

Surf Nite in SLO to Feature the Biggest Year for Big Wave Surfing at the Historic Fremont Theatre

Description

â?? The San Luis Obispo International Film Festival (SLO Film Fest) presented by Hotel San Luis Obispo is delighted to announce its Surf Nite picks for 2020. Brent Stormâ??s award-winning WHITE RHINO will be the focus the festivalâ??s most popular event, on Friday, March 20, with big wave surfer Dave Wassel traveling from Hawaii for the event. Surf photographer Brian Bielmann, director Brent Storm and producer Randy Olson will also be in attendance. Surf Nite will open with Santa Barbara filmmaker Heather Hudsonâ??s new short documentary that about female surfing pioneer, Marge Calhoun. 93 â?? LETTERS TO MARGE will be introduced by her friend and surf legend, Linda Benson.

Surf Nite in SLO is presented by Surfing for Hope Foundation and the City of Pismo Beach. Surfing for Hope is a local non-profit organization created to help inspire people challenged by cancer through the positive energy of surfing. The event is also sponsored by Cliffs Hotel and Spa, Sea Venture, Sycamore Mineral Spring Resort, Coast 104.5, and Quality Suites San Luis Obispo.

Canadian Filmmaker Brent Stormâ??s latest release, WHITE RHINO, is a parallel story from the surfers and photographers who witnessed three historic swells that hit the shorelines of the South Pacific in 2011-2012. Photographer Brian Bielmann takes the audience on an edge of your seat adventure as we discover the stories behind some of his most iconic photos and what really transpired on those memorable days. WHITE RHINO features notable big wave riders Nathan Fletcher, Dave Wassel, Bruce Irons, Mark Healey, Kohl Christensen and Kalani Chapman. It also features cinematography from some of the best surf filmmakers, including SLO Film Fest Surf Nite alum, Tim Bonython (The Big Wave Project).

In 93: LETTERS TO MARGE, Heather Hudson pays tribute to surfing pioneer Marge Calhoun, sharing memories from handwritten letters to a friend before her death in 2017 at the age of 93 in Morro Bay, CA. Chronicling an independent life that most people know little about, Marge won contests, shared waves and held her own with many of the sportâ??s legends in the early days of surfing. She won the 1958 Makaha International Championships and continued to travel, surf and compete. She judged, organized competitors on the beach and worked closely with Hoppy Swartz and others to form the U.S. Surfing Association. Later, she moved to Morro Bay and loved watching the waves from her home in the hills above the ocean.

Surf Nite Special Guests:

Fearless, fit and funny are some of the adjectives that have been used to describe Dave Wassel, the Hawaiian-born North Shore lifeguard who is also featured in WHITE RHINO. Heâ??s well known for braving huge surf as a surfer and lifeguard, going well beyond his duty to save lives in treacherous waters. He has a passion for the history andculture of Hawaii and is now the ambassador of Sustainable Surf, a California-based non-profit that protects and restores ocean health by shifting people to a highly desirable, low carbon, â??Deep Blueâ?• lifestyle.

As an internationally renowned photographer, **Brian Bielmann** has traveled extensively with many of the worldâ??s best surfers. With his images gracing more than 150 magazine covers, the pages of 30 books and appearing in iconic magazines like Rolling Stone, Menâ??s Journal, National Geographic and Sports Illustrated, he is recognized worldwide to be a photographer at the very top of his field. He captures the entire surf lifestyle and continues to push the boundaries of photography both above and below the water. Brianâ??s passion for surfing and his love of photography have kept him on the cutting edge for over 35 years. He has won numerous awards and his client list includes major corporations. He is also an captivating public speaker.

Dividing his life between Canada and the United States, **Brent Storm** has a passion for surfing that began in his mid-20â??s in San Francisco after a snowboarding injury in Mammoth. He discovered a way to blend his new passion with an old one â?? filmmaking, and after finally giving up on making wedding videos in Toronto, he decided to move to the North Shore and focus on surfing. WHITE RHINO began to take shape after he met Brian Bielmann and Randy Olson in 2016, and he discovered an amazing story in the three major swells Bielmann had captured on film in just one surf season.

Randy Olson began a career as a professor of marine biology at the University of New Hampshire, but during his first year as a professor he realized that he had grown more interested in telling stories about science and was drawn to the world of filmmaking. Despite his Harvard Ph.D., four years of post-doctoral research in Australia and Florida, and years of diving around the world from the Great Barrier Reef to Antarctica, he resigned from his tenured professorship and moved to Hollywood to explore film as a medium for communicating science. Now an independent filmmaker he is â??fluentâ?? in the two languages of science and cinema. He has written and directed his own films about major issues in science, and has worked with clients to assist them with the use of visual media in communicating science to the general public.

Linda Benson started surfing at age eleven and at age fifteen was the first woman to surf the legendary big waves at Waimea Bay in Hawaii. Linda made her competitive debut in the 1959, winning the West Coast Surfing Championship and the Makaha International contest in Hawaii a few weeks later (a year after Marge Calhoun had won.) Lindaâ??s other notable contest wins include the United States Invitational in 1964, the West Coast Championship in both 1960 and 1961, and the United States Championship in both 1964 and 1968. Moreover, Benson not only was a runner-up in the 1964 World Championship and was the top female vote-getter in a 1965 readerâ??s poll for Surfing Illustrated magazine, but also was the first female surfer to be featured on the cover of a 1963 issue of Surf Guide. She was inducted into the Surfing Hall of Fame in 1992 and the Huntington Beach Surfing Walk of Fame in 1997. This will be her third visit to the SLO Film Festâ??s Surf Nite.

Heather Hudson is also not a stranger to the SLO Film Fest. Her short films, THE WOMEN AND THE WAVES, and its sequel screened at the Festival in 2009 and 2016. An avid surfer, filmmaker and mother, Heather has been sharing her love for surfing on the big screen since 2007 when she started her production company Graciegirl LLC. For over 18 years, Heather has supported and volunteered for Heal the Ocean, a Santa-Barbara-based non-profit citizenâ??s action group committed to ending ocean pollution. She is currently on the board and coordinates fundraising.

EVENT DETAILS:
SURF NITE IN SLO â?? Presented by Surfing for Hope and City of Pismo Beach
Friday, March 20 â?? 7:00pm
Fremont Theatre, 1025 Monterey St. SLO

Tickets: $20 General / $15 Students & SLO Film Society (Mogul passes accepted)

Online: slofilmfest.org (limited tickets available pre-show)
In Person: Festival HQ (opens Feb. 15 â?? check website for hours)
South East corner of Hotel SLO, entrance on Morro St. (between Palm & Monterey)
Day of Show: Fremont Theatre Box Office â?? tickets will be sold first-come, first-served beginning at 6:30pm
Phone: 805-546-3456

(Source: SLO Film Fest News Release)

Category

1. #SLOFilmFest
2. San Luis Obispo International Film Festival

Date Created
February 2, 2020
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