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FILMS**

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## ***The World of Bernd Heinrich***

### **Film Proposal**

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## ***Proposal***

I am raising money to make a documentary film on one of the world's most insightful and original biologists, Bernd Heinrich. Heinrich has been both a Guggenheim Fellow and a Harvard Fellow, and has been awarded two honorary doctorates. He has authored 16 books on various aspects of the natural world and published numerous scholarly papers, professional book reviews, book chapters, and articles for magazines and newspapers as diverse as the *New York Times*, *Outside* and *Runners World*. In addition to his scholarly work he is a world-class ultramarathoner currently holding the U.S. 100-mile track record.

In a *New York Times* book review, David Quammen wrote that Heinrich "is no ordinary biologist. He's the sort who combines formidable scientific rigor with a sense of irony and an unslaked, boyish enthusiasm for his subject. . . He has a rare ability to embed dense scientific explications within graceful, light-footed nature writing. . . The mind of Bernd Heinrich is a big antic thing, like a raven, and meant to live outdoors."

Heinrich's unique personality is clearly evident in this passage from one of his books, *A Year in the Maine Woods*:

"A fierce restlessness draws me out into the woods. As an excuse, to give this urge legitimacy, I decide to search for golden-crowned kinglets. Are these tiny wraiths still here after the sub-zero temperatures we've had? I suspect they are, but I must see them to be reassured. I wonder how they can stay alive in these woods, all winter long, on a diet of insects gleaned from open branches. Very few people know the birds exist here at all, so I feel like I'm delving into a deep secret. If I can find out how they do it, then I'll know something that nobody in the whole world knows, and that prospect excites me. I do not yet want to form a hypothesis to test, because as soon as you make a hypothesis, you become prejudiced. Your mind slides into a groove, and once it is in that groove, has difficulty noticing anything outside of it. During this time my senses must be sharp; this is the main thing – to be sharp, yet open.

Before going on a hunting expedition, some Indians of Amazonia make themselves feel godlike, with sharpened senses and increased strength, by "taking frog." Their hunter's magic is a potion scraped from the skin of a green frog, *Phyllomedusus bicolor*. I sharpen my own senses and enhance my feeling of well-being by imbibing a brown brew that is liberally served at the Farmington Diner, made from pouring hot water through the ground-up seeds of a tropical shrub. I enhance the flavor by adding a dollop of the udder secretions of a cow, plus the crystallate of the juices of the cane plant.

The film will provide an intimate portrait of Heinrich as he shares his many ideas about the natural world and his approach to studying it. He feels that productive and enjoyable biology starts with a few basic concepts applied to the familiar, and then works "down" into mechanisms, to see how the world "works." As a scientific naturalist, his work begins with the simple act of observation, but eventually he sets up experiments to try to make sense of what he has seen. In an era of deep space probes and quantum

mechanics it may be surprising to many that useful science can still be practiced so near to home and often with little technology.

The film will not just re-examine ground Heinrich has already covered in his writings but will also be a unique record of a year in nature with one of the preeminent naturalists of our time. Filming will be done primarily at Heinrich's home in Vermont and at his cabin in Maine. Due to Heinrich and my living less than ten miles apart we will be able to flexibly document nature's proceedings in a manner that would otherwise be impractical. We will be able to wait for the ideal conditions to best document whatever significant events in nature are occurring.

The style of the film will reflect the way in which Heinrich conducts his scientific experiments. He describes his approach to research as "seeing little opportunities that seem interesting and going from there. . . [I like to] keep mostly low to the ground and then look up now and then." The film will proceed in a similar manner. It will be a collaboration between art and science and will seek to capture not only the beauty of the visible world but also the beauty underlying it.

The film will also show why biology matters and how it can help humans better understand their place in nature. We have done immeasurable harm to the earth with pollution, climate change, resource depletion and species extinction. It is critical that we stop the damage immediately while also striving to undo the harm we've already done. One of our best hopes for the restoration of the earth lies in a mass awakening of humanity to the wonder and beauty of this creation and an appreciation of our place within it. Heinrich, with his profound love of nature, penetrating mind and gift for conveying his insights, is an inspiring figure offering us a way back to a nature we must once again know and love.

The film will be of interest to the large following of Heinrich's readers, students of nature, educators and the general public. It will be 1 to 1 1/2 hours in length and shot on high-definition video. I estimate it will take approximately 50 days of filming and 75 days of editing to complete the film.

Exhibition possibilities include the science shows on PBS and cable television. DVD sales will also be important and advertising will be targeted toward the over 123,000 libraries in the United States. The film will also be entered into a number of film festivals, another effective way of generating publicity and sales.

Your immediate consideration of this proposal will be most appreciated as I would like to begin filming as soon as possible. I welcome your partnership at this exciting time and very much look forward to hearing from you and discussing further how you might support this project.

## **The World of Bernd Heinrich Budget**

	QTY	UNITS	RATE	COST	TOTAL
<b><i>PRODUCTION<sup>1</sup></i></b>					
Cinematographer	50	DAYS	400.00	20000.00	20,000.00
<b><i>TRAVEL</i></b>					
Mileage/Fuel	1750	MILES	0.51	892.50	892.50
<b><i>CAMERA EQUIPMENT<sup>2</sup></i></b>					
Sony PMW-EX1 HD Camera	1	EACH	6449.00	6449.00	
16GB SxS Memory Card	2	EACH	850.00	1700.00	
Mini Laptop Card Reader	1	EACH	600.00	600.00	
Lithium-ion Battery	3	EACH	240.00	720.00	
1.6 Tele Lens Converter	1	EACH	800.00	800.00	
Matte Box	1	EACH	700.00	700.00	
Matte Box Case	1	EACH	115.00	115.00	
Zoom Controller	1	EACH	375.00	375.00	
Glidecam Camera Support	1	EACH	1700.00	1700.00	
Rain Cover	1	EACH	97.00	97.00	
Heated Camera Case	1	EACH	390.00	390.00	13,646.00
<b><i>COMPUTER</i></b>					
Mac Pro 8-Core Computer	1	EACH	3050.00	3050.00	
Memory (4GB)	1	EACH	175.00	175.00	
Windows Virtual Software	1	EACH	75.00	75.00	3300.00
<b><i>EDITING &amp; FINISHING</i></b>					
Editor	75	DAYS	400.00	30000.00	
Narrator	1	ESTIM	500.00	500.00	
Music	1	ESTIM	500.00	500.00	
DVD Disc Design	1	ESTIM	300.00	300.00	
Hard Drives	4	DRIVES	250.00	1000.00	32,300.00
<b><i>MISCELLANEOUS</i></b>					
Library Advertising (for DVD sales)	1	FLAT	2000.00	2000.00	
Film Festival Entry Fees	20	ESTIM	50.00	1000.00	
Copies	1	ESTIM	150.00	150.00	
Postage/Shipping	1	ESTIM	200.00	200.00	3,350.00
<b><i>TOTAL EXPENSES</i></b>					<b>\$73,488.50</b>

## ***Budget Explanation***

<sup>1</sup> The estimate of 50 days of filming is based on the likelihood of being in the field at least one day each week for a year. Close consistent observation of Heinrich and nature is one of the main points of the film. In reality there may be some weeks without any filming while during other weeks there may be filming every day.

<sup>2</sup> The rental cost of just the camera, solid state cards (to which the camera records) and the camera stabilization device would be \$26,000 for 1 day a week for 50 weeks. Due to the necessity of frequent filming over a long period of time there is no way to take advantage of weekly rental rates. In any case having to get equipment from Boston (the nearest rental source) would be impractical due to the need to be ready to film with very little notice.

From the above figures it seems that the most efficient thing to do would be to purchase the equipment outright. For approximately \$17,000 all equipment and computing needs could be met at a savings of at least \$9,000 off of the cost of the camera rental alone.

\*Since I already own sound, lighting, and miscellaneous film equipment I am able to pass on a savings of over \$6,000 to the project.

## Selected Books



*The Summer World*, HarperCollins, forthcoming 2008  
*The Snoring Bird*, HarperCollins, 2007  
*The Geese of Beaver Bog*, HarperCollins, 2004  
*Winter World*, HarperCollins, 2003  
*Why We Run*, HarperCollins, 2001  
*Mind of the Raven*, HarperCollins, 1999  
*The Trees in my Forest*, HarperCollins, 1997  
*A Year in the Maine Woods*, Addison & Wesley, 1994  
*An Owl in the House*, Little, Brown & Co., 1990  
*Bumblebee Economics*, Harvard University Press, 1979

## Praise for Heinrich's Books

### ***Publishers Weekly***

"Arguably today's finest naturalist author...our latter-day Thoreau."

### ***Los Angeles Times Book Review***

"The Snoring Bird...show[s] readers why the work of an observant field biologist still matters."

### ***New York Times Book Review***

"Some of Heinrich's most lyrical writing...the future scientist as a footloose nature boy."

### ***The Washington Post***

"*The Trees In My Forest* is an engaging primer on the complex biological economics of the woods themselves...It's a quiet walk in stately woods...In Heinrich's hands, the lives of trees are as noble and as dramatic as the lives of men."

### ***Wall Street Journal***

"He writes with a graceful lyricism...to attract many general readers of natural history."

### ***New York Times***

"These passionate observations of a place 'where the subtle matters and the spectacular distracts' superbly mix memoir and science."

### **Edward O. Wilson, University Research Professor, Harvard University**

"This is an amazing book by an amazing author. Heinrich is a scientist and naturalist of the first rank, champion ultramarathoner, woodsman of skills seldom seen in modern times, and not least. . . a nature writer of uncommon talent."

### **Jean Craighead George, award-winning author of *Julie of the Wolves***

"...extraordinary...a memoir of fun, daringness and intellectual curiosity, the heartwarming evolution of a modern biologist."

**Elizabeth Marshall Thomas, anthropologist and author of the bestseller *The Hidden Life of Dogs***

"...I couldn't leave its pages...it has joined the small collection of my most favorite books..."

**Tom Seeley, professor of biology, Cornell University**

"I have read Bernd's book and find that it is captivating, for it sheds light not only on the mind of the raven, one of the most intelligent creatures in nature, but also on the mind of Bernd Heinrich, one of the most insightful and original biologists on earth."

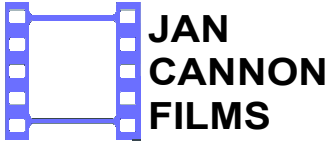
**John Alcock, author of *Sonoran Desert Summer***

"Bernd Heinrich writes with great authority and enthusiasm about the union of curiosity and science. The result is a wonderfully entertaining book about ravens and the excitement of discovery."

**Paul R. Ehrlich, Bing Professor of Population Studies, department of biological sciences, Stanford University**

"Fascinating science and brilliant writing. Bernd Heinrich has done it again."

For more reviews and information on Heinrich's writing go to:  
[www.jancannonfilms.com/books.htm](http://www.jancannonfilms.com/books.htm).



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## JAN CANNON BIOGRAPHY

Jan Cannon began his film career in South Florida in the early 1970s working on feature, commercial, documentary and industrial films. His primary experience was as a cameraperson and editor.

In 1981 he moved to Boston, where he worked for several years as a video editor at Cinemagraphics/Video One and WGBH.

While in Boston he discovered pottery and left filmmaking to become a studio artist for the next twenty years ([www.jancannonpottery.com](http://www.jancannonpottery.com)). During that period he studied ceramics at the Radcliffe Pottery Studio in Somerville, MA, and traveled extensively throughout Asia studying ceramics in China, Korea, Japan and Thailand. He was an artist-in-residence in Calhoun College at Yale University and director of the ceramics program at Creative Arts Workshop in New Haven, Connecticut. In 1993 he established his pottery studio in Charlotte, Vermont. He has served on the board of directors for the Vermont Crafts Council, The Ferrisburgh Artisan's Guild and the Shelburne Art Center.

In 2005, having become interested in sustainability issues, Cannon decided to return to making films. Vermont had many groups and individuals promoting ideas about sustainable living and he felt it was important that those voices be recorded. Observing that many people still didn't understand the challenges posed by over-consumption, climate change and peak oil, he decided that he wanted to be more actively involved in working for positive change in the world, especially by using film to educate and promote ideas of sustainable living.

When Cannon returned to filmmaking, he still had the sensibility of a studio artist. During the time he had been away from filmmaking the technology had changed radically and he was now able to work completely independently in what was traditionally one of the most collaborative of mediums. Working independently allowed him to maintain a low profile and achieve an intimacy on his projects that would otherwise be unachievable with a larger, more traditional filmmaking approach. As a studio artist the expression of beauty was always the primary aim of his work; and it remains so in his work as a filmmaker.

### FILMS:

◆ ***Health & the Hive: A Beekeeper's Journey*** explores the importance of honeybees in our lives. The central figure in the film is Todd Hardie of Honey Garden Apiaries. Hardie, a lifelong beekeeper, is inspired, articulate and knowledgeable about bees. For him, keeping bees and making plant medicines is a series of partnerships with farmers, horticulturalists, queen breeders and many others. The film follows the web of teamwork that makes up Honey Gardens Apiaries. Topics addressed in the film include pollination, queen breeding, disease control, bee venom therapy, organic agriculture and honey-based plant medicine. (53 min.) 2008

◆ ***His Own Master: the Art of William Accorsi*** presents the life and art of William Accorsi. Accorsi has exhibited his outsider art in dozens of museums in the United States and abroad. In addition to his sculptures, paintings and drawings he is also an award winning author/illustrator of ten books including "Apple, Apple, Alligator," "10 Button Book," and "10 Color Book" all by Workman Publishing, New York. The film documents Accorsi at work in his studio as he reflects on a lifetime of art making. (35 min.) 2008

◆ ***Marching for Action on Climate Change: Five Days across Vermont with Bill McKibben and Friends*** is a record of the Labor Day weekend march, in 2006, where hundreds of people joined writers Bill McKibben and John Elder for a five-day march from Ripton to Burlington in an effort to raise public awareness of global warming. (55 min.) 2007

PRAISE FOR THE FILM:

"This film captures the passion, the vision, and the strategic brilliance of an ascendant grassroots climate movement that is only just beginning to transform our country. By chronicling this first step of a new direction for environmental organizing, 'Marching for Action on Climate Change' not only inspires us to believe that we CAN take action up to the task of confronting the climate crisis, it also shows us *how* to create that profound and practical change. Whether you're looking for hope, drama, prophetic words, or practical ideas for how to organize the scale and type of actions that are now called for - this film has it all." -- Jared Duval, National Director, Sierra Student Coalition

◆ ***RADICALLY simple*** presents the work of Jim Merkel, author of *Radical Simplicity* and the former sustainability director at Dartmouth College. The film shows Merkel at work on his homestead as well as doing public presentations and leading workshops on footprinting, permaculture, money and other topics related to sustainability. (35 min.) 2006

PRAISE FOR THE FILM:

"Jim Merkel is a fascinating figure--a kind of pied piper for a challenging but deeply seductive way of living. This film will stick in your mind and in your heart." -- Bill McKibben, author and journalist

◆ ***living lighter, living better*** introduces the Vermont Earth Institute to prospective members. VEI is a statewide non-profit that educates and supports Vermonters in reducing consumption and adopting environmentally sustainable practices in their homes, workplaces and communities. (15 min.) 2006