



EXPANDING HORIZONS

International Programs, The University of Montana, December 2008

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A Collaboration of International Programs & IWFF Blossoms in the Garden City

By Janet Rose, Executive Director/Festival Director
The International Wildlife Film Festival & Media Center



Dr. Alan Rabinowitz Keynote at Montana Island Lodge – May 2008

When you think international, International Programs naturally comes to mind. But a new collaboration between The University of Montana, International Programs and the International Wildlife Film Festival and Media Center is an equally natural idea.

The Film Festival's headquarters at the historic Roxy Theater is just six blocks west of campus. This is where hundreds of UM students, interns and volunteers; professors, and university faculty, participate in the Wildlife Film Festival and Montana CINE Film Festival; access one of the most extensive wildlife and natural history film libraries in the world; attend talks, presentations and workshops, on some of the most pressing international issues facing the world. Now, the relationship between the two institutions will be official.

Every year, filmmakers, educators, scientists and students, who attend IWFF, have a unique opportunity to experience The University of Montana and its incredible resources. On campus, they participate in groundbreaking programs, coordinated and facilitated by both institutions. This new collaboration is blossoming.

Last May, the President's Office and International Programs hosted Alastair Fothergill, executive producer of the most watched television series on earth – Planet Earth. The BBC Producer gave a spectacular film presentation highlighting the best of this breathtaking series. The year prior, Michael Rosenfeld, President of National Geographic Television presented an unforgettable keynote with clips documenting 30 years of wildlife in film and television, sponsored by International Programs and the President's Office.

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This past spring, Dr. Alan Rabinowitz, the world's most renowned wild cat scientist, delivered a spellbinding keynote to IWFF and UM audiences at the Montana Island Lodge on Salmon Lake, another event of this evolving collaboration.

The University of Montana, International Programs and IWFF recently hosted Mani Mirsadeghi, one of Iran's leading wildlife filmmakers. Mirsadeghi and his wife Sadeh, an award-winning writer, met with UM professors and students, sharing a unique perspective on Iran, its people and its wildlife.

The IWFF Awards Gala, an annual celebration of the best films and filmmakers of the year, is co-hosted by International Programs and is the culminating event of the annual, weeklong Film Festival. Award-winners include BBC, National Geographic, Nature, Animal Planet and many others. The Lifetime Achievement Awards, also given at this co-sponsored event recently recognized Dr. George Schaller, whose life's work has helped to save pandas, cheetahs, mountain gorillas and snow leopards, to name only a few of our planet's mega species.

It seems natural then, that the premier wildlife film festival (IWFF), which was first established on The University of Montana campus more than 30 years ago, is again collaborating with the University, to bring leading international figures in media, science, and other fields, to the University campus.

There's a saying — timing is everything, and nowhere could that be truer than with this developing partnership. A chance meeting at an international airport several years ago between Dr. Kia, Dr. Fetz and myself, followed by lengthy discussions of our respective programs, and the seeds were firmly planted for this dynamic collaboration.

It began with one event (IWFF) and one department (International Programs). But both institutions are now committed to an engaging, far-reaching collaboration to bridge Montana with the rest of the world and to share internationally renowned speakers with students, faculty and audiences here in Missoula throughout the year.

An important question was raised recently, during one of our exploratory meetings -how do wildlife issues relate to international issues? It was an incisive question. Perhaps a recent keynote speaker, Dr. Alan Rabinowitz, explained it best. Rabinowitz said that the way scientists approach wildlife conservation today is holistic. Our efforts, he said, incorporate governments, people, cultures, and economic, social and political issues. He told of meetings with presidents, premiers, and tribal and community leaders to establish national parks and preserves. The science of saving wildlife he added was as much about understanding countries and their people as studying wildlife.

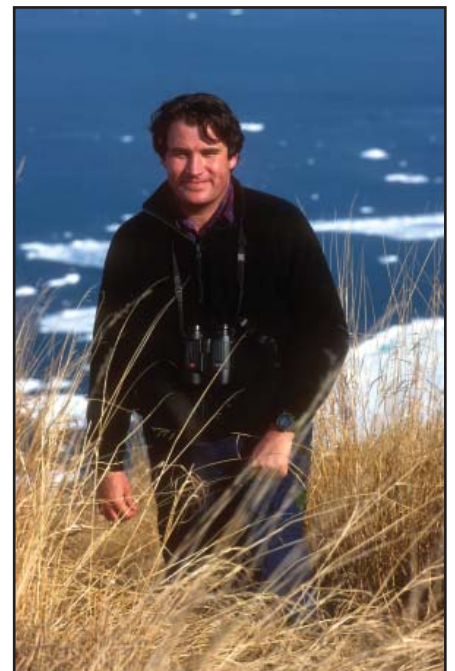
Several years ago, a filmmaker from Kuwait, attended IWFF. He screened his film and gave a riveting talk about filmmaking in the Middle East. Later, at an evening event — the filmmaker brought out and explained the mechanics of a hookah, which he had carried with him all the way from Kuwait. He wanted to share a piece of his culture.

Several years ago, an award winning filmmaker from Iran came to the UM campus and showed never before seen footage from his country. This coming May, two of the world's greatest oceans cinematographers will share their insights and years of footage on the fate of our marine environment. And from Namibia, Dr. Laurie Marker will be at UM and IWFF, to talk about her work in Africa to save the last of the cheetahs, events co-sponsored by The University of Montana.

Thanks to International Programs, Dr. Kia's brilliant foresight and The University of Montana's global interests, concerns and commitment, this new collaboration between UM and IWFF will flourish and our state, our community, our students and our faculty will be the beneficiaries for years to come.



Janet Rose giving Lifetime Achievement Award to George Schaller.



BBC Producer Alastair Fothergill in the field.



Iranian Filmmaker Mani Mirsadeghi receiving an award at IWFF/UM Gala.

Global Grizzlies go to Africa

By Cassandra Abel, President
Global Grizzlies

In the summer of 2008, the Global Grizzlies, a group of 10 UM students, successfully traveled on a life-changing trip to Buluba, Uganda and volunteered in St. Francis Leprosy Hospital and Iganga Babies' Home. In addition to gaining an unforgettable educational experience, students provided community teaching and training, rural village outreach, basic health, nutrition, and hygiene education, and social interaction. All of this helped us to fulfill the vision of the Global Grizzlies. Our vision is a sustainable program to bring together students from a wide range of disciplines and backgrounds to give them the opportunity to apply their individual skills in promoting international awareness and service abroad.

Continuing with this vision, in the summer of 2009, the Global Grizzlies will embark on an international service-learning project near Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. The rural village of Finca la Florida needs volunteers in clinics and orphanages. Students will combine their classroom education and basic medical training with the real-world experience of a lifetime to bring medical aid and whatever help they can to those in need.

The funding required to make the second annual Global Grizzlies project trip a success is quite substantial. We are diligently seeking support from esteemed alumni and friends of The University of Montana. For more information, or to find out how to make a donation, please visit our website at www.globalgrizzlies.org.



Hayley Blackburn, Catheryn Sears, and Katie Mikkelsen, members of the Global Grizzlies, and the children of Nakalanga village near Buluba, Uganda.

Building an International Learned Community on Interdisciplinarity: The MACAS Story

By Bharath Sriraman, Associate Professor, Mathematical Science

For the last five years, I have been heavily involved in an international group focused on interdisciplinary initiatives in humanities, the sciences and arts with mathematics at the center. This group blossomed out of a topics study group on interdisciplinarity at the 10th International Congress on Mathematics Education in Copenhagen (July 2004), after which Prof. Claus Michelsen (Univ. of Southern Denmark), Prof. Astrid Beckmann (Univ of Education, Schwaebisch Gmuend) and I took the initiative to sustain the group and create long term research collaborations. Nearly five years later, MACAS (Mathematics and its Connections to the Arts and Sciences) has slowly mutated into an eclectic but core group consisting of mathematicians, physicists, philosophers, and math, science and art educators. MACAS1 was held in Schwaebisch Gmuend, Germany in 2005, MACAS 2 in Odense, Denmark in 2007 [see Sept 2007 IP newsletter article, p.6], two mini symposia were held in Canada [Calgary, 2007 and Moncton, 2008], and the third biennial symposium has been fully planned for May 2009 at the University of Moncton, New Brunswick, near the beautiful Bay of Fundy. The Bay of Fundy is known all over the world for the highest tides, which generate tidal waves known as the "mascaret" preceding and after spring tides.

Prof. Viktor Freiman (Univ. of Moncton) and I were successful in obtaining a substantial developmental grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, in order to fund the third Symposium, and develop the activities of the group. The symposium will be held May 21-23, 2009 on the campus of the University of Moncton, and will overlap with a concurrent meeting of the Crystal



Organizers of MACAS3 [left to right: Nicole Lirette-Pitre (Moncton), Viktor Freiman (Moncton), Claus Michelsen (Denmark), Bharath Sriraman, Astrid Beckmann (Germany)]

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Atlantique group, which promotes activities at the nexus of science, technology and youth. In addition we have planned a number of Acadian cultural activities during the symposia. UM faculty interested in this symposium are asked to visit the website <http://www.umoncton.ca/freimanv/macas3/>

In case the reader is unaware, the Acadians of Canada are analogous to the Cajuns of Louisiana; both groups are descendants of the original 17th century French settlers deported by the British from the Canadian atlantic provinces in the "Great Expulsion" of 1755.

The plenary talks of MACAS3 will cover the topics of aesthetics (Prof. Nathalie Sinclair, Simon Fraser), interdisciplinarity through the history and philosophy of science (Prof. Tinne Hoff Kjeldsen, Roskilde Univ, Denmark); mathematics in the everyday world (Prof. Wolff-Michael Roth, Univ. of Victoria), and ethnomathematics of the Micmac (Prof. Dave Wagner, Univ. of New Brunswick). In addition a professional development workshop has been planned for local teachers as well as interdisciplinary activities for school children.

The MACAS symposia are restricted to 40 participants and are by invitation only. The group is interested in interdisciplinary research initiatives with implications for practitioners. In other words, one of the core interest of the group is didactical transposition of interdisciplinary content into teaching and learning. The papers in the previous Symposia have covered a wide genre of research domains such as mathematical cognition, modeling, science education, ethnomathematics, mathematical/statistical literacy, curricular and technological initiatives. More specifically

- Modeling activities to foster interdisciplinary projects in the school and university setting.
- Transposing research within the ethnomathematics domain of mathematics education to critical mathematics education and interdisciplinary projects involving mathematics, art and culture.
- Using the push for mathematical and statistical literacy to connect to other subjects via interdisciplinary activities.
- Utilizing technology and new ICT interfaces in linking communities of learners in interdisciplinary activities involving problem solving and mathematical contests.
- Expand into links with classical architecture

Another initiative of this group is to lay the foundations/charter for becoming a professional learned society and sustain itself via foundation grants. MACAS4 will come to Montana in 2011.

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