



PRESENTS

SALERO

A FILM BY MIKE PLUNKETT



2015 / USA and Bolivia / RT: 76 minutes / Unrated /

Formats: filmed on RED and Canon C300, exhibited on DCP / Aspect Ratio 1.85 theatrical, 1.78 broadcast

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LOGLINE

When the future arrives to Bolivia's Salar de Uyuni, one of the most secluded places on the planet, the destiny of this ancient salt flat is unearthed and one young salt gatherer becomes the last link between the old world and the new.

"There aren't many of us left. We are the sons of this land, and we should be proud."

MOISES CHAMBI YUCRA

SHORT SYNOPSIS

The earth's largest salt flat, Bolivia's Salar de Uyuni, is an otherworldly expanse of white. For generations, the only signs of life have been the *saleros* who harvest salt from its radiant surface. This secluded region is thrust into the future when Bolivia embarks on a plan to extract a precious mineral from the Salar and to build an infrastructure that will connect it to the modernized world. *Salero* is a poetic journey through the eyes of Moises, one of the last remaining salt gatherers, whose story explores how identity is formed by both tradition and progress.

DETAILED SYNOPSIS

Moises Chambi Yucra is a salt gatherer on Bolivia's Salar de Uyuni, the world's largest salt flat. It is a remote and stunning landscape like none other, a day's journey from the capital city, La Paz. Moises calls the Salar "the most peaceful place on earth." For him, being a *salero* is more than a job, it is his inheritance from his forefathers and his legacy for his sons. His work is intensely physical but it feeds his imaginative mind and poetic spirit.

When not on the salt flat with his truck and pickaxe, Moises is at home in Colchani, a dusty outpost known as the "gateway to the Salar." He lives among the few who still gather salt the "old-fashioned way" with his wife, Nelvi, and two young sons. Moises and his older brother, Nico, bag truck-loads of salt together in Nico's small-scale processing mill nearby.

When Moises asks his sons if they want to be *saleros*, they say they do, but Nelvi sees their future differently. Family and friends have been migrating to bigger cities in droves and she is studying to be a hairdresser with dreams of leaving, too. When she tries to discuss the idea of moving, Moises' answer is always the same: his work is his life, and his life is here. The city is all about greed, he says, the antithesis of the life he has built.

While salt is precious to Moises, it is not the most valuable mineral the Salar has in store. Industrial powers across the globe predict that our battery-powered future will be fueled by lithium and estimate that nearly half the world's supply is beneath the Salar's salt crust. If it can be extracted, experts say, it will make Bolivia "the Saudi Arabia of the 21st century."

Moises watches as President Evo Morales arrives on the Salar to herald his blueprint for Bolivia's new destiny. He plans to build a lithium industry without interference from other nations – a historic departure from Bolivia's legacy of natural resource exploitation by foreigners. Morales is Bolivia's first indigenous president and is a proponent of nationalized economic progress. The government-run COMIBOL (La Corporación Minera de Bolivia) will begin its plan by building a pilot lithium extraction operation and plant. A thoughtful and businesslike man named Marcelo Castro Romero is put in charge of making it happen.

Marcelo reaches his desert post and gets to work on this tremendous undertaking. The challenges are substantial: the salt traps his trucks like quicksand and anything his team needs they must build. Undaunted, Marcelo is enchanted by the Salar's boundless possibilities and the opportunity for his country. He progresses from surveying the land to excavating

evaporation pools, and from drafting blueprints to erecting factory walls, as a global spotlight is trained on his work. “I am creating a family between man, science, and the landscape,” he says. There is only one direction: forward. As the years pass in Colchani, Moises and Nico observe the harbingers of change all around them: new roads, a cell tower, an international airport. Driven by the lithium effort, the new infrastructure will make taking salt to market easy, but Nico forecasts that it will also speed the decline of salt prices. The tremors of progress do not deter Moises, who only works harder to increase his salt output. Nico soon leaves his brother’s side to start a tourist shop selling traditional crafts instead.

It is not long before Marcelo and his team are celebrating their first harvest of lithium carbonate, salt prices are at an all time low, and throngs of tourists flood Colchani. Moises must finally face the possibility of his own obsolescence and pursue a new path. In his heart, he is still a *salero*, but now he must discover what lies beyond the only way of life he has ever known.

“How could we write a poem about this? How could we describe it in a stanza, this place that would astonish the great poets and unsettle the great scientists?”

MARCELO CASTRO ROMERO

DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT FROM MIKE PLUNKETT

My initial decision to go to the Salar de Uyuni was purely an impulse. I read an intriguing article about the untapped lithium reserves beneath the salt flat, and how Bolivia was poised for historic change. But it was the images of the landscape itself that drew me there. I needed to experience this captivating place of endless, glimmering salt, before its total transformation.

As a storyteller I’m fascinated by places, and the power they have to shape the identities of the people who live in them. I was excited by the idea of creating a story around this mysterious place, where the Salar itself would be a central character.

I connected with Jean Friedman-Rudovsky, a freelance journalist and fixer living in Bolivia, and together we ventured down to the vast salt flat. Standing out on the Salar for the first time is a strange feeling. It’s like stepping out of a boat at sea and being able to walk on the surface of the water. There’s nothing for hundreds of miles, except for one sound: the rhythmic digging and scraping of the *saleros* at work, which, at a distance, sounds like the ticking of a clock.

I felt compelled to meet the salt gatherers, these people who had a daily, tactile relationship to the earth. For days, Jean and I were a pair of awkward *gringos*, wandering around in the blinding landscape, sharing coca leaves with the *saleros* in exchange for conversation. That’s how I met Moises.

His thoughtful, poetic way of describing his life, and how it had been shaped by the Salar was so moving. He seemed to embody the soul of this remote corner of the world, and to speak with its voice. It didn’t take long to discover that he was known as the most dedicated *salero*, working before the sun came up when no one else was around. His sense of purpose and his intimate connection to the earth was unlike anything I had witnessed before. It felt like a lifestyle from a previous age, one that technology has since erased from the modern human experience. Moises believed, unwaveringly, that his life as a salt gatherer would be passed on to his sons and carried on for generations. I identified with his vigorous passion for his work, which, in a way, is an art form. The longer we spoke the more I became consumed with curiosity about his life and his outlook on the world. Would he have to say goodbye to everything he loved?

Two weeks later, I returned to the Salar with audio equipment to record Moises’ thoughts and dreams, and to begin to discover how to tell his story. Mere hours after I arrived, the local communities erected a blockade and set fire to the train line to protest the government’s failure to build a new road. They sealed off all modes of transportation and I found myself trapped on Moises’ side of the blockade. What was originally planned as a few hours of conversation turned into six days of close interaction with Moises and his family. I recorded nearly twelve hours of voice-over, where Moises spoke

not only of his personal experience, but also had remarkable insights about the world at large, and events far beyond his small town of Colchani. Much more than the voice of one man, or of one region, he spoke to a timely, collective experience. By the time the blockade lifted we had begun a conversation that would develop over five years, and ultimately become the film *Salero*.

In the years that followed, the narrative concept evolved far beyond what I had imagined. At the outset, I anticipated a story of external conflict would unfold. I expected to bear witness to a traditional way of life as it was uprooted, cast aside, and replaced with modern industry. However, what came increasingly into focus was the internal, emotional journey of a man, as he came to terms with leaving behind his identity.

As he would work each day on the Salar, and I on making the film, it was a shared effort to preserve what would otherwise be lost to history. From this, as if unearthed from the Salar itself, the universal questions of our endeavour came to light. How does our connection to place define who we are? What does progress give us, and what does it take away? What can we preserve in a world of constant change?

“There are still hidden places full of mystery, where man hasn’t made his mark yet.”

MOISES

PRODUCTION NOTES

With the voice of Moises as its heart, filming *Salero* called for a storytelling approach that would further transport the viewer into this man’s world. To achieve this, it was important to Director Mike Plunkett to balance documenting real lives and situations with stylized cinematic and narrative techniques. The distinctive landscapes of the Salar region served not just as the backdrop, but a central force of the story.

Mike describes the location as “a giant canvas that light would paint differently at different times of day, portraying a huge range of emotional and aesthetic qualities.” To capture the Salar’s breathtaking starkness, its staggering scale, and the awe Moises felt there, the filmmakers shot across different seasons and times of day. They captured footage by flying over in a two-person aircraft, rigging the camera on Moises’ truck as it sped across the flat, and skimming the Salar’s hypnotizing hexagons from a choreographed dolly. They filmed the sky’s many faces by panning patiently across the horizon as the sun dipped down at the end of the day, and recording time-lapse footage of the stars overnight. “Even with all these techniques,” says Producer Anna Rose Holmer, “we only show a fraction of the breadth and range of the Salar.”

Moises’ everyday life is blended into this dramatic setting. When Moises is working on the Salar, we hear his reflections on life and the future in introspective voiceover. The rise and fall of his pickaxe form a meditative rhythm, and subtle slow motion distances his thoughts from his movements. The result is an elevated reality that carries both a literal and symbolic weight. Moises digs into the ground, while at the same time, he unearths parts of himself.

In order to revisit the region’s dark history of resource exploitation and collapse, we glide into the past with a haunted quality. A steadicam shot follows Moises past the rusty relics of the forgotten train graveyard in Colchani, then is match-cut to a dolly trip through a tunnel of the Potosí silver mine. It was important to Mike to convey the tremendous significance of the Spanish mining operation. “Carrying on for centuries, it was the largest mineral extraction in the history of the world,” said Mike. “Both Moises and Marcelo spoke about it often, and it loomed large over the local culture. It was the force that shaped Bolivia’s modern history and relationship to natural resources.”

When it came to filming the lithium operation, the team took a vastly different approach at first. “We started by shooting from a distance with a long lens, and remained static on a tripod,” says Mike. “This established COMIBOL as an impersonal, industrial operation. I mistakenly thought Marcelo would be a technocratic character, and began filming him in a colder style than Moises. I thought he would show us he was all about profit.”

But as Mike got to know Marcelo, that changed. Like Mike, Marcelo wasn't from the Salar, but was quickly seduced by it. Marcelo saw the lithium project as the key to improving his country's welfare, and felt a responsibility to contribute to something greater than himself. He was acutely aware of the complexity involved in his work. "He considered it with a poetic and philosophical lens," says Mike, "and he and Moises proved to have similar souls."

"The more we filmed with both men," says Mike, "the more similar the shooting technique became, and an organic quality evolved in our footage of Marcelo and the plant. It was less about establishing this thing going on in the distance, and more about the mutual humanity in both these threads of the story."

"With our own minds, our own hands, our own energy...If we can
produce lithium, we can produce anything."

MARCELO

There were also parallels between the technical and logistical hurdles Marcelo faced getting his operation off the ground and the experience of the *Salero* production team. Shooting on the Salar is not for the faint of heart, and requires being prepared for worst-case variables with all production logistics. There were no paved roads and the team lost count of how many times their van got stuck or blew a tire. Thin air from the high altitude was a further challenge for crew, and tested the limits of the camera's cooling fans.

The dust and salt were a danger to the RED sensor. Any speck on the surface would have ruined it, and the team had to change lenses inside a bag to protect it. Assistant Camera Nick Lindner elaborates, "We shot on various RED camera bodies, Arri Super Speeds and Ultra Prime lenses, that produced gorgeous images, but could not be replaced if damaged. We were constantly encountering environments that were risky for our gear: salt, humidity, rain, mine dust and debris, and there was only one other RED camera body in the country that was, at times, a three-day drive away. Constant vigilance was needed."

"The Salar is a wide-open expanse," says Producer Anna Rose Holmer, "a storm can just roll in, and it's a terrifying wall of dust speeding straight for you. It is very difficult to judge distance, as the only point of reference is the mountains and volcanoes on the Salar's perimeter. The risks of lightning strikes and dust contamination were high, so at any sign of an approaching storm we had to abandon the set-up, even if we had been leveling dolly track for an hour and were ready to take. Sometimes these storms would knock out power for days."

Each trip to the Salar also required the crew to adjust to altitudes of 12,000 feet and higher, and intense physical symptoms. "At first you can't breathe, and your head feels like it's in a vice," remembers Mike. "The salt also dries out every part of your body and causes frequent nose bleeds." The Salar also undergoes dramatic temperature shifts. The salt acts like a giant mirror that reflects sun during the day, and drops below freezing at night.

"On the Salar, it doesn't matter how well you plan your day, you have to roll with the punches," Mike says. "Ultimately, it was better to accept that and seize opportunities to shoot something we weren't planning on. At first it was frustrating, but there were a lot of great discoveries." Mike had a "dream team" camera crew in Director of Photography Andrew David Watson and Lindner.

Bolivian colleagues and crew were essential to discovering and accessing people and locations, and to achieving the desired production value. Mike found his first connection in Jean Friedman-Rudovsky, a media fixer for western media outlets, who lived in La Paz. Jean had introduced Mike to Francisco Quisbert, the leader of a group of salt gatherers and Quinoa farmers, who in turn, lead them to Moises. She had also introduced him to Marcelo.

Marcos Montpellier and Percy Monzon of NCE Transportation were the production's drivers, without whom navigating the disorienting terrain would have been impossible and dangerous. Percy, who was also a climber and photographer,

could look at the mountains in the distance and know which direction to go when the GPS didn't work. "Marcos and Percy are much more than professional drivers," adds Mike. "They built dolly track and were also our grip and electric team."

"This isn't about lithium. It's about this country saying goodbye to the past."

MARCELO

Mike and team completed eight trips to Bolivia between 2008 and 2015. When the project began, the Salar region had been straddling the old world and the new. By the end, it had stepped resolutely into the future. Bolivia's economy was experiencing unprecedented growth and the worldwide demand for lithium was soaring. As resource cultivation and extraction accelerates throughout the country — from lithium to natural gas to soybeans — and the major players of the global economy become increasingly involved, it is expected that relations between Bolivia and more industrialized countries and their investors will thaw.

Whatever transpires, there's no going back. The world captured in *Salero* has already passed into history. As the film makes its way out into the world like a time capsule, Moises enters a new chapter of life. He faces a future he never dreamed possible.

FEATURED PEOPLE AND PLACES

MOISES CHAMBI YUCRA is a *salero* who lives and works on the Salar de Uyuni. Like his parents, Moises and his five siblings were born in Colchani, a small town of several hundred people that borders the Salar. Until recently, Moises worked alongside his wife and brothers in the salt business, carrying forward his family's heritage. Changes in the salt industry and the advent of lithium extraction have shifted the ground under Moises' feet. Today he finds himself contemplating a wave of change that is quickly altering the face of the region. Moises is married to Nelvi and they have two sons, Maykel and Cristian.

NELVI CHAMBI was born in the desert on Bolivia's border with Chile and moved to the small city of Uyuni, about 20 kilometers from Colchani, as a young child. She moved to Colchani when she married Moises. For years, Nelvi has worked alongside Moises on the Salar and in the quinoa fields. Feeling trapped by the small size and remote location of Colchani and looking to better their lives, two years ago she began to study cosmology at a continuing education school in Uyuni. She dreams of leaving Colchani with Moises and their family for a larger town with greater opportunities for their children.

NICO CHAMBI is Moises' older brother. Since childhood, the Chambi brothers (Nico, Moises, Eric, Leo and Nirmo) worked as *saleros*, using Nico's salt processing house to grind and bag their product. In the wake of the tourist influx to the Salar, Nico closed down his salt house to build the Salar's first artesanal craft shop for tourists in 2013. Nico still lives in Colchani and has plans to expand his tourism business to include a salt hotel.

MARCELO CASTRO ROMERO works for COMIBOL (Corporación Minera de Bolivia) and is the chief engineer and head of on-the-ground operations for Bolivia's national lithium operation. He oversaw construction of the Llipi Loma Pilot Plant in Rio Grande on the edge of the Salar de Uyuni, which broke ground in October 2008 and completed in early 2015. The plant was the country's first step in a wide ranging lithium enterprise; plans for nine other processing plants are currently underway. Before joining COMIBOL, Castro worked for Coca-Cola for ten years as an engineer before leaving to pursue work that he felt better served his responsibility to the Bolivian people.

EVO MORALES is the first indigenous president of Bolivia and is popularly referred to as Evo. He took office in 2006 and was re-elected in 2014. On May 10, 2008, Evo initiated the lithium plant project headed by Marcelo Castro Romero. In the film, we see Evo's public Salar appearance on National Tourism Day in September 2013, where he gives a speech about his responsibility in the growing prosperity and newly built infrastructure in the region, including the international airport in Uyuni.

SALAR DE UYUNI (OR SALAR DE TUNUPA) is the world's largest salt flat at 10,582 square kilometers (or 4,086 square miles). It is located in the Daniel Campos Province in Potosí in southwest Bolivia, near the crest of the Andes. It is at an elevation of 3,656 meters (11,995 feet) above sea level. Part of the Altiplano in South America, the Salar was formed as a result of transformations between several prehistoric lakes. It is covered by a few meters of salt crust, which has an extraordinary flatness, with average altitude variation of under one meter across its entire surface. The crust serves as a source of edible salt and covers a pool of brine, which is exceptionally rich in lithium. The Salar is believed to contain fifty to seventy percent of the world's lithium reserves, which is in the early days of being extracted.

COLCHANI is a small town on the edge of the Salar with a population of approximately 600. Oral histories recount that it was founded in the 1940s at the crash site of two trains carrying mined silver. The burgeoning tourism industry has now dubbed it "The Gateway to the Salar," and there has been an influx of travelers from all over the world. Colchani is the only place where there is still a salt industry harvesting and processing salt from the Salar de Uyuni, though most of the *saleros* have abandoned the trade for quinoa farming which is more risky but more profitable, or to work in the tourism economy. At the height of the salt industry here, tens of thousands of tons of salt were processed annually. The town is also home to the salt cooperative, which regulates the industry and method by which the *saleros* harvest salt. Until relatively recently, *saleros* were only allowed to use hand tools.

COMIBOL (LA CORPORACIÓN MINERA DE BOLIVIA) is the Bolivian state agency that manages the country's interests in mining concessions and metallurgical and industrial plants through joint ventures, and through leases and service agreements with private entities. It is not a mine operator, but COMIBOL has eighteen projects related to exploration, prospecting and mine development, including the carrying out of lithium exploration on the Salar de Uyuni. In 2015, COMIBOL secured a loan of \$622 million from the Bolivian Central Bank towards building an industrial-scale lithium processing plant at the Uyuni salt flats, as part of the second stage of the national lithium development project. The next stage is the construction of a large battery plant. "Bolivia's goal is to have the largest lithium industry in the world in La Palca. Our obligation is to add value to our natural resources for future generations," Evo Morales said at the plant's inauguration ceremony.

CREDITS

Directed by	Mike Plunkett
Produced by	Anna Rose Holmer, Andrew Goldman, Mike Plunkett
Executive Producers	Philipp Engelhorn, Michael Raisler, Paul Mezey
Co-Producers	Noah Block-Harley, Aaron Rabin
Composer	Adam Bryanbaum Wiltzie
Director of Photography	Andrew David Watson
Sound Designer	Tom Paul
Edited by	Andrew Blackwell, Pax Wasserman
Featuring	Moises Chambi Yucra, Nelvi Chambi, Marcelo Castro Romero

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ABOUT THE PRODUCTION COMPANY

Cinereach is a film foundation and production company that champions vital stories, artfully told. It offers adaptive financial and creative support that frees the filmmaking process from systemic barriers and commercial pressures to make way for innovative work. Cinereach seeks projects and collaborators that can offer audiences new experiences and understanding, stimulate the imagination, and grapple meaningfully with the complexities of our time. Since 2006, Cinereach has supported close to 200 films globally, including *The Diary of a Teenage Girl*, *Evolution of a Criminal*, *Cutie and the Boxer*, *It Felt Like Love*, and *Pariah*. In addition to *Salero*, recent Cinereach-produced films include *Teenage*, *The Cold Lands* and *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, which was nominated for four Academy Awards including Best Picture. Cinereach is a founding partner of Sundance Institute's Transparency Project, and a non-profit ally of Sundance #ArtistServices. **CINEREACH.ORG**.

FILMMAKER BIOS

MIKE PLUNKETT (DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER) is a New York-based director, writer and editor for film and television. His short films have been shown at the Sundance Film Festival, the Queens Museum, the Director's Guild of America, and aired on PBS. *Salero* is his first documentary feature film and has garnered awards from The MacArthur Foundation, Tribeca Film Institute, San Francisco Film Society, and New York State Council for the Arts, among others.

ANNA ROSE HOLMER (PRODUCER) is one of *Filmmaker Magazine's* "25 New Faces of Independent Film 2015." Her narrative directorial debut, *The Fits* (Venice International Film Festival 2015), is a selection of the Venice Biennale College and the Sundance Institute Editing Intensive Fellowship. She recently produced Jody Lee Lipes *Ballet 422* (Tribeca Film Festival 2014, Magnolia Pictures). With Matt Wolf, Anna co-directed and produced *A Ballet in Sneakers: Jerome Robbins* and *Opus Jazz*, a companion film to *NY Export: Opus Jazz*, (PBS Great Performances/Dance in America) which was recognized with the Emerging Visions Audience Award at SXSW 2010. Anna's first documentary feature, *Twelve Ways to Sunday*, was one of ten films to participate in IFP's 2009 Documentary Filmmaker Lab and premiered at Rooftop Films in 2010. Anna is credited with her maiden name, Anna Farrell, for work created before July 2012.

ANDREW GOLDMAN (PRODUCER) is the head of production at Cinereach. Prior to Cinereach, Andrew worked alongside producer Paul Mezey at the independent production company Journeyman Pictures, the company behind the Academy Award nominated films *Half Nelson* and *Maria Full of Grace*.

PHILIPP ENGELHORN (EXECUTIVE PRODUCER) founded and serves as the Executive Director of the film foundation and not-for-profit production company, Cinereach. Philipp is a member of the Board of Directors of Synergos, a non-profit dedicated to eliminating global poverty and social injustice. He also serves on the boards of the Independent Filmmaker Project (IFP) and Artists Public Domain, and is a Trustee of the Sundance Institute. Originally from Germany, Philipp attended NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and is currently based in New York City.

MICHAEL RAISLER (EXECUTIVE PRODUCER) is Co-founder and Creative Director of Cinereach and works closely with Philipp Engelhorn to manage all day-to-day aspects of the organization and to define Cinereach's programmatic trajectory. Michael is an executive producer of Cinereach productions *Beasts of the Southern Wild* and *Teenage*, and is currently producing a documentary about the musician M.I.A.

PAUL MEZEY (EXECUTIVE PRODUCER) is a New York-based independent producer, founder of Journeyman Pictures, and Producer in Residence at Cinereach. Mr. Mezey has produced a number of critically acclaimed films including *Maria Full of Grace*, which received a 2005 Academy Award Nomination for Best Actress and *Half Nelson* starring Ryan Gosling, which received a 2007 Academy Award Nomination for Best Actor. Recent projects include Benh Zeitlin's *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (Cinereach), David Riker's *The Girl* starring Abbie Cornish, Tom Gilroy's *The Cold Lands*, and Joshua Marston's *The Forgiveness of Blood*, which won the Silver Bear for Best Screenplay at the 2011 Berlin Film Festival. His other films include: Mike Cahill's *Another Earth*, Ryan Fleck & Anna Boden's baseball odyssey *Sugar*; Sophie Barthes' feature debut *Cold Souls* starring Paul Giamatti; Azazel Jacobs' *Momma's Man*; Jim McKay's *Angel Rodriguez*, *Everyday People* and *Our Song*; Tom Gilroy's *Spring Forward* starring Ned Beatty and Liev Schreiber; David

Riker's *The City (La Ciudad)*; Mandy Stein's Mississippi Blues documentary *You See Me Laughin'*; and *The Ballad Of Ramblin' Jack* directed by Aiyana Elliott (winner of the Artistic Achievement Award for documentary film at the 2000 Sundance Film Festival).

NOAH HARLEY (CO-PRODUCER) is a writer, translator, and musician living in Queens, New York. He has written for *Babbel Magazine*, Carnegie Hall, and numerous art museums in Germany and Spain. He is currently writing and producing a feature-length documentary about Mariela Castro, the daughter of Cuban president Raul Castro. When he is not writing articles or producing videos, he roams the eastern coast of the United States with his band, *The Horse-Eyed Men*.

AARON RABIN (CO-PRODUCER) graduated NYU Tisch after his thesis film, *This Light Rains*, received the Wasserman Awards for Best Picture and Screenplay. Previous winners include Spike Lee and Ang Lee. Since then, Aaron has developed projects alongside producers such as Edward R. Pressman (*Badlands*, *Wall Street*), Paul Brooks (*My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, *Pitch Perfect*), and Mark Johnson (*Rain Main*, *Breaking Bad*). Recently, Aaron completed writing and directing a series of projects under the tutelage of Steven Soderbergh. He is currently adapting Gregg Olsen's true crime novel *Starvation Heights* as a feature film.

ADAM BRYANBAUM WILTZIE (COMPOSER) Adam Bryanbaum Wiltzie is a composer and former child tennis prodigy. Although he may be best known for founding the seminal ambient classical projects *Stars of the Lid*, and *A Winged Victory for the Sullen*, he also has recorded, played, and worked as a live sound engineer for famed artists such as *The Flaming Lips*, *Mercury Rev*, *Iron and Wine*, and *Sparklehorse*. He has also composed music for films such as *Transformers: Dark of the Moon*, *Like Crazy*, *Breathe In*, and *Submission*, and collaborated with Johann Johannsson on the Golden Globe winning *Theory of Everything* soundtrack and on the soundtrack to resident Royal Ballet choreographer Wayne McGregor's new long dance piece *Atomos*.

ANDREW DAVID WATSON (CINEMATOGRAPHY) Andrew David Watson is a New York based Cinematographer with an emphasis on creative nonfiction and commercial projects. His past work includes editorial projects for *The New Yorker* and *New York Times*, broadcast specials for the *History Channel* and commercial work for top agencies such as Ogilvy, Grey & KBS+. Andrew has shot projects on five continents, over 25 countries and more than 40 states and in nearly all conditions imaginable.

TOM PAUL (SOUND DESIGNER) is an Emmy Award winning re-recording mixer and a highly regarded sound designer. A New York City native, Tom got his start as a boom operator in 1988, moving on to production mixing in 1991. Some notable titles from his early years in production sound include: *Trust*, *The Wedding Banquet*, *Eat Drink Man Woman*, *Little Odessa*, *Swoon* and *The Yards*. Highlights of his sound design and re-recording credits include the Academy Award winning films *The Fog of War* and *Born Into Brothels*, *Junebug*, *Palindromes*, *The Baxter*, *The King*, and *U2 360* (the largest selling concert DVD of all time). Tom received a Primetime Emmy for outstanding mixing on Joe Berlinger's *Under African Skies*. He also composed and performed original piano music for a Bulgarian film called *Avé*, which was selected for competition in Critic's Week at Cannes 2011. In 2015, Tom worked on *The Wolfpack*, *Cartel Land*, *Doris* (with Sally Field), and *Anesthesia*.

ANDREW BLACKWELL (EDITOR) is a film editor and journalist living in New York City. His documentary work has appeared on *PBS*, *NBC*, the *BBC*, the *New York Times*, and at the Museum of Modern Art. As a journalist, he has written for *GQ*, won an Emmy award for Dan Rather Reports, and published a book, titled *Visit Sunny Chernobyl*, about traveling to the world's most polluted environments.

PAX WASSERMAN (EDITOR) is a film editor and producer with twenty years in features, television and documentaries. In addition to *Salero*, his recent work includes the 2015 Sundance winner *Cartel Land*, as well as *Unlocking the Cage*, the newest film from DA Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus. Other past work includes *Devil's Playground*, *Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me*, the Sally Mann documentary *What Remains*, and *Which Way Home*, which was nominated for an Academy Award in 2009. His fiction work includes Peter Bogdanovich's *She's Funny That Way*, starring Owen Wilson and Jennifer Aniston, and Noah Buschel's directorial debut *Bringing Rain*.