

ANNUAL  
**2023**  
REPORT

# Green Planet Films

*Promoting Environmental Education Through Film  
Since 2003*



Eye-Opening Documentaries From Around the Globe

GREENPLANETFILMS.ORG | STONINGTON CT

# 2023 was a 20-Year Milestone: Here's Looking to the Future

**In 2023, Green Planet Films (GPF) set a course for a growing film education mission, continued dedication to supporting documentary filmmakers, acquired an impressive group of new films, and increased financial sustainability through successful content acquisition and fundraising. It was an ambitious program and we are happy to share some impressive results.**

We invested in a new royalty payment software with huge gains in efficiency for us and a greatly enhanced user experience on the filmmaker's side. We invested in a suite of 12 iPads and other film production equipment to enhance our filmmaking workshops. We continued to invest in staff to generate new opportunities and maintain existing administrative work.

GPF is also a growing presence in the local community. With community screenings at Westerly Public Library, Stoneridge, Mystic Luxury Cinema and the United Theatre, we reached more local audiences in 2023 than ever before.

We presented over twenty individual documentary filmmaking workshop sessions for children and adolescents at the Mystic Seaport Museum and the Phoebe Noyes Griffin Library.

Leadership capacity at GPF is growing alongside our expanding work. We welcomed three new members to the GPF Board of Directors

including: Charles Buffum, Mike O'Keefe and Bill Dougherty. Each brings a unique perspective and a variety of skills that will support GPF as we build a stronger organization and prepare to grow and thrive in the future.

We are excited about GPF's growth in personnel, and on our board of directors, new technology and innovating the possibilities of linking documentary film distribution with filmmaking workshops and film education events. We do it for engaged, thoughtful and intellectually curious audiences who care about our planet. These are the touchstones of Green Planet's evolving mission as we celebrated the 20th anniversary.



We also wish to thank all our donors and acknowledge that in 2023, we saw the most impactful fundraising campaign of our 20-year history. We raised over \$10,000! Thank You! It has inspired us to continue on this journey with renewed enthusiasm and effort. We look forward to sharing the next steps with you.



# New Films Released in 2023

In 2023 we welcomed an exciting lineup of films that brought viewers to Canada, Tibet, Morocco, Japan, and the United States. We worked with directors from Ireland, England, Cyprus, Switzerland, Canada and Chicago, Illinois to bring their films to audiences in educational settings.

**Atomic Hope** continues a provocative conversation on the role of nuclear energy in solving the carbon crisis. **The Great 14th** invites viewers to a very intimate and profound conversation with the 14th Dalai Lama. **Art and Pep** reveals the birth of Chicago's queer activist community and how it has grown and thrives to the present day. **Ait Atta** offers an inspiring and haunting journey into a forgotten way of life in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. And, **Forest for the Trees** showcases the power of healing both the land and ourselves in a remote and unforgiving landscape. What is the common denominator for all these films? They all engage the fragile and awe inspiring human experience, challenge our assumptions, and invite positive change.



All 2023 film acquisitions include the below.

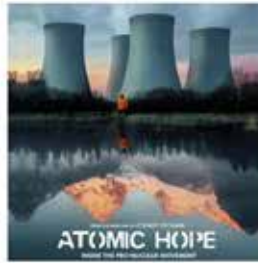
Topics range from Anthropology, to Humanity, to Sustainable Energy, Civil Rights to Forestry



**AIT ATTA: Nomads of the High Atlas (Morocco)**



**The Great 14th: Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama in His Own Words**



**ATOMIC HOPE: Inside the Pro-Nuclear Movement**



**Art and Pep**  
From \$49.00



**Forest for the Trees - The Tree Planters**

## **AIT ATTA: Nomads of the High Atlas (Morocco)**

The Ait Atta tribe of the High Atlas mountain range in Morocco preserves their ancestral right of access to the agdal, a communal land management system that dates back hundreds of years.

## **The Great 14th: Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama in His Own Words**

How does one capture the essence of one of the most legendary lives of our time? A boundless and heroic life filled with extraordinary loss, resilience, and achievement—and a man whose philosophy of kindness continues to inspire millions of people around the world, regardless of faith or political persuasion? In this profound and inspiring portrait of the 14th Dalai Lama, the answer is: In his own words.

## **ATOMIC HOPE: INSIDE THE PRO NUCLEAR MOVEMENT**

'Atomic Hope' follows a tiny global movement of unpopular pro-nuclear activists, who strongly believe we need nuclear power in order to decarbonize our energy systems, before catastrophic climate change occurs.

## **ART AND PEP**

Art Johnston and Pepe Peña are civil rights leaders whose life and love is a force behind LGBTQ+ equality in the heart of the country. Their iconic gay bar, Sidetrack, has helped fuel movements and create community for decades in Chicago's queer enclave. But, behind the business and their historic activism exists a love unlike any other. The documentary film ART AND PEP tells the inspiring story of the long struggle for equality and their fight to love freely

## **FOREST FOR THE TREES - THE TREE PLANTERS**

This visually and artistically unique documentary explores the physical and emotional aspects of a community of Canadian west coast tree planters. Deftly weaving together still photos and film footage, Rita Leistner, an award-winning photographer, photojournalist, filmmaker and erstwhile tree planter (who has been nominated for a 2022 Canadian Screen Award for Best Cinematography for her work in this film), depicts the contradictions in the experiences of the tree planters—the hardship and the healing; the solitude and the joy of belonging—creating an eloquent cinematic metaphor for the human condition.

# 2023 Screening Events

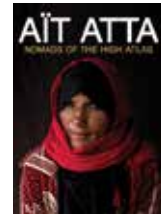
**Green Planet Films Presents** was busy in 2023 working with local partners to present curated screenings to local Connecticut and Rhode Island audiences. This is a chance to get out into the community and share films, stories about filmmakers, and get first hand audience reactions to new releases. To reach a diverse audience, we present films in different locations including, nonprofits, libraries, retirement homes and cinemas.

This reaction from one viewer at our Westerly Library screening of **Forest for the Trees** sums up nicely how impactful a film can be:

“**Thank you!** A life changing documentary! Excellent! I wanted to major in Environmental Forestry Science. Life got in the way. Bravo to all these people doing it without any schooling! Hero’s of Mother Earth.”

Two screenings at  
Mystic Luxury Cinemas

**Forest for the Trees**  
**Ait Atta - Nomads of the High Atlas**



A three-film series at the  
Westerly Public Library

**Tracking Notes**  
**Forest for the Trees**  
**Atomic Hope**



A Special Screening of  
**The Great 14th** at Stoneridge  
Independent Senior Living



**A Call to Arts** at the United Theatre  
with King of Cocktails Dale Degroff



# Grants, Fundraising and Board

## GRANTS



**Big news!** In 2023 Green Planet received two grants

We are thrilled to announce that Green Planet Films has received a **Supporting Arts Grant from the State of Connecticut** for \$4,062!

We look forward to putting this money to work growing our film education programs and distribution work. 2024 is going to be a great year at Green Planet Films.



**Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation.** \$3000 for Atomic Hope: Inside the Pro-Nuclear Movement screenings.

## FUNDRAISING

In 2023, we had our most successful fundraising drive of all times, with our **Cinema for Change** campaign.

For twenty years, we have been unwavering in our commitment to curating, supporting filmmakers, and distributing films that shed light on critical global issues. We've showcased over 350 stories of hope, resilience, and the human spirit that might have otherwise remained unseen. Our work has touched the lives of countless individuals, awakening a sense of interconnectedness and fostering a sense of responsibility toward our world. Our 2023 lineup of new releases are descriptive for everything we have sought to accomplish in this 20-year journey.

But our journey is far from over. The power of storytelling, especially through the medium of film, remains a potent force for change. There are countless stories yet to be told, voices yet to be heard, and lives yet to be impacted. That's where you come in.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A growing board with more local talent. Wishing outgoing members thanks and luck in their next endeavors and a big welcome to new members.

### Current Board of Directors and Team

Executive Director: **Suzanne Harle**

President: **Ernest Gonzales**

Treasurer: **Dave Reinhardt**

Secretary: **Sharon Duncalf** (outgoing) and **Christopher Donohue**

Director of Marketing and Development: **Christopher Donohue**

Director of Education: **Rosanne Shea**

Board Member: **Charles Buffum**

Board Member: **Michael O'Keefe**

Board Member: **Bill Dougherty**

Chief Operating Officer: **Chris Kepple**

# Publicity and Reviews

## Green Planet Films Publicity

### Westerly Sun

[LINK](#)

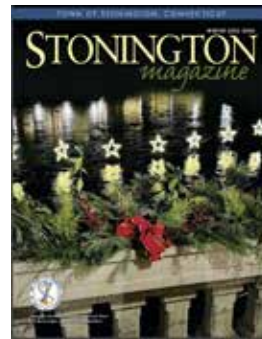
May 23, 2023 article about the screening of filmmaker Rita Leistner's film Forest for the Trees, and her appearance at the Mystic Luxury Cinema.



### Stonington Magazine

[LINK](#)

Winter 2023 article about Green Planet Films' filmmaking workshops.



### Comcast Newsmakers

[LINK](#)

Comcast contacted GPF's Founder and Executive Director Suzanne Harle to chat about our 20 year history. The 6 min segment can be seen at the link above.



## Great Film Reviews

GPF's 2023 slate of films garnered positive reviews in publications for librarians.



### Educational Media Reviews Online

**Forest for the Trees: The Tree Planters**

MAY18, 2023 HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

[READ HERE](#)

### The Sound View

**Ait Atta - Nomads of the High Atlas**

Dec 2023 HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

[READ HERE](#)

### Video Librarian (Read all reviews [HERE](#))

**Atomic Hope: Inside the Pro-Nuclear Movement**

Dec 1, 2023 ★★★★★

**The Great 14th: Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama in His Own Words**

Sept 18, 2023 ★★★★★

**Art and Pep**

Oct 18, 2023 ★★★★★ 4.5

**A Call to Arts: An Artistic Journey in Ireland 1935-1975**

May 5, 2023 ★★★★★

**Forest for the Trees: The Tree Planters**

April 27, 2023 ★★★★★

**Tracking Notes -**

**The Secret World of Mountain Lions**

Mar 13, 2023 ★★★★★

**When You Return -**

**The Basket Weavers**

Feb 24, 2023 ★★★★★

# 2023 Filmmaking Workshops

## Mystic Seaport Museum

Instructing Students from the Maritime Adventure Program Stonington High School



For a consistent learning experience, we invested in 12 iPads, sound equipment and tripods to use in our filmmaking workshops.



We introduced new filmmakers to professional documentarians such as Canadian Rita Leistner and her film "Forest For the Trees" (left) . The workshops also helped students develop the skills needed to complete a short film.



## Phoebe Noyes Griffin Library with Lyme Creative Arts



Middle school and elementary children came together at the Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library for a three day micro-documentary workshop. They explored many different facets of the library including the gardens, the art collection, the history of the library and the books.

Librarians at the Phoebe were very generous in supporting the filmmakers with guidance on the exciting possibilities of the library. They even agreed to share their expertise by sitting down for interviews with students. The workshop culminated in a really fun screening event, where anyone who happened to be in the library was invited.



# Partners and Platforms

## Streaming Platforms and DVD Partners



## Curve Royalty Systems

In Q2 2023 Green Planet Films upgraded our royalty payment method to Curve Royalty Systems.

Curve is a royalty processing platform built to accommodate the scale and demand needed for today's digital music and film reporting. It has helped improve GPF's costs and provides improved functionality for filmmakers and staff.



## Top Ten Streamed Films by Minutes in 2023

Rank	Video Title	Plays	Mins
1	Crazywise	3,922	148,852
2	Forest for the Trees	1,992	81,203
3	The Grammar of Happiness	1,563	46,970
4	A River Between Us	878	30,202
5	Thin Ice	955	27,149
6	Sand Wars	973	26,865
7	A Convenient Truth	835	22,985
8	Vegucated	574	21,562
9	USA: Being Poor in the World's Richest Country	740	20,147
10	Autism in America	497	16,711

