14th Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival Selection

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January 14, 2016 - If Inaritu's film "The Revenant" suggests a time for healing from the brutality of Western migration, then the unassuming short film "Here and Now" shows what this solution looks like on the ground in real time.

DiCaprio concluded his Best Actor Golden Globe Award recipient speech with this potent statement "... I want to share this award with all the First Nations people represented in this film and all the indigenous communities around the world. It is time that we recognize your history and that we protect your indigenous lands from corporate interests and people that are out there to exploit them. It is time that we heard your voice and protected this planet for future generations!"

"Here and Now," showing this weekend at the Wild & Scenic Film Festival in Nevada City, California, explores four partnerships between Native people and land conservation groups in Northern California. Like many independent films, filmmaker Andy Miller of Plus M Productions is deeply engaged in working solutions and bringing these forward to a broader audience.

"Here and Now" was produced by the Bay Area Open Space Council, which along with encouraging conservation and connection through public lands, works to promote a larger diversity and equity vision. Many lands enjoyed by the public today are conserved because of the vision of a very few. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which today encompasses over 80,000 acres, was created by the drive of several men in 1972, cosponsors Congressman William S. Mailliard (R-San Francisco) and Congressman Phillip Burton (D-San Francisco). Similarly, Open Space Councils and Land Trusts are carving out pristine areas for agricultural heritage and open space conservation.

Organizations featured in "Here and Now" include the Amah Mutsun Land Trust, Kashia Band of the Pomo Indians, Pie Ranch, Sempervirens Fund, Midpeninsula Open Space District and The Trust for Public Land.

With an aesthetic that feels like taking a quiet walk in nature, "Here and Now" is infused with Native spirit. Walking through the lands that are coming back into Tribal oversight through partnership, is a fine salve for the wounds of many overly developed Bay Area communities. Combined,
projects currently represent over 1,000 acres in open space partnership with Tribes. These conservation lands include treasured acreage along California’s Coast in Sonoma County and South Bay Peninsula. Without protection, these lands would have fallen into private hands and likely development long ago.

Miller weaves in the values of Native people as conservationists and caretakers for thousands of years prior to the arrival of white men, perhaps America’s ultimate immigrants. The over-arching sentiment portrayed is a humble moment of healing—not a righteous story. After seven generations, Indian legend indicates, things can get better. It has now been seven generations since men like Hugh Glass and Jim Bridger headed West through the frontier.

“There is not one inch of land, in the United States, that was not indigenous land at one time,” says Chairman Valentin Lopez, of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. “Being able to access our land is critical to all Native Americans. While being granted access doesn't erase the historical wrongs against our tribe, it’s a major step forward, and we are grateful to be renewing this connection to our history and Mother Earth.”

“This was the first time a tribal member had been back to their sacred mountain in 200 years,” says filmmaker Andy Miller, of Plus M Productions. Now, the tribe is building a ceremony site on the location through a partnership with the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

“The energy, the people that attend, the staff and the town of Nevada City all come together to create the perfect atmosphere to screen conservation films like “Here and Now,” Miller says. “You can actually feel the movement gaining real traction over the course of the weekend.”

Wild & Scenic Film Festival will screen over 140 independent films January 14-18, 2016, including many World premieres. Filmmakers and activists mingle, engage and inspire at this annual event.

“Here and Now” will screen at Friday evening, Jan. 15, Vet’s Hall, and Saturday afternoon, Jan. 16, Yuba River Charter School, at Wild & Scenic, Nevada City and Grass Valley, CA. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.wildandscenicfilmfestival.org.

“Here and Now” was made possible with support from The Christensen Fund, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, and The Trust for Public Land and was created by Plus M Productions.

See trailer here: https://vimeo.com/openspacecouncil

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