



MEDIA RELEASE

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2003 Banff Mountain Film Festival finalists feature adventure, discovery, and humour

Stories about Everest, issues-oriented films, and mockumentaries flavour this year's crop of finalists for the 2003 Banff Mountain Film Festival, running November 1–9 at The Banff Centre. A record number of 307 films representing 38 countries were entered into the 28th annual festival competition.

“We’ve never before seen as many good, strong films about Everest in the competition,” says Bernadette McDonald, vice-president, Mountain Culture, The Banff Centre. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the first ascent of Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. “There were also a number of films entered by young filmmakers, which is very encouraging because they are the festival’s future.”

Finalist films about Everest include *The Dark Side of Everest*, a Canada/U.K. co-production that explores death and morality on the mountain. *National Geographic Television: Surviving Everest* follows the sons of three celebrated Everest climbers who lead a climb up Everest, revealing the dangers and drama of the mountain and the untold stories of those who live in its shadow. In *The Race for Everest*, the dramatic story of the first ascent of Everest in 1953, and the controversy that followed, is told by the participants and their families.

In the issues arena, there is *Locked Horns – The Fate of Old Crow*, a documentary about the Vuntut Gwich’in aboriginal community of Old Crow, Yukon, where a millennia-old way of life is in danger of being wiped out if oil drilling proceeds. *Mountain Gorilla – Pushing the Boundaries for Conservation* highlights the role of the International Gorilla Conservation Programme in transboundary preservation efforts. The 1995 wolf re-introduction program in Idaho is the focus of the very disturbing film *Cost of Freedom*.

There is also humour. *Extreme Tramping: The Lord of the Springs* follows an elite team of Xtrampers searching for the perfect backyard trampoline. *Sister Extreme* documents an attempt at the first ascent of the notorious west face of Canmore’s Middle Sister. And *Front Range Freaks: Biscuit* features a small dog with a big appetite for committing climbs.

The 54 finalist films will be screened between November 1 and 9 at The Banff Centre. In addition to screening events November 4 (Radical Reels - a collection of high -adrenaline action sports films) and 7 – 9 (the main program), a new event, the Feature-Length Film Weekend, runs November 1 and 2 with a collection of breathtaking full-length films from around the world .

An international jury will announce the Best of the Festival award winners Sunday evening, November 9. For tickets to the 2003 Banff Mountain Film Festival, call the Banff Centre Box Office at 403-762-6301 or 1-800-413-8368.

For a complete list of finalists by category, click on
www.banffmountainfestivals.ca/festivals/film/finalists/

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An electronic version of this media release and downloadable photos of festival speakers are available at www.banffmountainfestivals.ca/media

The 28th Banff Mountain Film Festival

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Mountain Culture at The Banff Centre promotes understanding and appreciation of the world's mountain places by creating opportunities for people to share – and find inspiration in – mountain experiences ideas and visions.