

# NEWS

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**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ANNOUNCES *BLOOD ON THE WALL* FROM ACADEMY AWARD NOMINEE SEBASTIAN JUNGER AND EMMY WINNER NICK QUESTED TO PREMIERE SEPTEMBER 30 AT 9/8c**

**Feature Documentary Explores How Mexico and Surrounding Region Reached Current State, Influenced by Plight of Human Caravans, Resilient Drug Trafficking and Political Corruption at All Levels**

***BLOOD ON THE WALL* Is Second Project from National Geographic and Filmmakers Junger and Quested, Following 2017 duPont-Winning *Hell on Earth: The Fall of Syria and the Rise of ISIS***

**Emmy Award-Nominated Short Documentary, *THE NIGHTCRAWLERS*, from Director Alexander A. Mora will Premiere Commercial-Free Following *BLOOD ON THE WALL***

**(WASHINGTON, D.C. – AUG. 3, 2020)** National Geographic Documentary Films announced today that the new feature documentary, ***BLOOD ON THE WALL***, from Academy Award® nominee and best-selling author, journalist and filmmaker Sebastian Junger and Emmy®-winning filmmaker Nick Quested, will **premiere Wednesday, September 30, at 9/8c on National Geographic**. The film will be followed by the commercial-free Emmy Award-nominated short documentary, ***THE NIGHTCRAWLERS***, from director Alexander A. Mora, which presents an unflinching, verité-style exposé of the deadly battle being waged against the Philippines' drug epidemic and the determined photojournalists chronicling the wave of extrajudicial killings.

With the trademark inside access unique to National Geographic and the filmmakers, ***BLOOD ON THE WALL*** explores the internal and external influences on Mexico as it deals with the key issues of migrant caravans from Central America heading to the U.S., the dangerous but resilient traffickers fueling the cross-border drug trade and how corruption has impacted politics at every level.

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Featuring unprecedented first-person accounts from migrants on the road, farmers, narcos, security enforcers, journalists, presidents and diplomats, **BLOOD ON THE WALL** tells the story of how traffickers, corrupt politicians and well-positioned business interests have seized wealth and power, leaving everyday citizens desperately fighting for survival or needing to flee elsewhere for a better life.

Exploring Mexico's tension with its northern neighbor and the way regional U.S. policies over the past few decades have helped fragment Mexico's political order, the film looks at the ways in which the country has been weighed down by disorder and crime throughout the 21st century.

Closely following a caravan of migrants — some with young children — as they travel from Honduras, Guatemala and other Central American nations across Mexico toward the United States, the film depicts the daily struggles of life on the road without certainty of a better future. The border these migrants are seeking to be granted entry to is the very same that narco-traffickers cross regularly as they move drugs and money back and forth between Mexico and the U.S.

"The issues Mexico faces right now are layered and complex and ultimately intertwined with how the U.S. has approached foreign policy and immigration since the Reagan era. The history and the future of the country and its inhabitants is so bound up in the larger forces at work in the region, it's vital to look at them holistically. We're reaching a juncture in this election year when understanding the socio-political landscape of our neighbors is incredibly important for people before going into a voting booth," said director Sebastian Junger.

"Systemic change is top of mind for a lot of people right now and that conversation needs to include U.S. foreign policies that only enhance the inequities across our southern border, allowing ruthless leaders and cartels to take advantage of people for their personal gain. Humans are remarkably resilient, but when you disenfranchise them, taking away their peace and stability, it can leave them in a very desperate situation. The urgency of tackling these nuanced, extremely complex issues — caravans, cartels and corruption — has never been greater," added director Nick Quested.

Key interviews include:

- **Ludy**, a Honduran teenage girl with no family who joins a caravan heading north.
- **Sara**, her children and grandchildren, from Guatemala who have also joined the caravan to the U.S.
- **Felipe Calderón**, President of Mexico (2006-2012).
- **Arturo Sarukhan**, Mexican Ambassador to the U.S. (2007-2013).
- **Julia Preston**, New York Times Mexico correspondent (1995-2001).
- **Carmen Aristegui**, CNN en Español anchor.
- **Alan Bersin**, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Commissioner (2010-2011).
- **Jack Riley**, Former Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Deputy Director.
- **Jaime López-Aranda**, Latin America policy expert and former Mexican government official.
- **Santiago**, a poppy farmer in Mexico.
- **Ángel Mundo**, Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers' College survivor of the 2014 Iguala mass kidnapping and massacre by local authorities colluding with organized criminals.
- Anonymous drug makers in a Sinaloa Heroin Lab.
- Anonymous drug runners based on the southern U.S. border.

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**BLOOD ON THE WALL** is National Geographic's second collaboration with filmmakers and producing partners Junger and Quested following the 2017 duPont-winning feature documentary **Hell on Earth: The Fall of Syria and the Rise of Isis**.

The announcement follows the success of National Geographic Documentary Films' **The Cave** from Feras Fayyad, which was nominated for a 2020 Academy Award® and four Emmy Awards®. The banner previously released the Oscar, BAFTA and seven-time Emmy Award® winner **Free Solo**; the Sundance Audience Award-winning docs **Sea of Shadows** and **Science Fair**; Emmy®-winning films **LA 92** (also produced by Lightbox) and **Jane**, both of which were included in the top 15 documentaries considered for an Academy Award® in 2017; and duPont-Columbia Award-winning documentary **Hell on Earth**.

An unflinching, vérité-style exposé, **THE NIGHTCRAWLERS** follows a determined group of photojournalists on their mission to chronicle the deadly battle being waged against the Philippines' drug epidemic — and the tragic cost of this brutal crusade. Directed with pulse-pounding intensity by first-time director Alexander A. Mora, the documentary trails Raffy Lerma, a former staff photographer for a prominent newspaper, as he joins forces with a team of bold freelance photojournalists, or "nightcrawlers," who are covering a wave of extrajudicial killings that, by some estimates, has claimed as many as 27,000 lives. With unprecedented access the film also features shocking interviews with members of a mysterious death squad that prowls the city's back alleys in search of people they are paid to kill with impunity.

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#### **About Sebastian Junger**

Sebastian Junger is the New York Times No. 1 best-selling author of "The Perfect Storm," "Fire," "A Death in Belmont," "War" and "Tribe." As an award-winning journalist, a contributing editor to Vanity Fair and a special correspondent at ABC News, he has covered major international news stories around the world and has received both a National Magazine Award and a Peabody Award. Junger is also a documentary filmmaker whose debut film, "Restrepo," a feature-length documentary co-directed with Tim Hetherington, was nominated for an Academy Award and won the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance.

#### **About Nick Quested**

Nick Quested is executive director and owner of Goldcrest Films, where he has built one of the world's premiere documentary brands and won two Emmy® Awards for his work. Quested has produced over 35 films, including Sebastian Junger's "The Last Patrol," "Korengal," the PGA- and two-time Emmy-nominated "Which Way Is the Front Line From Here? The Life and Time of Tim Hetherington" and the Oscar®-nominated "Restrepo." Quested is also an award-winning music video director who has worked with such artists as Dr. Dre, Nas, Puffy, Sting, Master P, Cash Money and Trick Daddy.

#### **About Alexander A. Mora**

Alexander A. Mora is a first-time filmmaker with a background in architecture, policy and the law. Keenly interested in international rights-based advocacy, he was an active member on the board of Yale Law School's Human Rights and Development Journal before directing "The Nightcrawlers." His persistent desire to find greater synergy between his passion for creative storytelling and his dedication to rights-based advocacy led to his first foray into narrative documentary filmmaking.

#### **About National Geographic Documentary Films**

National Geographic Documentary Films is committed to bringing the world premium, feature documentaries that cover timely, provocative and globally relevant stories from the very best documentary filmmakers in the world.

National Geographic Documentary Films is a division of National Geographic Partners, a joint venture between Disney and the National Geographic Society. Furthering knowledge and understanding of our world has been the core purpose of National Geographic for 132 years, and now we are committed to going deeper, pushing boundaries, going further for our consumers ... and reaching millions of people around the world in 172 countries and 43 languages every month as we do it. NGP returns 27% percent of our proceeds to the nonprofit National Geographic Society to fund work in the areas of science, exploration, conservation and education. For more information visit [natgeotv.com](http://natgeotv.com) or [nationalgeographic.com](http://nationalgeographic.com), or find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Pinterest](#).

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