

THE RESCUE

Directed by E. Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin



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WEBSITE

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THE RESCUE

LOGLINE

THE RESCUE chronicles the enthralling, against-all-odds story that transfixed the world in 2018: the daring rescue of twelve boys and their coach from deep inside a flooded cave in Northern Thailand. Using a wealth of never-before-seen material and exclusive interviews, E. Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin keep viewers on the edge of their seats as they bring alive one of the most perilous and extraordinary rescues in modern times, shining a light on the high-risk world of cave diving, the astounding courage and compassion of the rescuers, and the shared humanity of the international community that united to save the boys.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

THE RESCUE chronicles the enthralling, against-all-odds story that transfixed the world in 2018: the daring rescue of twelve boys and their coach from deep inside a flooded cave in Northern Thailand. Academy Award-winning directors and producers E. Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin keep viewers on the edge of their seats as they use a wealth of never-before-seen material and exclusive interviews to piece together the high stakes mission, highlighting the efforts of the Royal Thai Navy SEALs and US Special Forces and details the expert cave divers' audacious venture to dive the boys to safety. **THE RESCUE** brings alive one of the most perilous and extraordinary rescues in modern times, shining a light on the high-risk world of cave diving, the astounding courage and compassion of the rescuers, and the shared humanity of the international community that united to save the boys.

LONG SYNOPSIS

In the summer of 2018, a short outing after soccer practice became a two-week saga of survival and a story that soon captured the world's attention. Monsoon rains had trapped twelve boys and their coach in a labyrinthian cave in Northern Thailand, and within days thousands of people had descended on the area to try to help. But were the boys even still alive? Anticipation and anguish hung in the air until they were found, trapped in a pitch-black chamber two kilometers deep into the cave. The next question—immediate, obvious, and confounding—was how to get them out.

THE RESCUE, the latest feature documentary from Academy Award-winning directors and producers E. Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin, brings alive one of the most perilous and extraordinary rescues in modern times. With exclusive interviews and a wealth of never-before-seen material, the film takes us into the infamous cave, highlights the efforts of the Royal Thai Navy SEALs and US Special Forces, and details the expert cave divers' audacious venture to dive the boys to safety.

THE RESCUE keeps viewers on the edge of their seats as it shines a light on the high-risk world of cave diving, the astounding courage and compassion of the rescuers, and the shared humanity of the international community that united to save the boys. In the tradition of their earlier films **FREE SOLO** and **MERU**, Vasarhelyi and Chin document a profoundly daring physical feat, laying bare the details of the seemingly impossible rescue.

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

Our films attempt to examine questions that transcend their subject matter. Our film *MERU* is about climbing, but really, it's about friendship and mentorship. Our film *FREE SOLO* is about free soloing a mountain, but really, it's about making intentional decisions about what we want to achieve in life and the sacrifices we make. *THE RESCUE* is about an impossible rescue, but really, it's about moral responsibility. When we have the skill set to rescue someone, do we bear the burden to do so even if we put ourselves at risk? It's also a story about the common humanity that brings us together rather than what divides us.

All these stories are about overcoming insurmountable odds. They feature unexpected heroes. And they invite the audience into specific worlds in a deep and authentic way. In *THE RESCUE*, that's the world of cave diving. Cave diving is very dangerous and very difficult. So why do the cave divers do it? What's their motivation, experience, inspiration? As a climber, Jimmy knows how vital it is that every last detail be right. Our films are defined by that level of exactitude.

We wanted to make this movie for many of the same reasons that the story of the Thai children trapped in the cave captivated the hearts and minds of the world in 2018. It was an against-all-odds story that gave you hope. It brought out the best in people who united from many different nations to help these kids. There's a line in the film that says, "Generosity is the beginning of everything," and that's ultimately what the film is about.

But creating *THE RESCUE* was very challenging. It has all the ingredients of a film you shouldn't or can't make: Everything's pitch black in the cave. It's underwater and muddy. The main event is over; you can't shoot footage of it, and the archival sources are scattered all over the world. And, of course, the pandemic hit. We were scheduled to go to Thailand in spring 2020, but as the shoot neared, it became clear that it was too risky to travel internationally. We did interviews by Zoom and focused on building trust and rapport remotely. We were dealing with different cultures, different languages, different time zones; and there were numerous constraints, but ultimately the story is still moving. The children, the cave divers, the Thai Navy SEALs, the US Special Forces and an entire community all showed us what great courage looks like.

The story of the rescue is filled with numerous coincidences that could be seen as more than coincidence. There's a fairy-tale quality to the story. We couldn't help but be struck by the fact that just as the boys were trapped in place in 2018, the whole world was trapped in place while we were making this movie. And yet, in 2018 the world came together to help the boys. *THE RESCUE* reminds us that amazing things are possible when people have integrity and a sense of responsibility for each other.

Q&A WITH DIRECTORS E. CHAI VASARHELYI & JIMMY CHIN

Q: What drew you to want to make this film?

Chai Vasarhelyi: Not only is it an amazing story in itself, it really brings out the best in people and the absolute morality that defines humans. And the story has only become more poignant because of the political discord in the world and the pandemic.

Jimmy Chin: I've made a career of examining stories about human potential, the strength of the human spirit and what humans are capable of when faced with what seem like insurmountable challenges. That was certainly the case with this story. There were so many people from so many different places and backgrounds and beliefs that had to come together to achieve this impossible goal. The story showcases that it doesn't matter who you are or where you're from, when a child is in danger, it touches everyone. It highlights the common denominator we all share - empathy and humanity. I also loved the confluence of unexpected heroes and a wild rescue all taking place in the extremely dangerous world of cave diving. I knew all these elements would make a compelling film .

What drew you to want to work on this project?

CV: The project had all of the elements that Jimmy and I love best: against all odds, immense suspense, and the opportunity to tell a story that is about something deeper, which in this case was what makes us human and what brings us together rather than what divides us. I really believe there are not enough positive Asian depictions in non-fiction so we were acutely aware that to do this right, we had to be able to listen to the Thai point of view because so much of the story is about how these two very different forces came together to achieve this one goal.

When did you actually start making the film? How did that tie to the emergence of the pandemic?

CV: We began making the film in the late summer, early fall of 2019. We had to do this very large digestion to understand what had happened during the rescue. We immersed ourselves. We were supposed to have our first big shoot in February of 2020, in Chiang Rai and then England. But it became clear that it was too risky and too unknown to leave the country at that point.

I really wanted to go to the cave, I needed to feel it, walk it, understand it. This was the first time that we were making a film where we weren't actually there in person for the event itself, to witness it. That was one of the real challenges.

So much of making a documentary is the relationship that you forge with the material and the film participants. You weren't there for the rescue and then the pandemic made it impossible to move. How did you negotiate that?

CV: When the pandemic hit, we both felt that it was a real priority to keep on working. So a lot of this film is filmed via Zoom with a local crew on the ground, either in England, Australia or Thailand. And it's certainly not the same. The interviews wound up being very, very long, like hours upon hours. It's always

strange to meet someone over Zoom, especially when you're about to forge an intimate relationship, when these people are trusting us with telling their story. We were dealing with different languages, different time zones. The amount of people who had to come together under all of these challenging situations is extraordinary. But all of these people believed in the story and they were willing to contribute.

JC: The pandemic brought up a lot of questions and unknowns for everyone—how you were going to move forward on basic things in life that weren't even related to the film. It certainly became apparent there would be some additional restrictions around what are often already very difficult aspects to documentary filmmaking, whether it's access to the subjects or getting enough time to get to know them. In documentary filmmaking, it's critical to build the relationships and trust that's required between the directors and their participants. You're not going to get the deep, personal answers that you're really looking for unless you have somebody's trust. Often you go and meet with participants multiple times, do multiple interviews in person and have dinner afterwards. It's those moments in between that establish rapport. Sometimes you don't get to that deeper place until your fifth interview. That's such an important part of the process for us. So not having that opportunity weighed heavily on Chai and me.

How did you deal with that?

JC: Through the process we were pleasantly surprised that we were able to get some great interviews virtually, and over time we felt like we were making good headway in terms of building relationships with the film participants. It was really helpful to spend some time with them in the United Kingdom when we were at last able to travel there to film. But I will say we had some credibility going in. Most of the divers had watched *Free Solo* and *Meru*. I felt comfortable going into this film and working with the divers. I have worked with a lot of athletes, adventurers and explorers in really high-stakes situations. I understand why they do it, the kinds of decisions they have to make and the situations they face. Despite the fact that I've never gone cave diving, I think there was a sense of mutual respect and understanding. We practice different crafts but the motivation to wake up every day and get out there to constantly push yourself and your craft is the same. I'll never ask, "Why would you ever go cave diving?" I totally get why they go cave diving. Not the absolute specifics of it but I get why they are obsessed and have shaped their lives around this activity because that's what I've done. Sometimes I need a check-in and Chai tells me, "That's not normal." Our partnership is very useful because there are certain things I understand deeply but might be too close to and it's really important to have the different objective perspective that Chai brings.

How aware were you before this film of cave diving as a thing?

JC: I was aware of cave diving through my peer group at National Geographic. Most of the photographers are highly specialized in a specific area of work. Whether it is conflict or mountain or microbiology or wildlife photography, everybody is at the top of their field. Technically they are highly accomplished in their fields as well. I knew of a few underwater photographers who dived and even a few who specialized in cave diving. I understood that it was highly technical and that cave diving was considered the most dangerous discipline within diving. Normally when you're diving, if something goes wrong, you can work

toward the surface. In cave diving if something goes wrong you can't surface. So your main point of safety is no longer there. One of the top National Geographic cave-diving photographers in the last ten years died, Wesley Skiles. It was a big deal among our community. So yes, I was aware that cave diving is highly technical, very dangerous and takes a lot of experience. A lot of things can go wrong. If there's an accident when you're cave diving, it can be catastrophic with a high likelihood of fatality.

CV: I've been a diver all my life. I know it quite well. But I don't know cave diving. I'm always scared to go into a cave when I'm diving because you don't have a direct route to oxygen. The Thai Navy SEALs are an elite team trained in open-water diving. And the differences between open water and cave diving are profound. In open water you always have a buddy. In cave diving if one person gets in trouble and another person is with them, they're both more likely to die. I didn't know about the subculture. And when it came to the Thai rescue, I didn't know the ins and outs of how difficult the decisions were to make around the excavation of the kids.

When did you first get to England to meet the cave divers in person?

CV: October of 2020. In England we shot reenactments. It felt appropriate to have the real divers demonstrate how they did it. So we did it in the tank and we got to spend time with them. We were testing for COVID every day. I had already done extensive interviews by then but it was great to meet them in person. What they did with the children was incredibly impressive. It really brings home the idea that panic is your worst enemy. These men have trained themselves to stay calm in the most difficult situations. They're the best of the best.

The moment I received my second vaccine I got on an airplane to go to Thailand. For a few reasons. We had heard that the Thai Navy SEALs had footage because the admiral's wife was a filmmaker and I had interviewed her and learned a lot about Thai culture. This was our last shot at trying to do justice to the Thai point of view. I met with her and she agreed to let us use her footage, which was kind of a miracle and a leap of faith on her part. It was also important to me to meet the coach and some of the children. And to see the cave. I did walk to the very end and it was terrifying at first but there was no other way to really understand why thousands of people were needed.

How did you approach telling the Thai side of the story and the rescue?

JC: It's always interesting when you get a story that's been cast around the world. People can experience things completely differently even though they are seeing the same story. Everybody has their perspective and it's our job to explore these various perspectives of the event and try to paint the most accurate picture of what was happening. For a long time, we were working in a vacuum and didn't have the footage from the Thai Navy SEALs. It was really important for us to understand their side of the story.

CV: There was always this rumor that the Thai admiral's wife had footage. I thought maybe there was 90 minutes. There was 87 hours. It was like having the curtain pulled back. This footage of the children and the rescue has never been seen before. It was locked away in a vault.

We got very lucky that these critical moments happened to be filmed. I can't tell you how difficult it was, how hard we worked to get the footage. Anything we could do to make the story more vivid was

important. My favorite part of nonfiction is that you can't write your way out of it. But it was very unclear in the beginning how we would do it.

What was it like using many different sources to craft the narrative?

JC: This was one of the big challenges we faced - just getting the facts straight and figuring out who was a reliable source. Everyone's experiences of the event were so different. Oftentimes people are telling you completely different accounts of the same moment. The perspectives were also cross-cultural. John [one of the English cave divers] is an IT consultant from the UK. He had to work with a highly specialized special forces team from Thailand that normally runs covert operations. They came from two totally different worlds. So taking into account these cultural differences was important for us. All the rescuers had the common goal of saving these children, and seeing how they came together to do that is pretty extraordinary.

What were the biggest challenges in this film for you?

JC: Like any documentary, we want to tell a great accurate story, show multiple perspectives and develop the characters in a way that people can empathize with who they are and what motivates them. But we also believe films should be entertaining, exciting to watch, and moving. It's always difficult to balance all of these objectives. There were quite a few challenges with this film in particular. Just getting the footage from inside the cave and the event has been a multi year struggle. Establishing the scale and complexity of the cave was also difficult. It's hard to imagine what the cave even looks like. We needed to give context to the space they were operating in so we put a lot of time into creating the VFX and 3D maps to show the scale of the cave and the divers. When you see the size of the cave and divers and how far they needed to go, you really understand the danger, complexity and difficulty of the endeavor.

CV: The first fifteen minutes I was in the cave, I was essentially hyperventilating. After that, I found it a great adventure. It's cool, there's a breeze, you're scrambling on rock, in the darkness, in silence. It's quite muddy and slippery. There are chambers that are 75 feet tall but it's pitch-black. It's scary. I tried to visualize what it would be like to be there in the dark for days unable to move because you might fall. I came back very moved and I'm so grateful I had the opportunity to actually go in and then meet the children afterwards and sit and talk with them.

JC: We worked really hard to bring the perspective of the Thai military but we didn't have access to their footage. They are also used to running covert operations and not used to giving up their stories, identities and perspectives. It runs counter to their culture. But it was the Thai Navy SEALs who were running the rescue operation. They had a very difficult task. When you take on a rescue, it's more than just going and rescuing someone. You're also taking on the accountability and safety of the rescuers that had come in from all over the world in a highly dynamic and dangerous situation. They had the unenviable job of managing the global media pressure too. They were being scrutinized by the entire world while being forced to make terrible choices with only horrible options.

What are your favorite moments in the film?

CV: I have a few. I really like how John describes how he puts his emotions in a box and puts them on the shelf because I think it makes it very clear the self-control these divers have to hone to be as good as they are. I also really like how everyone emerged from this with a changed perspective and having found their place in the world. My favorite clip in the film is John's motivational speech to the kids in the cave.

JC: I also have quite a few favorite moments. I love Harry [the Australian cave diver and doctor] and his story. He plays this pivotal role. He's a great character put into an impossible situation. At one point in the story the entire rescue sits on him and he has to concoct this cocktail of drugs to make it happen. There's a lot riding on him. Seeing how he manages this pressure is inspiring. I love the exchange between Derek (Master Sergeant Captain, U.S. Air Force Pararescue Special Warfare Flight Commander) and Rick and John. When Derek asks "What does the impossible look like?" Rick and John explain their idea. Derek responds with "That's a terrible idea." It's a great moment. It would be a great moment in any movie. I love the third act, the whole rescue.

What would you like the audience to take from the film?

JC: I hope people are inspired by the humanity of the global community of rescuers, the courage of the divers and Thai Navy Seals and the bravery of the kids. I want people to come out of the theater asking themselves "Could I ever do that? Would I have made the same choices?" I think the divers really exemplified great moral courage. They didn't have to go back in. I hope people are moved by seeing what great moral courage looks like and how people are able to achieve great things and overcome seemingly insurmountable odds through perseverance and determination.

CV: I think it's the absolute morality of Rick. He felt an absolute obligation to figure out how to save the kids. If only we all did what's fundamentally decent and responsible... that's interesting. It's about the common thread we all share -- about finding your place in the world. We see the divers evolve emotionally. We see their attention to detail and methodology. We cherish that, love it, want to honor and respect it. Truth is so much stronger than fiction.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi (Director, Producer) is an Academy® Award-winning filmmaker. Most recently Vasarhelyi directed and produced “Free Solo,” an intimate, unflinching portrait of rock climber Alex Honnold, which was awarded a BAFTA and the Academy® Award for Best Documentary Feature in 2019. The film also received seven Emmy® awards. Vasarhelyi’s other films as a director include “Meru” (Oscars Shortlist 2016; Sundance Audience Award 2015); “Incorruptible” (Truer Than Fiction Independent Spirit Award 2016); “Youssou N’Dour: I Bring What I Love” (Oscilloscope, 2009), which premiered at the Telluride and Toronto Film Festivals; “A Normal Life” (Tribeca Film Festival, Best Documentary 2003); and “Touba” (SXSW, Special Jury Prize Best Cinematography in 2013).

Vasarhelyi has directed pieces for the *New York Times* Op Docs, Netflix’s design series “Abstract” , ESPN’s “Enhanced” among others. She has received grants from the Sundance Institute, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Bertha Britdoc, and the National Endowment of the Arts. She is a member of the DGA as well as AMPAS. She holds a B.A. in comparative literature from Princeton University and splits her time between New York City and Jackson Hole, Wyoming, with her husband Jimmy Chin, their daughter, Marina, and son, James.

Jimmy Chin (Director, Producer) is an Academy® Award-winning filmmaker, [National Geographic photographer and professional climber and skier](#). He has led and documented cutting edge expeditions around the world for over 20 years. He has climbed and skied Mount Everest from the summit and made the coveted first ascent of the Shark’s Fin on Mount Meru. His photographs have graced the covers of *National Geographic Magazine* and the *New York Times Magazine*. Jimmy co-produces and co-directs with his wife Chai Vasarhelyi. Their film “Meru” won the Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival in 2015 and was on the 2016 Oscar shortlist for Best Documentary Feature. Their latest documentary "Free Solo" won a BAFTA® and the Academy® Award for Best Documentary Feature in 2019, as well as seven Emmy® awards. Jimmy splits his time between New York City and Jackson Hole, Wyoming, with Chai, their daughter, Marina, and son, James.

John Battsek (Producer) has been responsible for some of the most acclaimed documentaries in recent years, starting with the Academy® Award-winning “One Day In September,” which he conceived and produced. Notable credits include Academy Award®- and BAFTA-winning “Searching For Sugar Man,” Academy Award®-nominated “Restrepo” and “Winter On Fire,” and Emmy®-winning “Manhunt: The Story Of The Hunt For Bin Laden,” “The Tillman Story” and “Forever Pure.” Battsek served as producer on the BAFTA-nominated and Peabody-winning “Listen To Me Marlon” and Grammy nominee “Eric Clapton: Life In 12 Bars.” He also served as executive producer on the BAFTA Award-winning documentaries “The Imposter” and “Hillsborough.” Battsek's most recent credits include the double Emmy® Award-winning “Rising Phoenix,” and critically acclaimed biopics “Belushi,” “Sir Alex Ferguson: Never Give In,” and “Lady Boss: The Jackie Collins Story.” In 2020, Battsek launched his new production company Ventureland. His current productions include a film about the iconic Abbey Road Studios (directed by Mary McCartney) and a biopic on tennis player Boris Becker (directed by Alex Gibney).

PJ van Sandwijk (Producer) is the co-founder of Storyteller Productions alongside screenwriter Michael Lesslie. Storyteller Productions creates a diverse range of premium film and television projects. van Sandwijk most recently produced “Locked Down,” starring Anne Hathaway and Chiwetel Ejiofor, the first

major movie shot during the COVID pandemic; Errol Morris' "American Dharma," and Alex Gibney's "Citizen K." The latter two films both premiered at the Venice Film Festival and were nominated for several major awards. Notable projects originated by Storyteller in active development/production include "Space" with Tom Cruise, Doug Liman and Christopher McQuarrie (the first narrative movie ever shot in space), "Thirteen Lives" with Ron Howard, "Roads to Freedom" with Ridley Scott, Steven Knight and Sir Antony Beevor, "Heist" with Guy Ritchie (a major action franchise), "Ferrari" with Michael Mann, an Untitled Project with Kathryn Bigelow, "Mafia" with Ronan Bennett, "Rime" with Rebecca Ferguson, and "The Pigeon Tunnel" with Errol Morris.

Bob Eisenhardt, A.C.E. (Producer/Editor) is an Academy® Award nominee, two-time American Cinema Editors Eddie award winner, and three-time Emmy winner with over sixty films to his credit. Bob edited "Free Solo," the 2019 Academy® Award and BAFTA award winner, for which he received the ACE Eddie for Best Editing - Documentary. Other recent films include "Scotty and the Secret History of Hollywood," HBO's "Everything is Copy: Nora Ephron," Scripted and Unscripted," shown at the 2015 New York Film Festival and Primetime Emmy nominee, and "Restless Creature: Wendy Whelan," shown at the 2016 New York Film Festival. "Meru" won the Audience Award at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival, the Cinema Eye Audience Award and was the opening night selection at the Full Frame Film Festival. Other recent films include "Wagner's Dream," which received an Emmy nomination for editing, "Valentino: The Last Emperor," "Dixie Chicks: Shut Up & Sing," and "Living Emergency: Stories of Doctors Without Borders."

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

Senior Master Sergeant Derek P. Anderson (Operations Superintendent, 57th Rescue Squadron) serves as the sole pararescueman and superintendent of the weapons and tactics program at the 31st Fighter Wing, U.S. Air Force European Command, Aviano AB, Italy. SMSgt Anderson is also a senior subject matter expert for the 57th Rescue Squadron concerning the training and deployment of special operators in Global Access, Precision Strike and Personnel Recovery mission sets.

SMSgt Anderson enlisted in the Air Force in July of 2003. His career began in Air Combat Command conducting Combat Search and Rescue Operations in the Horn of Africa. Since then, he has had several combat deployments within Central Command and has also participated in multiple USSOCOM joint exercises/exchanges with partner allies in over 20 countries in every major geographic command. Sgt Anderson is also a member of the Language Enabled Airman Program and speaks 3 languages. Throughout his career he has attained several advanced qualifications to include being a master parachutist, military free-fall jump master and combat diving supervisor. SMSgt Anderson has held leadership positions at the 6th Special Operations Squadron as a Combat Aviation Adviser, as a team leader for his element at the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron and as Troop Chief at the 320th Special Tactics Squadron. He has also instructed numerous pipeline students at the Special Tactics Training Squadron during his time at Hurlburt Field, FL. Most recently, SMSgt Anderson acted as the Senior Enlisted leader during a humanitarian aid operation which resulted in the successful rescue of 12 school age boys and their soccer coach from a cave in Northern Thailand.

Colonel Bhak Loharjun (Chief Medical Officer of the Royal Thai Army)

Dr. Bhak Loharjun was born in Bangkok, Thailand and graduated from Phramongkutklo College of Medicine, the only military medical institute in the country. After completing numerous special combat courses served as a doctor of the Thai-Iraqi Force and later as a doctor for the Peace Corps in three southern border provinces. Among the special combat courses completed, the Underwater Destroyer Course (SEALs) along with the Aquatic Recon Course undoubtedly helped prepare Dr. Loharjun for the rescue mission in Chiang Rai province in 2018. Bhak was one of the divers to volunteer his skills and expertise to reach the trapped Wild Boars and their coach, and after the rescue was complete and successful, he was appointed by the Medical Council of the Board of Directors to be a Chief Medical Officer for the Special Warfare Command of the Thai Royal Army where he currently holds office.

“Amp” Bangngoen (Nurse)

Siriporn Bangngoen (Amp) (**Nurse**) set off to explore the world after completing her education, living in Thailand, Bahrain, New Zealand and Australia. Eventually returning to Thailand, Amp became the Head of Care at a large care facility in Chiang Mai. While on holiday in the United Kingdom, she met cave diver Rick Stanton. Upon returning to her home in Chiang Rai, Amp was horrified to hear that a group of boys were trapped in a cave close to her village. Amp volunteered to assist with the rescue and worked as a translator alongside Rick Stanton.

Thanet Natisri (Groundwater Expert/Water Management Consultant, Executive Producer) is a founding member and CEO of American Groundwater Solutions, LLC as well the founder and CEO of WATERFORCE CO., LTD. and co-owner of Thai D Classic Thai Cuisine in Marion, Illinois. Thanet has been involved in charitable acts of service with water management and environmental care globally for several years. Beginning in 2014, Thanet and his team kickstarted the National Groundwater Bank Project in Thailand, which has helped to lift thousands of people from poverty. He has also aided in the ongoing effort to solve the issue of PM 2.5 air pollution around Thailand. In 2019 Thanet was in the frontlines of responders to the floods of Alexander County, Illinois and expanded the Groundwater Bank Project to Myanmar, India, and Uganda. When the pandemic began in 2020, Thanet designed and built mobile negative pressure units for patients in Thailand. He also worked with the Thai Ministry of Education developing water management courses for community colleges.

Rick Stanton MBE GM (Retired Firefighter, Cave Diver) served as a firefighter with the West Midlands Fire Service, but it was his “hobby” of cave-diving that consumed his time. He has quietly spent forty years exploring caves around the world, steadily building his unique skill set as he defied limits, pushed boundaries, and discovered parts of the earth that had never been seen before. Along the way, he and his dive partners became the ones to call for the most challenging cave rescue and recovery missions. In 2018, he found himself on the world’s stage when he and John discovered the Wild Boars soccer team alive, trapped inside Thailand’s flooded Tham Luang cave. Rick needed to rely on all of the experiences and friendships he’d gathered along the way as he carefully planned and then successfully executed one of the most noteworthy rescue missions on record.

John Volanthen (IT Consultant, Cave Diver) is a world record-holding British caver and cave diver who has been involved in cave exploration over the last two decades. John began caving with the scouts at the age of 14 and has been at the forefront of cave exploration since combining disciplines of both caving

and diving. Where suitable equipment was not available, John has innovated, designed, and built breathing and mapping systems to safely explore new ground. John has been involved in a number of cave rescue incidents throughout the world including the Tham Luang cave rescue for which he was named one of *TIME* magazine's "Heroes of the Year." He lives in Bristol in the United Kingdom and runs ultra marathons in his "spare" time.

Dr. Richard "Harry" Harris SC OAM (Cave Diver) has worked in anaesthesia, diving, and aeromedical retrieval medicine in Adelaide, South Australia. His passion for cave diving goes back to the 1980s and has taken him to the corners of the globe in search of new adventures. Harry and his colleagues have explored caves to 245m depth and shipwrecks to over 150m, in dives lasting over 16 hours. He is an enthusiastic underwater photographer and videographer who is now also building a career in documentary films. Harry has a professional and voluntary interest in search and rescue operations, establishing the first sump rescue training course in Australasia. The 2018 Thailand cave rescue was an opportunity to put this training to work. In 2018 he received the Star of Courage, Australia's second-highest civilian award for bravery, and the Medal of the Order of Australia for his role in the Thailand cave rescue.

Captain Mitch Torrel (U.S. Air Force Special Tactics Officer) is a U.S. Air Force Special Tactics Officer assigned to the 24th Special Operations Wing under Air Force Special Operations Command, tasked with leading the Air Force's special operations ground force in executing global access, precision strike, and personnel recovery operations. He has supported both combat and humanitarian operations across the Pacific, Middle East, and Africa. Captain Torrel was called upon to lead a humanitarian aid response team in Tham Luang, Thailand. As the operations officer responsible for coordination between military, civilian, and diplomatic entities, Torrel helped implement a rescue plan across cultural and linguistic divides. In 2019 he was named the Special Tactics of the Year for Air Force Special Operations Command.



CREDITS - NOT FINAL

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Executive Producers
MICHAEL LESSLIE
MARIE SAVARE
ANDREW RUHEMANN

Executive Producers
CAROLYN BERNSTEIN
RYAN HARRINGTON

Cinematography By
DAVID KATZNELSON BSC DFF
IAN SEABROOK
PICHA SRISANSANEE

Music by
DANIEL PEMBERTON

Music Supervisor



TRACY McKNIGHT

Associate Editor
SIMONA FERRARI

Co-Producer
CHLOE MAMELOK

Associate Producer
CLAUDIA PHAA ROWE

Line Producer
JENNIE AMIAS

Art Bridge Artists Association
Chiang Rai, Thailand
SONGDEJ THIPTHONG

With the special collaboration of the Thai Navy SEALs Foundation

The faces of active duty Thai special forces
were blurred to protect their identities.

Some scenes were reenacted by the
actual participants.

Featuring		
LT. GEN. BANCHA DURIYAPUNT	RADM. APAKORN YOUKONGKAEW	TIK WORANAN
VERN UNSWORTH	WEERASAK KOWSURAT	RICK STANTON
JOHN VOLANTHEN	CONNOR ROE	DR. RICHARD HARRIS
AMP BANGNOEN	RUENGRIT CHANGKWANYUEN	SURATIN CHAICHOOMPHU
BEN SVASTI	P.O. SAMAN GUNAN	WALEEPORN GUNAN
MSGT. DEREK ANDERSON	JOSH BRATCHLEY	JIM WARNY
BEN REYMEANTS	SOMSAK KANAKAM	COL. SINGHANAT LOSUYA
GEN. ANUPONG PAOCHINDA	COL. BHAK LOHARJUN	DR. FIONA HARRIS
CHRIS JEWELL	JASON MALLINSON	DR. CRAIG CHALLEN
CAPT. MITCH TORREL	MIKKO PAASI	JOSH MORRIS
	CAPT. ANAN SURAWAN	

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	ADAM KURNITZ
	AACHAREE UNGSRIWONG

Additional Cinematography	MIKE CARLING
	CATHERINE GOLDSCHMIDT
	JULIO LUZQUINOS
	BEN PRITCHARD
	WILL PUGH
	DAVE RUTHERFORD
	MARCUS TAMMINEN

Shoot Producer TIBO TRAVERS
 Focus Pullers LUKE CAIRNS
 MAIYA ROSE



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Digital Imaging Technicians JESSE BADER
ROSS CRAIG
ANTHONY DIAS
PHILLIP MOZOROV

Stills Photography JACK HEXTALL
ZORA KUETTNER

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JEAN ASH	DOMINIQUE CHEUNG	SHAWN CHADWICK
SEAN CONNOR	ALEX DIAS	GIACOMO GEX
PHIL HUMPHRIES	BETH JOHN	KASH KHAN
RAY MEERE	ANGUS MITCHELL	DEAN MORRISH
THOMAS PATRICK	COREY PIPER	CHARLENE ROLFE
ROBYN SKEAD	JOE STEEL	DEAN THOMPSON
	PER TINGLEFF	

Sound Recordists	
MAT ADAMS	MARK ATKINSON
SEB BLACH	CHRIS BOX
PETE GILL	GLEN GOODEN
ALAN HILL	KARL HUI
OLLY ASTLES-JONES	JASON QUINN
TIM PITOT	TOM SMITH
EDWIN WEISS	CARLOS ZUNIGA

Lighting	
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TRACY KARAM	TOM LA MOTTE
NIKOLL LEKAJ	AARON KEATING
RON SHANE	ED SMITH
RIGGING	IAN HILLS
	ALEX HORNE
TECHNICAL ASSISTANT	LAURI KÄRKKÄINEN

Supervising Sound Editor	DEBORAH WALLACH
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Re-Recording Mixer	RIC SCHNUPP, C.A.S.
Mix Re-Recordist	TYLER NEWHOUSE
Post Production Mix Facility Producer	EMILY GILMER
Post Production Mix Facility	SOUNDTRACK FILM AND TELEVISION



DOCUMENTARY FILMS

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Foley Artist	NUNO BENTO
Foley Mixer	JOAO GALVO
Sound Editor	MARIUSZ GLABINSKI

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 Music Editor BEN SMITHERS
 Music Preparation ALEX GRUZ

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Post Producer	DEVORAH DEVRIES
Post Production Supervisors	KELSIE COLLINS
	ANN M. GRAY
Post Coordinators	SIMON BISHOP
	KELSIE HOFFMAN

Assistant Editors

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 JON CROOK ADAM DASHI
 DAN ERNST DANNY SCHWARTZ
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 JEREMIAH BRUCKART

“BELIEVE”

Written by ALOE BLACC, GARY GO, DANIEL PEMBERTON

Performed by ALOE BLACC

Produced by DANIEL PEMBERTON & GARY GO

Published by ALOE BLACC PUBLISHING, INC, TCR MUSIC LTD., MONCUR ST,
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VFX Supervisor	BJORN WALTERS		

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Cave Model Scans	COMMENDIUM
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	PHISIT KOMOLWANICH		PITI TANTAWEEVONGS
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 TEZO KYUNGDON LEE JO MANSER
 DEAN MARSH DAN MASLEN
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 SOPHIA AUDI

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 HASIT SAVANI MATT SHEREN

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RACHEL FULLERTON CASTING	SALLY KING CASTING
TWO 10 CASTING	UNIVERSAL EXTRAS
Child Actors	NATNADAI BRADWELL
	NAT LAWSON
	TIGER HIRANKRIT
	FELIX ROSEN

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