

Squamish Mountain Festival announces guest speakers - Royal Robbins, Barry Blanchard, Cedar Wright

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International climbing destination hosts Squamish Mountain Festival Celebrate with Royal Robbins, Barry Blanchard and climbing funny man, Cedar Wright, July 14-18

SQUAMISH, British Columbia (June 29, 2010) - With less than two weeks to go, Squamish is ready to celebrate its internationally renowned climbing culture with some of the sport's biggest names at the Squamish Mountain Festival. Films and speakers will be featured at the Eagle Eye Theatre, Squamish, British Columbia, Canada, from July 14 to 18, 2010.

Canadian alpinist Barry Blanchard, Yosemite big wall pioneer Royal Robbins, and crack climbing funny man Cedar Wright, are some of the highlights on the roster of presenters who have survived decades of wild adventures and near misses, and have stories to share about their vertical lifestyles. Also presenting at the festival will be Jason Kruk, Tommy Caldwell and Rob Pizem. Each night will feature climbing and mountain adventure films from around the globe.

The festival opens Wednesday, July 14 at the Eagle Eye Theatre in Squamish with legendary Canadian alpinist, Barry Blanchard. After three decades in the climbing game, Blanchard is a well-known raconteur, writer and mentor. He has been described as "a mountaineer so revered that aspiring alpinists pin his photo in their high school lockers." Despite the high-level adulation, Blanchard maintains a down-to-earth sense of humour.

"Barry has been a respected member of a small group of very elite alpine climbers for years," says festival director Ivan Hughes, "and he's still out there guiding on a regular basis so its been tough trying to get him out here for the festival."

The Steep Shot Photo Contest takes place Thursday, July 15. This is showcase of the best shooters in the biz and sells out every year! Six photographers are asked to produce a slideshow of their best climbing or climbing related photography. The slide shows are judged and the top 3 presentations are awarded cash prizes.

Friday, July 16 is the Big Wall Climbing Night and features a presentation from Yosemite big wall pioneer Royal Robbins. Robbins' accomplishments as rock climber are many. An early advocate of bolt-less, piton-less, clean climbing, Robbins did much to transform climbing culture to minimize the human impact on the vertical wilderness and protect its natural features. As a rock-climbing pioneer, he broke through existing standards to create wholly new skill and difficulty levels. In the 50s, 60s, and into the 70s, Robbins established one daring new climb after another, among them many revered classics on Yosemite's Half Dome and El Capitan.

On the Alpine Climbing Night, Saturday, July 17, the festival welcomes back Cedar Wright who first presented at the festival in 2008. Cedar learned climbing at the age of 21 on Northern California's majestic sea cliffs. While he worked toward his B.A. in English from Humboldt State, he quickly progressed as a climber and was soon establishing numerous first-ascent free climbs throughout the area. After earning his degree he started wintering in Joshua Tree and spending the rest of the year in Yosemite, where he became an accomplished free soloist, speed climber, aid climber and free climber.

"We wanted to bring Cedar back because he's been doing so many incredible climbs lately and filming lots of his adventures," says Hughes, "a lot of other climbers are out there doing presentations these days but few are as entertaining, enlightening and at the same time hilarious as Cedar, we just had to get him back here."

The Squamish Mountain Festival is presented by Arc'teryx. Tickets are available in Squamish at Climb On, Valhalla Pure, the Squamish Adventure Centre and on-line at <http://www.squamishmountainfestival.com>

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squamish july 14-18 mountain festival 2010



a 5-day celebration of climbing culture