Handful of Films

17/08/18

- **PRESS KIT –**

Equus
STORY OF THE HORSE

“A life-consuming work anchored in a devotion to animals… stunning visuals!”

John Doyle, *Globe & Mail*

“Stunning visuals… a gem to behold!”

“An ambitious and masterful exploration of our relationship with the horse…”

Greg David, *TV, eh?*

“An exhaustive scientific quest through 11 countries, backed by gorgeous footage and narrative magnificence… epic!”

“A glorious symphonic score!”

“Beautifully edited… emotional in a complicated way.”

Fish Grikowsky, *Edmonton Journal & Calgary Herald*

“Three spectacular hours of cutting-edge science and gripping adventure.”

Raoul Bhatt, *todayville*

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LEGEND

1. Promotional Stills, available in high-resolution with captions via Dropbox.
2. Log line descriptions, 5 variations
3. Short Synopses
4. Long Synopsis
5. Episode Loglines & Synopses
6. Science Scoops in Equus
7. Biographical Information, Scientists and Experts
8. Biographical Information, key creative personnel
9. List of Influencers
10. Production Credits

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1. **Promotional Stills, available in high resolution with captions via Dropbox.**

   NB. Download the photos from Dropbox to obtain high-resolution versions.

   NB. Photo captions are the file names; credit: Handful of Films

   1. 50 Promotional stills: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8lcfectcsfgoi4s/AABOAarpUxfL8q7_XzDk8YS4a?dl=0

   2. Stills of Host, Dr. Niobe Thompson: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jsrm3h7coxgpb66/AAAnLRPKcDVhlIxHPp3nKA1wa?dl=0

2. **Cutlines (entire series) (73 – 159 characters, incl. spaces)**

   A. An epic journey into the fascinating and unexpected world of horses, with anthropologist **Niobe Thompson**.

   B. Explore the evolution of horsepower, discover the mysterious origins of our incredible partnership, and witness our enduring love of horses in the present day.

   C. The horse changed everything. From the moment humans mounted these magnificent animals, we shaped our world with horsepower.

   D. Discover how horsepower made history, with anthropologist **Niobe Thompson.**

   C. Anthropologist **Niobe Thompson** explores our enduring partnership with the aristocrat of animals. A fascinating journey into the world of horses.

3. **[Short synopses, 57 & 258 words]**

[60 Words]

The horse changed everything. From the moment humans mounted these magnificent animals, we shaped our world with horsepower. Join anthropologist **Niobe Thompson** on a global journey to explore the evolution of horsepower, discover the mysterious origins of our incredible partnership, and witness our enduring love of horses in the present day.

[258 Words]

It's no surprise that when the world's brainiest biped climbed atop the world's greatest land-runner, that union rapidly changed the planet. Ever since the mysterious origins of our extraordinary partnership, horses have shaped the human world. At the speed of a horse, our ancestors conquered distance, toppled empires and knit the pieces back together to create the modern world.

What is it that makes humans and horses so perfect for each other? Why are these huge animals so eager to please? And how have we transformed the wild horse we tamed 6000 years ago into over 400 specialized breeds today?

In 2015, anthropologist **Niobe Thompson** brought the story of our origins to screens around the world with the internationally acclaimed three-part series *The Great Human Odyssey*. Now, he takes us to a new era in the human journey: the moment tamed the horse, and harnessed horsepower.

Join Niobe on an adventure of discovery around the world, and back in time to the first riders. Meet the world's only wild horses, who rely on seals to survive. Join horse nomads in Mongolia on a grueling mid-winter migration. Encounter extraordinary horse breeds in the hottest and coldest places on Earth. Discover why horses have 360-degree vision, and gallop on a single toe. And travel 45 million years back in time, to witness for the first time a perfect 3D reconstruction of the ancestor of horses.

Filmed over 18 months across 3 continents in 4K resolution, featuring drone and helicopter-mounted RED aerials, extensive Phantom slow-motion footage, and a live-recorded symphonic score.

4. [Long Synopsis, 694 words]

We built the world around us with horsepower. But what is it that makes humans and horses so perfect for each other? And how have we transformed the wild horse we tamed 6,000 years ago into over 400 specialized breeds today?

To answer these questions, anthropologist turned filmmaker Niobe Thompson takes viewers on an epic journey across eleven countries on three continents and back in time to the mysterious beginnings of the horse-human relationship. Over three spectacular hours of cutting-edge science and gripping adventure, Thompson explores the evolution of horsepower, discovers how our ancestors tamed the horse, and learns fascinating new insights into the body and mind of this unique animal.

Thompson learns by doing on a global adventure of discovery, living and riding with horse nomads in Arabia, Siberia and Mongolia, travelling into the field with archeologists, geneticists, and horse psychologists, and above all, getting friendly with horses everywhere he goes.

In **Episode 1, "Origins",** Thompson takes us 45 million years back in time to meet Dawn Horse, a creature that led to all horses today. Tiny, forest roaming, vulnerable to predators, and a fruit eater, Dawn Horse's fossil remains are brought to life by evolutionary biologist Martin Fischer and Thompson's team of 3D animators.

How do these huge animals practically fly? Thompson visits some of the fastest, and most valuable, horses on Earth, and learns how elastic energy and a bizarre ability to breath-hold make these some of the fast land-runners in Nature.

Why are horses so willing to please? Through some fascinating experiments, English horse psychologist Karen McComb discovers that horses use 17 different facial

expressions to communicate. (That's one more than dogs, and three more than chimpanzees!)

Thompson spends a day in the Canadian Rockies with "extreme cowboy" Jimmy Anderson, a horse whisperer who has left the old idea of "breaking horses" behind. Anderson doesn't break horses – he starts them. We get to learn his secrets, as he starts an "unbroke" colt.

The domestication of the horse has been a mystery of science for generations. In **Episode 2, "First Riders"**, Thompson travels to Kazakhstan to witness the groundbreaking discovery of a skeleton from the earliest culture ever to tame horses. In this episode, viewers get a set of genuine science scoops: we are the first to learn that our ancestors domesticated the horse twice, and that early riders carried the world's first pandemic of plague to Europe.

To bring the world of the first riders to life, Thompson and his filmmaking team travel back to Kazakhstan to film a series of exceptional dramatic re-enactments. In a year-long collaboration with Kazakh specialists, they rebuilt an entire Stone Age village, cast over 70 actors, filmed huge herds of horses high in the Tien Shan Mountains, and enlisted one of the world's leading horse stunt ensembles, known for their work on *Game of Thrones* and *Marco Polo*.

Returning to the present, Thompson took a dramatic and never-before-filmed journey across Mongolia's Altai Mountains. Joining horse nomads on their grueling winter migration over snow-covered alpine passes, Thompson discovers first-hand how horsepower makes an ancient way of life possible.

In the final **Episode 3, "Chasing the Wind",** Thompson takes viewers to meet some of the most fascinating and unlikely of the world's 400 horse breeds. He meets the Yakutian, at home in the coldest inhabited place on Earth (Siberia). He meets the Arab, a spirited horse at home on the scorching sands of the Arabian Desert. And he encounters the most valuable horses on Earth: elite Thoroughbreds, a breed of super-specialized sprinters descended from one of three 18th-century stallions.

Hard to believe, but there are still a handful of wild horses. On Canada's Sable Island, Thompson visits the only truly wild horses on Earth, now evolving in unexpected ways in their completely human-free world.

In a thrilling white-knuckle climax to the series, viewers discover North America's original extreme sport – the Indian Relay – and follow the fortunes of a young team of Blackfoot horse racers as they make their high-stakes debut at the Calgary Stampede. They remind us, even in the age of machines, some cultures still revolve around horses.

5. Episode Descriptions & Cutlines

Episode 1 – Origins

[Cutline] *A journey around the world and back in time, to discover why horses are humans make perfect partners.*

Explore the fascinating evolutionary journey of Equus, from its tiny forest-dwelling ancestors to the modern horse. Encounter scientists unlocking the genetic basis of horsepower, including the "speed gene". And decode the social gifts of an animal that remembers its friends, communicates with facial expressions, and takes "horseplay" seriously.

Episode 2 – First Riders

[Cutline] *Travel back to the moment humans tamed the horse, and learn how horsepower made history.*

Go back in time and meet the first humans to tame horses. Stand witness as scientists discover a human skeleton in Central Asia, and use DNA to unlock the mystery of the first riders. Learn how the world's first pandemic of plague shaped the world we live in. And ride alongside a family of horse nomads in Mongolia, through summer and winter.

Episode 3 – Chasing the Wind

[Cutline] *How did humans save the wild horse from extinction? And how did we create over 400 specialized breeds today?*

Discover how we saved the wild horse from extinction 6000 years ago, and then shaped these remarkable animals to our every need, creating over 400 breeds today. From horses living in the coldest place on Earth, to elite racetracks, to the wild horses of Sable Island, we find these animals almost everywhere we find people. In a thrilling climax, witness North America's original extreme sport – Indian Relay – and learn why, even in the age of machines, horses are here to stay.

6. "Science Scoops in Equus" – scientific breakthroughs featured in the series

The two-year production window for this series made possible a genuine "science-in-progress" approach, with our cameras following several scientific research projects from beginning to end. We bring our audience into then laboratory and out to the field, showing viewers how new discoveries are changing what we know about the biology and history of the horse. Here are some highlights:

<u>Bringing "Dawn Horse" to Life</u>

The series presents the first realistic animation of the 45million-year old ancestor of the horse.

The ancestors of horses evolved in the Eocene roughly 45m years ago, not long after the extinction of the dinosaurs. Although very good fossils of "Dawn Horse" have

been discovered at a location in Germany called Grube Messel, no accurate reconstruction of its shape and movement has ever been accomplished.

Working with world-renowned animal movement specialist and evolutionary biologist Prof. Martin Fischers (University of Jena) we set out to change this. Fischer and a team of scientific animators scanned a fossil of *Eurohippus messelensis* in one of Europe's largest CT Scan machines, digitally reconstructing each bone, accurately built a digital skeleton using fossil and modern evidence, and finally animated the skeleton in three separate running and walking gaits. Fischer's team then passed their animation data to our Canadian 3D animation team, who were able to bring "Dawn Horse" fully to life as a character in Episode I of *Equus – Story of the Horse*.

Emotional Intelligence in Horses

Animal psychologists in England have discovered that horses use 17 different facial expressions, three more than chimpanzees and one more than dogs.

Horses are intensely social animals, evolved to live in herds and family groups. Now, animal psychologist Prof. Karen McComb (University of Sussex) has created a series of tests to uncover how horses use non-verbal signals to communicate with each other.

McComb has discovered that horses not only use a rich set of facial expressions to communicate their own feelings, they are also exceptionally good at reading the feelings written on human faces. They easily distinguish between friendly and hostile human expressions, and they remember a human face (and its disposition) long after a first meeting: apparently for horses, first impressions really count! As McComb says, "horses are eavesdropping on us all the time."

Discovering the "Speed Gene"

An Irish geneticist has discovered a genetic code in Thoroughbreds that reveals their racing potential.

In the big-money game of horseracing, what would you give for genetic information on the speed of a racehorse? Horse breeders now have access to a genetic test, invented by Irish geneticist Prof. Emmeline Hill (University College Dublin), that predicts at birth whether a Thoroughbred will be a distance, sprint or mixed-distance runner.

Hill's "speed gene" test is now used at top horse training centres to select the most promising Thoroughbreds for training, and to determine which races are best suited to their genetic profile. After commercializing her work on the "speed gene", Hill is now developing new tests that could tell us how eager a horse will be to run (tractability) and what nutrition is best for what racehorse.

Who were the First Riders? Part 1

The domestication of the horse has been a major debate in archaeology for generations. Now, scientists have cracked the mystery.

Scientists have long suspected the earliest domestication of the horse occurred somewhere on the steppes of Central Asia, a territory of unbroken grassland stretching 6500km from Hungary to Mongolia. But exactly where, when and by whom remained an open question.

English archaeologist Alan Outram (University of Exeter), working with chemists at the University of Bristol, tested shards of pottery from a 5500-year old village site in Northern Kazakhstan called Botai. They discovered the remains of horse milk – protein solids – on the surfaces of the pottery. This was final and conclusive evidence that the Botai culture controlled horses, because they must have been tame enough to milk.

At the Botai site, there was evidence of corral structures and the remains of over 365,000 horses: this culture subsisted almost entirely on horsemeat. To hunt and capture speedy wild horses, Prof. Outram believes, the Botai must have been riding tame horses. Combined with proof of horse milking, this evidence has convinced scientists: the Botai were the earliest proven horse riders.

Who were the First Riders? Part 2

The first humans to tame horses should have had the world at their feet. But they fumbled the ball.

Horsepower was such a powerful innovation in the human story, scientists expected that the earliest horse cultures would have become powerful, spreading their language, culture and genes over a large part of the world. But to prove this required direct evidence: DNA from the first riders.

For our series, we collaborated with Kazakh, Danish and English scientists to open the Botai site in Kazakhstan for a major, summer-long excavation. The objective: to find human remains and recover their DNA. Botai was first excavated in 1980, and while several human skeletons were discovered during the Soviet period, all were lost in the collapse of the Soviet Union. Since the invention of ancient DNA analysis techniques over the past decade, no human DNA from Botai had been recovered and sequenced.

Success! In August 2016, our cameras were recording when a complete human skeleton was discovered. Pioneer of ancient DNA analysis, Danish geneticist Prof. Eske Willerslev (University of Copenhagen / University of Cambridge) was present to sample the Botai skeleton and he returned to his Danish lab to begin the analysis.

In the spring of 2018, Willerslev published his results in two articles in the journal *Nature*, but they were the opposite of what he expected. After domesticating wild horses, the Botai culture survived for only a short time, before dying away. The Botai left no genetic trace in their Central Asian homeland.

Humans Domesticated Horses… Twice!

Not only did the Botai tame the horse and then disappear. The horse they tamed wasn't even the ancestor of the modern horse, Equus caballus.

Working at the same site (Botai, in Northern Kazakhstan) was French geneticist Prof. Ludovic Orlando (University of Copenhagen / University of Toulouse). He expected that the horse bones at Botai would belong to the ancestors of all modern horses, the species we call *Equus caballus*. But what he discovered was also a complete surprise.

Publishing his results in the journal *Nature* in late 2017, Orlando found that the first domesticated horse was actually a genetic cousin of modern horses, a wild horse called the Przewalski now living in tiny numbers in Mongolia. These wild horses are aggressive and there is no historic record of their ever being ridden: we thought the Przewalski couldn't be tamed, just like the zebra. We were wrong.

Plague Pandemic – 3000 Years Earlier then the Black Death

The earliest record of plague was in the 6th century AD. But now scientists have discovered evidence of a pandemic 3000 years earlier.

Recently, geneticists studying the Bronze Age in Europe discovered that roughly 4000 years ago, 70-90 percent of the population of northern Europe and the British Isles vanished. The population that replaced them was from the East: horse-riding steppe nomads belonging to the Yamnaya Culture. The Yamnaya introduced to Europe the physical characteristics we associate with Northern Europeans today, as well as the ability to digest milk. What could have caused the almost complete replacement of Europe's pre-existing Neolithic population?

Danish geneticist Prof. Eske Willerslev (University of Copenhagen / University of Cambridge) was convinced that warfare was not the explanation: wars are never this deadly. So he began to scan Bronze Age skeletons across Europe and Central Asia for disease. At just the time period when the Yamnaya were entering Europe, he discovered widespread evidence of plague. In a paper published in the journal *Cell*, Willerslev announced his discovery of a plague pandemic 3000 years before the first recorded event, and linked this disease to the depopulation of Bronze Age Europe and the arrival of the Yamnaya.

Together with the arrival of the domesticated horse, we now know that the plague shaped Europe, and made Europeans who they are today.

High-Speed Evolution – the Case of Arctic Horses

The horses living in the coldest inhabited place on Earth are a curiosity of science.

The coldest place humans live is the Verkhoyansk Mountains of northeastern Siberia. Most of the population is comprised of ethnic Yakuts, and they wouldn't survive without their Yakutian Horses. They migrated to this region only eight centuries ago, when they fled violence in Mongolia during the reign of Chingghis (Genghis) Khan.

The wild ancestors of the horse lived on the cold and windswept Central Asian steppes; horses are born hardy. But the Yakutian Horse survives winter temperatures that fall to -50 Centigrade for weeks at a time; the coldest temperature on record is – 72 C.

French geneticist Prof. Ludovic Orlando (University of Copenhagen / University of Toulouse) was curious to see how Yakutian horses had evolved to cope with these extreme temperatures. He discovered that, apart from their extremely thick coat of hair and their stocky build, Yakutians have developed a form of "standing hibernation". These horses lower their metabolic rate during the coldest weather and enter a form of semi-hibernation.

High-Speed Evolution – the Case of Sable Island Horses

The world's only truly wild horses live on Canada's Sable Island. It's a perfect natural laboratory for studying evolution.

Sable Island's population of roughly 500 horses has been living on this remote crescent of sand in the North Atlantic for at least 40 horse generations. Although descended from domesticated horses abandoned or shipwrecked in the 19th century, these horses receive no care from humans today. This makes them the only truly wild population of horses on Earth (the wild Mongolian Przewalski is a different species of *equid*).

Canadian population biologist Prof. Philip McLoughlin (University of Saskatchewan) calls Sable Island a perfect natural laboratory, because he can track every horse from birth to death. Over a decade of study, he has discovered how the horses are changing in response to their environment. With no natural predators, they do not startle and run like typical wild horses. In this way, they save precious energy they would otherwise use fleeing from danger. They are becoming smaller, a well-known phenomenon among mammals we call the "island effect". And their pasterns – the length of bone above their hooves – has shortened, making them slower runners but also less likely to break a leg on the steep sand dunes.

8. Biographical Information, Scientists and Experts (by episode)

Episode I, *Origins*

Jim Anderson

Anderson is a recognized horsemanship expert and horse trainer, and winner of the world's foremost colt starting competition, the Road to the Horse (2014), in Lexington, Kentucky. He has won the Canadian Supreme Reining Futurity three times, as well as the Cowboy Up Challenge at the 2016 Calgary Stampede. He teaches horsemanship at clinics across North America with his wife Andrea Anderson through his company Higher Horsemanship.

Dr. Claudia Feh

A Swiss biologist and conservation scientist, Feh has spent more than 40 years observing free-living horses, establishing herself as a world expert on their behaviour. Feh raised the world's first natural herd of Przewalski horses in France, before reintroducing the first of two groups of 12 horses to the Mongolia steppes in September 2004. She is currently the Reintroduction Director for Association Takh, the organization she founded to facilitate the return of Przewalksi horses to Mongolia.

Prof. Martin S. Fischer

Fischer is is a German zoologist, evolutionary biologist, and movement researcher. Fischer has been Professor of Special Zoology and Evolutionary Biology at the Friedrich Schiller University since 1993. At Jena, he is Chair of Special Zoology and Evolutionary Biology and Director of the eponymous institute and the Phyletic Museum. Fischer is the founder of modern fluoroscopy or X-ray cinematography, and is a world-renowned expert in the study of animal locomotion.

Dr. David Lambert

A veterinary scientist and founder of Equine Analysis Systems, Lambert is considered a global leader in the sports physiology of equestrian and racehorses. Since doctoral studies at Cornell University, he has spent the last 30 years advising leading horse owners and trainers in North America and Europe. He worked with the United States Equestrian Team. Lambert is a Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgery and a Member of the American Association of Equine Practitioners.

Prof. Karen McComb

McComb is Professor of Animal Behaviour and Cognition in the Department of Psychology at the University of Sussex, UK. She studies the cognitive ability and the expression of emotion and intention in mammals, including in dogs, elephants and horses. In 2005, she published the book, *Vocal Communication Networks in Large Terrestrial Mammals* (Cambridge University Press).

Episode II

Prof. Eske Willerslev

Joint professor of evolutionary biology at the Universities of Copenhagen and Cambridge, Willerslev is the founding Director for of the Centre for Geogenetics in Copenhagen. He is a global leader in the field of ancient DNA analysis and the study of prehistoric and historic population dynamics. He has led research projects on the peopling of the Americas, the migrations of Arctic peoples, migrations of Polynesians across the South Pacific, the peopling of Australia, and many other related questions.

Prof. Sandra Olsen

Olsen is a former curator at the Smithsonian Institution, and presently Curator in Charge in the Division of Archaeology at the University of Kansas. Olsen was the first western archaeologist to collaborate with Kazakh and Russian scientists at excavations

of Botai Culture settlement sites in northern Kazakhstan, and remains a leading expert on the domestication of horses in the early Bronze Age.

Prof. Ludovic Orlando

Orlando has joint professorship positions at the Centre for Geogenetics at the University of Copenhagen and the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toulouse. One of the world's leading experts on the evolution and genetics of horses, he discovered that horses were domesticated twice (2018), explained how Scythians selected and bred horses (2017), conducted the first genome-wide study of wild horses (2015), and sequences the genomes of all living equine species (2015).

Prof. Alan Outram

Outram is an environmental archaeologist and palaeoeconomist who specialises in zooarchaeology (the analysis of archaeological animal bones and understanding past human/animal relations). Some of his most significant work has been on tracing the domestication of the horse in Central Asia, and studying the development of steppe pastoral societies in Kazakhstan. He is also well known as a specialist in bone taphonomy, particularly fracture and fragmentation analysis. He led research that discovered horse milk protein solids on pottery remains at Botai, Kazakhstan, which has subsequently been recognized as conclusive proof of the earliest known domestication of horses.

Episode III

Prof. Harold Floss

Floss is a German archaeologist at the University of Tubingen, with a special interest in material culture and art of prehistoric human populations of Europe. When the world-famous wall art was discovered in Chauvet Cave (Ardeche Gorge, France), he was one of a small group of experts who consulted in its conservation and reproduction in at the Pont D'Arc Musem ("Chauve II"). Floss supervises archaeological excavations at a number of sites in France, including at Roche de Solutré.

Prof. Emmeline Hill

An Associate Professor at University College Dublin, Hill is the Irish horse geneticist credited with discovering a genetic signature for speed in horses, a sequence in the myostatin gene that predicts racing stamina and speed in Thoroughbred horses. This discovery has major implications for the value of Thoroughbred racehorses for the global horse breeding industry, and it has led to the invention of genetic tests, which can predict the racing ability of a horse. Hill is the co-founder of Equinome Ltd.

Prof. Philip McLoughlin

McLoughlin is Professor of Biology at the University of Saskatchewan, and leads the McLoughlin Lab in Population Ecology. He studies pure and applied aspects of animal ecology, and has pioneered population ecology studies with the wild horses of Sable

Island. The Sable Island Horse Project has been running on the island and in McLoughlin's lab since 2007.

Allison Red Crow

Great grandson of the legendary Blackfoot Chief Red Crow, who signed Treaty 7 on behalf of his people with the British Crown. Allison is a retired bareback bronc rider, and he ranches cattle and horses on the Bow River at the Siksika First Nation in southern Alberta. He is the leader of the Old Sun Indian Relay team, which competes in traditional First Nations horse race events throughout Western Canada and the Northwest USA.

10. Biographical Information, Key Creative Personnel

Producer, Director & Host, Niobe Thompson

MacLeans calls him "Canada's answer to David Attenborough" and *The Globe & Mail* describes his unique style of adventure-and-science storytelling as "indescribable, but brilliant." Dr. Thompson made the jump from university research to filmmaking a decade ago, and quickly established a reputation for taking his audiences on wild adventures to remote locations, while making a laboratory of his body and mind. For the 2012 documentary, *The Perfect* Runner, he ran Canada's 125-km Death Race as an experiment in human endurance. For the 2015 series *The Great Human Odyssey*, he learned to breath-hold dive in order to hunt with Badjao free-diving nomads. Now, for *Equus – Story of the Horse*, Thompson rides with horse nomads in some of the most extreme environments on Earth, from the Arabian Desert to Mongolia's Altai Mountains to northern Siberia in mid-winter.

The recipient of four Canadian Screen Awards and eleven nominations, his most recent series, *The Great Human Odyssey,* was nominated for an Emmy and won the Canadian Screen Award for "Best Science and Nature". His feature-length documentary *Memento Mori* was the first film in history to capture on screen the death of a patient and the decision of his family to donate his organs.

Thompson earned his PhD from the Scott Polar Research Institute at the University of Cambridge, before founding Clearwater Documentary in 2008. In 2018, he founded a new production company: Handful of Films.

Director of Cinematography, Daron Donahue

Daron Donahue is one of Canada's most decorated documentary cinematographers, the recipient of both Gemini and Canadian Screen Awards for *The Great Human Odyssey* (2015) and *Code Breakers* (2011), as well as three Alberta Film Awards for *The Perfect Runner* (2012), *Code Breakers* (2011) and *Inuit Odyssey* (2009). Daron has over thirty years of experience as an expedition cinematographer, with past shoots in Afghanistan, Siberia, the Arabian Desert, the Kalahari, Papua New Guinea, Easter Island, Arctic Canada, and many other locations. He is currently the Director of Photographer for the 3-part series *Equus – Story of the Horse*. Daron is a member of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

Cinematographer, aAron Munson

aAron Munson has travelled to 25 countries on five continents as one of our senior cinematographers, with Director of Cinematography credits for *The Great Human Odyssey, Equus – Story of the Horse, Boy Nomad, Fast Horse, and Vital Bonds*. One of Canada's most experienced expedition cinematographers, aAron is a multimedia artist, and is his personal installation *Isachsen* is currently in gallery exhibition. His work has taken him from his personal studio, to war zones, high-Arctic weather stations, reindeer nomad camps in Siberia, and the Arabian Desert. aAron's projects tackle extreme human experiences, in documentary and dramatic form.

Editor, Episodes I & III, Brenda Terning

As our longest collaborating editor, Brenda's work has brought us a series of major national and international awards, beginning with *Inuit Odyssey* in 2009 and most recently with the Emmy nominated and Canadian Screen Award winner *The Great Human Odyssey*. One of Canada's leading documentary editors, Brenda received double nominations and a win at the 2017 Canadian Cinema Editor Awards for *Vital Bonds*. Her body of work includes multiple internationally broadcast documentaries, including *Vital Bonds* (CBC, PBS) *Wolverine: Ghost of The Northern Forest* (CBC, NAT GEO), *The Great Human Odyssey* (CBC, PBS) *The Perfect Runner* (CBC, Smithsonian Channel), and *Tipping Point - Age of Oil Sands* (CBC, NHK, Al Jazeera). As an independent filmmaker, Brenda has taken directors' residency at the Canadian Film Centre and the Praxis Centre for screen writing.

Editor, Episodes II, Scott Parker

Scott has 30 years experience editing and directing music videos, commercials television, and in the past decade has focused his talents specifically on documentary work. His flexibility in cutting styles and his strong instincts for story have helped create award-winning, compelling films seen by audiences around the world. He edited the 2010 feature documentary *Broke*, which won the Donald Brittain Award for Social-Political Documentary at the Geminis. Scott is also creating innovative community-engaged films, leveraging his unique background in community work and media. When Scott is not immersed in the filmmaking process, he's usually found roaming some empty quarter of wilderness.

Editor, Episode III, Krystal Moss

Krystal Moss graduated from MacEwan University's Design and Motion Image Program in 2008, and has been passionate about editing and post-production ever since. She joined our team in 2014 for their behind-the-scenes project, "Making of a Film Score", which earned her an AMPIA award for Best Corporate/Promotional Production. *Equus* is Krystal's first major broadcast documentary. When she isn't glued to her computer screen, Krystal is a dance instructor, coach, and performer, specializing in the dances of the Swing Era.

Music Composer & Conductor, Darren Fung

Our first collaboration with Darren led to one of the most successful musical scores of 2015, the Canadian Award Winner for Best Original Music: for *The Great Human*

Odyssey. Alongside filmmaker Niobe Thompson, he is now performing this production for audiences throughout North America with a critically acclaimed live orchestral version. With over 100 composition credits and three Canadian Screen Award nominations, Darren is one of the brightest lights of a new generation of film composers and orchestra conductors. His film scores have been heard at prestigious film festivals around the world, including Toronto, Cannes, and Sundance. With *Equus,* Darren has just created our newest orchestral score, recorded live with members of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and Pro Coro.

Production Manager, Sandra Tober

Sandra Tober is Production Manager and Director of Business Affairs for Handful of Films, with over 20 years of experience in the film industry. A graduate of the University of Alberta, Sandra worked with the renowned natural history filmmaker Albert Karvonen until moving to work with Niobe Thompson in 2009. In addition to managing the operations of Handful of Films, Sandra has served as Production Manager on the company's recent films, including *The Great Human Odyssey* (2015), *The Perfect Runner* (2012), *Code Breakers* (2011), *Tipping Point: The Age of the Oil Sands* (2011) and *Inuit Odyssey* (2009). Sandra sits on the Board of the Documentary Association of Alberta.