

THE EARTH NETWORK presents

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# THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM

A JON LONG FILM

English, Documentary, 92 min, 5.1 Surround Sound

**WINNER (Outstanding Achievement in Action Sport Filmmaking) Newport Beach Film Festival April 2015**

**WINNER (BEST PRODUCER) The Beverly Hills Film Festival April 2015**

**Whistler Film Festival - Adventure Film Series May 2015**

**Maui Film Festival June 2015**

**Lighthouse International Film Festival, New Jersey June 2015**

**THEATRICAL RELEASE ACROSS THE USA STARTING JUNE 10, 2015**

**DISTRIBUTORS: ITM FILM INC, THE EARTH NETWORK (USA) , ABRAMORAMA (THEATRICAL) (USA)**

For USA theatrical bookings contact Cindy Banach [cindy@abramorama.com](mailto:cindy@abramorama.com)

**ENTERTAINMENT ONE (CANADA), UNIVERSAL PICTURES (WORLD EXCLUDING USA AND CANADA)**

Special Consultant - Karol Martesko-Fenster

## [Film Website](#)

International Trailer - <https://vimeo.com/121174641>

Theatrical Trailer - Youtube – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDI5HjaqdHI>

US Theatrical Trailer - VIMEO <https://vimeo.com/129514431>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/TheSearchforFreedom>

INSTAGRAM: Tag: The Earth Network Hash Tag: #thesearchforfreedom

TWITTER: <https://twitter.com/earthnetwork1>

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THE EARTH NETWORK CREATES VISCERAL, THOUGHT PROVOKING  
MOTION PICTURE EXPERIENCES THAT ENTERTAIN AND INSPIRE.

TheEarthNetwork.com

## OVERVIEW

### **New Documentary Examines "Cultural Revolution"** *Finding Freedom from Living in the Moment*

**THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM** is the story of a cultural revolution fueled by the human desire to live in the moment and do what makes you feel the most alive. We discover how an electrifying new world came about through pure energy and imagination and the infinite possibilities of self-expression available to anyone willing to drop in. This documentary, written and directed by Jon Long (IMAX® Extreme), is a visceral, visual experience told through the eyes some of the brightest pioneers, legends, visionaries and champions of surfing, snowboarding, skiing, skateboarding, mountain biking and more.

This revolution *has* been televised, but the film explores the *human* stories behind this movement that has spilled into primetime. Ski film Godfather Warren Miller explains that, "The basic instinct of a human being is his search for freedom." The film explores how living in the moment and doing what makes you feel most alive can be key to that freedom.

"I wanted to tell a *bigger* story about this movement," says Long, "Despite appearances, what drives the characters in this film is not so very different from the fuel that successful artists, scientists and entrepreneurs run on: passion, creativity, grit, and a willingness to try new things and fail."

In **The Search For Freedom**, these characters are searching for something larger than themselves, whether that's an ocean, a mountain or a city street. By exploring timeless themes such as pushing your comfort zone, risk, fear and the unquenchable desire to learn, the film unravels the cultural implications of these lifestyles through candid conversation and some of the finest adventure footage ever assembled.

But how did we arrive in this world where surfing imagery in NYC subway ads greets bankers and municipal skateparks share space with baseball diamonds? Despite recent "media darling" status, these high-adrenaline activities only exploded in *the last few decades* because of their inherent power to change lives. Many claim that the freedom experienced when you are riding a moving wave, becoming part of that wave for an instant, is impossible to shake. It's a state of grace. And it's the same whether you're sliding on snow, skateboarding on concrete, or mountain biking through a rainforest.

Veteran surf publisher Steve Pezman taps into the source: "The wave is forming in front of you, the wave is over your head, your wake is disappearing, your footprints are washed from the beach. There's no material production from having done it. There's no depletion. There's no creation. It's just an aesthetic instant." That aesthetic instant is the real subject of *The Search for Freedom*.

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**THE EARTH NETWORK, ABRAMORAMA, GRINDTV, TUGG AND  
VIMEO PARTNER ON UNPRECEDENTED RELEASE  
FOR THE STUNNING DOCUMENTARY**

**“THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM”**

**National Theatrical Event Release Kicks Off Multi-Platform Strategy June 10,2015**

**NEW YORK (June 1, 2015)** – The Earth Network, Abramorama, GrindTV, Tugg and Vimeo are collaborating on the US theatrical release of The Earth Network’s visually stunning documentary **THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM**. The group will present the film with a national one-day theatrical event release on June 10, 2015 in more than 75 theaters. Individuals, and groups, will be able to use the Tugg platform to bring the film to the big screen to create encore showings throughout June and July. The film’s VOD release in the United States will be on August 10, 2015. eONE and Universal are releasing the film on VOD across Canada and the around the world on August 10<sup>th</sup> as well. **THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM**, written and directed by **Jon Long** (IMAX® *Extreme*), celebrates the human desire to live in the moment and do what makes you feel the most alive.

**THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM** is a visceral, visual experience chronicling how an electrifying new world came about through pure energy and imagination and the infinite possibilities of self-expression available to anyone willing to drop in. Told through the eyes, and the footage, of some of the brightest pioneers, legends, visionaries and champions of surfing, snowboarding, skiing, skateboarding, mountain biking and more.

**Richard Abramowitz**, President of Abramorama stated, “‘The Search for Freedom’ offers a profound perspective on living in the moment that will transcend the traditional action sport genre and reach a mainstream audience. We are excited to put it on the big screen where it can be appreciated in all its glory.”

The film features interviews with skate board legend **Tony Hawk**, world champion surfer **Kelly Slater**, the modern day “Evel Knievel” **Robbie Maddison**, climbing icon **Ron Kauk**, windsurfing world Champion **Robby Naish**, world champion paddle boarder **Kai Lenny**, world champion long boarder **Kelia Moniz**, street skater **Nyjah Huston**, X Games Gold Medalist **Tom Schaar**, as well as the Godfather of the Action sports film **Warren Miller**, the father of the mountain bike **Gary Fisher**, Quiksilver founder and surfer **Bob McKnight**, filmmaker **Bruce Brown**, and rock climber and Patagonia founder **Yvon Chouinard**, among others.

Filmmaker **Jon Long** stated, “We are thrilled to be collaborating with this group to bring ‘The Search for Freedom’ to such a wide audience. This unique collaboration is a wonderful achievement for an independent film.”

The distribution collaboration and deal points were negotiated on behalf of the filmmakers by The Earth Network’s Jon Long, Abramorama’s Richard Abramowitz and Thought Engine’s **Karol Martesko-Fenster**; by **Nicolas Gonda** on behalf of Tugg, **Jeremy Boxer** on behalf of Vimeo, and **Aaron Carrera** on behalf of GrindTV.

Website and to view the trailer visit: <http://thesearchforfreedom.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheSearchforFreedom>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/theearthnetwork>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/earthnetwork1> #TheSearchForFreedom

**Download Media Assets, Photos, Social Media and more from [DROPBOX](#).**

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### **The Earth Network**

The Earth Network is an integrated media company that creates motion picture experiences and connects them to the world through innovative combinations of traditional entertainment media, digital media and social networking. The Earth Network's mission is to create immersive and thought provoking films that entertain, inspire, engage audiences and have a positive social impact. For more information, please visit <http://theearthnetwork.com>.

### **Abramorama**

Abramorama is an independent theatrical distribution and marketing company with strategic expertise in maximizing the revenue lifecycle of both feature-length films and event-based cinema. For more than 20 years, Abramorama has successfully distributed and marketed hundreds of films, including multiple Academy Award winners. Abramorama's films include Asif Kapadia's *Senna*, Robert Stone's *Pandora's Promise*; Cameron Crowe's *Pearl Jam Twenty*; Banksy's *Exit Through the Gift Shop*; and, Sacha Gervasi's *Anvil! The Story of Anvil*. Abramorama has recently released 2014's surprise indie hit *AWAKE: The Life of Yogananda*, the critically acclaimed documentary *Particle Fever*, Jonathan Demme's *A Master Builder*, Kevin Spacey's *NOW: In the Wings on a World Stage*, New York Times Critics' Pick *An Honest Liar*, and Tribeca Opening Night's *Live From New York!*. Abramorama's recent event cinema releases include, Royal Opera House Ballet and Opera Cinema Season, Shakespeare's Globe on Screen, *Matisse at the Tate*, *Hermitage Revealed*, along with national Earth Day release *Planetary*.

### **GrindTV**

GrindTV is the world's largest adventure sports and outdoor lifestyle website, as well as the official adventure sports content provider for Yahoo. GrindTV reaches 15 million outdoor enthusiasts monthly by sharing their stories in a 24/7 social and mobile world. GrindTV is published by TEN: The Enthusiast Network, which reaches more than 45-million active sports enthusiasts through an integrated network of magazines, online properties, events, and television programming. For more information, visit [GrindTV.com](http://GrindTV.com).

### **Tugg**

Tugg is the platform that enables fans, filmmakers, and organizations to host events in theaters and community venues. Tugg has relationships with over 85% of the theater screens in the US and has held events across all 50 states. These individually curated screenings showcase Tugg's growing library of 1600+ studio and independent films. [www.tugg.com](http://www.tugg.com)

### **Vimeo**

Vimeo® is the high-quality video platform for creators and their audiences. Vimeo's mission is to empower and inspire people around the world to create, share, and discover videos. Vimeo enables creators to sell original films and series worldwide through Vimeo On Demand, its open self-distribution platform. Vimeo has more than 30 million registered members and reaches a global monthly audience of over 170 million people. Founded in 2004 and based in New York City, Vimeo, LLC is an operating business of IAC (NASDAQ: IACI).

### **Press Contacts:**

Falco Ink.

Shannon Treusch, [ShannonTreusch@falcoink.com](mailto:ShannonTreusch@falcoink.com)

Monica Delamater, [MonicaDelamater@falcoink.com](mailto:MonicaDelamater@falcoink.com)

(212) 445-7100

# THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM

Directed and Written by Jon Long

## LOGLINE

**THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM** is the story of a cultural revolution fueled by the human desire to live in the moment and do what makes you feel the most alive. We discover how an electrifying new world came about through pure energy and imagination and the infinite possibilities of self-expression available to anyone willing to drop in. This documentary, written and directed by Jon Long (IMAX® Extreme), is a visceral, visual experience told through the eyes some of the brightest pioneers, legends, visionaries and champions of surfing, snowboarding, skiing, skateboarding, mountain biking and more.

## SHORT SYNOPSIS (250 Words)

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This revolution *has* been televised, but the film explores the *human* stories behind this movement that has spilled into primetime. Ski film Godfather Warren Miller explains that, "The basic instinct of a human being is his search for freedom." The film explores how living in the moment and doing what makes you feel most alive can be key to that freedom. On the surface, The Search for Freedom might appear to be about sports, or chasing thrills, but it is about so much more. It's about feeling that pull of nature and wanting to go deeper into that element, that ocean.

Many claim that the freedom experienced when you are riding a moving wave, becoming part of that wave for an instant, is impossible to shake. It's a state of grace. And it's the same whether you're sliding on snow, skateboarding on concrete, or mountain biking through a rainforest.

Veteran surf publisher Steve Pezman taps into the source: "The wave is forming in front of you, the wave is over your head, your wake is disappearing, your footprints are washed from the beach. There's no material production from having done it. There's no depletion. There's no creation. It's just an aesthetic instant." That aesthetic instant is the real subject of The Search for Freedom.

## SYNOPSIS (500 WORD)

**THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM** is the story of a cultural revolution fueled by the human desire to live in the moment and do what makes you feel the most alive. We discover how an electrifying new world came about through pure energy and imagination and the infinite possibilities of self-expression available to anyone willing to drop in. This documentary, written and directed by Jon Long (IMAX® Extreme), is a visceral, visual experience told through the eyes some of the brightest pioneers, legends, visionaries and champions of surfing, snowboarding, skiing, skateboarding, mountain biking and more.

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human being is his search for freedom." The film explores how living in the moment and doing what makes you feel most alive can be key to that freedom.

On the surface, *The Search for Freedom* might appear to be about sports, or chasing thrills, but it is about so much more. It's about feeling that pull of nature and wanting to go deeper into that element, that ocean. As surf legend Gerry Lopez puts it: "Somehow, every time you do it, at whatever level...it somehow manages to *free* you from a lot of the things in life that are gonna try and sink you... It somehow allows you to leave all that behind for maybe just a *moment*—but sometimes that moment's enough." That "somehow" Lopez speaks of is the central theme of **The Search for Freedom**.

The film explores the *human* stories behind this now-massive movement:

Climbing icon Ron Kauk, 56, jokes that without climbing, he and his buddies would have all "ended up in prison." He now takes teens *from* the prison system up into the mountains that inspired him as a young man, providing shortcuts to lessons that took him a lifetime to unravel. The mountain's infinite potential is their potential—if they choose the right route.

The new Evel Knievel, Robbie Maddison, has always lived by the motto *Face your fears, live your dreams*. He jumps his dirt-bike to world record lengths near 400 feet, yet we see him face his *real* fears when he sits in a quiet room, alone.

These sports that were once fringe activities practiced by a fearless few quickly grew into acceptable pursuits enjoyed by millions. *But how?* We come to understand how action sports have taken such a strong hold in the larger culture. From the debut of the X Games beaming these superheroes into our living rooms to half-pipe snowboarding becoming the single most watched event of the last Winter Olympics, it all comes back to *that feeling*.

Many of these athletes claim that the freedom experienced when you are riding a moving wave, becoming part of that wave for an instant, is impossible to shake. It's a state of grace. And it's the same whether you're skiing on snow, skateboarding on concrete, or mountain biking through a rainforest.

We meet world champions, weekend warriors, and everyone in between, and they all seem to be chasing the feeling they got on their first day.

## **SYNOPSIS (1000 WORD)**

**THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM** is the story of a cultural revolution fueled by the human desire to live in the moment and do what makes you feel the most alive. We discover how an electrifying new world came about through pure energy and imagination and the infinite possibilities of self-expression available to anyone willing to drop in. This documentary, written and directed by Jon Long (IMAX® Extreme), is a visceral, visual experience told through the eyes some of the brightest pioneers, legends, visionaries and champions of surfing, snowboarding, skiing, skateboarding, mountain biking and more.

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As Pipeline surfing legend Gerry Lopez puts it: "Somehow, every time you do it, at whatever level...it somehow manages to free you from a lot of the things in life that are gonna try and sink you... It somehow allows you to leave all that behind for maybe just a moment—but sometimes that moment's enough." That "moment" Lopez speaks of is the central theme of *The Search for Freedom*.

The first surfers to truly devote their lives to the waves lit the fuse on a lifestyle revolution—almost by accident. This was a tiny tribe that questioned post-war norms of stability and acceptability, choosing fun and adventure over the safer 9-to-5. We meet Bruce Brown, whose 1966 film *Endless Summer* showed the world how it feels to be a surfer, breaking box office records in the process. We also meet Warren Miller, whose yearly ski epics represent the single longest running franchise in film history. Together, these films have inspired generations of surf, ski and snowboard bums to pursue the life of their dreams rather than living up to someone else's.

Many action sports descend from surfing and yet each one evolves on its own, has its own path, its own pioneers. All of these various strands, from different sports happening in different environments, had FUN in common. And they were haphazardly woven together into an action sports industry that would forever redefine the question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

By pursuing fun, by chasing after that feeling of freedom, these pioneers instigated a paradigm shift that can be seen today as skateboard parks pop up alongside baseball diamonds.

*The Search for Freedom* explores the human stories behind this action sports phenomenon. We meet these larger-than-life characters and see how their first contact with action sports rewired their life—for good.

These sports that were once fringe activities practiced by few quickly grew into acceptable pursuits enjoyed by millions. But how? We come to understand how action sports have taken such a strong hold in the larger culture. From the debut of the X Games beaming these superheroes into our living rooms to half-pipe snowboarding becoming the single most watched event of the last Winter Olympics, it all comes back to that feeling.

Tony Hawk, the first skateboarder to land a 900, explains: "Action sports have become mainstream because as soon as we step on a skateboard, a surfboard, a motorcycle, a bike, IT'S ON!" We get inside the heads of these individuals and see that the passion that drives them is not so very different from the fuel that artists, entrepreneurs, and even scientists run on. They show grit, a work ethic, a willingness to try new things and, crucially, a willingness to fail. Risk and fear are essentially "workplace hazards" for them so they evolve strategies and instincts to deal with them, to keep pushing the limits.

Many claim that the freedom experienced when you are riding a moving wave, becoming part of that wave for an instant, is impossible to shake. It's a state of grace. And it's the same whether you're sliding on snow, skateboarding on concrete, or mountain biking through a rainforest.

Veteran surf publisher Steve Pezman taps into the source: "The wave is forming in front of you, the wave is over your head, your wake is disappearing, your footprints are washed from the beach. There's no material production from having done it. There's no depletion. There's no creation. It's just an aesthetic instant." That aesthetic instant is the real subject of *The Search for Freedom*.

## SYNOPSIS (2000 WORD)

**THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM** is the story of a cultural revolution fueled by the human desire to live in the moment and do what makes you feel the most alive. We discover how an electrifying new world came about through pure energy and imagination and the infinite possibilities of self-expression available to anyone willing to drop in. This documentary, written and directed by Jon Long (IMAX® Extreme), is a visceral, visual experience told through the eyes some of the brightest pioneers, legends, visionaries and champions of surfing, snowboarding, skiing, skateboarding, mountain biking and more.

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From outside these activities, *Why?* is an obvious question. For some, the rewards are self-evident: adrenaline, risk, speed etc. For others, creative expression and progression rule the roost. But almost all of these athletes speak of the "stillness of mind" that comes from truly living in the moment on a wave or in mid-air and how this calm can be a portal to personal freedom.

As Pipeline surfing legend Gerry Lopez puts it: "Somehow, every time you do it, at whatever level...it somehow manages to *free* you from a lot of the things in life that are gonna try and sink you... It somehow allows you to leave all that behind for maybe just a *moment*—but sometimes that moment's enough."

That "somehow" Lopez speaks of is the central theme of **The Search for Freedom**.

The first surfers to truly devote their lives to the waves lit the fuse on a lifestyle revolution, creating a new world almost by accident. This was a tiny tribe that questioned post-war norms of stability and acceptability, choosing fun and adventure over the safer 9-to-5. And these trailblazers were operating *way* under the radar: hardly anybody was surfing in the 1950s.

Then we meet Bruce Brown, whose 1966 film *Endless Summer* showed the world how it *feels* to be a surfer. The film transcended its intended audience of board riders and became one of the most successful films of its era, capturing the imaginations of audiences everywhere. The lifestyle it depicted proved extremely contagious.

We also meet Warren Miller, whose yearly ski epics represent the longest running franchise in film history (65 years and counting!). These films have inspired generations of ski and snowboard bums to pursue the life of their dreams rather than living up to someone else's.

These were just two fun-loving guys with cameras who were trying to find a way to stay at the beach or in the snow. But their passion motivated millions.

Most action sports descend from surfing and yet each one evolves on its own, has its own pioneers:

We see how pro snowboarder Jeremy Jones went from mini-missions in Cape Cod to conquering the world's heaviest peaks.



We hear from skateboarding icon Tony Hawk how, in the 80s, "skating just wasn't cool...you were an outcast."

Patagonia founder and climbing legend Yvon Chouinard says, in no uncertain terms, "climbing saved out lives."

All of these various strands, from many different sports happening in many different environments, had FUN in common. And they were haphazardly woven together into an action sports industry that would forever redefine "growing up." By pursuing fun, by chasing after that feeling of freedom, these pioneers instigated a paradigm shift that can be seen today as skateboard parks are built alongside baseball diamonds and city commuters are greeted by billboards depicting snowboarders jumping off cliffs.

**The Search for Freedom** is the first film of its kind to explore the *human* stories behind this action sports phenomenon. We meet a cast of larger-than-life characters and see how their first contact with their chosen sport rewired their life—for good. We see how these exciting sports are not just something these people "do" in their spare time, mere hobbies; these sports come to *define* their practitioners. These sports become *who they are*.

We also see how bold choices lead to unforgettable lives:

ER Doctor and world record BASE jumper/wing-suiter, Glenn Singleman, says: "[When] I was taken into the wilderness for the first time, that disrupted my pathway. It disrupted my life. It was a liberating circumstance that just happened to explode my comfortable life into a million little pieces...."

Rock climbing icon Ron Kauk, 56, jokes that without climbing, he and his buddies would have all "ended up in prison." He now takes teens *from* the prison system up into the mountains of Yosemite that inspired him as a young man, providing shortcuts to lessons that took him a lifetime to unravel. The mountain's infinite potential is their potential—if they choose the right route.

The "new Evel Knievel," World Record daredevil Robbie Maddison, 33, has lived by the motto *face your fears, live your dreams*. He jumps his dirt-bike to world record lengths near 400 feet—and appears utterly fearless as he does so—yet we see him face his *real* fears which actually involve sitting in a quiet room with only himself.

Over footage of him doing tricks that would make any teenager jealous, 24-time(!) World Champ windsurfer Robby Naish, 51, explains, "most people grow up...and they *stop playing*". His growth comes from questioning the logic of "growing up" necessarily being synonymous with "abandoning fun." If there's a fountain of youth this man has found it.

It's now taken for granted that most folks have a mountain bike in their garage. But co-inventor Gary Fisher's dream became a reality only through passion, perseverance and lucky timing. Once people tried this newfangled creation, the mountain bike, they were *hooked*: "In 1983, for the first time in history," he says, "you could walk into a bike shop and walk out with this fat-tired thing called a mountain bike. In another 10 years, when someone would say 'bike', they'd actually mean 'a mountain bike'."

Like mountain biking, these sports that were once fringe activities practiced by a fearless few quickly grew into acceptable pursuits enjoyed by millions. *But how?* Via some incredible and dynamic and spirited individual characters the world has ever seen, we come to understand how action sports have

taken such a strong hold in the culture. From the invention of the X Games beaming these sports into our living rooms to half-pipe snowboarding becoming the single most watched event of the last Winter Olympics, it all comes back to *that feeling*.

Tony Hawk, the first skateboarder to land a 900 and arguably the head of his own cottage industry explains: "Action sports have become mainstream because as soon as we step on a skateboard, a surfboard, a motorcycle, a bike, *IT'S ON!*"

You don't need a team. You don't need a coach. All you need is some rudimentary equipment and, as Hawk says, *it's on*. The excitement is immediate and undeniable.

The popularity and success of these sports is neither a marketing coup or a flash in the pan. We see how it all comes back to that fun and freedom, that *feeling* you get the first time you drop into a wave or clear the coping on a vert ramp.

As Meg Roh, a high school student who has now surfed *over 1,000 days in a row*, puts it: "Every day surfing is a good day." The smile on her face suggests she's onto something...

Many people get infected with this action affliction through videos inspiring them to try a new sport, to try and tap into "that feeling" they see onscreen. The new POV cameras (eg. GoPro) have given spectators access to the actual adventure of a tube ride in Indonesia or a near-vertical couloir in Alaska. They can see, and to some extent *feel*, what the athlete experiences.

We also see the lengths professional shooters will go to "Get The Shot" as they zoom backwards on zip lines through dense forests and hang hundreds of feet above waterfalls to capture an athlete doing the impossible. And, as the Internet has expanded the reach of *all* video, we see how capturing the experience, the pulse, is even more important than capturing the latest tricks.

Athlete after athlete seems to have dropped everything in their previous life to pursue these sports full time, chasing that First Day Feeling. As World Champion board rider Kai Lenny, 21, puts it: "[You] instantly feel like nothing else in the world *exists*. Nothing else *matters*. You're living in the moment. Big waves are relative, you know? I think everyone's a big wave surfer. If the waves seem big to you, you know...it's all relative."

TEDx "hack-schooling" phenom Logan Laplante, also a sponsored skier in Squaw Valley, puts a new spin on the age-old question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" He points out that teens like him are more likely to want to be pro skiers than neurosurgeons and says: "But if you ask a *little kid*, sometimes you'll get the best answer, something so simple, so obvious, and really profound—'*When I grow up, I want to be HAPPY.*'"

Many of the men and women of **The Search for Freedom** are the astronauts of action sports, the superheroes doing the unthinkable on bike or board. We get inside the heads of these individuals and see that the passion that drives them is not so very different from the fuel that artists, inventors, entrepreneurs and even scientists run on. They show grit, a work ethic, a willingness to try new things and, crucially, a willingness to fail.

With this heady progression comes risk. And with risk comes fear. Risk and fear are essentially "workplace hazards" for them so they evolve strategies and instincts to deal with them, to carry on, to keep pushing the limits:

Mountaineer Yvon Chouinard says that if you remove the risk from an adventure you'll often lose the lessons inherent in it.

Pro snowboarder Annie Boulanger shows us how surviving an avalanche in the mountains, an avalanche we see happening, gave her tools for handling fear that transferred to her non-riding life.

Fear is described as a friend, an enemy, your greatest teacher and fuel for your fire. What these athletes have learned through challenging themselves in ruthless environments and, in some cases, surviving near-death experiences, leads to a unique look into a fascinating world.

Snowboarder Jeremy Jones says: "Adventure to me is just getting out of your comfort zone and going into the unknown. That's where I feel every emotion of life and feel the most alive."

The characters claim that the freedom experienced when you are riding a moving wave, becoming part of that wave for an instant, is impossible to shake. It's a state of grace. And it's the same whether you're skiing on snow, skateboarding on concrete, or mountain biking through a rainforest. (*It's fun!*)

Veteran surf publisher Steve Pezman taps into the source, *why* it makes us feel so alive: "The wave is forming in front of you, the wave is over your head, your wake is disappearing, your footprints are washed from the beach. There's no material production from having done it. There's no depletion. There's no creation. It's just an *aesthetic instant*."

That aesthetic instant is the real subject of **The Search for Freedom**.

# THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM

## Notes from Director Jon Long

When I first conceived the movie, it was to tell a story about a cultural phenomenon. The action sports movement came from humble beginnings and has become a way of life for so many. This is a real story of the action sports revolution and some of the people who fueled it with verve, imagination and courage.

I started making action sport movies in the late 1980s, when only a handful of people were doing it. Our little tribe was following in the footsteps of the great pioneer filmmakers like Warren Miller and Bruce Brown. I hadn't initially planned on pursuing the theme of freedom in this film until I had already interviewed dozens of people. The concept of freedom kept coming up again and again with so many of them that I wanted to look deeper into what that really meant.

People talk about freedom in many ways; relationships, borders, politics, finances, electronic devices... But one thing that seems to be constant is that the pursuit of freedom is tied inextricably to the pursuit of happiness. They're two sides of the same coin. This film is about the freedom that comes when you become completely immersed in the moment, when all of your focus and energy is fully directed to that place and time.

In *The Search for Freedom*, some people take what may seem to many as outrageous risks, and others in the film take almost no risks. It's a personal choice made by the participants. I wanted to create a film that made these characters accessible, no matter what the apparent risks they take.

When Glenn Singleman, a base-jumping ER doctor stands on the edge of one of the highest cliff in the world, about to jump, he says: "Every cell in my body is screaming – *don't do it!*". Now that may *not* sound like something that's easy to relate to, but we follow Glenn's story and see what facing fear means to him, and in so doing find out that we're all really not that different.

Prior to making the film, I was working on another documentary about education and researching attributes and characteristics kids have that allow them to do well in school and lead happy and successful lives, things like; like creativity, pushing your comfort one, not being afraid to fail, grit and perseverance.

Even with the explosion of social media, web clips and "behind-the-scenes" stuff, the *Why?* is often misunderstood or assumed. Fans can know what their surf idol is cooking, what songs they are listening to, where they surfed this morning...but I wanted to explore what drives their passion, to tap into that primal urge, that undeniable power you're exposed to the first time you drop into a wave or ski a backcountry line. This feeling is at the very heart of the film.

As a long time participant in action sports filmmaking, I was able to bring together an amazing cast to share their personal journeys. Without these pioneers, athletes, visionaries, filmmakers and entrepreneurs really opening up, the movie would not exist. All of these characters come together to create the overall arc that follows the evolution of a way-of-life.

Probably the biggest challenge was wrangling so many sports and characters into one 90 minute movie. And, I wanted the participants to tell the story without a narrator. No one sport or character "takes over"; they each inform each other's development. It's a continuum. It's this larger whole that all of these people are a part of. It's a community. The characters talk about activities really close to their

hearts, so we ended up with something that has a lot of heart.

In all of the shooting we did, we wanted to be open and flexible to go with the creative flow of the moment because that's where magic can happen. When we were filming a world championship surf competition on the North Shore of Oahu, hundreds of cameras were aimed at the action as we focused on the kids playing in the sand with the surfers in the background. And while all of the best competitive surfers in the world were in one place, we noticed a Dad teaching his four year-old daughter to surf and decided to spend the next three days filming with them. My aim was to show the connection and inclusivity of these activities and that no matter what the skill level, the experience and feelings are equally powerful.

With this film, I really wanted to try and create an immersive, visceral experience, where the audience can actually inhabit those magical moments like gliding along a glassy green wave, even if they've never tried any of these sports. I wanted to capture the inherent beauty and stillness of mind that comes even when you are moving fast and the adrenalin is pumping.

Ultimately, I wanted to create something that is entertaining and that audiences can relate to, even if some of what they witness is almost beyond imagination, to show why people devote their lives to these activities, sometimes literally. What I hope to show is the reason that most people pursue these lifestyles - their passions - isn't any different from anyone else: They just want to *feel free*...

#### JON LONG BIO:

Jon Long is an accomplished documentary filmmaker whose own career evolved authentically with the action sport story. Jon was one of the first independent filmmakers to pioneer the style of "core culture" action sport videos still used by many producers in the genre today. While making his films about skiing, surfing, snowboarding & mountain biking in the 90's, Jon himself became a part of the core culture of the action sport world. His career continued to develop with the release of his film "Extreme", which became one of the most successful and critically acclaimed IMAX® films ever. Jon has since created/produced & directed films for Disney, National Geographic, PBS, Universal and Entertainment One. He recently founded The Earth Network, which makes movies designed to have a positive social impact and distributes them through innovative combinations of traditional entertainment media, digital media and social networking. He is currently developing a documentary called *The Next Step*, about a paradigm shift in education, and a new action sport related documentary called *Flow*, which will be a visceral, visual feast and intimate look into human nature and potential.

Jon resides in the small mountain town of Nelson, BC, where he has lived for the past 15 years. His mission is to create, connect and inspire with his movies.

## KEY PRODUCTION PERSONEL

<b>JON LONG</b>	DIRECTOR / PRODUCER / WRITER / EDITOR
<b>MIKE PARENTEAU</b>	CO-PRODUCER / DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR / EDITOR
<b>KIM WAKEFIELD</b>	CO-PRODUCER / PRODUCTION ACCOUNTANT
<b>CHIP BURGESS</b>	EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
<b>LAURA ZEMAN</b>	ASSOCIATE PRODUCER / MUSIC SUPERVISOR PRODUCTION MANAGER
<b>KELLY MORRIS</b>	CO-EDITOR
<b>COLIN WHYTE</b>	CO-WRITER
<b>SAM WELSH</b>	ORIGINAL SCORE
<b>DAN BROCK</b>	ORIGINAL SCORE
<b>RILEY KOENIG</b>	ORIGINAL SCORE
<b>GILLES PARENTEAU</b>	ORIGINAL SCORE

**THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM - CAST**  
**ONE MINUTE TEASER LINKS, BIO AND QUOTES**  
**FOR SHARING ON FACEBOOK AND EMBEDDING**

THE SEARCH FOR FREEDOM is the story of a cultural revolution fueled by the human desire to live in the moment and do what makes you feel the most alive. FEATURING:



**TONY HAWK** - Skateboard legend and action sports icon. The most recognizable skateboarder of all time was the first to land a 900 and has appeared in countless movies, video games, and TV shows. *“Action sports have become mainstream because as soon as we step on a skateboard, a surfboard, a, a, a motorcycle, a bike, it’s on.”*

<https://vimeo.com/127960213>



**ROBBIE MADDISON** - World record holder for the longest distance jump ever covered on a motorcycle (almost 400 feet). The "new Evel Knievel" jumps his dirt-bike to world record lengths near 400 feet and considers backflipping an open Tower Bridge in London "fun." *“I think it’s at the time when you’re most stressed is when you do your most important work.”*

<https://vimeo.com/127421245>



**KELLY SLATER** - World champion surfer of 11 world titles. *“It’s basically a desire, having a passion for it and having the desire to keep learning. No matter how much you think you know, there’s a lot more that you don’t know than you do know.”*

<https://vimeo.com/127661523>



**ANNIE BOULANGER** - Professional big mountain snowboarder. *“It’s like I’m breathing...the best breath you can take of full bliss and happiness. It’s like magic.”* *“Learning to deal with fear and talking yourself down from things you’re so scared of I find really helps, really helps you deal with other situation for the rest of your life.”*

<https://vimeo.com/127774856>



**RON KAUK** - This climbing icon has doubled for Tom Cruise and Sly Stallone on the silver screen and has first ascents galore, but his humility is even more legendary. Ron now brings at-risk youth into the mountains to share his lifetime of learning there. *“If you’re kind of a misfit kid and you want to rebel, you need a place to do that in a positive way.”*  
<https://vimeo.com/127948807>



**ROBBY NAISH** - He shocked the sport by winning his first windsurfing world championship aged just 13 in 1976 and then proceeded to win another 24 world titles. *“Most people grow up, you get out of high school, and they stop playing. They, they lose that aspect of falling down and getting back up and brushing yourself off and doing it again as an adult. And I’ve never lost that.”*  
<https://vimeo.com/127429577>



**KAI LENNY** - Eight-time world champion stand up paddle boarder. *“You instantly feel like nothing else in the world exists, nothing else matters. You’re living in the moment.”*  
<https://vimeo.com/127419350>



**KELIA MONIZ** - Two-time world champion long boarder. *“I just like to keep surfing the way I like it and that’s just to have fun. For me, I think pushing myself in my sport is maybe more about teaching people and showing people this amazing thing that we do and putting a smile on their face.”*  
<https://vimeo.com/127421986>



**GARY FISHER** - Some call him the founding father of mountain biking. He says he just wanted to cover the world with bikes. *“It was obvious you know that this [mountain biking] was going to go someplace, but man, we were like broke hippies.”* *“I wanted to spread this thing everywhere ‘cause I knew that we could just make a lot of people so happy.”*  
<https://vimeo.com/127426009>





**BOB MCKNIGHT** - When surfer Bob McKnight began building the surf clothing business "Quiksilver", it was only supposed to be a two-year project. His plan was just to keep surfing as much as possible, sell some surf shorts and have some fun. *"Whether you're young or old, male or female, it's the same thing. It's that, that thrill of the first ride. And once it gets under your skin, you can never stop."*

<https://vimeo.com/127330776>



**BRUCE BROWN** - His film *Endless Summer* changed the face of surfing and in 1966 was a box office smash introducing mainstream audiences to the nomadic lifestyle of hardcore surfers. *"A surfer would rather live in an expand-o trailer on a perfect point break than have a mansion in Beverly Hills with 45 servants and 8 Rolls Royce's."*

<https://vimeo.com/127420102>



**YVON CHOUINARD** - While making first ascents on rock walls around the world, as a means to an end he built and sold climbing hardware from the floor of a decrepit warehouse while creating one of the most successful and socially conscious companies in America. *"You get to the summit, there's no summit. It's just flat. There's nothing up there. There's nobody meeting you. There's no wise man up there telling you the secret of life. There's nothing. You realize, you know what? It's all about the process."*

<https://vimeo.com/127433241>



**MEG ROH** - High school student who has surfed over 1,000 days in a row. *"Even if it's bad [weather], I still have fun. Surfing just like makes me so happy, so it's good. Every day is a good day."*

<https://vimeo.com/128080979>



**NYJAH HUSTON** - Considered by many to be the most remarkable and phenomenal street skater's of all time. *"It takes failing and it takes falling a lot to be able to get to that point, you know, falling a lot and falling hard, and getting hurt and all those things. But that's just part of the game."*

<https://vimeo.com/127425474>



**TOM SCHAAR** - The first skateboarder to ever land a 1080 (when he was 12 years old) and the youngest X-Games gold medalist. - *“You just want to feel it again and you want to keep driving, keep going just to keep feeling the same emotion every time, every time you skate. It’s fun.”*

<https://vimeo.com/127430272>



**DANNY WAY** - After watching him shatter the limit of what is possible on a skateboard, many consider him to be the greatest skateboarder ever. Known for his work designing "megaramps" to push skateboarding to new heights—including jumping the Great Wall of China—Way has been at the forefront of skateboarding progression since the late 80s. *“People are still excited about skateboarding because there’s no boundary, there’s no limit. We haven’t found it yet.”*

<https://vimeo.com/127423670>



**GLENN SINGLEMAN** - An emergency room doctor who had never climbed mountains or based jumped in his life, until he decided to set a one year goal: to climb to the highest vertical cliff in the world (Trango towers in Pakistan), and then jump off. *“For me, all adventure is a metaphor for the journey inside yourself, getting to know the darkest, remotest corners of your own psyche.”*

<https://vimeo.com/127431288>



**JEREMY JONES** - Professional big mountain snowboarder. *“Adventure to me is just getting out of your comfort zone and going into the unknown.”* *“Today we watch the Olympics and the number one rated event at the Olympics is, is half-pipe snowboarding. And I don’t think anyone thought it would grow to that size.”*

<https://vimeo.com/127954374>



**SHANE MCCONKEY** - Free skier and base ski pioneer, Shane has been called the most influential skier of all time. He changed the face of action sports with his creativity, ability and humor. Shane died in 2009. *“You always kind of have in the back of your mind what your biggest passions are and you know your biggest goals. And for people like me, that’s jumping off stuff, sliding down snow as fast as I can, finding interesting creative ways to have fun in the mountains.”*

<https://vimeo.com/127433845>



**LOGAN LAPLANTE** - Free skier - in 2013, Logan gave a Tedx talk about action sports and education. It now has almost 5 million YouTube views. *“If you ask a little kid, sometimes you’ll get the best answer, something so simple, so obvious, and really profound. When I grow up, I want to be happy.”*  
<https://vimeo.com/128032727>



**WARREN MILLER** - The Godfather of Action Sports filmmaking and the man behind the longest running film franchise in history. *“There was less than 15 chair lifts in the world. And I bought my first pair of skis for two dollars.” “The basic instinct of a human being is his search for freedom. And still, the search for freedom is within all of us.”*



**HEATHER SWAN** - Dual world record holding wing suit pilot, a mountaineer, and an award-winning writer. *“I don’t consider myself to be an extreme sports person. I consider myself to be somebody who’s experiencing things.”*



**STEVE PEZMAN** - 40 year surf magazine publisher and creator of The Surfer’s Journal.

*“Trying to grab surfing is, is like trying to hold a, a snowflake. You know, the minute you try to hold it and possess it, it melts.”*



**ROB CAMPBELL** - Former editor in chief of Transworld Business. *“Since the beginning, there’s been monumental change in action sports. At its core, the thing that remains absolutely the same is, is that experience and that, that calling that people have that you know this is something that I’m completely dedicated to and it’s who I am and it’s something I’m gonna do my entire life.”*



**CHRIS BURKARD** — Surf Photographer. *“You feel that draw, the pull of the tides and the surge of the shore break, and you want to go out deeper.”*