

Summit Life

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Breckenridge Festival of Film *enters 33rd year*

Boulder native Jordan Campbell introduces Western world to Duk County

By Aaron H. Bible
Special to the Daily

Mountain town film fests such as the Breckenridge Festival of Film are one of the best things about living in the High Country. With a rich tradition spanning North America from Telluride to Banff, these annual rituals of the visual arts are not only the best chances of the year to soak up some culture, but you can experience some groundbreaking, socially relevant, contemporary, thoughtful and moving films of all lengths by international artists and film makers.

Now in its 33rd year, the Breckenridge Festival of Film was actually the pioneer of the bunch, launching the now ubiquitous movement. Among numerous standouts, one film this year seems to embody the spirit of the festival, a simple, thoughtful and inspirational independent motion picture, "Duk County."

INSPIRE, ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE

A directorial debut by Marmot apparel ambassador and global steward Jordan

FILMS NOT TO MISS

The Breckenridge Festival of Film takes place Sept. 19-22, screening more than 50 films ranging from documentaries to comedies. Here are a few others not to miss:

- "Sell By Date"
- "The Insomniac"
- "A.K.A. Doc Pomus"
- "Dream Team: 1935"
- "Knuckle Jack"
- "The Trail"
- "Antartica: A Year On Ice"
- "Cascada"
- "The Gold Sparrow"

Visit www.breckfilmfest.com for more information and to watch trailers as the festival nears. Follow the festival on Facebook and Twitter (Breckenridge Festival of Film). Tickets are on sale now at www.breckfilmfest.com.

Campbell, "Duk County: Peace is in Sight" is a documentary film that sends adventure athletes and doctors together into one of the most war-torn regions of Africa.

"The mission of the festival is to inspire, entertain and educate," said Dianna Nilsson, Breckenridge Festival of Film programming director since 2004. "Duk County" is an inspiring, as well as educational, documentary about doctors who go to Sudan and perform surgeries on some of the blind people there."

"Film festivals in North America, from adventure and indie film fests to Academy Award qualifiers, have become an end unto themselves for niche and general audiences — and especially for first-time directors," Campbell said. "Festivals are a way to build a groundswell of interest and, hopefully, inspire people to take action. 'Duk County' is an independent production and a chance for me to spotlight the remarkable people and the organizations in our film."

"Festivals also open doors. At our world premiere at Telluride Mountainfilm this past spring — where we took two awards, which was amazing — I was able to network with other luminaries in the filmmaking world. We received invitations to screen in other festivals around the country and unearth more ways to screen the film and get the word out. I also met a contact in Washington, D.C., who I've been working with ever since for a possible screening of 'Duk County' at The World Bank, which could open huge doors for the organizations we represent in the film and spotlight the amazing work Dr. (Geoff) Tabin, Dr. (Alan) Crandall and John Dau are doing in South Sudan and beyond."

DIRECTORIAL DEBUT

Campbell is a Colorado native, born in Boulder, and a graduate of the University of Colorado Boulder. His film is a unique connection between Colorado and South Sudan — the world's newest country.

"Duk County" is the first film I've ever directed," Campbell said. "And it's a film with some globally reaching narratives: blindness, hope, war and peace — it has inspired me and thus become a larger initiative in my life. As a director, a film reflects your storytelling abilities, your narrative voice and your top-line creative vision — it's your

'baby,' for lack of a better term."

"To have eyesight is really to have a life when you're in a subsistence agrarian economy," Tabin says in the film. "You're like a mouth with no hands. You're a burden on your family; people become depressed. They're unable to do the simplest tasks of daily living — they can't care for themselves. Right now, there are 34 million people, according to the World Health Organization, who are needlessly blind. And 80 percent of that blindness is preventable or treatable, and half is completely curable."

According to Tabin, South Sudan is the place with the highest amount of blindness on the planet, with nearly one in 50 people totally blind. And while probably hundreds of nonprofit medical missions operate worldwide, Tabin's medical team featured in the film cures blindness to effect a powerful change in the lives of many, at the same time humbly facilitating South Sudan's peace process.

TELLING THEIR STORY

Jordan tells the story of warring tribes who arrive with family members after walking up to 50 miles on foot to face a surgery they don't believe will work. When patients have their bandages removed a day after surgery, they are overcome with emotion and gratitude, as they are able to see the world and their family around them.

"I wasn't terribly nervous during the trip, but South Sudan is still the real deal," Campbell said. "Jonglei state and Duk County, where we did our work, is wide open, unprotected country with plenty of ongoing intertribal violence. I have described Jonglei as the 'Wild West' in many ways. An estimated 10,000-plus AK47s are still unaccounted for in the new country."

"We were euphoric by the time we flew home, but then just days after we returned to the U.S., 3,000 people were killed in a flash of intertribal violence in the town of Pibor, just 100 miles from our village. That violence spread back into the Duk County, and one of our patients, Lonnie, who had bilateral cataracts, was actually killed. This was a big chill for me. I felt a moral imperative to tell this story and get the word out about what's still going on in that region of Africa."

SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

Photo 1: A blind Sudanese boy. A directorial debut by Marmot apparel ambassador and global steward Jordan Campbell, "Duk County: Peace is in Sight" is a documentary film that sends adventure athletes and doctors together into one of the most war-torn regions of Africa.

Photo 2: Dr. Geoff Tabin with a Sudanese man. "Duk County" spotlights the amazing work of Tabin, Dr. Alan Crandall and John Dau in South Sudan and beyond, restoring vision and, thus, life to subsistence farmers.

Photo 3: "Duk County: Peace is in Sight" is a directorial debut for Jordan Campbell, right, Marmot apparel ambassador and global steward.

Photo 4: Dr. Geoff Tabin provides post-operative care to patients. "To have eyesight is really to have a life when you're in a subsistence agrarian economy," Tabin says in the film "Duk County." "You're like a mouth with no hands. You're a burden on your family."

Although Campbell has a background as a climber, brand ambassador and public relations director, he considers himself a journalist first and foremost.

"I've always liked the idea of capturing a story firsthand with boots on the ground — grab what you can in the field and come back to retell the story for large audiences," he said. "That boots-on-the-ground style of reporting philosophy began in 2005, when I chased the relatively untold story about the civil war in Nepal, which was not getting a lot of attention in the U.S. Twelve thousand people had been killed in a decade. Throughout my spring and fall climbing expeditions to Cholatse and Ama Dablam in the Everest region, I wrote a seven-page feature for Climbing magazine. The story turned out great and I realized I had a knack for reporting and storytelling, especially in areas of international realm — social issues, war and peace, geopolitical and historical angles."

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FESTIVAL OF FILM

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"South Sudan had only just become an independent country, sanctioned through the United Nations, a few months before our trip. I knew that we had an opportunity to capture something remarkable there about delivering eye care into an underserved, war-torn region of Africa in a bold, five-day mission."

INTERNATIONAL MIND-SET

Campbell's father was a Foreign Service Officer for more than 10 years, and Campbell spent time growing up in Brazil and Venezuela, international affairs and foreign policy influencing his mind-set at a young age. "About 10 years ago, Pete Athans and I wanted to help spread the word about Tabin and his miraculous work," Campbell said. "We organized an expedition around his eye-care initiatives in Nepal and the high Asian kingdoms of Tibet, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, etc. That was Tabin's focus back then. Now it's Africa. Our team of athletes provided support for Tabin in remote outback eye camps in Nepal. The expedition, Sight to Summit, was chronicled in a great film by Michael Brown called 'Light of the Himalaya.'"

"My co-producer and editor, Michael Herbener, is really my partner in this project. He's a young filmmaker, and I'm sure we'll see great films coming out of him in the years ahead. He masterfully edited together a lot of raw footage and, like me, worked on this project without any compensation. Ace Kvale contributed amazing still photography, and Michelle Bar-Evan, of Boulder, shot a ton of poignant footage that you see in the film. Without their willingness to contribute, we wouldn't be where we are today. Marmot, Cure Blindness and Moran Eye Center have all made meaningful contributions to the film's post production."

Campbell said he wanted "Duk County" to be a timeless piece of journalism, an adventure with some hard news.

"I went to painstaking lengths to find the appropriate archival footage on 'The Lost Boys of Sudan' to fortify John Dau's remarkable story, clips from the civil war and the U.N. footage that chronicled the aftermath of the massacre in Pibor, where more than 3,000 people were killed," he said. "Licensing that footage cost a lot of money and burned a lot of time, but it really added to the film's overall gravitas, and that's probably what I'm most proud of about this film."

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
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TIME:	EVENT:	LOCATION:	COST:
8:00PM - 11:30PM	BLUEGRASS KICK-OFF PARTY: DELLA MAE W/ BLUE CANYON BOYS	WARREN STATION CENTER FOR THE ARTS	\$12 IN ADVANCE/\$14 @ THE DOOR
SATURDAY, AUGUST 3RD	TIME:	EVENT:	LOCATION:
9:00AM - 1:00PM	MUSIC SEMINARS (SEE BELOW)	WARREN STATION	\$10 (FREE TO KEYSTONE LODGING GUESTS)
12:00PM - 5:00PM	SHOCK TOP BEER GARDEN	WARREN STATION	FREE & PAID ACTIVITIES
12:00PM - 5:00PM	KIDS CRAFTS	INA'S BRIDGE	FREE
12:30PM - 2:30PM	SPUR OF THE MOMENT	SHOCK TOP BEER GARDEN STAGE (QUAKING ASPEN AMPHITHEATRE)	FREE
12:30PM - 2:30PM	HACKENSAW BOYS	RIVER RUN EVENTS PLAZA STAGE	FREE
12:30PM - 2:30PM	HIT AND RUN	MONTEZUMA PLAZA STAGE	FREE
1:00PM - 5:00PM	UNLIMITED BEER SAMPLES	RIVER RUN EVENTS PLAZA	\$40 - 1 DAY / \$75 - WEEKEND
3:00PM - 5:00PM	SPUR OF THE MOMENT	SHOCK TOP BEER GARDEN STAGE	FREE
3:00PM - 4:30PM	SIERRA HULL	RIVER RUN EVENTS PLAZA STAGE	FREE
3:00PM - 5:00PM	TRUTHION	MONTEZUMA PLAZA STAGE	FREE
8:00PM - 11:00PM	SATURDAY NIGHT BLUEGRASS SHOWCASE: HOT RIZE & RED KNUCKLES	WARREN STATION	CA - \$25 ADVANCE/\$30 THE DOOR RESERVED - \$35 ADVANCE/\$40 DOOR
SUNDAY, AUGUST 4TH	TIME:	EVENT:	LOCATION:
9:00AM - 11:00AM	MUSIC SEMINARS (SEE BELOW)	WARREN STATION	\$10 (FREE TO KEYSTONE LODGING GUESTS)
12:00PM - 5:00PM	SHOCK TOP BEER GARDEN	WARREN STATION	FREE & PAID ACTIVITIES
12:00PM - 5:00PM	KIDS CRAFTS	INA'S BRIDGE	FREE
12:30PM - 2:30PM	GIDDY UP KITT	SHOCK TOP BEER GARDEN STAGE	FREE
12:30PM - 2:30PM	PHOEBE HUNT	RIVER RUN EVENTS PLAZA STAGE	FREE
12:30PM - 2:30PM	HACKENSAW BOYS	MONTEZUMA PLAZA STAGE	FREE
1:00PM - 5:00PM	UNLIMITED BEER SAMPLES	RIVER RUN EVENTS PLAZA	\$40 - 1 DAY / \$75 - WEEKEND
3:00PM - 5:00PM	GIDDY UP KITT	SHOCK TOP BEER GARDEN STAGE	FREE
3:00PM - 5:00PM	TRUTHION	RIVER RUN EVENTS PLAZA STAGE	FREE
3:00PM - 5:00PM	SIERRA HULL	MONTEZUMA PLAZA STAGE	FREE
SATURDAY, AUGUST 3RD	TIME:	EVENT:	LOCATION:
9AM	BASS SEMINAR: STEVE ROY	MUSIC SEMINARS AT WARREN STATION	9AM
10AM	MANDOLIN SEMINAR: JOHN FRAZIER		10AM
11AM	GUITAR SEMINAR: REBECCA FRAZIER		
12PM	DOBO SEMINAR: TODD LIVINGSTON		
SUNDAY, AUGUST 4TH	TIME:	EVENT:	LOCATION:
9AM	BANJO SEMINAR: KYLE TUTTLE		9AM
10AM	FIDDLE SEMINAR: PHOEBE HUNT		10AM
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