



BLUE WATER FILM FESTIVAL

May 26, 2021

NEWS - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Blue Water Film Festival, in celebration of UN - World Oceans Day, Announces 2021 Honoree & Film Slate

Valerie Taylor to receive "Queen of the Sharks" Award

Del Mar, CA. The 2021 Blue Water Film Festival (BWFF) presented by the Blue Water Institute announces its honorees and film line-up for its inaugural film festival event taking place June 4th- 8th, 2021, in celebration of UN - World Oceans Day with a total of 25 films - 7 feature films and 18 short films.

HONOREES

Valerie Taylor will receive the **Queen of the Sharks Award**, which is presented to an industry leader whose contributions to the innovation of marine science & entertainment and has changed the industry for the better. The award will be presented online on Monday, June 7th, during the inaugural Blue Water Summit.

FILMS

The Blue Water Film Festival will begin on June 4th and conclude June 8th, UN-World Oceans Day with a special presentation of the feature documentary **Watson** with legendary Captain Paul Watson attending online for Q&A following the screening and will close with **Playing with Sharks** with director Sally Aitken, Director - Tina Dalton, Producer and Valerie Taylor, underwater photographer attending online for Q&A following the screening.

Select films will screen at the Del Mar Highlands in Del Mar, San Diego and virtually at Filmocracy Blue Water Film Club and the In Demand Theatre. The Blue Water Film Festival is well-known for its environmental programming which provides opportunities for support and mentorship of the emerging voices of up-and coming environmental filmmakers.

AWARDS RECEPTION

The Blue Water Film Festival awards reception will be featured online. More to come.

SUPPORTING FILMMAKERS

The Blue Water Film Festival in conjunction with the Blue Water Institute is an emerging festival whose intention is to bring greater awareness to and engagement for our **big blue planet's** precious **life supply of water**—our oceans, aquifers, rivers, dams, lakes, streams, and waterway systems through cinema and engagement. Blue Water Film Festival is quickly becoming known as the Festival for Environmental Filmmakers: a boutique event beloved by conscious and environmental film fans and auteurs alike. Over 80% of the films in the 2021 BWFF slate will have filmmakers in attendance online to participate in Q&As after the screenings.

FILM SLATE - DOCUMENTARY FEATURE

A VOYAGE AGAINST TIME

This pioneering documentary follows a physically and mentally challenging kayaking expedition led by BASHAR AL HUNEIDI and accompanied by Colin Wong & Mansour Al Safran through six countries from Kuwait to Oman. After several dangerous brushes with death the Expedition is rewarded by Mother Earth with breathtaking scenery, marine and wildlife on the journey of exposing the regions plastic and pollution of The Gulf.

This spiritual journey raises awareness of the region's natural beauty and rich biodiversity and highlights the urgent need for a sustainable strategy to protect the environment so fundamental to the region's heritage and culture. Bashar overcomes treacherous physical, mental, and logistical obstacles to bring himself connect with nature!

Directed by Steve MacKay, Jonathan Ali Khan

KUWAIT

RT 1.26.08

ENTANGLED

ENTANGLED is an award-winning feature film about how climate change has accelerated a collision between one of the world's most endangered species, North America's most valuable fishery, and a federal agency mandated to protect both. The film chronicles the efforts to protect North Atlantic right whales from extinction, the impacts of those efforts on the lobster industry, and how the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has struggled to balance the vying interests. The film, by the makers of Lobster War and Sacred Cod, won a 2020 Jackson Wild award, known as the Oscars of nature films. It also won Best Feature Film at the Water Docs Film Festival, Best Conservation Film at the Mystic Film Festival, and the John de Graaf Environmental Filmmaking Award at the Wild & Scenic Film Festival

Directed by David Abel

USA

RT 1:15:07

** Filmmaker in Online Attendance – David Abel*

NANUQ- AN ARTIC JOURNEY FROM PAST TO FUTURE

1928, 81st parallel North, the Italia Airship, under the command of general Umberto Nobile, crashes into the North Pole icepack. Nine crew members survive. One dies on impact. Six crew members are trapped inside the airship envelope. They will never be found, and, as of today, their destiny is unknown. A story of tragedy and courage, driven by an ancient and anthropological thirst for discovery, the very thirst that leads Paola Catapano, director of audio-visual communications at the CERN centre in Geneva, to seek for the relic of the Italia airship, and to put together an international team of scientists, explorers and science communicators to pay homage to a lost past and give hope to a future which is in serious danger because of humanity's irresponsible behaviour.

Directed By Emanuela Licitra

ITALY

RT 55.10

PLAYING WITH SHARKS

The extraordinary life story of pioneering scuba diver, Valerie Taylor, a fearless marine maverick whose passion for sharks knows no bounds – even when there should be. Valerie Taylor is a living legend and icon in the underwater world. A glamorous shark hunter in the 1950s, she was a champion slayer with ruthless aim before a personal epiphany transformed her into a passionate marine conservationist – notably for the ocean's scariest creature, the shark. This is her incredible true story, swimming against the tide of human misconception of sharks and putting herself on the front line for sharks for over 70 years. Featuring a stranger than fiction script, the making of *Jaws*, a magnetic heroine, and that most charismatic and terrifying of screen creatures, sharks; this powerful and visually sumptuous 90-minute feature documentary draws on incredible re-mastered film footage captured over 50 years. Valerie's passion to change the human perceptions of sharks transformed scientific knowledge and our understandings of these magnificent apex predators forever. This is her story.

Writer/Director: Sally Aitken

Australia, RT 1:35:00

Producer: Tina Dalton

Cast: Valerie Taylor, Jean Michel Cousteau, Dr. Sylvia Earle

* *Filmmaker in Attendance online* – Sally Aitken, Tina Dalton, Valerie Taylor

THE LONG COAST

In a series of lyrical portraits, *THE LONG COAST* illuminates the stories of Maine's seafolk, those whose lives and livelihoods are inextricably connected to the ocean. This atmospheric film shows the beauty, intimacy, and uncertainty that coastal dwellers face in rooting their lives in the ocean, particularly as human actions — from overfishing, to aquaculture, to warming seas — confront Maine and its people with profound change.

Directed by Ian Cheney

USA

RT 1.20.35

WATSON

Co-founder of Greenpeace and founder of Sea Shepherd, Captain Paul Watson has spent 40 years fighting to end the destruction of the ocean's wildlife and its habitat.

Directed by Lesley Chilcott

USA, RT 1:39:00

** Filmmaker in Online Attendance – Captain Paul Watson*

WHERE THERE ONCE WAS WATER

A song for the sacred in all of us. An invitation to change our perspective, rewrite the story, and heal our relationship with water ... one watershed, one meal, one raindrop, at a time. Water is love, and if we write it together, this love story may indeed become one for the ages

Directed By Brittany App

USA

RT: 1.14.00

** Filmmaker in Online Attendance – Brittany App*

FILM SLATE - SHORTS

A FISHER'S RIGHT TO KNOW

Fishers throughout East Alabama depend on the mighty Coosa River for food, recreation and a family pastime that goes back generations. But do fishermen and women -- and their families -- have a right to know which fish are safe to consume? Not currently in Alabama, the River State. Coosa Riverkeeper and other advocates are working to give fishers across the entire state that right.

Directed By John Haley

USA

RT 16.44

AZILALI: THEY DO NOT SLEEP

The creatures of the sea are always awake to connect with you. Journeying through the life of a dark shy shark foetus, this film is a deep cinematic and aural bowing to the sacredness of the kelp forests and its myriad life forms and non-life forms. It gently reaches out to that which is beyond what can be said about the profundity, mysteriousness and beauty of nature and the universe.

Directed by Faine Loubser

South Africa

RT: 11.37

BAJO: GUARDIANS OF THE REEF

In a time when we are so detached from the natural world, A group of people called the Bajau are still inspiring close to the water. Sulawesi is at the epicentre of worldwide marine biodiversity. Bajau people have lived and hunted in these waters for centuries with communities made up of some of the most renowned natural free divers in the world. Dafrin identifies as

Bajau, he is a priest and a free diver, and has stopped using bombs to catch fish, and retreated to the traditional Bajau technique of free diving. The ocean is his communities life source and he sees himself as a protector. For many indigenous people, dynamite fishing is the only way to compete with the live fish trade.

Director: Alice Colfox

United Kingdom

RT: 4.38

BARBARA CRIUTES: SNORKELING ST JOHN, USVI

Ten years ago Barbara Crites left Wisconsin and moved to St John in the US Virgin islands. Living next to the Caribbean Sea, she outfitted herself with the latest snorkel gear and an underwater camera. For the next decade she documented underwater marine life and collected over 90,000+ photos. Her photo collection is testimony to the changing nature of life in our oceans due to acidification and warming temperatures.

Directed By Andrea E Leland

USA

RT 9.16

FAKA'APA'APA

In the years since Tonga banned whale hunting, an important piece of the local economy has become swimming with whales. But will this new form of ecotourism be sustainable?

Directed by Scott Sportleder

USA

RT 14:06

FROM THE GROUND UP

In the semi-arid village of Malolo in Singida, Tanzania, Adija and her surrounding community rely on one water source, a single hole in the ground no larger than the size of an average puddle. From the Ground Up takes a look into Adija's daily routine and provides a powerful understanding of the localized impact of the increasingly dire global water crisis.

Directed By Trent Zulkiwicz

USA

RT 14.29

FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE OCEAN: TURTLES OF ALABAMA

Alabama is a global hotspot for turtle diversity and the perfect playground for turtle scientists. The variety of microhabitats traversing the state create conditions for turtle diversity unmatched anywhere else on the planet. This film explores the "glamorous life of turtles" in Alabama -- from the dramatic alligator snapping turtle to the elusive and almost extinct flattened musk turtle -- and the special people who spend their time protecting this critical species.

Directed By Josef Fairbanks

USA

RT 16.40

GAMECHANGERS: THE FOOTBALL TEAM CONSERVATION GOALS

Gamechangers is the story of the Ghanaian football team who committed to saving sea turtles in Ghana. The first step is to address the issues in their own community in Gomoa Fetteh - a coastal town in the Central Region of Ghana. But accomplishing this task is far from easy. The football team, led by their coach Daniel, is well aware of these challenges. In the close knit community in Gomoa Fetteh, sea turtle patrollers and poachers are often linked by family ties. The team's only way forward is through dialogue with the wider community. But as passionate football players, they know what it takes to achieve their goals.

Directed by Charlie Johnson

United Kingdom

RT 8.48

HEMCOMING JOURNEY TO LIMUW

Homecoming: Journey to Limuw tells the story of the Chumash people's annual journey back to their historical village site on Limuw, now present day Santa Cruz Island. Come along as we see, hear, and feel each pull of their paddles, symbolic of how the Chumash community is keeping their traditions alive.

Director Nick Zachar

USA

RT 14.30

MABON

An eight-year old boy residing on the stunningly stark north welsh coast. Mabon works with his mum to keep the welsh beaches clean, spending hours each week, scouring the beaches of plastic washed up on the sand. Friction Collective wanted to tell Mabon's story from his perspective. We want to listen to his thoughts about the world he lives in, the beaches, the litter, the nets and things he would say to the world that has left him this mess to deal with.

Director Jack Davies

United Kingdom

RT: 4.39

MOTHER OF THE SEA

This short film tells the legend of the Mother of the Sea – a tale that virtually every intuit from Greenland to the Canadian Artic knows in some form or another. This is a “living story”, it's not about the past; this story is taking place right now. Updated with plastic trash and climate change, telling this tale does more than scare children away from the dangerous ice – it warns us all about the perils of disrespecting Mother Nature. Directed by Nicolas Brown

OUR PLASTIC BEACH

Our Plastic Beach is a narrative short film that follows a young girl and her Gran tackling plastic waste on their local beach together. After an unfortunate turn, a new level of relationship is found between mother and daughter - and we see the power of the sea to unite family across

generations. Director Chris Thomas is an award-winning filmmaker from London, known mostly for his character-focused emotive tales and often sub-culture themed stories within the medium of short film.

Directed By Chris Tomas

United Kingdom

RT 4.03

RISE FROM THE CAPE FLATS

The film is about a man who lives in the heart of the notorious Cape Flats, one of the most dangerous places in the world. After one life changing encounter upon experiencing the ocean, he now does everything in his power to advocate for positive change within his community through education and affording the youth to experience the ocean, becoming advocates and protectors of therof.

Director: Shamier Magmoet

South Africa

RT: 9.45

SANCTUARIES 360 – VIRTUAL ONLY

Dive in without the need to get wet! Explore your National Marine Sanctuaries, a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. From the thriving kelp forests of Channel Islands to the emerald blue waters of the Florida Keys, and from the shipwrecks of Lake Huron to turtle cleaning stations in Hawai'i, few places on the planet can compete with the diversity of the National Marine Sanctuary System. Come along as we experience these underwater treasures through virtual reality. Our library currently includes 4 VR "episodes", with more to come down the road.

Director Nick Zachar

USA

RT 5.00

SAVING BUFFALO REEF

Buffalo Reef is a natural cobble feature in Lake Superior, located just off the eastern edge of the Keweenaw Peninsula in the U.P of Michigan. The reef has historically maintained invaluable spawning habitat for fish species such as lake trout and lake whitefish. These remarkable habitat features are threatened by the migrating stamp sands, produced by harmful mining activities beginning in the late 1800's.

The treaty of 1842 or commonly known as the "Copper Treaty" ceded millions of acres of land to the United States in exchange for rights to hunt, fish, and gather within the ceded territory. Buffalo Reef has always been considered as culturally significant harvesting grounds for local tribal communities. Today's challenge involving Tribal, State, Federal, and Academic partnerships combine efforts to mitigate damages and ultimately restore Buffalo Reef as the ecological resource that has sustained both tribal and non-tribal communities for generations.

Directed by Finn Ryan

USA

RT 11:20

STORIES FROM THE BLUE: DISCOVERING INNER EARTH

"For me and for my colleagues, we look into the darkness and we see opportunity." Many think Jill Heinerth and fellow cave divers are nothing but adrenaline junkies. Come along as Jill takes us on a journey that dispels this myth, and find out how her exploration of inner Earth is furthering understanding of our planet.

Director Nick Zachar

USA

RT 6.00

STORIES FROM THE BLUE: DISENTANGLING EXTINCTION

"How do you do it? You have to figure out two things: how do you stop them, and how do you get close enough without losing your life..." Come along as we hear how Charles "Stormy" Mayo, the pioneer of whale disentanglement techniques, and his family went from hunting to saving these sentient creatures in and around Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

Director Nick Zachar

USA

RT 6.14

STORIES FROM THE BLUE: MILLION WAVES PROJECT

"What if doing something was better than doing nothing?" That's the question that sparked the Million Waves Project, which works with Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary to turn marine debris into 3D-printed prosthetic limbs. Watch our Stories from the Blue to hear how they're making a difference for people and the ocean.

Director Shannon Shikles

USA

RT 6.03

STORIES FROM THE BLUE: OCEAN GUARDIANS

The NOAA Ocean Guardian School Program provides opportunities for kids to get out in their environment to do hands-on, stewardship-based projects. Come along as we meet those who have fostered the growth of this important program and the children who are the future guardians of our planet.

Director Nick Zachar

USA

RT 6.44

TRAPPED BY PLASTIC

Through her work, photographer Mandy Barker shows the devastating and far-reaching impact of marine plastic pollution.

Director Anny Tubbs

Belgium

RT: 9.06

Passes for the 2021 Blue Water Film Festival can now be purchased at www.bluewaterfilmfestival.org.

About the **Blue Water Film Festival & Blue Water Institute**

The [Blue Water Film Festival](http://www.bluewaterfilmfestival.org) takes place in Del Mar, San Diego home to the Scripps Oceanographic Institution. The year-round [Blue Water Institute](http://www.bluewaterinstitute.org) purpose is to innovate for ocean-based solutions and to develop the next set of environmental filmmakers for industry change. Each June, the festival celebrates the UN - World Oceans Day with a slate of cutting-edge environmental films, shorts, industry panels, and a beach clean-up. The 2021 BWFF will be held June 4th- 8th. BWFF collaborates with ICV as its 501(c)(3) non-profit. Learn more at bluewaterfilmfestival.org.

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About **Blue Water Film Festival**

Founded in 2020, the Blue Water Film festival celebrates the UN - World Oceans Day, June 8th. The theme of the BWFF is about our Blue Planet; the festival purpose is to encourage attendees to think broadly about how climate change affects planet Earth and deeply about the universal concerns and actions needed to bring us into balance. About 50% of all film selections are non- US productions, helping to fulfill the festival mission of promoting cross -cultural understanding through film.

About the **Blue Water Institute**

Blue Water Institute is a non-profit organization committed to the preservation of the planet and the need to nurture the next generation of environmental filmmakers. The Institute is driven by its environmental programs that discover, innovate and support the next generation of environmental filmmakers from all over the world.

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