

WHEN THE
**SMOKE
CLEARS**

OFFICIAL PRESS KIT

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO PRESENTS AN ADVANCED LABORATORY FOR VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY PRODUCTION
A FILM BY JAI DHILLON "WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS" EDITED BY VICTORIA LEWIS CINEMATOGRAPHY BY DAN BRUNS AND MARLEY GRIDER AND ELIJA RAMOS
CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCER GEORGIA FOX EXECUTIVE PRODUCER BRIAN BRAZEAL DIRECTED BY JAI DHILLON



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PRESS KIT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Producer's Statements
- 4 Film Synopsis
- 5 Film Crew
- 7 Technical Info
- 8 Cast Voices
- 10 Gallery
- 11 Photos



27 MINUTES
SHORT LENGTH | DOCUMENTARY | 2021
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The Campfire struck a personal note for me. For some time, I was deeply concerned about the increasingly destructive nature of Californian wildfires. Having been an evacuee of the Sycamore Canyon Fire in 1977, the memories were still fresh. Making this film was therefore a personal journey that coincided with an opportunity to speak to the danger and frequency of California's wildfires and their deadly consequences.

Dr. Brian Brazeal, director of the Advanced Laboratory for Visual Anthropology (ALVA), had chosen the Camp Fire as the theme for his class in documentary film-making. Working with a team of students provided the chance to speak not only to the event, but also to another vital part of the Camp Fire experience: the emerging sense of community resulting from the fire and its aftermath.

Although devastating, the Camp Fire revealed the enormous outpouring of support and generosity by the citizens of Butte County and even nation-wide. More importantly, facing the overwhelming task in assessing the damage and rebuilding Paradise, the Camp Fire spoke to the power of human resilience and pride of place for a community that could have easily turned its back and walked away. But for the many who stayed, their story serves as a testament to hope and faith in community and the future, unknowable, but fully anticipated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

SYNOPSIS

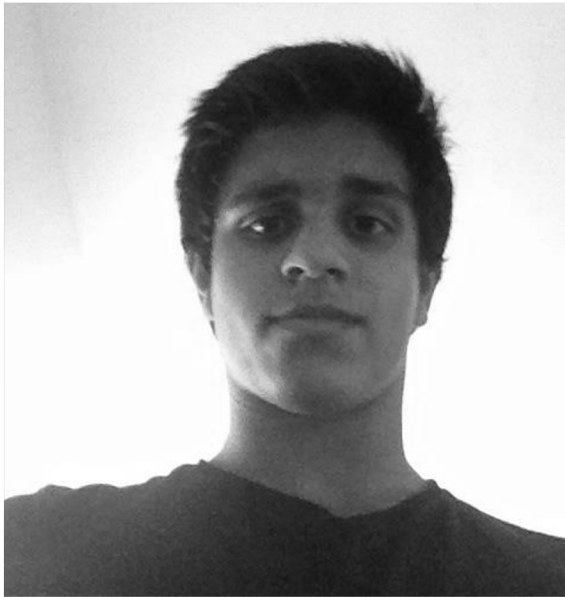
A black and white photograph showing the aftermath of a disaster. In the foreground, there is a large pile of debris, including twisted metal and charred wood. In the background, a building with a gabled roof and corrugated metal siding is partially visible, appearing damaged. The scene is set against a backdrop of bare trees, suggesting a winter or late autumn setting.

Short Synopsis

When the Smoke Clears chronicles the Camp Fire from its inception on November 8, 2018, to the aftermath almost two years later. The film focuses on the town of Paradise, interviewing residents about their reactions and impressions of the fire, its devastation, and impact on their lives. Although heartbreaking at times, the film reveals the resilience and hope of its residents as they rebuild their community in this Northern California town.

Long Synopsis

In the early morning hours of November 8, 2018, as the residents of the Northern California town of Paradise were getting ready for the day, a strange saucer-shaped cloud appeared on the horizon. Some were concerned, others unaware until the event disrupted their lives in what seemed like an instant. A wildfire in Pulga some 25 miles away quickly raged out of control like a runaway train jumping its tracks, heading toward Paradise, giving residents only a short time to escape. As bumper to bumper traffic poured out of Paradise and nearby Magalia into Chico, flames engulfed both sides of the highway as people feared for their lives. Twenty-four hours later, much of Paradise was burnt to the ground, and almost 20,000 residents were displaced, not knowing whether their homes were still standing. When the Smoke Clears follows the fire from its inception to its aftermath almost two years later. Interviews with residents and community leaders chronicle their initial reactions to the fire, the shock of displacement and loss, and their hope and resilience in the rebuilding of this close-knit community.



JAI DHILLON
DIRECTOR

Jai Dhillon is an anthropology major at California State University of Chico. He lives in Temecula, California. Though Jai has previous filmmaking experience, this was the first PBS length documentary that he has been part of. He directed a team of two shooters and one editor to make this film.



GEORGIA FOX
PRODUCER

Georgia Fox is a regional Emmy award winning producer and an historical archaeologist teaching at California State University of Chico. There, she heads the museum studies program and the Valene L. Smith Museum of Archaeology. She is currently chair of the Anthropology Department.



DANIEL BRUNS
CINEMATOGRAPHER

Daniel Bruns is a regional Emmy award winning documentary filmmaker. He works at the Advanced Laboratory for Visual Anthropology at the California State University of Chico. There, he has helped to make 12 films for PBS broadcast.

FILM CREW



FILM CREW

MARLEY GRIDER **CINEMATOGRAPHER**

Marley Grider is an anthropology student at California State University of Chico. She is originally from Los Olivos, California.

ELIJA RAMOS **CINEMATOGRAPHER**

Elija Ramos is an anthropology student at California State University of Chico. She has sought to enhance her natural interests in human culture and the variability of social behavior. She has also designed and installed an AAM standard museum exhibit for the Valene L. Smith Museum of Anthropology at CSU, Chico.

VICTORIA LEWIS **EDITOR**

Victoria Lewis is an anthropology student at California State University of Chico.



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The Camp Fire is the deadliest wildfire in California history

www.census.gov

Total Running Time - 27 minutes

MPAA - Not rated

Aspect Ratio - 16x9, pixel size 4K

3840x2160p

Year - 2021

Website - <https://www.csuchico.edu/al-va/projects/2021/when-the-smoke-clears.shtml>

Production Company - The CSU, Chico

Advanced Laboratory for Visual Anthropology

Television Standard - NTSC

Shooting Format - R3D

Sound Format - Stereo

Framerate - 23.976fps

Subtitles - English

Translation - N/A

IN THEIR OWN WORDS



"I thought oh, no. Maybe it was a wall of fog. But I knew."

LINDA WATKINS-BENNETT
ACTION NOW NEWS ANCHOR



"When about a week and a half later we found out our house was gone. And then we started to hear about how it had happened to thousands of people too. That's when it really hit us."

MIKE FINDLAY
CAMP FIRE VICTIM

IN THEIR OWN WORDS



“I lost hope before this fire, really with people in general. Until this fire, you wouldn’t have known that there was anything wrong. You should see the people who are coming together. It’s phenomenal!”

ALI KNIGHT
MECHOOPDA



“You could hear the ash falling from the sky and bouncing off the roof. It sounded like heavy rain. And then a four inch burnt stick fell in front of my feet and I knew it was time to leave.”

CHARLES BROOKS
CAMP FIRE SURVIVOR

GALLERY



HIGH RESOLUTION STILL



DESIGNED BY
Green Ridge
LANDSCAPING

HIGH RESOLUTION STILL



Psalm 34:18
The Lord is close
to the broken-hearted
and saves those
who are crushed in spirit

...

...

...

HIGH RESOLUTION STILL





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VA
ADVANCED
LABORATORY for
VISUAL
ANTHROPOLOGY

AN ALVA PRODUCTION 2020

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