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JENNIFER BAICHWAL

Jennifer Baichwal was born in Montréal and grew up in Victoria, British Columbia. She studied philosophy and theology at McGill University and received an M.A. in 1994, supported by a McGill Major Fellowship and a 2 year FCAR Master's Scholarship.

She has been directing and producing documentaries for 15 years. Her first film, *Looking You In The Back of the Head*, an enquiry into the problem of personal identity, asked thirteen women to try to describe themselves and was first broadcast, to critical acclaim, on TVOntario's From the Heart. It subsequently sold for broadcast across Canada.

Let it Come Down: The Life of Paul Bowles, her first feature documentary, won a 1999 International Emmy for Best Arts Documentary. It premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 1998 and was nominated that year for a Best Feature Documentary Genie Award. It won Best Biography at Hot Docs in 1999 and was picked up for theatrical release by Mongrel Media in Canada, Zeitgeist Films in the U.S., and Uplink in Japan. The film has been sold for broadcast all over the world, and has been selected for a number of international film and television festivals, including Jerusalem, Buenos Aires, FIPA, Banff (where it received a Rockie nomination), Istanbul and Edinburgh.

The Holier It Gets documents a trek Baichwal took with her brother and two sisters to the source of the Ganges river with her father's ashes. The film won Best Independent Canadian Film and Best Cultural Documentary at Hot Docs 2000, Geminis for Best Editing and Best Writing and was nominated for the Donald Brittain Award and the Chalmers Documentarian Award. It was commissioned by TVOntario and features music by Ravi Shankar and John McLaughlin.

The True Meaning of Pictures is a feature length film on the work of Appalachian photographer Shelby Lee Adams. It was commissioned by TVOntario, Bravo!, SBS Australia and Discovery Germany. The film premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2002 and was invited to the Sundance International Film Festival in January 2003. It won a Gemini award for Best Arts Documentary in 2003 and has played at numerous international festivals. The film was released on dvd by Docurama/New Video in October 2003.

Baichwal, along with Nick de Pencier, was commissioned in 2003-4 to make 40 short films on artists who have been supported over the past four decades by the Ontario Arts Council. These include writer Michael Ondaatje, artist Michael Snow, pianist Eve Egoyan and playwright Judith Thompson, and are in periodic rotation on TVOntario. The collection received a 2006 Gemini nomination for Best Direction in a Performing Arts Program or Series.

Manufactured Landscapes, a feature documentary about the work of artist Edward Burtynsky, was a co-production between Mercury Films, Foundry Films and the National Film Board. It premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2006 and won Best Canadian Feature Film, and has since received a number of other awards, notably a Genie for Best Documentary, Al Gore's Reel Current Award and the 2006 Toronto Film Critics' Award for Best Canadian Feature and Best Documentary 2006. It played theatrically in over 15 territories worldwide, after a prolonged and successful run in Canada.

Act of God, a feature documentary on the metaphysical effects of being struck by lightning and another collaboration between Mercury and Foundry, opened the Hot Docs Film Festival in April 2009 and was released in Canada afterwards by Mongrel Media. It has since played at a number of international festivals, and was released by Zeitgeist Films in the U.S. and Against Gravity in Poland. The film features Paul Auster, Dannion Brinkley and Fred Frith. It was commissioned by The Documentary Channel in Canada, Arte in France and Channel 4 in the U.K.

Baichwal is currently in production on Margaret Atwood's *Payback: Debt and the Shadow Side of Wealth* with the National Film Board of Canada and Ravida Din (Executive Producer, Quebec Production Centre). She lives in Toronto with her husband, Nick de Pencier, and their two children.

NICHOLAS de PENCIER (Co-Director / Producer)

Nicholas de Pencier is a director, producer, and director of photography working in documentary, performing arts, and dramatic film. He is President of Mercury Films Inc., the Toronto based production company he shares with his partner, Jennifer Baichwal.

De Pencier was a producer resident in the Canadian Film Centre's 1997 Producers' Lab, and produced one of four Short Dramatic Films, *Cold Feet*, which was selected for the Toronto International Film Festival and the Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, among others. He then produced Jim Allodi's feature film *The Uncles*, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2000, was picked up for distribution in Canada by Odeon Films, and named one of year's top ten Canadian films by the Toronto International Film Festival Group.

As a cinematographer, de Pencier regularly shoots factual TV series, modern dance, rock videos (Gord Downie, Skydiggers, Bob Wiseman), and documentaries. He has also directed, produced and photographed eight modern dance performance films which have received national and international broadcasts and won awards at Canadian and international festivals. His performance film *Streetcar*, was nominated in 2004 for a Performing Arts Best Direction Gemini; the film's choreographer and lead, Peter Chin, won for Best Performance in a Performing Arts Program or Documentary. It was also nominated for a Banff Rockie Award.

Other Cinematographer credits include the documentaries *Tre Donne*, *The Quest for the Unicorn*, *A Murder of Crows*, and *Deux de la Vague*, which premiered at Cannes in 2009.

As both producer and director of photography his credits include the feature documentary *Let It Come Down: The Life of Paul Bowles*, which received a Genie nomination in 1998, a Banff Rockie nomination in 1999 and won the International Emmy Award for Best Arts Documentary in 1999. Also *The Holier It Gets*, a documentary filmed in Canada and India, which won Best Cultural and Best Independent Canadian Documentary at Hot Docs, 2000, and garnered Geminis for best writing, editing, and direction in a documentary series, as well as a nomination for The Donald Brittain award for best documentary and a nomination for a Chalmers Award in 2001.

In 2002 he produced and shot the documentary: *The True Meaning of Pictures* about the work and world of Kentucky photographer Shelby Lee Adams, which premiered at TIFF and then Played at the Sundance Film Festival. It was nominated for two Gemini Awards and won in the Best Arts Documentary category. This was followed in 2003 by *Hockey Nomad* based on Dave Bidini's best-selling book *Tropic of Hockey* about hockey in unlikely places around the globe, which was nominated for a Banff Rockie Award, as well as three Geminis, and won the Best Sports Documentary Gemini. He also co-directed, produced and photographed for TVOntario a series of 40 short profiles on artists who have received Ontario Arts Council grants over the past 40 years.

He produced the documentary *Manufactured Landscapes*, which won the Chum City Award for best Canadian feature at TIFF 2006, the Genie Award for best Documentary, and was distributed in 15 countries. He also directed and partially shot the high definition feature documentary *Four Wings and a Prayer*, about the migration of the Monarch butterfly, which won the Grand Prix Pariscience, the Banff Rockie Award for best Wildlife and Natural History Program, the Jules Verne Nature Award, and was nominated for Geminis for best Science Documentary, Best Cinematography and Best Direction, as well as an Emmy for Outstanding Nature Programming (PBS version).

Most recently he was producer and director of photography on *Act of God* - a feature documentary about the metaphysics of being struck by lightning, which was selected as the opening night film for Hot Docs International Film Festival as well as an official selection in competition at the Karlovy-Vary International Film Festival in 2009. In 2010 he is shooting the documentary adaptation of *Payback*, Margaret Atwood's Massey Lecture on debt.

KERMIT BLACKWOOD (Lead Writer/Creative Director)

Kermit Blackwood graduated from Marlboro College in Vermont, 2000. As an undergraduate science major, he was one recipient of an unrestricted \$750,000 MacArthur Foundation grant. He is considered an authority on gallinaceous birds, evolutionary biology, and behavioral ecology; having described an alternative evolutionary pathway of ornamental plumage in Gallinaceous birds, which pushes the boundaries of current understandings of animal mimicry and avian flight. Over the years, he has worked with the Wildlife Conservation Society at the Bronx Zoo, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Stockholm Museum of Natural History Ornithology Department. He has also conducted extensive field research in Asia and the Americas on a host of Gallinaceous bird species. Kermit writes natural history essays and historical fiction stories for film and television. He also co-writes and produces musical soundtracks and scores.

TRAVIS RUMMEL (Associate Producer)

Travis Rummel graduated from Colorado College in 2001 with a degree in International Political Economy. Moving to Telluride to pursue white water rafting and fly fishing after college, he began working on documentary films focusing on nature. Travis Rummel's production company FeltSoul Media, co-owned with Ben Knight, has produced an award winning feature and several award winning shorts.

The Hatch, a short documentary film on the annual stone-fly hatch that engulfs the Black Canyon of the Gunnison River, tells the story of what used to be a secret fishing spot closely guarded by a few locals. However, dire threats to this pristine river prompted Felt Soul to raise awareness of this critical conservation issue through the production of this film. It won Best Documentary, Gotham Film Festival, and placed as a finalist at the Telluride Mountain Film Festival, Banff Mountain Film Festival, and Taos Mountain Film Festival (2005/2006).

Running Down the Man, another short documentary film, chronicles the quirky activity of fly-fishing for Rooster Fish from the beaches of Baja Sur, Mexico. It won Telluride Mountain Film Festival People's Choice Best Film, and was a finalist in Taos Mountain Film Festival, Durango Independent Film Festival, and Boulder International Film Festival Finalist (2006/2007).

BEN KNIGHT (Second Unit Director of Photography)

Ben Knight

Ben Knight headed westward from his home in North Carolina at the age of 17 to follow his dream of documentary work and photojournalism. For 10 years, he worked as the Photo Editor for the Daily Planet in Telluride, Colorado. His still photography, video, and editing skills are entirely self-taught. For years he operated the projector at the Telluride Mountainfilm, soaking in the style of the films that showed from around the globe. In 2008 Knight stood upon the stage at the Mountainfilm Awards to accept the Director's Choice Award as well as Audience Choice for Best Film for *Red Gold*. What a journey.

Red Gold, a feature-length documentary, is set at the headwaters of the Kvichak and the Nushagak Rivers in Bristol Bay Alaska: the two largest remaining sockeye salmon runs on the planet. Mining companies Northern Dynasty and Anglo American have proposed to extract what may prove to be the richest deposit of gold and copper in the world. *Red Gold* is a portrait of a unique way of life that would not exist if the salmon didn't return with Bristol Bay's tide. This film won many awards, including Best Film, Ellensburg Film Festival, Award for Cinematic Vision, Camden International Film Festival, Audience Choice Award for Best Film, Banff Mountain Film Festival, and Director's Choice for Best Film, Telluride Mountain Film (2007/2008).