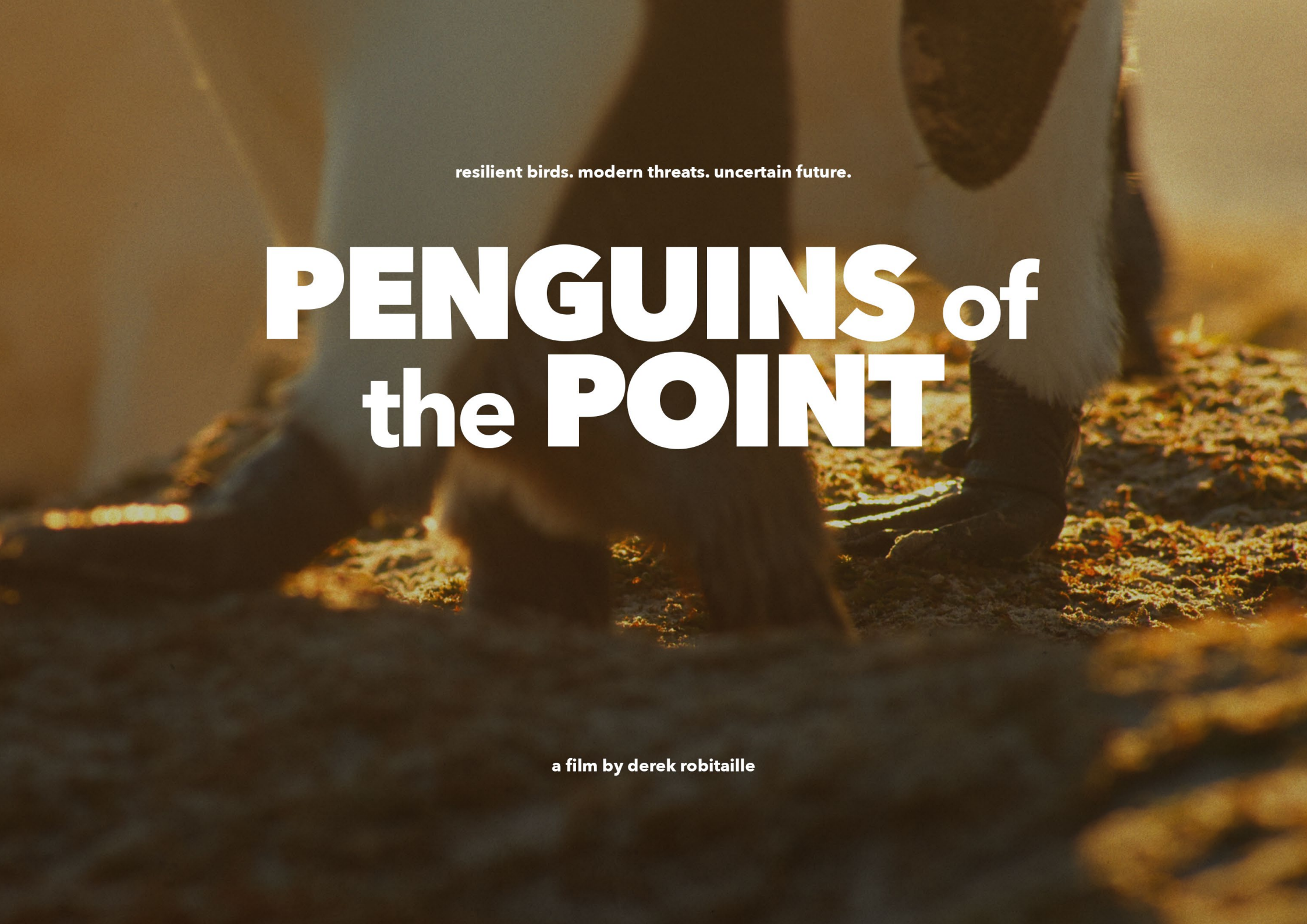
resilient birds. modern threats. uncertain future.
PENGUINS of the POINT
a film by derek robitaille

TECHNICAL

17 minutes | Falkland Islands | English
2.0 Stereo | Aspect Ratio 2:1

Camera:
Blackmagic Cinema Camera 6K (Full Frame)

Resolution:
4K DCI

Lenses:
DZO Vespid Prime 21, 75mm T2.1
Red Pro Prime 300mm T2.9

Subtitles available in:
Spanish | Korean | Serbo-Croatian

"It is estimated that foraging distances will become so great, that 70% of the world's king penguin population could be lost by the end of the century."

SYNOPSIS

Penguins of the Point is an intimate short nature documentary offering a glimpse into the daily lives of King, Gentoo, and Magellanic penguins at Volunteer Point in the Falkland Islands.

Beyond the familiar seasonal rhythms of breeding and molting, the film explores three pressing threats to the colony's survival: climate change, commercial overfishing, and avian influenza. Rather than relying on sensationalism, the documentary takes a measured, evidence-based approach to examining how human activity and warming oceans are reshaping the delicate balance of life in one of the world's most remote ecosystems.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

My goal with Penguins of the Point was to offer an intimate, humorous, and educational glimpse into the daily lives of the penguins at Volunteer Point. From natural predation, life cycles, and modern threats like climate change, commercial fishing, and avian flu, I aimed to create a narrative that resonates emotionally and educates viewers of all ages. The future of these remarkable birds is uncertain, and this film seeks to deepen understanding while inspiring urgency around their conservation.

The last time I visited the Falkland Islands was in 2019, while working in the shore excursions department for Holland America Line. During that time, I managed a couple of day trips to Volunteer Point and always envied those fortunate enough to stay at the nearby house, just steps from the wildlife. In early 2024, I reached out to Derek Petterson, one of the wardens of the property, to inquire about any remaining availability for October. With some luck, I secured five nights, despite the location being fully booked for the next three years. Derek and Trudi were exceptional hosts, and I highly recommend staying there if you ever get the chance.

My days on-site were long, but rewarding. Each morning began at 4:30 AM to catch the sunrise and early wildlife activity. I'd return for breakfast around 8:30, head back out with a packed lunch by 9:30, and stay out until dinner at 7:30 PM. Afterward, I backed up footage and took time to reflect on the day. I was incredibly fortunate with the weather—clear skies, no rain, and only one particularly windy day that made shooting with a long lens a little frustrating.

With each passing day, I became more attuned to the penguins' behaviors and patterns, allowing me to anticipate movements and better position myself for the next shot.

At the same time, the pressure of having only a few days to film everything often left me feeling torn between patience and urgency. To stay focused, I developed a loose shooting plan. Mornings typically began with a hike up the hill to the king penguin rookery, where I could assess the action and decide how to structure the rest of my day. One morning I stayed on the beach. The next, I followed and observed the king penguins on their long march to the other end of the beach. On yet another, I focused entirely on the rookery itself. Those early hours helped shape the rest of my daily shooting strategy.

Wildlife and weather are both unpredictable, which is why time and patience are essential, sometimes just to capture a single meaningful moment. Penguins of the Point is the result of those moments, strung together through observation, persistence, and an enduring passion for wildlife, documentary storytelling, and the belief that education through film can lead to action.

Volunteer House

BIOGRAPHY

Derek Robitaille is a photographer and cinematographer based in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, with a passion for nature and travel. After four years working aboard cruise ships and the rare privilege of visiting all seven continents, he honed his craft through extensive travels, drawing inspiration from landscapes, cultures, and wildlife. Though new to filmmaking, Derek has gained experience in documentary and corporate storytelling, particularly within Indigenous communities across Canada, and most recently received an award for his debut production, Penguins of the Point, at the 2025 Wildlife Conservation Film Festival.

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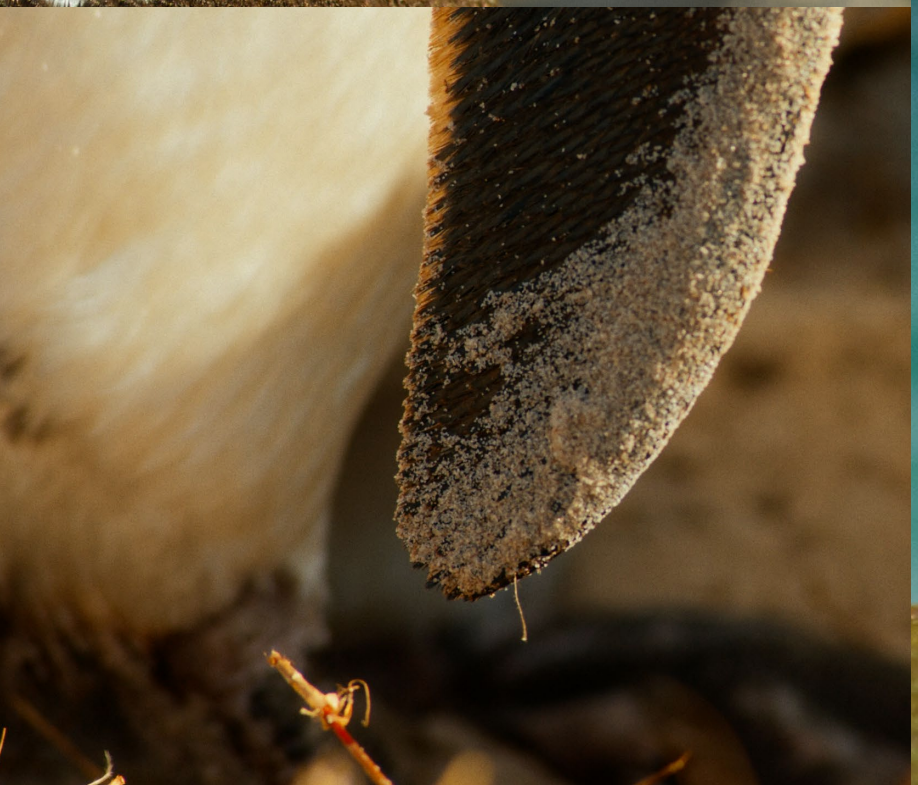

"Studies by Falklands Conservation has suggested that a shortage of food when adults are feeding chicks, has very much led to a low survival rate."

FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

2025

Wildlife Conservation Film Festival
Winner, Birds
Honorable Mention, Best Short Film

International Film Festival The Hague
Runner Up, Climate/Environment/Wildlife

Animalis Fabula Film Festival
Outstanding Nature Film

Nature Without Borders International Film Festival
Outstanding Achievement

British Columbia Environmental Film Festival
Finalist

Wild and Free Film Festival
Official Selection

SHORT to the Point
Official Selection

2026

Ekotopfilm
Official Selection

Victoria Falls Adventure Film Festival
Official Selection

World Whale Film Festival
Honorable Mention

International Ocean Film Festival
Official Selection

E?! Environmental film festival
Official Selection

Ocean Week Canada
National Tour in partnership with the British Columbia Environmental Film Society

World Oceans Day, Argentina
House of Ushuaia, Buenos Aires
University of Tierra del Fuego, Ushuaia

Korea International Ocean Film Festival
Official Selection

15th International Environmental Film Festival of Chefchaouen
Official Selection

2026

EKOFILM International Environmental Film Festival
Official Selection

Bio Film Festival
Finalist

SunChild International Environmental Festival
Official Selection

NATOURALE Nature & Tourism Festival
Finalist

NatureTrack Film Festival
2026-27 Special Screening Series