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Planet in Focus Environmental Film Festival to present inaugural Rob Stewart Youth Eco-Hero Award to Jonah Bryson

Festival will honour the legacy of Canadian filmmaker, activist and educator Rob Stewart with a brand new Eco-Hero Award named after him. Bryson, who was mentored by Stewart, becomes first-ever recipient of the award at 17.

The 18th Planet in Focus Environmental Film Festival will take place October 19 to 22, 2017
Planetinfoocus.org

TORONTO - The **Planet in Focus Environmental Film Festival** (PIF) is extremely pleased to celebrate the legacy of extraordinary Toronto-born activist, filmmaker and educator Rob Stewart by introducing the **Rob Stewart Youth Eco-Hero Award**, which will be presented annually to a young Canadian environmental activist aged 20 or under.

Activist and filmmaker **Jonah Bryson**, 17, will be presented with the inaugural Award during PIF's 18th edition, set to take place October 19 to 22, 2017.

In addition to being an exceptional young talent, **Rob Stewart** was also a long-time friend of the Festival. The late Canadian documentarian became the youngest-ever recipient of PIF's International Eco-hero Award at just 34. His two award-winning feature documentaries, *Sharkwater* —which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival to much enthusiasm— and *Revolution*, both screened at PIF in 2006 and 2012, respectively.

Born in the South of France, activist, filmmaker and musician **Jonah Bryson** has had a deep connection with the underwater world from a very young age. In addition to numerous accolades and having worked with several high-profile names, Jonah had the opportunity to work on a couple of film projects with Stewart, who became his mentor and friend. Together they co-directed the 2015 short doc *The Fight for Bala*, and Stewart took part in Bryson's feature directorial debut, *A Sweet Spot in Time*, which is set for release later in 2017.

Recently, Bryson was also part of PIF's Eco-Hero roundtable with 2016 Canadian Eco-Hero, Dr. David Suzuki.

“We are honoured to have the opportunity to celebrate Rob Stewart’s legacy with this brand new Award,” said PIF’s Executive Director Jordana Aarons. “Jonah is a very talented and passionate young man. Not only did he get the chance to collaborate with Rob but was also deeply inspired and mentored by him. I cannot think of someone more deserving.”

PIF’s complete 2017 lineup will be announced on September 18, 2017. Festival tickets will go on sale that same day. For more information, visit planetinfocus.org

About Planet in Focus

Planet in Focus is a charitable organization whose mission is to use film as a catalyst for change by raising awareness of critical environmental issues through a variety of media-based initiatives including; the Planet in Focus Environmental Film Festival, the Green School Tours, Eco-Film Lab, the PIF Student Film Festival and year ‘round screenings that showcase the best environmental films from Canada and around the world. PlanetinFocus.org

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