

# Speakers

## Robyn Davidson

Robyn is an Australian writer best known for her 1980 book *Tracks*, about her 2,700 km (1,700 miles) trek across the deserts of Western Australia using camels. Her career of travelling and writing about her travels has spanned 40 years.

In 1975, Robyn moved to Alice Springs in an effort to work with camels for a desert trek she was planning. For two years she trained camels and learned how to survive in the harsh desert.

In 1977, Robyn set off from Alice Springs for the west coast, with a dog and four camels, Dookie (a large male), Bub (a smaller male), Zeleika (a wild female), and Goliath (Zeleika's offspring).

She published her award-winning book ***Tracks*** in the 1980s and this was followed by the movie of the same name.

Robyn has been an inspiration to several generations of solo women travellers particularly because she *"places herself in the wilderness of her own accord, rather than as an adjunct to a man"*.

## Sophie Matterson

### Winner of the Australian Geographic Spirit of Adventure Award 2022

Sophie Matterson is an adventurer currently based in the Flinders Ranges, South Australia.

In 2020 and 2021 Sophie solo trekked 4,800 kilometres across the width of Australia, from Shark Bay, Western Australia to Byron Bay, New South Wales, with her five camels. Sophie's dromedary traveling companions, Jude, Delilah, Charlie, Clayton and Mac were mustered from the wild near Uluru, where she spent a year breaking them in and training them to carry her equipment, as well as making her own saddles and organising permits and logistics before setting off.

Her journey of 13 months, which was necessary to split into two parts due to the intense summer heat in the outback, took her through some of the most remote and isolated parts of the country including the Strzelecki Desert and Australia's largest desert, the Great Victoria Desert.

Sophie first discovered her passion for camels when she took a break from her career in film and television to work on a camel dairy on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. Her fascination with these enigmatic and intelligent animals grew from here and her desire to learn more has taken her to Michigan and Texas in the USA, and Rajasthan India, where she stayed with the Raika nomads.

Through her experience of many of the Outback's far-flung places, Sophie is an advocate for visiting and seeing first-hand the beauty of Australia's wild and arid heart. She is about to release a book about her trek across the country and one day hopes to visit all ten of Australia's deserts with her camels.

## Leonie Katekar

### My 12,000 km Bike-Packing Ride through South America

Leonie Katekar left behind her past and confronted her fears by immersing herself in a foreign world and embarking on 12,000 km solo bike-packing expedition through South America.

Leonie undertook her journey during a difficult time in what had been a difficult life. Her story is about being brave, stepping out, and finding out how we can pursue a deeper happiness.

On her journey she overcomes almost overwhelming physical challenges and internal anguish while experiencing a world of beauty and inspiration.

Leonie rides more than 12,000 km through nine countries. She conquers the Andes at an altitude of more than 4,000 metres, explores and thrives in and among unique towns and cities, lakes and forests, deserts and ancient ruins, while pushing through extreme physical demands on her body and overcoming the weather and her own doubts.

Her book ***When We're Not Afraid*** – is told with an insight that enthralls and inspires on the way to confronting fears that many of us have. Yet it is a story not just for women who are seeking more, but for anyone disillusioned with their life and wanting to be brave enough to face the question – What would I do if I was not afraid?

Returning to Australia at age 55, just days before the pandemic, she is changed, and now faces a new world from a unique perspective.

# FILMS

We do our best to show every movie twice during the weekend however, with such a packed schedule some movies have only a single showing as denoted by  $\phi$

## 14 Days South: Over Sea and Land (2021) 30 mins

Five eco-adventurers cycle the 1200 miles between Orkney and the Isles of Scilly in the summer of 2021, with a twist... They keep the pedals turning the whole way, using waterbikes to perform two sea crossings and conventional bicycles the rest of the way. Meeting with numerous experts in the environmental and sustainability space along the route, we learn about how humans are interfering with the landscapes of the UK and what scalable solutions there are for regenerating and restoring them.

## 972 Breakdowns: On the Landway to New York (2020) 110 mins

4 vintage Urals, 30000 kilometres, 5 artists, 2 years and 972 breakdowns... This one is heading straight to the adventure travel film hall of fame. Anne, Efy, Johannes, Kaupo and Elisabeth leave Germany on their three-wheeled machines with New York as an end goal. The roads dissolve into deserts, then into swamps, and then eventually into rivers as they attempt to take a short cut along The Road of Bones in Russia's far east.

Accompanied by thunderstorms, sandstorms, armies of mosquitos and mountains of bureaucracy, they learn to become very familiar with the inner workings of the Urals. It's a story of creativity, friendship, dogged determination and what to do when plans collapse. Do they make it to New York? You'll have to watch it to find out.

## Across the Adriatic (2020) 40 mins $\phi$

A team of kayakers paddle more than 600 kilometres through the outer islands of Croatia, from Rijeka to Dubrovnik on the farthestmost and least populated route they can find. The team draw energy from the wilderness, wildlife and rough seas along the journey.

## Alumination (2020) 73 mins

In 1929 Airstream founder Wally Byam built his first travel trailer in the backyard of his California home. Nearly a century later Airstream continues as the oldest travel trailer company in the United States and an iconic brand. For many, the word "Airstream" signifies more than just the image of an aerodynamic silver bullet gliding down the highway; it also evokes the spirit of innovation, adventure, resilience, and dynamism. Byam didn't just create a tool for travel — he created a blueprint for modern nomadic living. Alumination will undoubtedly stir the age-old desire to pack up and discover what lies beyond the next range of hills.

## Around the World in 1000 Days (2019) 43 mins $\phi$

Five years ago Fredrika Ek decided to go for a bike ride. With little experience but with big dreams she started a seemingly impossible adventure – to bike around the world. It truly became an adventure, meeting people from all over the world and facing both their prejudices and her own. She danced in Iran, camped out in salt deserts in Bolivia and had hut dinners in Ghana. She struggled, smiled, cried and pedalled her way around our planet.

## A Single Day (2020) 45 mins $\phi$

In October 2019, Frédéric Funnelle is welcomed for a week into the home of Assayuh, who lives in an isolated village, seven days' walk from Lalibela in Ethiopia. In a particularly patriarchal rural society, Assayuh raises her two daughters and two sons alone. A Single Day tries to portray, with great modesty and honesty, the day-to-day life of this family. The black and white footage speaks for itself, sensitively and intimately capturing Assayuh and others as they go about their daily routine. If there's any film that sets the ATFF apart from the adventure-adrenaline circuit, this is it.

## Breaking Trail (2021) 36 mins $\phi$

Oriol Baró led a dual life between the city of Barcelona and the Pyrenees, his playground and escape on the weekends. He decided to jack in city life, return to his roots in the mountains and devote himself full time to making handmade wooden skis. Attempting to live in perfect harmony with his work and his passion for the mountains, Breaking Trail follows Oriol in his workshop and on the slopes. Secretly we all wish we could do the same, don't we?

## Busking (2020) 70 mins

Camera in hand, Timo Vergauwen booked a plane ticket to Seattle and drove south along the west coast of the United States, in search of a good story. A week before he was scheduled to return to Belgium, he stumbled upon a free bus-concert of the folk duo Handmade Moments. He became friends with Joel and Anna and, a week later, he'd cancelled his return flight and was living in the bus with them. Travelling around the US in their stage-topped solar-powered tour bus, Busking captures the appeals and drawbacks of the couple's lifestyle and shows how everything can change in the blink of an eye.

## Following Lines (2020) 59 mins

Seeking a mean encounter with the territory of the Inuit, six paddlers plan to make the first recorded descent of a little-known river in northern Quebec. This mapping expedition, beset by adverse weather conditions and other unforeseeable situations, is also, for filmmaker François Léger-Savard, a reminder of his ancestry. The film reminds us that what we have come to think of as an "adventure" was here, for thousands of years, simply a way of life. Set against an imposing background of snow, tundra and white-water rapids, the documentary is a call to go beyond: out onto the land, and also inward into ourselves.

## Freedom Seat (2020) 26 mins

Naresh Kumar sets out on a tandem bike from India to Germany, but with just him pedalling. He invited curious onlookers to join him on his second seat for as long as they wanted, accompanying him on his mission to not only cycle 10,000 km through 13 countries but to grow awareness and raise funds to help end human trafficking.

## Home Sweet Home (2021) 15 mins

Can one really have an adventure without going too far? Absolutely, but it also helps if you live in the heart of the Dauphiné Alps, surrounded by jagged peaks and wooded valleys. Anthony Komarnicki spends three weeks exploring his backyard, paragliding, cycling, hiking and never going more than 60km from his front door.

## It's Only Natural (2019) 25 mins $\phi$

Ro Privett and his buddies set out on a two week expedition, attempting to kayak as much of Tasmania's Gordon River as possible. Paddling through pristine wilderness they navigate remote white water sections and capture rare geological phenomenon as they go.

## Jagannath Tour (2020) 24 mins

Bollywood meets heavy metal in Aigars Liepins' soundtrack as he rides 5000 km around India capturing religious festivals, unusual living arrangements, famous sights and chaotic traffic wherever he goes.

## Lessons of the Sky (2018) 52 mins $\phi$

Three friends decide to take on an old dream: to traverse the Pyrenees, from Mediterranean to the Atlantic, in 'hike and fly mode'. Crossing the mountains by foot and paraglider, learning as they go, they soon find out that it isn't all plain sailing.

## Lost at Sea (2020) 48 mins

Lost at Sea is an epic tale of the ocean, following one young man's personal journey to understand his father, Peter Bird, who in 1983 became the first person to row the Pacific Ocean single-handed. Over the next 15 years Peter continued to set new ocean-rowing records, until in 1996 he disappeared at sea. His son, Louis, was just four years old at the time.

Lost at Sea follows Louis's attempt to piece together his father's life, a father he hardly knew. It is a dramatic tale of obsession and extreme isolation, and an intimate exploration of a mother and son coming to terms with feelings of loss and abandonment, while trying to deal with a legacy of trauma that ran through their family for generations.

## Matsés (2019) 45 mins

Is it still possible to experience a real adventure today, in the age of SOS beacons and GPS gizmos? Paper map in hand, a father and daughter set out into the heart of the Amazon, near the Peruvian-Brazilian border. There, they meet the Matsés, an indigenous community facing the pressures of mining companies and the outside world.

## Memories of Chapursan - 1000 Cups of Tea (2018) 46mins

A team spends two weeks exploring the Kuk-e-Yaz and Yishkuk glaciers, which flow into the secluded Chapursan Valley, a restricted and remote area of northern Pakistan near the border with Afghanistan. With no reliable maps available of the region, the expedition relies on the help of farmers, shepherds and miners who know the mountains like the back of their hands.

## Nenets (2021) 20 mins $\phi$

Hitching rides on rickety boats and old Soviet snowmobiles, Devang Sethi travels into the Yamal region of Arctic Russia to reach the Nenets people. A hardy group of nomadic reindeer herders, the film explores their unique way of life in one of the most remote places on earth.

## Not Tourist Area (2019) 50 mins

Not Tourist Area documents a journey into some of the remotest parts of Myanmar. Pre-military coup, Keir and Alexis must dodge the watchful eye of the authorities at times, navigating a complex and ever-changing network of restricted areas. Despite the tense political situation, the real winners are serendipity, generosity and the power of music. Myanmar's intrinsic beauty is on show as Keir and Alexis meet dozens of kind people on their way to a village which hasn't been visited by foreigners since the 1930s.

## Pamir to Karakoram (2020) 60 mins

A journey across the roof of the world on the Pamir and Karakoram Highways. Eight weeks, two bicycles, four largely unexplored countries and an adventure into one of the most remote and rugged landscapes on our planet. A husband and wife team battle snow, altitude and fatigue as they discover yaks, 8000m peaks, frozen lakes and the world's friendliest people.

## Sarek II (2020) 35 mins $\phi$

Above the Arctic Circle lies the wildest natural area in Europe. In Sweden's Sarek National Park there are no human settlements or shelters; there aren't even paths, only erratic trails that are traced into the landscape. The warning from the authorities for those who wish to hike in the region is telling: "We, park managers, hope you know what this decision involves. If you have an accident, you have a serious problem."

## Stalking Chernobyl (2020) 59 mins

Three decades after the world's most infamous nuclear disaster, wildlife has returned in the absence of human settlements. Meanwhile, illegal hiking adventurers known as "stalkers," extreme sports aficionados, artists, and tour companies have begun to explore anew the ghostly, post-apocalyptic landscape of Chernobyl.

## Still On The Move (2019) 16 mins $\phi$

Bruno and Elena immerse themselves in the world of the nomadic Rabari people of Gujarat, capturing their day-to-day lives as they travel around an increasingly urbanised and industrialised region. Occupying a unique ecological niche where migration is crucial to their survival, the Rabari exist as one of the few remaining vestiges of nomadic caravan communities in India.

## Stødig (2020) 38 mins

Charting the adventure of a survival lifeboat converted into a self-supporting floating home by two architects, Stødig is a journey of over 3000 miles from the UK to the arctic north of Norway. The film explores the idea of slow adventure set against the dramatic backdrop of the Norwegian coast.

## The 40 Mile Birthday (2020) 12 mins

Dave Cornthwaite had spent a decade and a half trying out different forms of human powered transport, each time travelling over 1000 miles. So, when it came to his fortieth birthday it made sense to celebrate with a little challenge. Dave spent his birthday attempting to travel 40 miles, each one using a different form of non-motorised transport.

## The Charging Bullet (2020) 58 mins

When Fred Spaven got his hands on a knackered, British-built, 1961 Enfield 'Bullet', he was determined to restore it to more than just another petrol motorbike. The Charging Bullet documents the bike's electric conversion: transforming the noisy, fossil-fuelled machine into a near-silent, battery-powered beast. But it doesn't stop there; Fred's hometown friend, filmmaker Finn Varney challenged Fred to take his bike on Britain's longest overland journey: from Land's End to John O'Groats along a weaving 1,450-mile route, taking-in stops with fellow innovators pioneering their own green transport tech.

## Tracks 2013 112 mins

In 1977, a young Australian woman named Robyn Davidson set out from Alice Springs to trek across 2,700 kilometres of harsh desert of Western Australia to reach the ocean. Accompanied only by her dog and four camels, Davidson had no other purpose than to reach the ocean and find herself on a journey of self-discovery.

Based on Robyn Davidson's book starring Mia Wasikowska and Adam Driver, directed by John Curran with Mandy Walker winning several awards for her outback cinematography.

## Trans Siberia (2020) 70 mins

A taste of what a month long solo-journey is like aboard the longest train journey across the world's largest country. Ciaran O'Connell starts out in St. Petersburg and crosses Russia to the small one-horse town of Khuzhir on Olkhon Island in the middle of Lake Baikal in deepest Siberia. Exploring the mystery of the route, we see the sights of some of the lesser-known parts of the country and meet a whole host of different characters along the way. All aboard!

## Up and Down (2021) 21 mins

Dylan Moron sets out on the 3000 km Te Araroa Trail, New Zealand's longest hiking route. His documentary not only chronicles the journey but also leads him to meet and learn from inspiring people along the way. A call to adventure and to connect with people.