

A

NATURAL

REVELATION

a
film
proposal
by
Jim
Bones

A FILM PROPOSAL

BY

JIM BONES

We rush to and fro like Mad Hatters upon our peculiar errands, all the time imagining our surroundings to be dull and ourselves quite ordinary creatures. Actually, there is nothing in the world to encourage this idea, but such is the mind of man, and this is why he finds it necessary from time to time to send emissaries into the wilderness in the hope of learning of great events, or plans in store for him, that will resuscitate his waning taste for life...One must seek, then, what only the solitary approach can give--a natural revelation.

---LOREN EISELEY

In a beautifully photographed sensitively edited 30-minute color film focused on Eliot Porter and Loren Eiseley, I seek to capture the rare moments of insight, the times of realization which occur to all reflective humans, but which few of us are able to see or understand.

Sensitive use of the verité film art can provide a beautiful window through which we may see this special happening between two wise, gifted and experienced men. Each has already shared, through their award-winning works, natural insights of great magnitude.

An intensity of knowing exists which cannot be

transmitted through the printed word or still images, but which penetrates the heart when seen in the living motion of film.

Eliot Porter and Loren Eiseley are unquestionably two of the finest interpreters of the natural universe living today. Both are near 70 years of age and still quite active. These men have each in their own poetic way helped to cast light upon the origins of man and his inextricable association with the wild, mysterious world of nature. Both are interesting, entertaining storytellers with a geologically broad sense of time. Both are historically experienced world explorers with the sensitive perception of artists. They have above all a deep abiding love of the spirit of life and a unique ability to share personally their understanding of that spirit.

The opportunity exists to make available to them the subtle, yet powerful medium of television-film for the expression of the incidents and experiences which have given them glimpses beyond the surface of what we call the natural world and reality. John Witherspoon, Director of Television Activities for the Corporation of Public Broadcasting told me that the Corporation would favorably consider airing such a film as this.

This would be a television art first.

The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the source of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms---this knowledge, this feeling is at the center of true religiousness.

---ALBERT EINSTEIN

Art is the expression of that most profound emotion, the sensation of the mystical or transcendental. These men see deeply and clearly. The possibilities are numerous and numinos. On what ~~stone~~^{level} shall it be? Imagine the associations with patterns of stones along a stream bed, the recollections of a similar stream in an African gorge where the bones of our pre-iceage ancestors mingle with the stones. What like memories might this kindle in another of similar bent. What points of departure might arrive for exploring the beautiful spirit of nature's universe.

The rich diversity of signs contained in nature's patterns has shown these men unexpected insights throughout their life. We might share with them through a unique collaborative film exploration moments from an island of wildness.

The form of the film might be conceived of ^{as} a sequence

of dramatic vignettes in cinema verite' style, each being the distillation of associated actions and ideas suggested by the elements of the natural environment surrounding the location. Each transition from vignette to vignette could be most effectively achieved with short abstract visual poems consisting of the natural textures of the wild surroundings and micro-photomation of Eliot Porter's photographs. The sound track offers the opportunity for a rich mixture of natural sounds, significant quotations, the selected elements of the conversations between Eliot Porter and Loren Eiseley, and their individual observations through myself as interlocuter.

As expressed in the agreement with Mr. Porter and Mr. Eiseley, I do not foresee a highly pre-structured or pre-scripted encounter or play situation. Rather, it is my plan to remain as flexible as possible and let the actual reality of the meeting constitute the basic structure of the film.

I believe that by choosing a stimulating, beautiful location and selecting both specific and general topics for consideration from the personal experiences of Mr. Eiseley and Mr. Porter, then pursuing a natural evolutionary line of inter-personal exploration, an honest film of great human insight and visual beauty would be made.

Their images, in words and photographs have helped to

broaden the awareness of millions of people to our natural involvement with the earth. Perhaps through the unique powers of film and television we can share more intimately their love and understanding of wild nature, which underlies their art.

A certain time urgency exists for this film. Because of individual obligations the exact time of shooting is a matter of coordinating a time when Loren Eiseley and Eliot Porter can coincide their complex schedules. (See Letters) The most promising time for shooting appears to be the autumn of this year, in October, November or December. Preparation will require 8 to 10 weeks for location, scouting, logistic planning, equipment procurement and travel arrangements. Film crew participation will be for two weeks and actual film shooting will occupy 7 to 10 days. Careful editing will require three to four months.

Much of the value of this film depends upon beautiful, naturally dramatic intuitive film work. For this only the finest, experienced film makers are suitable. Three of the most talented and sensitive American film makers have consented to collaborate with me in filming Mr. Porter and Mr. Eiseley.

Bob Elkins, Tobe Hooper and Ron Perryman have all

produced, directed, photographed and edited numerous award-winning films. All are familiar with the work of Mr. Eiseley and Mr. Porter, and they share a common ground of understanding in nature. Tobe Hooper's 1967 film, "Down Friday Street," won a silver award at the International Film and Television Festival in New York.

Ron Perryman's 1967 film, "Pandora's Box," for the US Public Health Service and American Institute of Planners, forcefully and innovatively interpreted key aspects of the then little known environmental-urban crisis. Bob Elkins' revealing film, "Madalyn," about atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair, shown internationally, demonstrates the effectiveness of the verite' approach. Examples of film and television work are readily available. More extensive resumes appear at the conclusion of this proposal, along with a budget, personnel list and correspondence.

Again I emphasize the unique potential offered in an informal visit between these interesting men. Consider the cinematic relationship between images, moving and still, between image and sound, image and word, image and reality. Consider the possibilities and the time. From my own experience I know a film of this association is worth making. Examine the book, "The Place No One Knows," and explore the natural wild location concept in "Symbols

BONES, page 7

of the Seasons." Explore the possibilities and consider.

All of the correspondence with Eliot Porter and Loren Eiseley attached with this proposal constitutes the original basis and structure of this endeavor. Basic agreements with them shall have first priority.

PARTICIPANTS AND PERSONNEL

Eliot Porterthe talent (and part of theater and television
Loren Eiseley royalties)

Jim Bones: Producer/Director/Photographer/Editor/Interlocuter

Bob Elkins: Photographer/Sound/Collaborator

Tobe Hooper: Photographer/Sound/Collaborator

Ron Perryman: Photographer/Sound/Collaborator

(plus part of theater and television royalties)

FOR THE UNUSUAL PRODUCTION AND LOGISTICS NEEDS:

Ann Bones: Production Assistant/Logistics and Collaborator

Emile Beck: Secretary/Assistant Logistics and Collaborator

Paulette Smith: Assistant Logistics/Collaborator

Tommi Jan Nabors: Assistant Logistics and Collaborator

30 min (1200') 16mm/color/optical/sound

Pre-production time: 8 weeks

Shooting (10 days) autumn, 1972

Editing (3 months) winter 1972-73

Delivery: Early Spring, 1973

Shooting Ratio: 30 to 1 (1200') 36,000 feet

I.	Fees and Personnel:	\$22,500.00 (plus royalties)
II.	Lab and film costs:	11,186.50
III.	Rentals, cameras editor:	10,000.00
IV.	Production:	7,200.00
	Total:	<u>\$50,855.50</u>

(Rental of camping vehicles for rear wilderness location shooting is figured into travel expenses under production costs.)

Film Work by Bob Elkins

1969

Austin Symphony Pops Night Light Show (still & motion picture photography;
image synchronization)
The Love Girl (film maker) 15 minute interview with 5 year old boy concerning
the influence of television upon children

1970

Madalyn (film maker) 30 minute film about atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair
for Southwest Creative Film Center (SCFC), aired nationally on PBS
selected by European Broadcast Union for airing in Denmark and Sweden
chosen for Robert Flaherty Seminar and Public Television Program Conference
print purchased by New York Public Library
The Future is Now (cameraman) film study of a sensitivity session, 25 minutes
SCFC grant, aired nationally on PBS
Physics Today (sound, back-up photography) 30 minute film for U. of Texas, Austin
Physics Dept.
Andrew Sarris (second camera) documentary concerning the film critic, production
in progress. SCFC grant
Wedding (film maker) 5 minute study of a wedding of two friends

1971

The Wishbone Incident (cameraman) 60 minute documentary of the 1971 Cotton Bowl
game between U. of Texas and Notre Dame
produced by NCAA films for ABC-TV, nationally aired
Egg Shells (associate editor) feature-length dramatic film (released 1972)
Gold Medal for Editing, Atlanta International Film Festival
Acromantic (production assistance) 8 minute animated film
SCFC grant
First Place, Experimental Division, Southwest Film Festival (Tulsa)

1972

Glasswork (sound man) 15 minute study of a professional glassblower
SCFC grant

TOBE HOOPER

- 1967.....Heisters. 10 minute comedy in cinemascope and technicolor won awards at San Francisco International Festival, Tours Festival, Sidney and Melbourne Festival.
- 1967.....Down Friday Street. 10 minute film about environmental degradation, shown on Public Television. Director-Photographer-Editor National Trust for Historical Preservation prints. Dept. of Interior won Silver Award at International Film and Television Festival of New York.
- 1969.....A Way of Learning. 18 minute film about innovative individuals' learning, funded by the Title III, Federal grant. Experimental school for primary students. Bronze Award at International Film and Television Festival in New York. Director/Photographer/Editor.
1970.Peter, Paul and Mary. 60 minute cinema verite' documentary of folk group front and backstage on national tour, shown on NET. Photographer/Director.
- 1971.....Eggshells. 90 minute feature ,entertainment film for national distribution. Won Gold Award at the Atlantic Film Festival Director/Photographer/Editor. Released Jan. 1972.

Also Director and Photographer of a 1968 film called, Promises to Keep, for National Education Association. Won photography award with I.F.P.A. This was an information film.

Also, in 1971, producer of America Innercity program, experimental project based in Philadelphia, Miami, San Diego, Ghetto areas of cities.

Hooper, page 2

1967.....Series of 14 Public Information spots for
Texas Education Agency about new ideas
in public education and techniques

1969.....Arts and Education. 15 minute Texas Education
Agency. Director, photographer, editor.
Art programs through the University of Texas
to stimulate interest in art.

Over 70 television commercials, training films and promotional
films between 1961-72, including 1972 Senator
Yarborough campaign. Photographer/Director/
Editor

Ron Perryman, filmmaker

- 1964 - 1966 Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine - pictures and picture stories, and magazine's first double (front and back) cover photograph
- 1965 The Murder of Silence - 3-screen slide show with music and sound effects for Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. Widely acclaimed, it has produced a string of imitations.
- 1965 *The Heisters - Director of Photography on this 35mm Technicolor wide-screen motion picture short which won honors in San Francisco and Melbourne.
- 1967 Man Against Nature - slide show for one screen, music, and sound effects. Made in Florida.
- 1967 The Walls Are Rising - three-projector one-screen slide show with music and sound effects about Dallas, produced for Great Dallas Planning Council.
- 1967 Pandora's Box - 16mm color film about urban problems. Produced for U.S. Public Health Service and American Institute of Planners. Available on FVR cartridge.
- 1967 *Down Friday Street - collaborator credit on this short, award-winning color film about the destruction of old houses.
- 1968 Texas Pavilion at Hemisfair - organized and managed photographic team for large photo exhibit. Job required shooting in over 100 Texas towns and cities.
- 1969 Legislative Politics - 16mm color film produced for classroom use. Takes sample air & water pollution bill through the legislative process.
- 1969 Dallas Flower Show - designed seven special screens (including bamboo, fishnet, and white flowers) for special "world's fair"-styled presentation. Pictures taken in Jamaica.
- 1970 *A Way of Learning - collaborator credit on this award-winning film about innovations in education.
- 1970 *Peter, Paul and Mary - cameraman, collaborator, and director of special sequences for documentary shown on NET.

- 1971 *Eggshells - collaborator credit on "way-out" feature film about modern college kids. Special jury award at Atlanta Film Festival.
- 1969 - 1971 TV Commercials - produced numerous award-winning spots including special series for Texas State Bank in Austin.

*Written, directed, and edited by Tobe Hooper

All other films and slide shows were written, produced, directed, edited, and provided with sound track by Ronald Perryman, except Pandora's Box which was edited by Tobe Hooper.

**I have never entered my own work in competition.