

For Immediate Release

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***Keeper of the Beat: A Woman's Journey into the Heart of Drumming* receives *Runner Up for the Audience Award for Best Documentary* at Mill Valley Film Festival, 2013.**

Keeper of the Beat: A Woman's Journey into the Heart of Drumming is an hour-long documentary on the life and music of Barbara Borden, an acclaimed and pioneering 68-year-old Mill Valley drummer, composer and teacher. It tells her inspiring life-story in eloquent words and toe-tapping music. Filmed on four continents, it was produced and directed by three-time Emmy-Award winner, David L. Brown. The documentary premiered at the 2013 Mill Valley Film Festival where it was honored with a rare third screening and awarded the *Runner-up for the Audience Award for Best Documentary*.

Keeper of the Beat weaves footage from *She Dares to Drum*, Borden's autobiographical "percussion play" and other dynamic performances from the last four decades with interviews of noted artists, students, family and friends who know her and the social history of her times. The film tells the story of a woman whose love of drumming and music gave her courage, [and] inspiration, and the drive to find connectedness within a widening circle of communities throughout the world. We watch the unfolding of Borden's identity as she grows from a little girl in love with drumming to a pioneering woman drummer, a first-class percussionist and a world musician. Archival footage shows her career in performance, her leadership in drumming circles and peace and reconciliation projects, her teaching methods to bring drumming into all areas of life, and her exploration into the deeper cultural and ceremonial dimensions of drumming.

Born into a Jewish immigrant family, Borden was the kid sister of the show business Borden Twins, who performed as a novelty act on TV shows from the 1950s through the '80s. Given a drum set by her sisters, Borden soon established herself as a hotshot "girl drummer," performing at the Hollywood Bowl and in nightclubs in L.A. and San Francisco. Marriage and self-doubt led her to abandon her burgeoning career for "normal life." In the '70s, when the marriage ended, Borden found herself in the middle of the feminist cultural revolution and the robust women's music movement as the drummer in a leading women's jazz band, *Alive!* The documentary captures the electrifying performances of the band with its rapturous audiences. After eight years of international touring, her five-women musical family fell apart, and Barbara once again had to face the conflict between her love of drumming and her doubts about her ability to keep the beat on her own.

Since then, Barbara has become a *drumming diplomat* and citizen of the world. We witness her traveling and drumming in the former Yugoslavia in the midst of civil war and in Zimbabwe at a time of brutal dictatorship and economic collapse. In July 2008, Borden with her band, *Fools Gold*, performed in Abakan, Khakassia, Siberia as part of the Earth Spirit Theatre and Music Festival. The film captures the deep connection Borden developed with Tatiana, a Siberian woman shaman, during a life-changing ten-day eco-shamanism workshop.

Back in the United States, we see her teaching and generating joy with the Redwood Drummers, a group she began in 2001 at The Redwoods, a Mill Valley senior retirement community. We follow the engrossing story of how Borden gave a six-foot heart-shaped drum that had been made especially for her to a woman drummer of the Suquamish tribe -- an act that helped clarify her life purpose as Keeper of the Beat and her ability to use drumming as a unifying tool that can bring about group harmony, greater fellowship, and personal transformation.

A moving theme of the documentary is the importance of passing down the lessons, the love and joy of the music and drumming, to the younger generations. The audience gets to know Borden's protégé, Lotus, from the time Barbara gave her her first drum at age one, captured in precious home movie footage, to her drumming in her teen rock band, *Third Rock*. The documentary concludes with a rousing version of "Sing Sing Sing" by *Barbara Borden's Hearts on Fire Band* that features the now sixteen-year-old Lotus sharing the drum kit with Borden.

Filmmaker David L. Brown Biography.

David L. Brown is an Emmy Award-winning San Francisco documentary filmmaker who has produced, written and directed over 80 productions and 14 broadcast documentaries on social, nuclear, environmental, health, engineering, technology, aging, peace and justice issues. His documentaries have received over 85 international awards, include three Emmy Awards, and have been broadcast on PBS and in sixteen countries.

Recent work includes: ***Running for Jim***, a feature-length documentary on a legendary cross country coach who contracts ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) (*Best Documentary*, Soho International Film Festival, *Audience Award*, Tiburon Film Festival); ***Going the Distance: Journeys of Recovery***, a feature-length documentary on survivors of traumatic brain injury that former ABC News anchor, Bob Woodruff, called "the best film on the subject;" ***The Bridge So Far: A Suspense Story***, a comedic 56-minute documentary on the troubled 16-year history of the new east span of the S.F.-Oakland Bay Bridge that received two Emmy Awards (*Best Documentary* and *Best Graphics and Animation in a Program*) and aired on national PBS; ***Of Wind and Waves: The Life of Woody Brown***; an hour-long profile of legendary 94-year-old surfer, Woody Brown (Emmy nomination for *Best Documentary*, *Inspiration Award* at Mountainfilm in Telluride) that aired on national PBS; ***Seniors for Peace***, (MVFF 2003) a 26-minute portrait of a group of articulate and passionate senior peace activists (average age 85) which aired on national PBS; and ***Surfing for Life***, an inspirational feature documentary on older surfers as models of healthy aging. It aired on PBS, in six countries and received a dozen awards. It was profiled in *The New York Times Magazine*, *Parade Magazine*, on National Public Radio and ABC's *World News Tonight with Peter Jennings*. *The San Francisco Chronicle* called it "a treasure, perhaps the most intelligent treatment of surfing ever captured on film."

Brown teaches Documentary Filmmaking at City College of San Francisco. His website is www.DLBfilms.com. The website for this documentary is www.kobmovie.com