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Director's Statement

WEED & WINE was conceived out of a pursuit of personal pleasure and a deep cultural curiosity. I imagined a cinematic love letter: a lush meditation on two plants whose relationship to people and place is layered and dynamic.

French philosopher Roland Barthes wrote in 1957 about wine as a receptacle of cultural mythology in France—a product rich in symbolism, steeped in and inextricable from French identity. “Wine is felt by the French nation to be a possession which is its very own, just like its three hundred and sixty types of cheese and its culture,” he wrote. “It is a totem-drink, corresponding to the milk of the Dutch cow or the tea ceremonially taken by the British Royal Family.”

So too with cannabis. Located somewhere on the American cultural spectrum between criminal and counter-culture (though headed quickly toward the mainstream), cannabis in the United States is more than a plant, or a medicine, or even a drug. It is the badge of outlaws and outsiders. It is a rebuke of America's Puritan seriousness. It is medicine and spiritual rite, precious and mysterious even as it is mostly ubiquitous. And yet, unlike wine in France, cannabis enjoys no national pride of place, no patriotic reverence. I was drawn to the narrative power inherent in this juxtaposition between weed and wine: two emblematic plants, one honored and protected, the other outlawed.

At the outset, I knew that my “way in” to the stories of weed and wine would be through their growers. The most fun set of research trips I will likely have in my entire career led me to the Jodreys in Humboldt County and the Thibons in the Rhône Valley. Each family lived in its own culture so deeply: they were as much unique products of their land as their plants were. I watched how they brimmed with love, in all its glorious complexity, both for their craft and for each other. And another storyline emerged.

Some families have parents who march off to an office or a shop or a factory each day, and whose children have no intention of—indeed no path to—inheriting a generational vocation. The Jodreys and the Thibons were strikingly different. Like fewer and fewer of us in the 21st century, their relationships and their livelihoods were tightly tethered to their common ancestry and to each other. Heaped on top of the difficult and uncertain work they did as farmers was the work they did as parents and children. That work—in all its pain and beauty—became the overarching story I couldn't ignore.

In the end, I hope WEED & WINE is a reminder that none of us—farmer, consumer, parent, child—is stronger than the cultural contexts of which we are a part. Heritage dramatically impacts how we view the plants we consume. It shapes how we celebrate or marginalize the growers who cultivate them. It determines how we perceive the people we define as farmers and artisans. So too does age, time, culture and circumstances shift our perceptions of parent and child. Of how we will answer the age-old question of whether it is the parents who raise the children, or vice versa, or both. Of independence and interdependence. Of competing and complementary notions of freedom. Of how to grow and flourish in a world rife with uncertainty.

For me, making this film was a lesson in the importance of interrogating and redefining my own understandings of wine, cannabis, farming, and family— thereby perceiving each anew. Perhaps it will also be that for you.

If nothing else, may it be the love letter I first intended. Pour a glass, light a joint, hold closely those you love, and enjoy.

Rebecca Richman Cohen
2019

Logline

Hélène Thibon and her son grow grapes on her family's centuries-old French vineyard, while Kevin Jodrey—a cannabis farmer in California's Humboldt County—schools his son in the artisan culture emerging in his newly legal industry. *WEED & WINE* interweaves their stories, showcasing the ways in which the two very different farmers navigate a common challenge: how to survive on the land?

Synopsis

Continents apart from one another, two farming families aim to reinvent themselves while honoring their roots. One family—a strong-willed French matriarch and the son she raised among her vines—tends a centuries-old, biodynamic vineyard in the South-ern Rhône. Across the ocean in Humboldt, California, another family—a brash father and his more reserved son — carefully manage a state-legal, organic cannabis farm. The feature documen-tary *WEED & WINE* juxtaposes their stories, urging compar-isons and teasing out contradictions between France's revered winemaking traditions and the artisan culture emerging along-side the legal cannabis industry. In the end, the film offers a reflection not only on farming, but on the family bonds that get tended alongside the land.

Film Details

Total Run Time: 89 minutes

Sound: Dolby 5.1

Languages: French & English (with French subtitled in English)

Formats: DCP, Blu-Ray, DVD

Subject Profiles

Hélène Thibon (Hélène)

Hélène Thibon is one of the winemakers at Mas de Libian, a biodynamic wine estate in France's Ardèche region of the Southern Rhone Valley, which has belonged to the Thibon family since 1670. Raised in a family of "peasant scholars," as Hélène describes them, Hélène spent her childhood devouring books in her family's library and caring for the animals on their land. After pursuing studies in viticulture and oenology, she and her husband Alain settled at Mas de Libian to raise their son, Aurélien. Along with her parents, husband, sisters--and now son--she has cultivated organic and biodynamic wine at Las De Libian since 1993.

Aurélien-Nathanaël Thibon-Macagno (Aurélien)

Aurélien is the son of Hélène Thibon and a winemaker at Mas de Libian, an organic wine estate in France's Ardèche region, which has belonged to the Thibon family since 1670. Before returning to his family's land in 2017, Aurélien worked with winemakers in Germany, Switzerland and New Zealand, and interned at Domaine Méo-Camuzet in Burgundy while studying viticulture and oenology in Beaune.

Kevin Jodrey ("Kev")

Kevin Jodrey is an internationally respected cannabis expert known for improving and forwarding the modern cannabis movement. Owner of Humboldt County's Wonderland Nursery and co-founder of *The Ganjier*, Jodrey has been a cannabis cultivator for decades, running his own operations and offering consulting services to the broader community. A frequent speaker on cannabis-related issues, Jodrey is guiding the industry as it transitions to the so-called "Clean Rush": a movement to regenerate the land through cannabis cultivation.

Nocona Jodrey ("Cona")

Cona Jodrey is the son of Kevin Jodrey and helps to manage the family's Wonderland Nursery in Humboldt County, California. When he is not supporting the family's business, he is a multi-time and current US national champion kettleball lifter, whose results in his weight class place him in the world's top-ten kettleball lifters for all competitive lifts.

Interview with H el ene Thibon (English translation)

Translated from the original French by David Beus

How did you meet Rebecca Richman Cohen, director of WEED & WINE? What made you consider her invitation to participate in the film? Why did you ultimately agree to have your story told?

I remember it very well. I was in the car with my dog when my telephone rang and I put it on speaker phone. It was Lauriane from [production company] Faites un Voeux with an offer to participate in the film. She explained the idea of the film: talking about wine, the soil, the connection to *terroir* in parallel with another farmer from America who grows weed. She also told me she felt very honored to be able to work with Rebecca. And I was so taken with the idea that I said yes without really thinking about it. Because in France people think that Ard che is the cannabis d partement after 1968 and the hippies!

Then I had time to reflect, and I thought it would be a beautiful gift to offer future generations. I myself would love to see images of Libian before 1900... And then I returned home and the stress hit. How was I going to tell my family about it? My son was still on the other side of the world and I don't think he was in the mood to think too much, just as he was coming home and his carefree years were ending, he trusted me and said yes. But my parents...ouch! I went in on tiptoe, saying that nothing had been decided, but that it would be nice to leave images for our great-great grandchildren. Then Rebecca came. Despite the language barrier, something happened, I can't define it exactly, but a sense of confidence, of calm: it was her, everything will work out. And the story could begin.

Documentary filmmaking can be a deeply intimate process; as a subject, you are letting another person (and sometimes a crew!) into your life, your home, your family, your daily rhythms. How did you come to trust Rebecca with your story? Was it difficult to be open and honest about your challenges or uncertainties? Did any part of the filmmaking process surprise you?

How did we come to trust Rebecca? It's hard to answer because it happened right away, we didn't have to think about it. It reminds me of Montaigne's famous words about his friendship with La Bo tie, "because it was him, because it was me," and I think that best sums up our relationship with Rebecca, and where there is trust you don't ask yourself too many questions. Of course Rebecca entered into our private life, but we opened our doors "because it was her."

Since it was our first experience with the making of a feature-length film, we didn't know... We didn't really understand all the hours of footage, and we wondered what she was going to do with all of it! We didn't completely understand the meaning, where it was going, but it was definitely better that way. We let ourselves be carried along and this definitely let us remain completely natural in front of the camera. And [Director of Photography] Eric's great skill was to make you forget he was even there. Eventually we didn't see them any more.

We see in the film that farming--like parenting--is often quite humbling: we are vulnerable to so many conditions outside our control. Was participating in the film also humbling?

I believe every artisan should be humbled by their work; if they aren't, their work will be bad. And I was already convinced that a filmmaker's work was as difficult, as uncertain, as ours. In the end, Rebecca and Eric are just like us: transmitters. And to transmit well what you see, what you hear, what you feel, you must be endowed with great humility. You must accept and absorb the new developments, the pitfalls, the difficulties, the fortunate and unfortunate surprises of life.

Many North Americans have a romanticized view of life in rural France. What do you hope WEED & WINE will show North Americans about France? About winemaking?

Oh, I think most people have a romanticized view of agriculture and especially of winegrowing. Wine makes you dream and drunk too... But we are first of all farmers, as our ancestors were, dependent on the rain and the sun, and today on equipment, too. (You see it in the film when Aurélien is repairing a rotary hoe with his grandfather). As my father likes to say: "the work used to be back breaking, now we fix breakdowns." A farmer's work is hard, and it's getting harder as the climate changes. We crossed a threshold in 2017. The harvest started August 18th and finished on September 3rd. It was unprecedented and very distressing. We are having trouble adapting because the climate is changing too fast, diseases and insect pests are advancing faster than we are. You can see that the harvest is a time of great stress for us because we don't want to betray what nature has given us. We have a duty to share and to raise the wine as honestly as we can.

What do you hope audiences will take away from your story? What do you hope they will understand from the interweaving of your story with Kev's story?

As I discovered the film and what Kevin had to say I saw that even farmers on opposite sides of the world speak the same language. And even though we come from very different cultures, our joys, our doubts, our hopes are all similar. Some of Kevin's very poetic words really resonated with me, and I wrote them down: "the delicate footprints you leave on the ground." "Plants and humans adapt to adversity." "You are like a root. You are digging for water." That's it, we have the same thirst to respect nature and to sustain it [pass it on]. And I think it's fantastic since at first glance we are really different: we are not "pirates," we don't lift weights, our family has a deep history here, we are producing a drink that has been an important part of culture for 8,000 years... And yet we felt so close to Kevin, because he is a real farmer and not a commercial producer. He's not doing agribusiness. We are farmers like those one hundred, five hundred, a thousand years ago...

What are you afraid audiences will miss? What is not captured in the film that you wish audiences could know?

What I just said. Because true farmers have almost all disappeared. Farmers have become businessmen, they exploit the land. (My God, it's ugly! No! We absolutely should not exploit either the earth or people). And since the world of the farmer has practically disappeared, we are often misunderstood. People don't understand or they misinterpret what we do. The energy we put into working the earth, the tears and sorrow when a mishap destroys our plants. Our work, the joy that comes from making beautiful wine or beautiful weed, has little to do with money. Of course we need to make some (in order to live and to sustain the farm), but it is in no way the first thing we think about, our motivation. We are situated in a different dimension. You don't have children, you don't raise children for money or out of a kind of vanity. No, it's about love. And our work is like that, which explains the intensity of our emotions. What the film doesn't show: you only see Aurélien and me. The other members of the family resemble "shades" in our midst. But Libian exists because we are a family and each person has an extremely important role. We are completely interdependent. We wouldn't be who we are if the others were not there. Very strong ties bind us together and to past generations, too. Our ancestors' eyes are very much upon us. We are responsible for what they have passed down to us.

Were you aware of Kev's story during the filming process, or before seeing the finished film? Have you met Kev and his family?

The whole family made a choice not to see the images, not to get to know "our twins" on the other side of the world. We knew only the main points of Kevin's story. We chose

the surprise and wonder of discovery once the film was finished. Again, our great confidence in Rebecca and Eric governed this choice. The more I thought about Kev, the more he seemed like someone I knew. Now I know why. I am a big reader and admirer of your great American writer Steinbeck. And Kevin has something of Joseph from the novel *To a God Unknown*, without a doubt the greatest of Steinbeck's novels, and the one that I find the most overwhelming/devastating. Thank you Rebecca for introducing us to him!

Did viewing Kev's experience in California prompt any insights about your work, your family or your impact as a winemaker? Do you see yourself as similar to Kev in certain ways, or do you feel your experience is wildly different from his?

We are different, it's undeniable, but this difference is mostly superficial. We are old, historically: the culture of the vine goes back 8,000 years. We are steeped in this culture, this history. We always eat together and mealtime is an important moment for us. We don't smoke. We hate sports...And we have never been on the other side of the law. That's the most important point. We don't know...On the other hand, without being outlaws, we still have the feeling of being "against." Against this destructive way of life, against the disappearance of small farmers, against the need imposed by our capitalist system to exploit the earth, to produce more and badly, counter to all the rules of living things. Kevin says "we fight for survival." We fight for survival too, even though we know that the world our children will encounter will be more difficult and will have nothing in common with the world of our ancestors. Climate change is too far advanced. Peoples' stupidity has already done too much damage. We cannot rebuild what has died, but as the great Victor Hugo said, "for the defeated, the struggle is a great, melancholy joy, that one must make last as long as possible." With Kevin, we are fighting to live and to pass things on... Out of a sense of loyalty to the Earth.

What is it like to see your life refracted back at you via a documentary film?

Everyone in the family had the same initial reaction: how unpleasant we all looked during the harvest! We hadn't realized just how tired and stressed we had been! That we work hard because we have an important task to carry out: accompany the vine all the way to maturity, and at the same time that we have these lighter moments that help us maintain balance. And that we are very fortunate to live in Libian, in this family! And that we wish lots of courage and tenacity for Kevin and his son.

Interview with H elene Thibon (French)

Comment avez-vous rencontr e Rebecca Richman Cohen, la r alisatrice du film "Du Vin et de L'Herbe"? Qu'est-ce que vous a-t-il pouss e   consid erer son invitation de participer   ce film? Pourquoi avez-vous accept e que votre histoire soit racont e?

Je me souviens tr s bien. J' tais dans ma voiture accompagn e par une woofeuse, quand mon t l phone a sonn e et j'ai r pondu par le haut parleur. C' tait Lauriane de Faites un Voeux, qui me proposait de participer   ce film. Elle m'explique l'id e du film parler du vin, de la terre, du lien au terroir en parall le avec un autre paysan Am ricain qui fait de l'herbe. Elle me dit  galement qu'elle est tr s honor e de pouvoir travailler avec Rebecca. Et l'id e m'a tellement amus e que sans vraiment r fl chir, j'ai dit oui. Car en France on pense que l'Ard che est le d partement du cannabis depuis mai 1968 et des hippies!

Puis vient le temps de la r flexion, et j'ai pens e que ce serait un beau cadeau   offrir aux g n rations qui vont venir. En effet, je serais heureuse de voir des images de Libian avant 1900....et je suis rentr e   la maison et le temps du stress est arriv  : comment vais-je annoncer  a   ma famille? Mon fils  tait encore   l'autre bout du monde et je ne pense pas qu'il avait la t te   r fl chir, tout   son retour et   la perte de ces ann es d'insouciance, il a dit oui en me faisant confiance. Mais mes parents...a e. J'y suis all e sur la pointe des pieds, en disant que rien n' tait d cid  mais que ce serait beau de laisser des images   nos petits petit enfants. Puis Rebecca est venue. Malgr  la barri re de la langue il s'est pass  quelque chose, je ne suis pas capable de d finir exactement, mais une sorte de confiance, de tranquillit : c'est Elle, tout va bien se passer. Et l'histoire a pu commencer.

La r alisation d'un documentaire peut  tre un processus profond ment intime; en tant que sujet film , vous laissez une autre personne (et une  quipe) entrer dans votre vie, votre maison, votre famille, vos rythmes quotidiens. Comment avez-vous appris   faire confiance   Rebecca pour raconter votre histoire?  tait-il difficile d' tre direct et honn te   propos de vos d fis et incertitudes? Quelles parties du processus dutournage vous a surpris?

Comment avons-nous fait confiance   Rebecca? C'est difficile de r pondre car ce fut imm diat, ce ne fut pas r fl chi. Et il me vient une citation c l bre de Montaigne parlant de son amiti  avec la Bo tie, "Parce-que c' tait lui, parce-que c' tait moi." Et je pense que c'est ce qui r sume le mieux notre relation avec Rebecca. Et quand la confiance

est là, alors il n'y pas à se poser de question. Bien sur Rebecca est rentré dans notre intimité, mais nous avons ouvert les portes "parce-que c'était elle."

Comme c'était la première fois qu'un long métrage était tourné chez nous, on ne savait pas. Et on ne comprenait pas bien ces heures d'images, on se demandait ce qu'elle allait en faire de tout ça! On ne comprenait pas bien le sens, la direction. Mais c'était certainement mieux ainsi; on se laissait porter et c'est certainement ce qui nous a permis de rester tout à fait naturels devant la caméra. Et la grande qualité d'Eric était de se faire complètement oublier. On ne les voyait plus.

On voit dans le film que l'agriculture – comme la parentalité – nous rends souvent modeste: nous sommes vulnérables à de nombreuses conditions indépendantes de notre volonté! Est-ce que participer à ce film, vous a-t-il transmit la même leçon de modestie?

Je crois que tout artisan doit être humble devant son travail, car s'il ne l'est pas, le travail est mauvais. Et j'étais déjà convaincue que le travail d'un cinéaste est aussi difficile, aléatoire, que le notre. Finalement, Rebecca et Eric sont tout comme nous: des passeurs. Et pour bien transmettre ce que l'on voit, ce que l'on entend, ce que l'on ressent, il faut être doué d'une grande humilité, accepter et absorber les rebondissements de la vie, les écueils, les difficultés, les surprises bonnes et mauvaises.

De nombreux Américains ont une vision romantique de la vie rurale en France. Qu'est ce que vous espérez que le film "Du Vin et de L'Herbe" montrera aux Américains à propos de la France? À propos de la vinification?

Oh, je crois que la majorité des gens ont une vision romantique de l'agriculture et particulièrement du métier de vigneron. Car le vin fait rêver et enivre aussi. Mais nous sommes d'abord des paysans comme l'ont été nos ancêtres, tributaires de la pluie et du beau temps, et aujourd'hui du matériel. (On le voit dans le film quand Aurélien est avec son grand-père pour réparer une bineuse.) Comme dit mon père, "Avant c'était la civilisation de la peine, aujourd'hui celle de la panne." Le métier de paysan est dur, de plus en plus difficile avec le changement climatique. En 2017 une marche a été franchie: vendanger le 18/08 et finir le 03/09 ne s'était jamais vu et c'est très angoissant. Nous avons du mal à nous adapter car le climat change trop vite, les maladies et insectes ravageurs avancent plus vite que nous. Et l'on voit que le moment des vendanges est un temps de grand stress pour nous car nous ne voulons pas trahir ce que la nature nous a donné. Nous avons le devoir de transmettre et d'élever ce vin le plus sincèrement possible

Qu'est que vous espérez que le public retienne de votre histoire? Et qu'est que vous espérez qu'ils comprennent de l'entrelacement de votre histoire à celle de Kev?

Quand j'ai découvert le film et les paroles de Kevin j'ai su que les paysans même à l'autre bout du monde parlent la même langue. Et bien que nous soyons issus de culture très différentes, nos joies, nos doutes, nos espoirs sont de même nature. J'ai relevé des phrases très poétiques de Kevin qui ont résonné en moi: "Les empreintes délicates que l'on imprime dans le sol." "Les plantes et les humains s'adaptent à l'adversité." "On est comme une racine; on cherche l'eau." Oui, c'est cela nous avons la même soif: respecter la nature et transmettre. Et je trouve ça magnifique car au premier regard nous sommes bien différents: nous ne sommes pas des "pirates," nous ne soulevons pas des poids, nous sommes issus d'une longue histoire familiale, nous produisons un breuvage culturel depuis 8,000 ans. Et pourtant nous nous sommes sentis si proche de Kevin, juste parce qu'il est un vrai paysan et non pas un "exploitant agricole." Il ne fait pas de "l'agro alimentaire", oui nous sommes paysans comme il y a 100, 500, 1,000 ans.

Qu'est que vous craignez que le public ne comprenne pas? Qu'est-ce qui n'est pas montré dans ce film et que vous souhaitez que le public sache?

Ce que je viens de dire. Car les hommes de culture paysanne vraie ont presque tous disparus. Les agriculteurs sont devenus des "exploitants" (mon Dieu que c'est laid! mais non justement on ne doit exploiter ni la terre ni les hommes.) Et comme ce monde paysan a pratiquement disparu nous sommes souvent mal compris. On nous comprend mal, on interprète mal nos actions. L'énergie que nous dépensons pour travailler la terre, la douleur et les larmes quand une catastrophe détruit nos plantes, notre travail, la joie de faire un beau vin, une belle herbe, n'a que peu à voir avec l'argent. Bien sur il est nécessaire d'en gagner (pour vivre et pour transmettre), mais ce n'est pas du tout notre première pensée, notre moteur. Nous nous situons dans une autre dimension. On ne fait pas des enfants, on n'élève pas des enfants pour de l'argent ou pour une quelconque gloriole, non c'est juste de l'amour et bien notre métier se situe à ce niveau là. Ce qui explique l'intensité de nos sentiments.

Ce qui n'est pas montré dans le film : On ne voit qu'Aurélien et moi. Et les autres personnes de la famille semblent des "ombres" autour de nous. Mais, Libian existe parce-que nous sommes une famille et que chaque personne à un rôle extrêmement important. Nous sommes totalement interdépendants les uns des autres. Nous ne serions pas ce que nous sommes si les autres n'existaient pas. Nous sommes liés par des liens très forts et nous sommes liés aussi aux générations passées. Le regard de

mes ancêtres est très présent. Nous sommes responsables de ce qu'ils nous ont transmis,

À quel point étiez-vous au courant de l'histoire de Kev pendant le tournage ou avant de voir le film fini? Avez-vous rencontré Kev et sa famille?

Ce fut un choix de la part de toute la famille: ne pas voir les images, ne pas connaître "nos jumeaux" de l'autre côté du monde. On ne connaissait que les grandes lignes de l'histoire de Kevin. On a choisi la surprise et l'émerveillement de la découverte quand le film fut fini. Encore une fois, c'est la profonde confiance que nous avons en Rebecca et Eric qui nous a dicté ce choix. Plus je pense à Kev, plus je me dis qu'il m'est "familier." Et maintenant je sais: je suis une grande lectrice et admiratrice de votre grand écrivain Américain Steinbeck. Et Kevin a quelque chose de Joseph du roman *To a God Unknown*, certainement le plus grand roman de Steinbeck et celui qui me bouleverse le plus! Merci Rebecca de nous l'avoir fait rencontrer!

Après avoir vu l'expérience de Kev en Californie, avez-vous eu une différente perception à propos de votre travail, de votre famille ou de votre impact en tant que vigneronne? Est que vous vous voyez semblable à Kev dans certaines manières ou vous sentez que votre expérience est très différente de la sienne?

Nous sommes différents on ne peut le nier, mais cette différence est essentiellement superficielle: nous sommes "vieux" d'histoire; la culture du vin a 8,000 ans; nous sommes pétris de cette culture, de cette histoire; le repas est toujours pris en commun et c'est un moment important pour nous; nous ne fumons pas; nous détestons le sport. Et nous n'avons jamais été dans l'illégalité. C'est le point le plus important, nous ne savons pas. En revanche, sans être hors la loi, nous avons le sentiment d'être "contre." Contre ce système destructeur de la vie, contre la disparition des petits paysans, contre la volonté imposée de notre monde capitaliste d'exploiter la terre, de produire plus et mal à l'encontre de toutes les règles du vivant. Kevin dit, "on se bat pour survivre." Nous aussi, on se bat pour survivre. Même si nous sommes lucides, et que la vie que va connaître nos enfants sera plus difficile et n'aura rien à voir avec celles de nos ancêtres, le changement climatique est trop avancé, la connerie des hommes a déjà fait trop de mal, nous ne reconstruirons pas ce qui est mort. Mais comme le dit le grand Victor Hugo, "pour les vaincus, la lutte est un grand bonheur triste, qu'il faut faire durer le plus longtemps qu'on peut." Avec Kevin, nous luttons pour vivre et pour transmettre...Pour une certaine loyauté envers la Terre.

Qu'est-ce que vous sentez en voyant votre vie se refléter sur vous à travers ce documentaire?

Première réaction de toute la famille: quelle sale tête nous avons aux vendanges! On ne se rendait pas compte que nous étions aussi stressés et fatigués! Que nous portons beaucoup car nous avons une tâche importante à effectuer: accompagner la vigne jusqu'à sa maturité, et en même temps que nous avons ces moments de légèreté qui nous équilibrent. Et que nous avons beaucoup de chance de vivre à Libian dans cette famille! Et que nous souhaitons beaucoup de courage, de ténacité à Kevin et son fils.

Interview with Kevin Jodrey

How did you meet Rebecca? What made you consider her invitation to participate in the film?

I originally met Rebecca [when] I was referred by a friend. I was just somebody who was very well connected in Humboldt County; she wasn't at first planning to film me, but was looking for possible [subjects], and I referred her to a large number of people, so she could choose who to follow for the endeavor...I was like a liaison. And Cona had some dealings with her too, as we were compiling the lists. She ended up really liking the relationship between me and my son, and she asked if we would be in it. I never expected to be in a film.

Documentary filmmaking can be a deeply intimate process; as a subject, you are letting another person (and sometimes a crew!) into your life, your home, your family, your daily rhythms. What made you agree to participate? Did any part of the filmmaking process surprise you?

I saw an honesty in Rebecca. She was just such a good person, and I understood that she was trying to show these parallels between organic cannabis and organic wine production, and the beauty of both regions. I thought it would be great to highlight Humboldt County as a beautiful place.

Rebecca was honest; she explained [that the filmmaking process] would be pretty intrusive and that it would dig into your life. That was a little daunting, but all in all it was a wonderful opportunity. I've done a lot of work with the media, and Rebecca and Eric had such a beautiful vision. You know, a lot of stories that come out of Humboldt are sensational. Had I any trepidation that Rebecca and Eric would paint Humboldt in a sensationalist way, I wouldn't have participated. It was all about the integrity of the film team; otherwise, it's too intimate.

And you know, I was very honest about so much, that in the end you have to have faith in the people who are going to portray it. And I did; I had such a faith in the team that I didn't hesitate.

And how did your family—Cona in particular—feel about being filmed?

I spoke with the family after Rebecca said she wanted us in the film. They were a little nervous, but they were confident that they wouldn't be portrayed as anything else than

what they were. I think that's what they were worried about: they are not fame-seekers. They don't desire that spotlight. But they also saw the opportunity, we all saw the opportunity, to show Humboldt in a normal fashion, for what it is, and that was a great opportunity. My lady's family has been in Humboldt forever; they have a store in Humboldt that they've owned for 100 years. They wanted Humboldt to be shown as a beautiful place, which it is.

How long have you lived in Humboldt?

Since '92. Humboldt was once the epicenter of commercial cannabis production in the US; it produced 80% of cannabis produced at the time. Legalization...diminished Humboldt's status, so to speak...So it goes from being this monster of production [in the 90s] to being a site for a renaissance for craft and organic culture.

I don't think any film can actually cover Humboldt County correctly; it's one of those places on earth that's so grand and so majestic that without you physically being here, you just can't understand the place. But that's what I loved about the film: that Humboldt looks beautiful in it, just the way she is. I hope audiences who see the film have a desire to come here, and to see the region; it's just so breathtaking.

Did you think, at the outset, that the film would be about family and parenting?

It was unexpected. When [Rebecca and Eric] came in to shoot the film, it was about cannabis production as compared to wine production, in two beautiful places. And then the family story comes out, because, you know, that's who we are: it's your family. It's your family, so it's not something you stage.

So yes, it was very unexpected...and it was beautiful.

I've been in cannabis since the late 70s, and everything I've ever seen is sensationalized and overplayed, and [full of] made-up stories so you can catch more tension. Rebecca turned that down.

She told a story about two families trying to move through time with their kids.

Were you surprised by the parallels between your story and the French story? Parenting is a big part of both stories: the experience of the adult children reflecting deeply about their parents and their childhoods.

They both got raised by two nutty parents! I laugh because we're so similar; we're so radically different culturally, but we're so similar. We both had desires to have good lives for ourselves and our children. And I think that's true for everyone; we all hope that time will be a friend.

It was really interesting to see the parallels; Rebecca paired us really elegantly, and she wove [the family] stories in. You know there was so much they shot that didn't end up in the film, because in the end she pared it down to what she wanted the picture to be, which was the movement of time in a family with land. It was a privilege to be part of it.

What do you hope audiences will take away from your story?

I hope audiences will take away that even if you're not a farmer, you eat food from farmers. No one is disconnected from farmers. And what I would hope is that [audiences] will see the normalcy of cannabis. I am hoping people will be able to see that—that it's a craft like any craft. It's an appreciation of the land, it's an appreciation of the environment; it's an attempt to produce something without harming the world around you.

I hope the film will lead to a different acceptance of cannabis. It may not change whether you consume or don't consume cannabis, but it might make you look at the people who produce cannabis in a different light.

What did you know about Helene, or the French side of the story, while Rebecca was filming?

Nothing! You know, we knew the film was going to be about an American family and a French family, comparing wine growing and cannabis growing. But Rebecca did really well to [say very little]. Otherwise it becomes a compare and contrast. You automatically as humans try to compete!

It was best that we didn't know each other; we didn't know what each other looked like. Of course, we knew we were both farmers. We both wished each other well for our harvests. But if she had walked into my house, I wouldn't have known who she was!

This allowed two very separate stories to be woven together; we got to see the clear differences, and the incredible similarities between two people who have a love of the land. You know there's so much we're trying to do that's the same. We both want to preserve our properties for the future; their family has done this for 400 years, and we're at the beginning of that process. It's beautiful to see that they've been able to work

through the issues to hold onto their land, and that we're working through the issues to hold onto our land.

Tell me about how Humboldt has changed since you've been there, and since legalization. It hasn't been easy!

Yeah, it only took seven years! [Legalization] is not meant to be easy; it's really a barrier to entry. But you have no choice in life but to fight to the very end. You can't quit at any time. There's no quit.

It's a matter of: can you sustain it? I was fortunate that I was able to. So many that were very qualified couldn't [get certified]. I used to think the best will always win, but sometimes the best is defined by how many fingers you're willing to cut off in the process! That's the truth. The sad truth. And I only have one thumb left on one hand!

And that's all farming. We're about to see a real crisis with farmers in America right now... You're about to have some tremendous trouble in farming, with the Chinese trade battle ... and climatic changes....tremendous amounts of flooding, long springs, low prices.

You know, I never used to call myself a farmer. Because we used to have a radically different situation here. We used to be illegal pot growers, and I never used to call myself a farmer. We used to have a different profit margin. The perception that we're still rolling in the money is wrong; that era is long gone. Nobody really recovered after the [economic crash] in 2007 or so. [The recession] took cannabis to half of its normal level...and only now is it making a little bounce-back. The traditional (illegal) industry is now rising a little, and the legal market is rising a little too.

But the bottom line is that now we're in farming. You have to see the relevance for all farmers. And we're all farmers. People don't understand that when entire regions become dependent on a single crop, and then something changes, it decimates a region. So you can see, across the world, the connection among farmers; you can see this connection of boom and bust. For all of us, it's precarious and risky. But someone has to do it. You can't grow food out of thin air, so someone has to farm.

It's risky, it's a huge risk, but it's also a privilege. For me to be able to spend the day on the hill [farming] is just the biggest privilege.

How do you think it will be to watch the film with an audience?

Well, you know before you see a film that's been in production for three years, you're nervous. But I watched it with my family, a small group, those of us who are in it. And I look like who I am. The family is who they are. It was well portrayed.

For both of us, me and Helene, I think we were both really honest about it, and what we wanted to see: a picture of reality. I just hope the audience gets to enjoy this common struggle between two farmers. To see the similarities among all farmers, that it doesn't matter what you grow. All farmers are farmers. You're someone who loves the land. You're someone who has a connection to living things. That's what's important.

Film Team

Rebecca Richman Cohen

Director & Producer

Rebecca is an Emmy-nominated documentary filmmaker and, since 2011, a Lecturer on Law at Harvard Law School. Her directorial debut, *WAR DON DON* (HBO), won the Special Jury Prize at the SXSW Film Festival and was nominated for two Emmy Awards. *Salon* called her second feature, *CODE OF THE WEST* (America ReFramed), “one of the best movies about America’s drug war.” In 2016 she produced *UNTOUCHABLE*, which won the Albert Maysles New Documentary Director Award at the Tribeca Film Festival. Rebecca was pro-filed in *Filmmaker Magazine*’s 25 New Faces in Independent Film as an “up-and-comer poised to shape the next generation of independent film.” She is the founder and principal at Racing Horse Productions. In addition to Harvard, she has taught classes at RISD, American University’s Human Rights Institute, and Columbia University. She was a 2012 Soros Justice Fellow and a 2016 Faculty Affiliate at Harvard’s Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society. Rebecca graduated from Brown University and Harvard Law School.

Alysa Nahmias

Executive Producer

Alysa is an award-winning filmmaker and founder of Ajna Films. Her work has been shown at festivals and exhibitions worldwide, including the Venice Biennale, Sundance, SXSW, and the Berlinale. Alysa’s directorial debut feature, *UNFINISHED SPACES*, won a 2012 Spirit Award, numerous film festival prizes, and is in the permanent collection at MoMA. She recently directed and produced *THE NEW BAUHAUS*, a feature documentary about artist, designer, and educator Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. She also produced the Sundance Jury Award-winning documentary *UNREST*, directed by Jennifer Brea. Her additional producing credits include: *WHAT WE LEFT UNFINISHED*, directed by Mariam Ghani; *SHIELD AND SPEAR*, directed by Petter Ringbom; and *AFTERNOON OF A FAUN: TANAQUIL LE CLERCQ*, directed by Nancy Buirski with creative advisor Martin Scorsese; and the scripted feature *NO LIGHT AND NO LAND ANYWHERE*, directed by Amber Sealey with executive producer Miranda July. Alysa is a 2019 Sundance Momentum Fellow. She holds degrees from New York University and Princeton University, and she lives in Los Angeles with her husband and two children.

Lauriane Jussiau

Executive Producer

Lauriane is part of the award-winning French production company Faites Un Voeu, where she has been developing and producing documentaries since 2013. She worked on the award-winning Netflix-original documentary SOUR GRAPES by Jerry Rothwell and Reuben Atlas, co-produced with Met Film (UK) (Arte France / Netflix / VPRO / SVT / DR / NRK / YLE), which follows the story of the world's greatest wine fraud. Other documentary productions include BURMA, THE POWER OF MONKS by Joel Curtz and Benoît Grimont (ARTE France / Public Sénat / KRV-VPRO / Deutsche Welle and supported by Lagardere Foundation, world premiere in FIGRA), a film about the process of democracy in Myanmar through the eyes of Buddhist monks. And she is currently working on the production of THE JUMP, by Lithuanian director Giedrė Zickyte (France 2 / Vosges TV / SVT / YLE / LTR), which tells the story of a Lithuanian sailor who made a 10-foot jump from a Soviet fishing boat onto a U.S. Coast Guard ship in pursuit of freedom. Lauriane has been a key creative force on WEED & WINE since its development.

Graham Boyd

Executive Producer

Graham is an attorney, consultant and scholar, specializing in political efforts to reform drug laws and reduce mass incarceration. He has recently served as a Visiting Senior Fellow at the Washington, DC think tank Third Way and at Stanford Law School. Graham advises a group of philanthropists who fund the majority of the cannabis reform efforts currently sweeping across the United States. He has played a guiding role in opinion research, legal drafting and campaign design for cannabis reform measures throughout the United States and abroad, including the recent legalization of cannabis in Washington State, Colorado, Oregon, California, Maine, Massachusetts and Michigan, as well as in the nation of Uruguay. Previously Boyd was the founding director of the ACLU's Drug Law Reform Project. He litigated before the U.S. Supreme Court and federal courts across the nation, resulting in reforms in sentencing, racial profiling, medical marijuana, police practices and alternatives to incarceration.

Nathaniel Hansen

Editor & Co-Producer

Nathaniel is an Emmy-nominated producer and an award-winning director, cinematographer, and editor. His documentary work has screened in competition at festi-vals around the world, including SXSW, Hot Docs, and Camden International Film Festival, and has been featured online by the *New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, and the *LA Times*. In 2013, the *Boston Globe* called his feature documentary work “Outstand-ing” and “Remarkable.” His documentary and commercial work assignments have taken him around the world to film in India, Brazil, Venezuela, China, Japan, South Africa, Sweden, Germa-ny, England, and New Zealand, among others. Nathaniel lives in Boston with his wife Felicity and their two children.

Eric Phillips-Horst

Director of Photography & Co-Producer

Eric is a director, producer and cinematographer based in New York. Some of his featured work includes broadcast television (PBS, History Channel, Biogra-phy Channel, MTV, Nickelode-on, Arte France), documentary and independent festival circuits (Sundance, Tribeca, LA Interna-tional, CPH:DOX, Rotterdam, Rooftop Films) and numerous online publications (*The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Huffington Post*, TED, *IndieWire*). He was the principal cinematographer on STRAY DOG, which A.O. Scott called “passionate cinema verité” and the *Village Voice* wrote “cap-tures scenes of rare power.” He was also a director of photography on WELCOME TO PINE HILL, BRASSLANDS, APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR and 5STAR. Eric is a founding member of both Meerkat Media and the Brooklyn Filmmak-ers Collective.

Myra Boutros

Associate Editor

Born and raised in Beirut, Myra earned a Master’s degree in Filmmaking and Television production with honors from the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts - University of Balamand. During her time in Lebanon, she wrote and produced two comedy shows that aired on national television. Returning to her first passion, she began a career as an editor, working on international commercials, corporate videos, music videos, movie trailers, short fiction films and documentaries. During this time, she also instructed editing classes at her alma mater in Beirut. In 2012 Myra moved to Boston, where she worked as an Assistant Editor on shows including PBS *American Experience* and *American Masters*, and worked as an Associate Editor on several independent, award-

winning feature documentaries and PBS *Nova*. Myra is trilingual and has edited movies in English, French and Arabic. She best describes editing as her “happy place.”

Caitlin Boyle

Consulting Producer

A pioneer of grassroots distribution for independent film, Caitlin founded the boutique firm Film Sprout in 2009, becoming a leading champion for the distribution of documentary films in community settings, and an advocate of film's power to effect social change from the ground up. Throughout Film Sprout's decade-long tenure, Caitlin engineered audience engagement efforts for 50 feature documentaries, including *PRAY THE DEVIL BACK TO HELL*, *THE END OF THE LINE*, *UNFINISHED SPACES*, *THE INVISIBLE WAR*, *VESSEL*, *THE HUNTING GROUND*, *FED UP*, *TRAPPED*, *WHERE TO INVADENEXT*, *WHOSE STREETS*, *NEWTOWN* and *UNREST*. In December 2018 Caitlin sold Film Sprout to social impact agency Picture Motion. Prior to Film Sprout, Caitlin worked in documentary film and radio production, including on the production team of *WIDE ANGLE*, the WNET foreign affairs film series hosted by Bill Moyers, and as a reporter and news announcer at NPR affiliates WFUV in the Bronx and WFIU in Bloomington, Indiana. A graduate of Columbia University and the Media School at Indiana University, Caitlin lives in Brooklyn with her family.

Catherine Simeon

Consulting Producer

Catherine is a producer at *Faites un Voeu*, a company she joined in 2010 after working for many years at film festivals. She is currently the Head of Documentary and in charge of international development. Her producing credits include Jerry Rothwell and Reuben Atlas' acclaimed theatrical documentary *SOUR GRAPES*, which follows the story of the world's greatest wine fraud (ARTE France / Netflix / VPRO / SVT / DR / NRK / YLE) and Joël Curtz and Benoît Grimont's Lagardère's film, *BURMA*, about the power of the monks about the process of democracy in Myanmar through the eyes of Buddhist monks (ARTE France / VPRO / Deutsche Welle). She is currently co-producing *THE JUMP* by Giedrė Zickytė (France Télévisions / LTR / Vosges TV / SVT / YLE / WDR / MDR), telling the story of a Lithuanian sailor who made a 10-foot jump from a Soviet fishing boat onto a U.S. Coast Guard ship in pursuit of freedom, and *IRAK'S INVISIBLE BEAUTY* by Sahim Omar Kalifa (ARTE France / CANVAS / AVROTROS / Al Jazeera / YLE), the portrait of Iraq's hidden culture through the eyes of a man who photographed his country before it was destroyed. Catherine is also the head of APARR, a regional French association of producers. She has a master's degree in philosophy and in cultural management from the University of Burgundy, France.

MUSIC

Max Avery Lichtenstein

Original Score

Max Avery Lichtenstein is a film composer whose melodic sensibilities, understated arrangements, and creative recording techniques infuse a special character into the movies his music accompanies. Max has scored all of Racing Horse Productions' feature documentaries and has written scores and songs for critically-acclaimed narrative features such as James Marsh's THE KIND, Todd Haynes' FAR FROM HEAVEN, and the film adaptation of Denis Johnson's JESUS' SON. His scores can be heard in renowned documentaries including the Academy Award-nominated MONDAYS AT RACINE, the Emmy-winning VERY SEMI-SERIOUS: A PARTIALLY THOROUGH PORTRAIT OF NEW YORKER CARTOONISTS, and Jonathan Caouette's groundbreaking autobiography TARNATION. His latest projects include THE WORLD BEFORE YOUR FEET (produced by Jesse Eisenberg) and the Maria Irene Fornes biography THE REST I MAKE UP. In addition to composing for film, Max records and performs under the name Camphor.

Juniore

Original Songs

Juniore is still growing up. After nearly three years of touring countries across the world, their new record "Un, Deux, Trois" will be released early 2020.

Recorded by Samy Osta, the album is full of their distinctive tones, a flavorful mix of genres and the delicate roughness that defines Juniore. The new tunes continue to explore the future as 60's France hadn't quite imagined it: an improbable encounter between Brigitte Bardot and the mad world of the B-52s. Songs that recount the modern world in everything that makes it anachronic. With cool ballads to slow-dance to and uplifting rhythms to twist, Juniore tells stories of falling in and out of love, light and heavy-hearted urban tales, sweet and sour apocalypse and new beginnings--the sort of "Yéyé noir" that makes Juniore.

Always nostalgic, but never retro, Juniore isn't afraid of paradoxes. Lead by Anna Jean, the band of garçonnnes isn't simply feminist or only female. A whimsical creature performed with them for years and like tarot cards being shuffled, for the new album, Juniore will be three on stage: "Un, Deux, Trois". Anna Jean sings in a monotonous and velvet voice and shares keyboards and guitars with the electric Samy Osta, while Swanny Elzingre is radiant and full of sensual force at the drums.

Made in France and made by hand, Anna writes songs, plays them with Swanny, and Samy brings them to life. She sketches the images and puts together the videos with the help of friends. The three work and travel and play together like school mates.

While French Yéyé, Françoise Hardy and Brigitte Bardot never seem far, it doesn't sum up Juniore. A contemporary sense of urgency has infiltrated their songs, through the subtle lyrics and delicate melodies, like the soundtrack of a dream-beach-horror-romance-road-movie, inspired by the fantastic magic of Sergio Leone, Romero, Carpenter, Tarantino or Jodorowsky and the ordinary madness of the Nouvelle Vague. Juniore explores specific issues with universal values, music as a language and a form of storytelling, in a dimension where all the mixes and matches are allowed.

In 2014, the first two seven-inch records were released, followed by an EP in 2016. The first album *Ouh Là Là* (Le Phonographe/A+LSO/SONY) was released in France in 2017 and Juniore toured countries across the world, including France, Spain, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, Turkey, Hungary, Romania, USA, Canada, Mexico, Australia, Japan and the UK.

The album *Magnifique* was released on the English label Outré during the summer of 2018 and was voted Album of the Day by the BBC. With 13 artists, Juniore opened for Miles Kane and The Dandy Warhols during their European tour in 2018/2019.

Juniore's music has been used for commercial films and series (GOOD GIRLS, KILLING EVE, HERMÈS). The band appeared in the film *LES FAUVES*, directed by Vincent Mariette, with Lily-Rose Depp, shown in cinemas in 2019.

During the summer of 2019, Juniore collaborated with writer, director and producer Rebecca Richman Cohen on the soundtrack of her latest documentary film *WEED & WINE*.