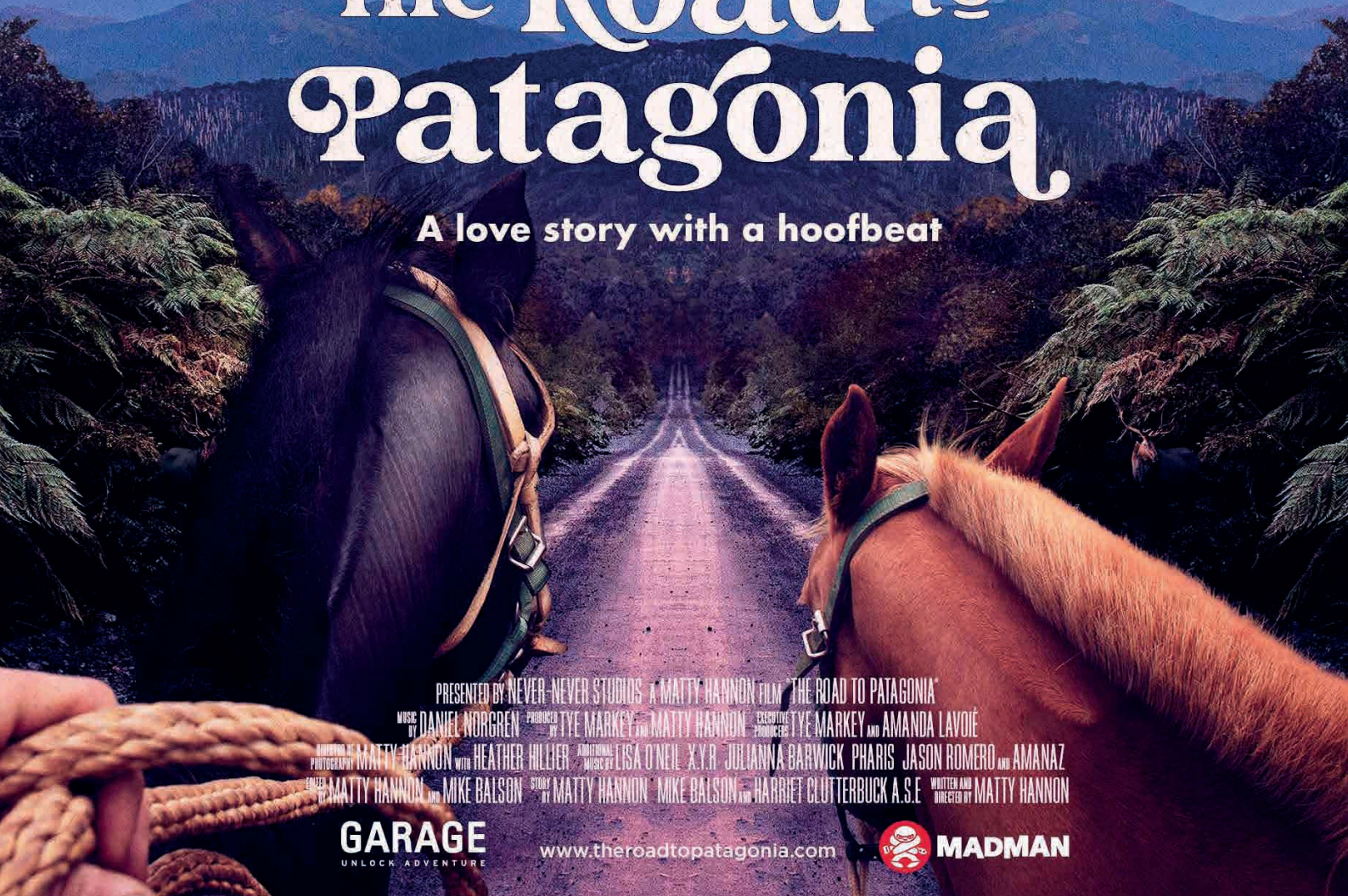




The Road to Patagonia

A love story with a hoofbeat



PRESENTED BY NEVER-NEVER STUDIOS A MATTY HANNON FILM "THE ROAD TO PATAGONIA"
MUSIC BY DANIEL NORGREN PRODUCED BY TYE MARKEY AND MATTY HANNON EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS TYE MARKEY AND AMANDA LAVOIE
WRITTEN BY MATTY HANNON WITH HEATHER HILLIER ADDITIONAL MUSIC BY LISA O'NEIL X.Y.R. JULIANNA BARWICK PHARIS JASON ROMERO AND AMANAZ
EDITED BY MATTY HANNON AND MIKE BALSON STORY BY MATTY HANNON MIKE BALSON AND HARRIET CLUTTERBUCK A.S.E. WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY MATTY HANNON

GARAGE
UNLOCK ADVENTURE

www.theroadtopatagonia.com



MADMAN

Short Synopsis

The Road to Patagonia is a stunning, intimate and unflinching series of love letters within a documentary - firstly, a love between two people, and secondly between humanity and the Earth. Ecologist Matty Hannon begins an incredible solo adventure, to surf the west coast of the Americas by motorbike, from the top of Alaska to the tip of Patagonia. But deep in the wilderness - alone with the wolves and the bears - the journeyer's plans unexpectedly fall to pieces. After losing everything, and on the cusp of quitting he meets the girl of his dreams, a permaculture farmer named Heather. Shot over 16 years, the result is an adventurous exposé on the more-than-human-world, offering a physical and spiritual odyssey to better understand our place in Nature.

Full Synopsis

The Road to Patagonia is a stunning, intimate and unflinching series of love letters within a documentary – firstly a love between two people, and secondly between humanity and the Earth. We follow Matty Hannon on an incredible solo adventure, to surf the west coast of the Americas by motorbike, from the top of Alaska to the tip of Patagonia. But deep in the wilderness - alone with the wolves and the bears - the journeyer's plans unexpectedly fall to pieces. After losing everything, and on the cusp of quitting he meets the girl of his dreams, a permaculture farmer named Heather Hillier who throws caution to the wind and sells her urban-farm to buy a bike of her own. Together riding south, the duo meet with Zapatista rebels, Amazonian shamans and Mapuche leaders whose salient words crack the adventurers' cultural veneer, leaving them with existential questions.

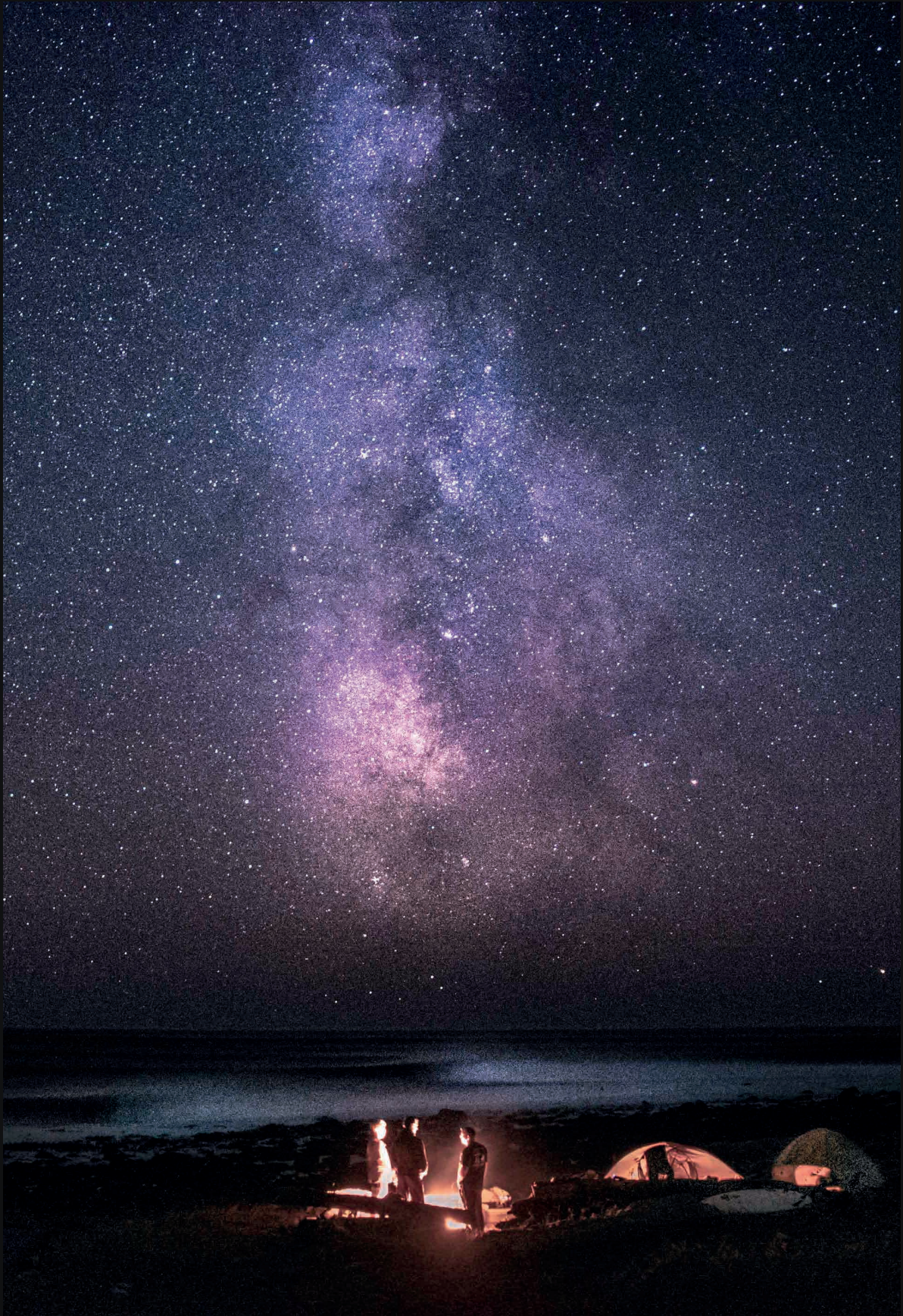
The 50,000km surfing odyssey becomes beautifully complicated by their decision to downshift from motorcycles to horseback, presenting a relational approach to the breathtaking landscapes and a host of challenges that ultimately become extremely rewarding. Hannon and Hillier succeed in beautifully capturing deeply human moments during the world-first expedition, and the noticeable lack of camera-crew becomes The Road to Patagonia's strength. The theme of deep ecology underpins the entire film, visually communicated through exquisite cinematography and emotional verité sequences. Shot over 16 years, the result is an adventurous exposé on the more-than-human world, offering a physical and spiritual odyssey to better understand our place in Nature.

Winner - Best Film and Best Documentary - Byron Bay International Film Festival

Winner - Audience Choice award - Florida Surf Film Festival

Winner - Audience Choice award - Melbourne Documentary Film Festival

A love story with a hoofbeat



Press Kit & Photos

PHOTOGRAPHY: MATTY HANNON

The Road to Patagonia



ONE-LINER

The lives of two strangers are changed forever when they cross paths on the surfing adventure of a lifetime, discovering love, downshifting and four charismatic horses.

Cast and Crew

A SMALL TEAM OF DIRTBAGS AND PROFESSIONALS



DIRECTOR CINEMATOGRAPHER
MATTY HANNON

Matty Hannon is a regionally based (Byron Bay, Australia) director with experience producing and directing short documentaries in challenging environments across 6 continents. He runs a small, multi-award winning production company called Thunderbox.



CINEMATOGRAPHER
HEATHER HILLIER

Heather Hillier's primary passion is growing cabbages and climbing, but over 2 years of filming from the back of motorcycles and horses meant that she developed a uniquely earthy style to her cinematography, and her subtle disposition means 'access' comes easily.

WEBSITE

theroadtopatagonia.com

INSTAGRAM

[@theroadtopatagonia](https://www.instagram.com/theroadtopatagonia)

[@matty_hannon](https://www.instagram.com/matty_hannon)

[@heatherhillier](https://www.instagram.com/heatherhillier)

FACEBOOK

[The Road to Patagonia](https://www.facebook.com/theroadtopatagonia)



EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
AMANDA LAVOIE

Amanda Lavoie is an entrepreneur from California with a growing interest in film, and an absolute love of the arts. The Road to Patagonia is her debut film as Executive Producer.



PRODUCER
TYE MARKEY

Tye informally studied, wrote and produced short films in college while simultaneously getting his Bachelor of Science in Business Management. Now as an entrepreneur Tye has started to apply his skills into more formal film production.

Cast and Crew

A SMALL TEAM OF DIRTBAGS AND PROFESSIONALS



EDITOR
MICHAEL BALSON

Michael Balson is one of Australia's most experienced and awarded documentary makers, with dozens of international documentaries to his credit, and has won AFI, Logi, and US ACE awards for Directing, Editing and Soundtrack.



EDITOR
HARRIET CLUTTERBUCK

Harriet Clutterbuck is an award-winning documentary editor with 50 years experience. She enjoys editing stories about social issues, the environment and diverse cultures.

WEBSITE

theroadtopatagonia.com

INSTAGRAM

[@theroadtopatagonia](https://www.instagram.com/theroadtopatagonia)
[@matty_hannon](https://www.instagram.com/matty_hannon)
[@heatherhillier](https://www.instagram.com/heatherhillier)

FACEBOOK

[The Road to Patagonia](https://www.facebook.com/TheRoadtoPatagonia)



SOUNDTRACK
DANIEL NORGREN

Daniel Norgren (born 18 July 1983), is a Swedish singer-songwriter, with millions of fans worldwide. He has been working through a small indie label called Superpuma Records since 2006.



ADDITIONAL MUSIC
LISA ONEILL

Lisa is an award winning singer-songwriter from Ireland, having produced 5 albums from 2009 til present.



Initial Reviews

NATIONAL REVIEWS COMING SOON

"It's just beautiful. Congratulations. I was completely swept up and wouldn't change a thing. Thanks for inviting me to witness your wonderful story. Bravo!"

- Damon Gameau, Actor and Director, 2040, That Sugar Film



So great to see your art and your beautiful - very masterfully - put together story. Just amazing.' - Dave Rastovich, Freesurfer & Foodgrower



I cried the whole way through. It's just so full of magic... It's just so beautiful. To me love stories are the best stories, and yours is the most beautiful love story to the living world. I'm so grateful that you spent time making this beautiful, beautiful gift to the world... so inspiring.' - Lauren Hill, Professional surfer, Writer, Director



Best documentary I've seen in years. Five stars.

- Nolan Verheij, DOP and Director



All I can say is WOW. Thank you for taking us and anyone else who views this beautiful film on this crazy, yet self-reflecting journey. It truly is a journey of self-interrogation and interrogating your own culture. I loved how you connected to other cultures and listened to their stories, and how you saw for yourselves the Spiritual connection that Indigenous people have all around the world."

- Brenda Matthews, Award-winning writer and director - THE LAST DAUGHTER



POLITICS



Employing a personal and verité documentary mode of storytelling, *The Road to Patagonia* uses the hooks of ‘adventure and love’ to explore the deeper themes of ‘human rights and relationality’.

It argues that the project of globalisation is failing, and that the relationships we build ecologically, socially and spiritually are critical to our human happiness and environmental sustainability.

A NEW OLD STORY

“Slowing down will not only help humanity and the more-than-human-world, but it might also be the most beautiful adventure of our lives.”



T R A

THE ROAD TO PATAGONIA

Directors statement

MATTY HANNON

THE ROAD TO PATAGONIA is a physical and spiritual odyssey to better understand our place in nature.

Not only do I believe in the power of adventure to coax us out of our digital lives - to reconnect ourselves with the Earth and each other - but I believe in the power of an emotive documentary, an immersive experience that inspires the audience into self-reflection and action.

As a verité documentary THE ROAD TO PATAGONIA includes 16 years of footage from my life. Some moments were difficult to include, being so personal and vulnerable. However, overall they were incredibly privileged times to have documented, and despite investigating themes of colonialism and globalisation, the film aims to instil an uplifting sense of hope and positivity in the audience. In a way, I hope it's a small antidote to the heaviness of the world in recent years.

Some of the interviewees included in the film speak to the harsh consequences of an ancient paradigm conflicting with the dominant modern system. Indeed we live in polarising times; the mainstream west still embedded in a Cartesian philosophy that says humans are separate from and superior to nature, all the while accepting the ideas of dualism; of man vs nature, man vs woman, white vs black, right vs left etc.

THE ROAD TO PATAGONIA investigates a philosophy born epochs before René Descartes or even the Abrahamic religions, a complex web of life and ideas that are still thriving today, and it argues that to truly bring ourselves into harmony with the natural world, we must slow down, and return to seeing humanity as a part of it.

N S I T I O N



TECH -

Shooting format: Digital

Aspect ratio: 16 x 9

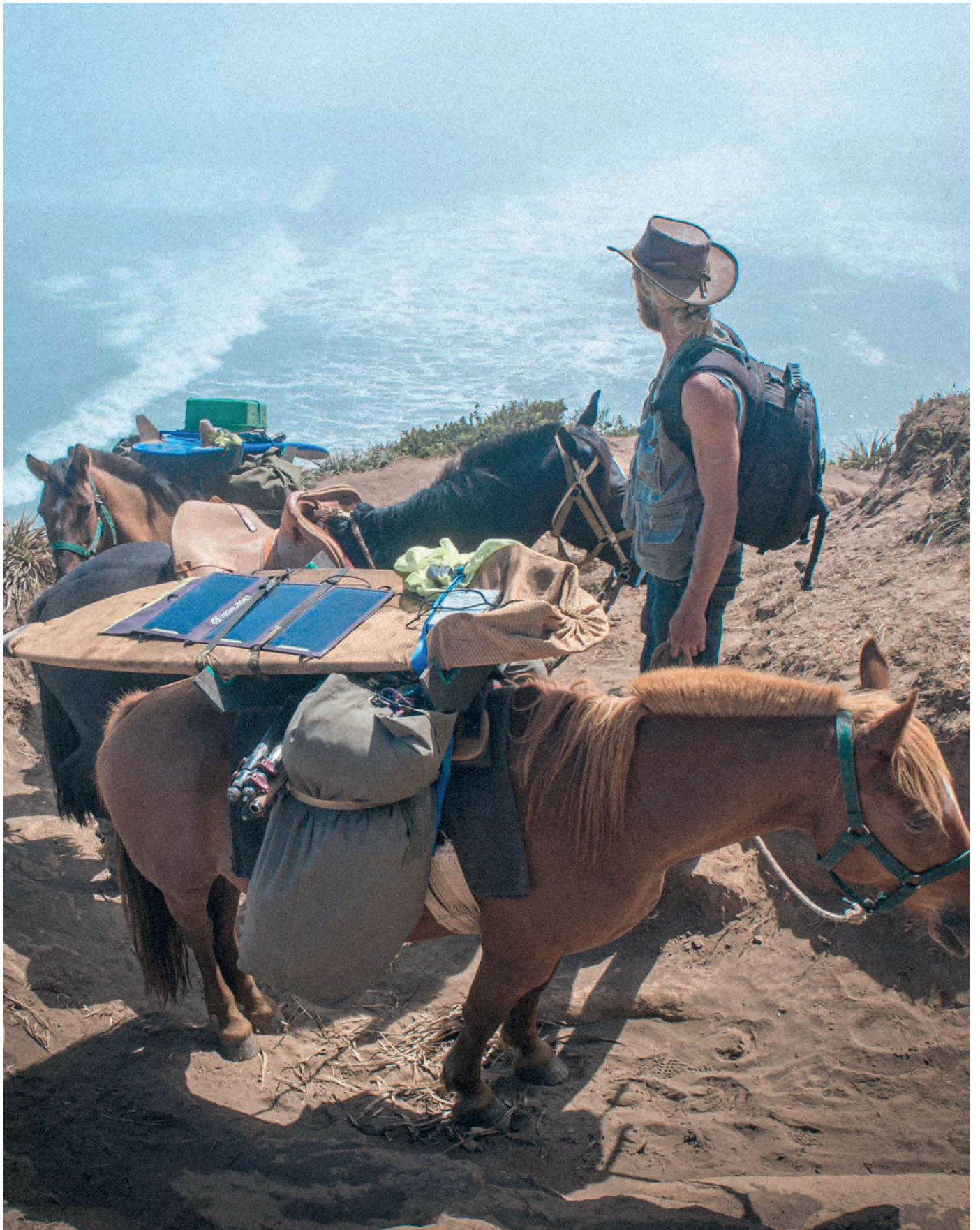
Audio deliveries: Dolby Atmos, 7.1, 5.1 or Stereo versions

Length: 90min

Language: English, Spanish, Mentawai (with English subtitles)



SPECS









GENRE

Documentary

COMPLETION

January 2024

PRODUCTION

10 years

WORLD PREMIERE

Byron Bay International F.F.

INTERNATIONAL PREM.

Mauai International Film Fest

“The entire horse trip was a highlight. It shrunk our perspective, which feels dangerously insular in this age of data overload, when we’ve been told that the more information we have, the more mobile, the better.

The horses forced upon us a local dependency on the land above all else, but also on the communities we passed through, and each other. We were constantly aware of swales in the landscape, as a tiny creek running through it might be our only water for the day.”

- Heather Hillier

INTERVIEW FROM BYRON BAY
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

FAQ

How did you come to discover the subject of your film, or the issue behind it? Was there someone you met or something you experienced that sparked the idea to make this film?

There’s a lot of topics in our film; adventure, love, surfing, human rights and globalisation are the obvious ones, and they came about organically, just by living the adventure on a day to day basis, and the people we met along the way.

But the premise for the film - the deep ecology or animism - came later in the editing process, and it took a long time before we were able to distil that down into a filmic context.

When you’re out in the middle of nowhere on the back of a horse experiencing an incredibly animate moment with a girl you love, you don’t need words to communicate that shared feeling, you’re intuitively connected to each other and the world around you. Especially if you’ve been doing that for months on end; you’re immersed and leaning into a different way of life.

But to communicate that feeling through a digital medium on screen to an audience in an dark and insulated cinema is tricky. Fast-paced, modern lifestyles have removed a lot of the language necessary for exploring connection to ‘Nature’, or the universe, or whatever you want to call her.

And that’s where long adventures into the wild can help, the isolation is grounding, the people you meet turn your world upside down, and a lot of the bullshit, if you let it, can fall away.

What aspect of your film is the most important to you for the audience to understand and take on board? What are you hoping the viewer will take home with them?

The world is still rich, diverse and beautiful; there’s hope beyond the anthropocentric story.



FAQ

If your documentary has a central character, can you tell us a little about the process of working with them and establishing trust as they allowed you into their life?

There's two central characters, myself and Heather. And we're in a relationship. And we're filming each other while we live out of tent for years on end. It wasn't easy, but we had 100% trust with each other, even when things didn't go to plan.

Have you always wanted to be a filmmaker? What path did you take to start filmmaking?

No, I never had a vision for a 'career'. After studying ecology at uni I moved to the Mentawai Islands because the rainforest and the traditional culture there is still so vibrant. Later I found the waves, then when the wind was wrong for surfing I would paint. At that stage I figured I could just surf and sell my paintings... life was simple, I lived in an unpowered thatched hut, costs were super low.

After 4 or 5 years of living in Mentawai (before it was all over the media), my friends and family couldn't understand why I wasn't coming home, so I picked up an old camera and started filming the islands - just to show them how incredible it was.

After that I was hooked, I love documentary filmmaking. Not just the cinematography, the music or storytelling, but the way it inherently brings you close to people. Very often when you've developed rapport with people and you sit them down in front of a camera they'll open up deeper than what they would in conversation, and it's such a beautiful thing, that offering of vulnerability. Then you as a filmmaker have the privilege to help them share that story. It comes with a lot of responsibility, but without a doubt that's my favourite part.

There are many ups and downs in the process of making a film. What was your absolute favourite/funniest experience in making/producing this film?

The Road to Patagonia was made over 10 years, so to pick a favourite part is hard.

Money was tricky. In Alaska I was trying to only eat twice a day just to save budget, and when shooting was finished we lived in a rusty old caravan for 4 years, trading work on Hayters Hill Farm for free rent, just so I could afford to keep going with the edit. Getting funding for post-production was an elating milestone, prior to then everything had been such a battle.

A big highlight was discovering the language around animism, that was a big breakthrough :)

Then when Daniel Norgren offered to provide the music for the Road to Patagonia, that was incredible too, he's so talented and evocative, I knew then - 7 years in - that we were gonna make a special little film.

What unique challenges did you face when making or developing this film; and how did you overcome them?

No real budget. No crew (like zero crew) during the shooting. Everything was carried either on the back of a motorcycle or a horse for 2.5 years in the rain, hail and shine, from the top of the world to the bottom. Then in Mexico all my gear, a lot of footage (all my drone footage) was stolen, that was a really tough time.

Editing was tough too. Waking up each day and trying to summon the motivation to sit for 8-10 hours at the computer and figure out how 16 years of footage can be turned into 1.5 hour documentary is the gnarliest puzzle.

I'd never make a film in this way in the future, it's a once-in-a-lifetime dirtbag production, but ironically, the difficulties of this film are also its strengths. The harder it got, the more the film benefitted.

“Then in Mexico a lot of footage (including all my drone footage) was stolen - that was a tough time.”

MATTY HANNON

Director

Can you pinpoint some of your crew members' unique skills or talents that added a 'special something' to your film?

There were a lot of people who added something special to this film, but without a doubt it was Heather's tenacity that made it special.

She'd never even been dinked on a motorcycle before she sold her business and bought a 500cc bike in Mexico to ride into South America with me. Said yes to a relatively dangerous horse expedition. Let me film really intimate moments of her. Learned how to use a camera and interview people. She put up with me through the thick of it.

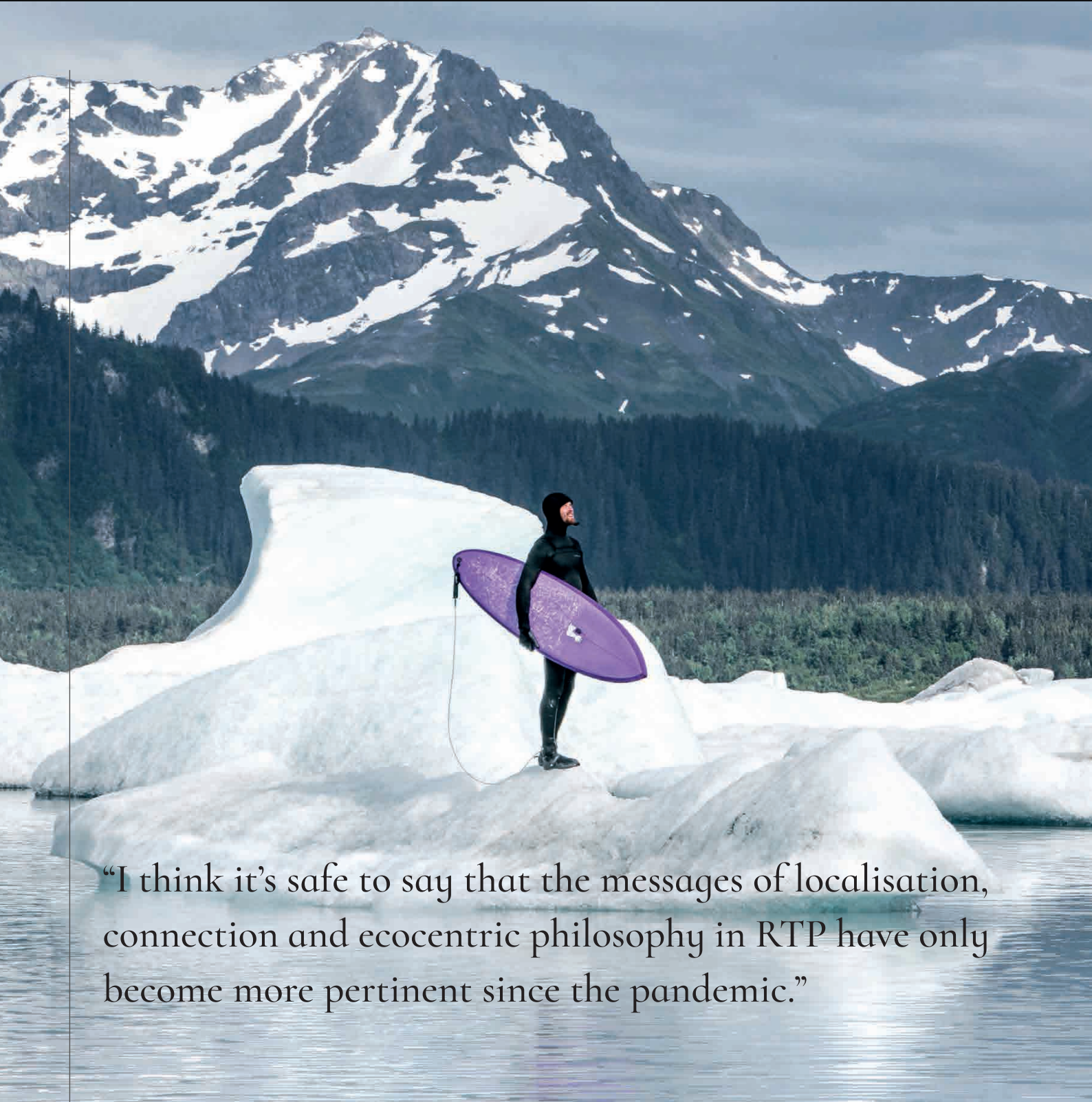
When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up? Are there any parallels to what you're doing now?

I remember being bored in school, not because I was too smart for it, but I hated having to sit still inside a classroom, always daydreaming of being outside. Then I started skateboarding and going to punk rock shows, listening to bands like Bad Religion, NOFX or Operation Ivy, and they got me interested in politics I suppose.

There's definitely parallels with my life these days, i'm lucky that my work takes me on adventures, and allows me space to delve into politics, issues or stories. In free time, we surf, swim in the crystal clear river near our house, or go hiking, and Heather's teaching me about permaculture.

Who or what is your biggest creative influence – at present, and in your career as a filmmaker?

There's so many inspiring people in this world, but to pick a contemporary Australian, it's Nick Cave.



“I think it’s safe to say that the messages of localisation, connection and ecocentric philosophy in RTP have only become more pertinent since the pandemic.”



BY BBFF

“When you’re out in the middle of nowhere on the back of a horse experiencing an incredibly animate moment with a girl you love, you don’t need words to communicate...”

What’s next for you? A job you’re loving? A film in the wings? Taking a break?

I run a documentary production company called Never Never and so that keeps me quite busy. Most films we make are ecologically and culturally focused, which means I get to do the work I love, tying it into surfing, spending time on the land and with my family. I’m super grateful for all of that.

We’re expecting another child in a few months time, so that’s going to change our landscape again, I’m just aiming to have enough time for my family, the land, my community and a bit of surfing and diving along the way.

GENRE

Documentary

COMPLETION

January 2024

PRODUCTION

10 years

WORLD PREMIERE

Byron Bay International F.F.

INTERNATIONAL PREM.

Mauí Internaitonal Film Fest





CONTACT

Matty Hannon

E

matty@neverneverstudios.com

P

(+61) 0490 88 11 42

