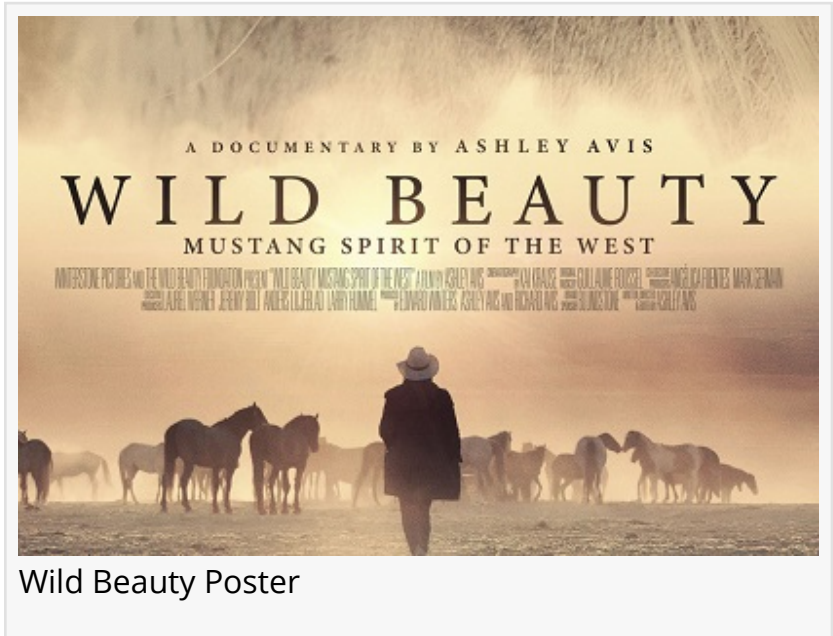


# 'Wild Beauty: Mustang Spirit of the West' Captures Major Accolades & Award for Best Documentary at Boston Film Festival

*Documentary by Director of Disney's Black Beauty Displays Sweeping Cinematography Alongside Government Corruption Decimating Wild Horse Populations in the West*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- The 38th Boston Film Festival has announced the awards for the live event program held last week. The Omni Boston Hotel at the Seaport sponsored the 2022 film festival including the closing night party at the Lifted Pool Bar. An array of topics highlighted this year's program including comedy, suspense, drama, historical, environmental, nature and connection.



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*Robin Dawson, Executive Director of the Boston Film Festival*

Several theaters throughout Boston hosted screenings that included three World Premiere Films and three U.S. Premieres including *The Wind & the Reckoning* written by John Fusco (Hidalgo) which took home 8 awards including Best Screenplay, Best Director, and Best Ensemble Cast; and *Bromates* from executive producer Snoop Dog which won Audience Favorite. The Opening Night Feature was *Don't Worry Darling* from Producer-Director-Star Olivia Wilde.

Taking Best Documentary award is [Wild Beauty: Mustang](#)

[Spirit of the West](#) from Director-Producer-Editor [Ashley Avis](#) (Black Beauty). The film displays breathtaking cinematography of wild horses living free across vast stretches of public lands, immersing audiences into the intimate world of their closely-bonded equine families; while

exposing the terrible injustices they face by the federal Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Dept. of Interior.

Avis and crew attended mass roundups, documenting terrible acts of animal cruelty, violations of the federal Wild and Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971, misuse of federal tax dollars, and violations of Constitutional Rights as well as Freedom of the Press.

Participants in the Question-and-Answer session that followed the film in Boston included Avis, Edward Winters, fourteen-year-old Josselyn Wolf, [Marty Irby](#), Erik Molvar, and Kimerlee Curyl.

“After four years of creating this film, I am incredibly proud to have our East Coast debut at Boston Film Festival” said Ashley Avis, founder of the Wild Beauty Foundation who directed, produced, and edited both Wild Beauty and Disney’s 2020 Black Beauty. “It is beyond time for the public to know about the astounding beauty we have in the backyard of our own country; and that wild horses and other native wildlife are being eradicated in favor of special interests. My sincere hope is that we can use our voice as storytellers to raise awareness, and correct this injustice before wild horses disappear completely. It would be a travesty for the next generation to never get to see them, the true icons of our American West.”

“The United States Government is supporting a system that is economically and ecologically unsustainable, which scapegoats wild horses and burros, leaving a number of other species and our public lands as collateral damage,” said Edward Winters, producer of Wild Beauty: Mustang Spirit of the West and president of Winterstone Pictures. “I am proud of the work our team has done and the passion with which this film was made. We all hope it raises the awareness necessary to create change.”



Wild Beauty Team at Boston Film Festival



Shot of the film at the Boston Film Festival

"This is a film that is both beautiful and alarming, as it enlightens the story of what is going on with wild mustangs in the U.S.," said Robin Dawson, Executive Director of the Boston Film Festival. "The cinematography is spectacular and the story is told by prominent filmmaker Ashley Avis who informs her audience about a hidden program that will eliminate the existence of wild horses. We can stop this if we take action."

"This documentary is illumination," said Josselyn Wolf, a fourteen-year-old advocate who is featured in the film, delivering a speech to Congressman Steve Cohen in Washington D.C. "This documentary is a celebration of the unfathomable wonder that exists within our Earth. And this documentary is going to mobilize our nation to prioritize democracy over plutocracy. The tidal wave of change is swelling with every revelation. I am so proud of everything this film has and will continue to accomplish."

"This brilliant film by Ashley and Ed Winters is a game changer for the future of our iconic American wild horses whose very backs this country was built upon," said Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action featured in the film who was honored in 2020 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for his work to protect horses. "For far too long the federal Bureau of Land Management's radical assault on these magnificent creatures has gone unnoticed and unpunished but the BLM's going to be in serious trouble when the world sees what they've done. Many thanks to the Boston Film Festival for their tremendous award and honors."

"Wild Beauty exposes a national scandal," said Erik Molvar, a wildlife biologist and Executive Director of the conservation group Western Watersheds Project. "This film catches the Bureau of Land Management red-handed, removing wild horses from public lands under 'emergency' roundups while simultaneously authorizing an ecologically unsustainable amount of cattle and sheep to be trucked into the same areas. Wild Beauty is a clarion call for fundamental land-use reforms, so public lands can start being managed for ecological sustainability and the public interest, instead of private profits."

"Wild Beauty weaves together the intoxicating beauty of our wild world and the horrifying



Wild Beauty Film: Marty Irby Interview



Boston Film Festival Logo

realities that exist due to special interests,” said Kimerlee Curyl a wild horse photographer who was featured in the film. “May this film reach many, exposing the insanity of this issue, however still, inspiring us to care about these wild creatures and these wild places. Their existence, on the lands they call home enrich our lives and future generations, simply, by being wildly free. Protecting wildlife will forever be up to us.”

“Combining dazzling beauty, hard-nosed journalism, and passionate advocacy, Wild Beauty: Mustang Spirit of the West reveals the beauty of wild horses in their habitat as well as the corruption and cruelty they endure at the hands of our federal government to benefit the livestock industry,” said Scott Beckstead, director of campaigns at Animal Wellness Action and program director at the Wild Beauty Foundation, who was featured in the film and joined the Q&A at the Breckenridge Film Festival. “We are thrilled to see Wild Beauty honored by the Boston Film Festival and recommend the film to anyone who cares about wild animals, public lands, and responsible government.”

Wild Beauty will next screen at the Newport Beach Film Festival on October 19th and DOC LA on October 21st, followed by the Academy Award qualifying St. Louis International Film Festival and Ft. Lauderdale International Film Festival in November. The film had its world premiere at Breckenridge Film Festival in Colorado earlier this month, attended by Colorado Governor Jared Polis and First Gentleman Marlon Reis.

More information about festival screenings of Wild Beauty: Mustang Spirit of the West along with The Wild Beauty Foundation can be found at: [www.wildbeautyfoundation.org](http://www.wildbeautyfoundation.org).

#### FULL LIST OF AWARD WINNERS:

\*Best Film           The Wind & The Reckoning - David Cunningham, Director

\*Best Documentary   Wild Beauty: Mustang Spirit of the West - Ashley Avis, Director, Writer

\*Best Actor           Tom Pelphrey (Ozark) - American Murderer

\*Best Actress           Lindsay Watson (Finding O'Hana) - The Wind & The Reckoning

\*Best Screenplay     John Fusco - The Wind & The Reckoning

\*Best Director        David Cunningham - The Wind & The Reckoning

\*Best Cinematography   Scott Lee Mason - The Wind & The Reckoning

\*Best Story            The Wind & The Reckoning - John Fusco Writer (based on the writings of Pi'ilani)

- \*Best Editing      Kyle Gilbertson - The Wind & The Reckoning
- \*Best Ensemble Cast      The Wind & The Reckoning - Jason Scott Lee, Lindsay Watson, Henry Ian Cusick, Johnathon Schaech, Lance Kerwin, Ron Yuan, Matt Corboy
- \*Audience Favorite      Bromates - Court Crandall, Director, Co-writer
- \*Best Music      American Murderer - Scott Gentile, Composer
- \*Best Comedy Feature      Bromates - Court Crandall, Director, Co-writer
- \*Mass Impact Award      The Temptation of Trees - Andrea Sparrow, Director, Writer
- \*EcoFilm      The Temptation of Trees - Andrea Sparrow, Director, Writer
- \*Best Film      The Wind & The Reckoning - David Cunningham, Director
- \*Best Short Film      Before We Die - Kate diRienzi, Director
- \*Best Foreign Short      Mate - Geroge-Alex Nagle, Director
- \*Best Comedic Short      What Wilderness Permits - Joel Marsh, Director

Sponsors for the 2022 Boston Film Festival are A & E, Omni Boston Hotel at the Seaport, Hawaiian Airlines, Dream Alley Pictures, Boston Light & Sound, The Flie; Don't Tread on Me Entertainment, Boston Public Library, Shalin Liu Performance Center, The Wilbur.

HIGH-RES IMAGES:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3p1s370aou29zi9/AAAodDePlrBBCEY2n66AlrZta?dl=0>

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