual and multi-faceted, even a seasoned Hollywood-screenwriter would have a hard time coming up with them. It takes us on a quest that seems to be crazy and anachronistic but is actually full of purpose and symbolic power. Watching this film helps to restore the belief in a better world. Our hearts warmed as we joined Harold, Desmond, and Anna on their journey schlepping a piano in pieces along dusty roads and across steep slopes into a remote village high up in the Himalayan Mountains. When 65-year old piano tuner Desmond reassembles the instrument, it becomes the highest piano in the world and everybody is united by the magic of music. Cultural boundaries vanish and a crazy dream becomes real. This is a passion project of emerging filmmakers. It is enchanting, it is a feel-good movie and it is the account of a real adventure. — Joachim Hellinger, jury member**

## Award for Creative Excellence



Sponsored by Trangia | \$2,000

### *Camel Finds Water*

(USA, 2019, 8 min)

Director: Ian Durkin

Producer: Ian Durkin and Trevor Gordon

Trevor found the hull of an abandoned fishing boat in a field. He brought it home and built it back to a sea-worthy state over the course of a summer. Then, he took it on its maiden voyage to British Columbia in search of waves.

**“In this film, there is nothing wasted and every shot works. It is done with unique flare and a cheeky retro style. This is a really fun film!”**

— *Billy Choi, jury member*

## Best Film: Exploration and Adventure



Sponsored by Devold | \$2,000

### *Home*

(Canada, 2019, 91 mins)

Director: Jen Randall

Producers: Jen Randall, Sarah Outen

Between 2011 and 2015 UK adventurer Sarah Outen traversed the globe by bike, kayak and rowing boat, travelling over 32,000 kilometres by human power alone. The solo trip took its toll, and a violent storm on the Pacific takes Sarah to the physical and mental brink.

**“This is a compelling film tracking the journey of an ordinary woman, on an extra-ordinary adventure. It takes you on an emotional and physically demanding roller-coaster ride around the globe, highlighting the warmth and generosity of our fellow human beings. The film is challenging, engaging, enthralling, and inspiring. However – the central question is.....where is HOME? Such a simple title, for such a complex film.”**

— Lynn Robinson, jury member

## Best Film: Mountain Culture

Sponsored by Helly Hansen | \$2,000

### *Holy Tour*

(France, 2018, 70 mins)

Directors: Valery Rosier, Meryl Fortunat-Rossi

Producer: Benoit Roland

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 is a purely observational documentary and a creative twist on this iconic sporting event. In this film, we spend one week along the roadside with fans of this event. Their passion and patriotism, quirks and quibbles on full display. You have never seen the 'Tour de France' this way before."**

*- Billy Choi, jury member*

## Best Film: Climbing



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

### *The Last Mountain*

(Poland, 2019, 83 min)

Director: Dariusz Zaluski

Producer: Narodowe Centrum Kultury

The true story of the 2018 Polish expedition's attempt on K2, the only remaining unconquered Himalayan peak to be climbed in winter. Tensions are high and the expedition is pulled apart when team members must perform one of the most extraordinary high altitude rescue operations in history of mountaineering.

**"In this film, we can find almost everything that can happen during a high altitude expedition. Avalanche, injury, teamwork, ego and conflict. The director captures these unexpected and dramatic moments with a sharp yet dispassionate eye. This allows the audience to make their own judgement with calming distance."**

— *Billie Choi, jury member*



## Mountain Sports



Sponsored by Rumble Supershake | \$2,000

*8000+*

(Germany, 2018, 22 min)

Directors: Christian Schmidt, Antoine Girard

Producer: Luz Marina Gennes

From the town of Skardu, paraglider Antoine Girard sets off on a three-week hike and fly tour to explore the Karakorum mountains in Pakistan – alone. If he succeeds, he will set a new altitude record in paragliding.

**“For one second, I want you all to think about what you did on your last vacation. This film is about Antoine. He’s not a professional athlete, he’s a university professor, and this film tracks what he did on his last vacation. Set in the dramatic, Karakorum mountain range, Pakistan, the audience is lifted, with Antoine, by the thermals, to gain a unique glimpse of some amazing mountain scenery, on this self-supported tour in the sky.”**

— Lynn Robinson, jury member

## Best Film: Snow Sports



Sponsored by Park Distillery | \$2,000

### *The Ridge of Dreams*

(USA, 2019, 24 min)

Directors: Ben Sturgulewski, Zack Giffin

Producer: Scott Ballew

Two best friends with very different views on life embark on a search for a mythical unskied mountain.

**“For sponsored athletes and filmmakers, the pressure to capture every turn, every line, every moment of exhilaration on camera is unrelenting. The results of all this work is an astonishing, adrenaline-charged body of free ride and extreme snow films. But at some point, don’t all of us think... I just want this moment for myself? For the filmmakers on our jury, when we saw the shoot begin to fall apart on screen, and the “adventure payoff” disappear, our hearts stopped. But then, the Director made the profoundly brave and seriously original decision to keep rolling... The result is a gift to all of us who love the snow and who will keep searching for it, regardless of the audience.”**

— Niobe Thompson, jury member



## Best Film: Mountain Environment & Natural History



Sponsored by Kupilka | \$2,000

### *Artifishal*

(USA, 2019, 90 min)

Director: Josh Murphy

Producer: Laura Wagner

Artifishal is a film about people, rivers, and the fight for the future of wild fish and the environment that supports them. It explores wild salmon's slide towards extinction, threats posed by hatcheries and fish farms, and our continued loss of faith in nature.

**"Every once in a while, there is a film that influences the way we think, we love, we live. This documentary will probably change the way we eat. Facing the challenges of feeding an ever-growing population on our planet we humans are forced to come up with solutions. It is our tendency to believe that we can engineer our way out of any problem. And sometimes this seems to work. But when it comes to fish one has to look under the surface. With disturbing images of robot-controlled fish-farms and a well-composed narrative this film gives indisputable evidence that we are swimming in the wrong direction."**

— Joachim Hellinger, jury member

## Best Short Mountain Film



Sponsored by Sherpa Adventure Gear | \$2,000

### *Speak To Me Softly*

(Canada, 2019, 6 min)

Director: Henna Taylor

Producer: Matthew Hood

Take an honest and intimate peek into the headspace of a climber having a not-so-sunny day.

**"I'm going to fall.. I'm going to fall...ok, chill...calm down". I'm sure this is something that we can all relate to...right? This is a beautiful, artistic and gentle story that shows how we can overcome inner doubt with confidence and self-belief..."**

— Lynn Robinson, jury member

## Best Feature-Length Mountain Film



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

### *Into the Canyon*

(USA, 2019, 84 min)

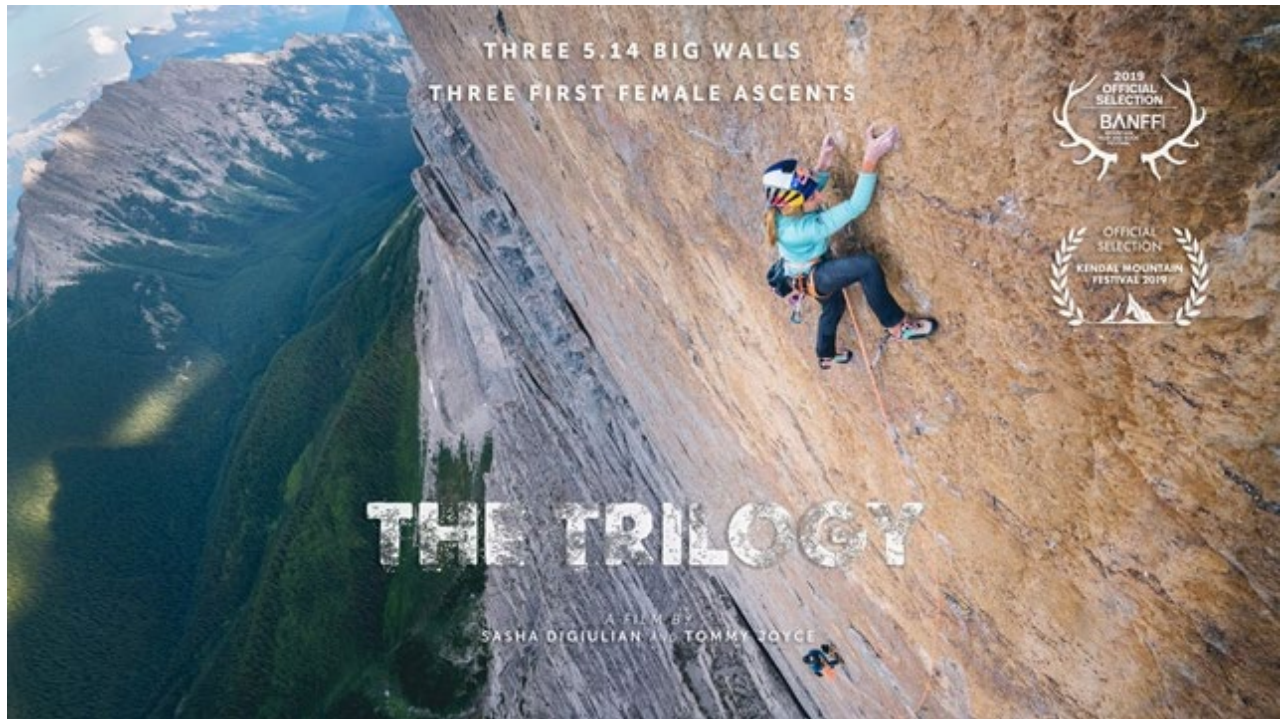
Director: Peter McBride

Producer: Amanda Pollak

When filmmaker/photographer Peter McBride and writer Kevin Fedarko set out on a 1200-kilometre journey on foot through the entire length of the Grand Canyon the challenge becomes far more than they bargained for. *Into the Canyon* is a story of extreme physical hardship where the bonds of friendship are stretched and the timeless beauty of this sacred place becomes meditation and ultimately a cautionary tale for our complex relationship with the natural world.

**"A question we might well ask ourselves is this: 'Is every person entitled to visit every piece of this wilderness?' The appetite is there, and there's money to be made packaging the jewels of the wild for mass tourism. But as this film reminds us, 'Wilderness cannot be its own spokesperson.' A feat of endurance, a heartwarming and hilarious buddy film, the work of a major photographer at the height of his powers, this singular film about a specific place - the Grand Canyon - carries a universal message. When we visit a wild place, it becomes a little less wild. If we don't commit to advocating for and protecting wilderness as the other half of loving it and using it... we'll love it to death." — Niobe Thompson, jury member**

## People's Choice Award



Sponsored by Osprey | \$2,000

### *The Trilogy*

(USA, 2019, 31 min)

Director: Tommy Joyce

Producer: Sasha DiGiulian

Sasha DiGiulian does the first female ascent of three 5.14 routes up big walls established by Sonnie Trotter in the Canadian Rockies.

## SPECIAL JURY MENTION



### *Out on a Limb*

(Canada 2019, 21 min)

Director: Jordan Manley

Producer: Diana BrucculieriUSA, 2016, 50 min)

Director: Erik Osterholm

Producers: Erik Osterholm and Alyse Walsh

Production Company: Vice Media

Engineer Kai Lin teams up with climber Craig DeMartino to design a badass prosthetic foot, which if they succeed won't just level the playing field, but will dish up, if not superpowers, then a real sense of empowerment. Which is almost the same thing.

**“A joint connects two parts to become one unit. The construction of a joint for a protheses connects a designer from the East Coast with a disabled climber in the Rocky Mountains in wonderful ways. Smart storytelling and skillful use of on-screen graphics create a strong visual and emotional link between our two protagonists who actually never meet in person. This film celebrates the benefits of creativity and modern communication in an artful way.”**

— Joachim Hellinger, jury member

## SPECIAL JURY MENTION



### *The River and the Wall*

(USA, 2019, 99 min)

Director: Ben Masters

Producer: Hillary Pierce

Five friends venture into the wilds of Texas to travel 1,900 kilometres on horses, mountain bikes, and canoes along the Rio Grande as conservation filmmaker Ben Masters realizes the urgency of documenting the last remaining wilderness while the threat of new border wall construction looms ahead.

**“Everywhere, waves of populism are chewing at the foundations of civil discourse, and threatening to wash away cherished ideals. Among those ideals most at threat are a belief in open borders and a commitment to conservation. This film shows us what a campaign promise - tailor-made to feed on fear and ignorance - can do wild places. It shows us that a wall can’t stop people, but that it can kill an ecosystem. A journey down the Rio Grande by bike, on horseback, and in canoes, this is a rich and carefully made (and funny) film that succeeds in unpacking a truly complex problem. It also features some of the worst river running we have seen at the festival in many years.”**

— Niobe Thompson, jury member