

PRESS KIT

THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER WILDERNESS (2013)

Log Line: A beautiful and comprehensive natural history of Santa Barbara backcountry.

Description:

Four years in the making, The Santa Ynez River Wilderness is a comprehensive natural history of the Santa Barbara back country featuring prominent local experts in biology, anthropology, and geology. Framed by beautiful cinematography of the seasons, flora and fauna, the film offers a deeper understanding of our mosaic of habitats and wildlife. Cristina Sandoval, Resident Director of Coal Oil Point Reserve and the Paradise Reserve, gives us unique insight and observations that bring the local biology, food web, and ethics of preservation to life. John Johnson (Curator of Anthropology, Santa Barbara Natural History Museum) guides us in tracking the arrival and settlements of local Native Americans. This is further explored by Ernestine De Soto whose ancestors were from villages in the upper Santa Ynez River Wilderness region. Jeff Meyer (geologist, Santa Barbara City College) explains the geologic history of Santa Barbara and the Santa Ynez River Wilderness in particular, beginning with the tectonic forces that created these mountains, to our local faults, formations and the ongoing geological forces at work today. The geology section is further enhanced by Tanya Atwater (geophysicist and professor, UCSB) whose geological animations in collaboration with artist John Iwerks have become a prize-winning education tool in the understanding of tectonic theory. It all comes together in an appeal for appreciation of our relationship to all of nature. The film's goal is to encourage viewers to explore, become educated, and be inspired by our local natural world, and to contemplate our ethical responsibility in preserving it.

FILMMAKERS:

Michael Love - Writer/Director/Producer/Cinematographer

Statement about making the movie:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

I have always found peace and a spiritual haven in nature. After buying a cabin in the Santa Ynez River Wilderness I was inspired to deepen that appreciation by learning more about where I was, and sharing it with others. For four years on and off I filmed local wildlife, flowers, birds, mushrooms and the seasonally changing landscape. Then I approached prominent local scientists and asked if they would become part of an educational natural history documentary. To my delight they accepted and came aboard enthusiastically, generously giving their time, energy and knowledge to this film. When I started putting together the interviews I realized just how much I had learned making it. And how much more intimate my relationship to nature had become. I hope it is contagious.

Michael Love has been writing screenplays for Hollywood for over twenty-five years. In 2006 he began producing and directing independent films and documentaries with his wife Tina Love. The Santa Ynez River Wilderness is Michael's fourth feature film to be presented at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival.

Bio:

Michael grew up in Mexico City and attended University of the Americas and California Institute of the Arts where he received a BA in music composition. He started writing screenplays at seventeen and had his first produced credit, the Oscar and Golden Globe nominated *Gaby a True Story*, released internationally in 1987. The film starred Oscar nominated actresses Liv Ullmann and Norma Aleandro. This was followed by many other films, including ABC Network's TV Movie *Breaking the Silence* (aka Not in My Family) (1993), the dark comedy *Hold it Like a Baby* (2009) (co-directed with Tina Love), and most recently, the most expensive film ever made in Mexico, the historical epic *For Greater Glory* (2012) Starring Oscar nominated actors Andy Garcia, Peter O'Toole, and Catalina Sandino among a large ensemble cast that includes Eve Longoria and Ruben Blades. Michael also writes screenplays in Spanish and wrote the two theatrically released Spanish language films *La Leyenda del Tesoro* (2011), and *Extranos Caminos* (1993). He has also directed and produced three documentaries, *Much Ado About W.* (2007), *Last Man in Paradise* (2011) (both with co-director Tina Love), and *The Santa Ynez Wilderness* (2013). Michael has taught screenwriting at the American Film Institute and UCSB.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Tina Love - Editor

Tina Love was born in Brooklyn. She has a BA in English/drama and after getting a master's degree in education, she went on to study film at Brooks Institute. Prior to editing *The Santa Ynez River Wilderness*, she has written, directed and edited three feature films: the dark comedy *Hold it Like a Baby* (2009) (Gold Medal for Excellence in original music, Park City Film Music Festival 2011), and the documentaries *Last Man in Paradise* (2011) and *Much Ado About W.* (2007). All three feature films premiered at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival. She also wrote, directed and edited several short films, including the prize winning short *Destroying Angel* (premiered San Luis Obispo International Film Festival 2011, best local feature, PCFMF 2011 (Gold Medal for Excellence in original music), Bare Bones International Film Festival) and *Autumn Leaves* which premiered in Santa Barbara International Film Festival in 2006.

SCIENTISTS AND HOSTS

Cristina Sandoval Ph.D - Biology Section

Cristina Sandoval is Resident Director of UCSB's Coal Oil Point Reserve and responsible for fostering the remarkable recovery of the endangered Snowy Plover. She also owns with her husband The Paradise Reserve in the Santa Ynez River Wilderness. Cris became fascinated by the area as a graduate student at UCSB, searching for an insect that would be suitable for studying natural selection, the topic of her PhD dissertation. While searching in the chaparral shrubs, the most common insect that fell inside of her butterfly net, was an unusual walking-stick. Cris sent this insect to a walking-stick specialist in Canada, Dr. Vernon Vickery, and learned that it was a new species of walking-stick. Dr. Vickery named it *Timema Cristinae*. This insect became the subject of her research career to this date.

She was surprised to learn that a common species of insect in a mountain so close to UCSB campus was still unknown to scientists. Although scientists have developed a great understanding of ecological and evolutionary theory, we know little about California's ecosystems. We don't know most of the species that live in them, and even less what these species, particularly the insects, do in their environment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Knowledge of basic natural history of species and their habitats is an essential tool to protect them from the danger of extinction. People love what they know and protect what they love. Thus science, education, and conservation are tightly linked and dependent on each other.

John Johnson Ph.D - Anthropology Section

John Johnson has served as Curator of Anthropology at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History since 1986. He obtained his Ph.D in anthropology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Johnson's career has been devoted to understanding the culture and history of the Chumash Indians and their neighbors in south central California through the study of archaeology, archival records, and interviews with contemporary Native Americans.

Johnson has published more than 40 studies about Southern California Indians, particularly the Chumash. His work to preserve important archaeological sites and collections has been recognized formally by the Society for California Archaeology, which awarded him their Mark Harrington Award for Conservation Archaeology in 2002

Johnson heads a team that has been investigating the earliest evidence for people in our region at the Arlington Springs Site on Santa Rosa Island.

Ernestine De Soto - Chumash Section

Ernestine's late mother was the last Chumash Indian to speak the native language. The documentary film *6 Generations: A Chumash Family's History* told the story of Ernestine's family going all the way back to the year 1769. Ernestine's ancestors have been traced to villages along the upper Santa Ynez River wilderness. Mitochondria DNA traces her origins to the first Native Americans to come to this continent.

Jeff Meyer Ph.D - Geology Section

Jeff Meyer received his Ph.D In Geology at UCSB after working in minerals exploration for eight years. He has taught at Allan Hancock College and is currently a professor at Santa Barbara City College.

Tanya Atwater Ph.D - Geophysicist - Geology Animations

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Dr. Tanya Atwater is a professor at UCSB. She was educated at MIT., UC Berkeley and Scripps Institute of Oceanography, earning her PhD in 1972. She was a professor at the MIT before joining the UCSB faculty. Atwater's research in tectonics has taken her to the bottoms of the oceans and to mountains on many continents. She is especially well known for her works on the plate tectonic history of western North America and the San Andreas fault system. She is devoted to science communication, teaching students at all levels, working with the media, museums, and teachers to bring Earth information and excitement to all. She directs the Educational Multi-media Visualization Center at UCSB, creating geological animations that are used extensively by teachers, museums and the media. Dr. Atwater has served on various national and international committees and panels. Her recent honors include the Geological Society of America Cordilleran Section's Best Paper Award, a National Science Foundation Director's Award for Distinguished Teaching Scholars, and Germany's Leopold von Buch Medal for "outstanding career contributions in the geosciences". She was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1997.

John Atwater - Geological Animations, Maps and Art

My love for Landscape Painting is rooted in the knowledge of Geologic Processes that have formed the landscape we live upon. The large forces of shifting tectonic plates, particularly the interactions between the Pacific Plate and North America Plate, forming the San Andreas Fault, are of extreme interest to me as I interpret the gesture of the land I paint.

Nature endures despite the pressures of population and development. As a member of the Oak Group I have been proud to contribute 50% of the sales of my work in our group exhibits towards environmental protection organizations. These include the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County (LTSBC.org), The Environmental Defense Center, The Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, Marin Agricultural Land Trust, and many others. Many successes have occurred in Santa Barbara County, including the Douglas Family Preserve, Sperling Preserve, and the Arroyo Hondo Preserve.

Cartooning and Animation have been a natural part of my life, which allows me to bring a sense of humor into t-shirt designs, illustration work, and ceramic sculptures.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

I have my family background involved with the Walt Disney Studios to thank for this inspiration.

I am honored to share my life with my gifted artistic wife Chris Chapman, with whom we share many painting adventures together, including our time as Preserve Managers from 2001-2005 on the Arroyo Hondo Preserve for the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County. Here we were able to combine our love of Nature, Painting and Interpretation with like-minded visitors, volunteers and professionals at the Preserve.

FULL CREDITS

Written Directed and Produced by Michael Love

Cinematography: Michael Love

Film Editor: Tina Love

Narrated by: Michael Love

BIOLOGY SECTION:

Cristina Sandoval Ph.D
Resident Director Coal Oil Point Reserve
UCSB

ANTHROPOLOGY SECTION:

John R. Johnson, Ph.D
Curator of Anthropology,
Santa Barbara Natural History Museum

Ernestine De Soto

Chumash exhibits thanks to:
John Johnson and the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

GEOLOGY SECTION:

Jeff Meyer Ph.D.
Geologist and Professor
Santa Barbara City College

CONTINUED: (6)

Geology Animations:

Tanya Atwater Ph.D
University of California at Santa Barbara

John Iwerks
Geology Animations, Art and Maps:

MUSIC

Allemande from Bach's English Suite No 2 in A minor,
Performed by Egle Januleviciute

Arranged for Guitars by Raphael Atlas

Original Music (Summer, Spring) by Michael Love

ADVISORS

Marc Kummel
Naturalist, guide and consultant

Wes Fritz
Birding guide

CREW

Post-production Supervisor
Tina Love

Associate Editor
Michael Love

Music Supervisor
Raphael Atlas

Boom Operators
Michelle Mazzetti
Ryan Quinn
Jesi Vasquez

SPECIAL THANKS:

Cristina Sandoval

Ernestine De Soto

CONTINUED: (7)

John Johnson

Jeff Meyer

Tanya Atwater

Jon Iwerks

Grant Conova-Parker

Kate McCurdy

Jan Schultz

Wes Fritz

Marc Kummel

Jan Timbrook

Tina Love

Michelle Mazzetti

Andrew Nolan

Julia Ford

Anna Love

Natalie Whiting

Santa Barbara Natural History Museum

Sedgwick Reserve

Coal Oil Point Reserve

Santa Barbara City College

University of California at Santa Barbara

Los Padres National Forest

Los Prietos Ranger District