

**BIOS for WIFV EXECUTIVE BREAKFAST, March 17, 8:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.
Honoring 3 Women Filmmakers
2016 DC Environmental Film Festival**



SANDY CANNON-BROWN, Director
BEAUTIFUL SWIMMERS REVISITED - World Premiere

Sandy Cannon-Brown, founder and president of VideoTakes, Inc., is an award-winning environmental filmmaker whose work has taken her to Central and South America, West Africa, the Northern Great Plains of Montana, and the Everglades. Many of her films have premiered at the Environmental Film Festival in the Nation's Capital over the past ten years, including: *Henry A. Wallace: An Uncommon Man*, produced in partnership with Wallace's granddaughter Joan Murray; *Nora!* honoring Nora Pouillon who created the nation's first certified organic restaurant, *Save Rainforests/Save Lives* about the medicinal bounty of the tropical rainforests, *Spat! Bringing Oysters back to the Chesapeake Bay*, and the *American Prairie Reserve* and its efforts to bring back native bison to the Northern Great Plains. Sandy is an associate director for the Center for Environmental Filmmaking at American University, was honored as CEF's first senior scholar in 2013 and named AU's adjunct professor of the year in 2011. She is a former president of Women in Film and Video DC and one of WIFV's women of vision awardees. As a resident of St. Michaels, MD, Sandy donates her filmmaking skills to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, the Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy and other Bay-minded non-profits to help them fulfill their missions.

NATASHA DESPOTOVIC, Co-Director
THE VALUE OF LIFE (VALOR VITAL) - U.S. Premiere

Natasha Despotovic is the director of the Dominican Republic Environmental Film Festival (DREFF) and the executive director of the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development (GFDD), a US non-profit organization. Both a Croatian and Dominican Republic national, Natasha currently lives in the Washington, DC metro area and divides her working time between DC, New York and the Dominican Republic. Following an academic background in philosophy and Spanish, French and English literature and linguistics, Natasha has had an extensive and diverse international career in which she has held high-level positions in the private, public, non-governmental and multilateral sectors in Europe, the Dominican Republic and the US. Her professional experience is very broad and ranges from teaching, writing, translation, film production, architecture, interior design and holistic health to business management, public relations, marketing, international development, international affairs and non-profit management. At GFDD, she leads numerous international sustainable development programs, as well as, book publishing and filmmaking projects. Her first short movie *Garbage or Resource: A Dominican Republic Experience*, that she directed and produced as part of the GFDD Environmental and Sustainable Development Program, was screened at seventeen international film festivals and earned one first place award and two second place awards.

MARILYN WEINER, Co-Director
DISPATCHES FROM THE GULF - World Premiere

Marilyn Weiner has produced over 225 documentaries, four PBS series, and three feature films. Her most recent documentary, *Dispatches From The Gulf*, is the 14th episode in the continuing television series, *Journey To Planet Earth*. It premieres on March 25th at 7 pm at the National Museum of Natural History as part of the DC Environmental Film Festival. Marilyn Weiner's feature films include the highly acclaimed PBS/American Playhouse production, *Family Business*. Based upon an off-Broadway show and starring Milton Berle, the film was listed in the top ten television features of the year by *The Hollywood Reporter* and *TV Guide*. *The Iimagemaker* was a thriller exposing, as *Variety* put it, "the incestuous relationship between the press and politicians in the nation's capital." Her third feature was the \$16 million Paramount Pictures production of *K2*. Based upon the Tony award-winning Broadway show, *K2* is a mountain climbing drama set against the

staggering backdrop of the world's second tallest peak. Marilyn is the recipient of the National Academy of Television Arts and Science's Silver Circle Award for "outstanding contributions to the television industry," Women In Film and Video's "Women of Vision Award" for creative excellence, and over 130 top international film festival awards. She was appointed by Mayors Anthony Williams and Marion Barry to serve as a DC Commissioner for the Arts and Humanities for six years and played a leading role in the funding of arts education within the DC public school system.

FLO STONE, Founder, Environmental Film Festival in the Nation's Capital, Moderator

Flo Stone is Founder of the annual Environmental Film Festival, which she started in 1993. Previously, she worked on public programming at the American Museum of Natural History in NYC for 15 years. There she initiated the Margaret Mead Film Festival and served as its Co-Chair from 1977-84. She also directed West Side Day, a community festival at the Museum from 1970-1976. Flo was Film Chair for the Smithsonian's National Forum on Biodiversity in 1986 and the same year she established the Earthwatch Film Awards for documentaries, presented annually at National Geographic for 17 years. Flo has authored filmographies for the U.S. Festival of Indonesia (1990) and the Ocean Planet exhibit at the National Museum of Natural History (1995). Internationally, she has served on film festival juries at the Green Festival in Korea, FICA in Brazil, Cinemambiente in Italy, CineEco in Portugal, and the SunChild International Film Festival in Armenia. In the U.S., Flo has been on many film juries over the years. In 2013, she was a final judge for the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival. In 2014, she was on the international jury for Cinemambiente in Italy and in 2015 served on the film jury at DukuFest in Kosovo. Flo is on the Board of Advisors of the NY Wild Film Festival and on the Advisory Council of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Last May she was honored to receive the 2015 Rachael Carson Award from Audubon's Women in Conservation.

WOMEN IN FILM & VIDEO (wifv.org) is dedicated to advancing the professional development and achievement for professionals working in all areas of screen-based media and related disciplines. WIFV supports women in the industry by promoting equal opportunities, encouraging professional development, serving as an information network, and educating the public about women's creative and technical achievements. WIFV is an affiliate of Women in Film and Television International (WIFTI), a global network of nearly 40 chapters whose total membership includes more than 10,000 media professionals worldwide. Founded in 1979, it is the premier professional resource for people who want successful media careers in the DC metro region. Its resources, connections and advocates support a vibrant, creative media community.

ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL (dceff.org) is the country's oldest and largest environmental film festival. Celebrating its 24th year, from March 15-26, more than 140 films from 33 countries screening at 52 venues throughout metro Washington, D.C. and includes over 70 premieres. Screenings are enhanced by the participation of filmmakers, scientists, policymakers and cultural leaders. The 2016 festival focuses on *Parks: Protecting Wild* which explores the vital role that parks and protected areas play around the world and celebrates the Centennial of the National Park Service. Most importantly, this year's Festival features work from an impressive 93 women filmmakers.

