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AWARD-WINNING FILMMAKER DAVID VASSER TO OPEN NEW RAE DOROUGH SPEAKER SERIES WITH CLIPS AND DISCUSSION OF FILMS ABOUT YOSEMITE

LIVERMORE – David Vasser, an Emmy-winning and Oscar-nominated documentary filmmaker, will kick off the 2017-18 Rae Dorough Speaker Series with a presentation of “Yosemite and Hetch Hetchy: Why National Parks?” at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 5 in the Bankhead Theater.

Vasser, who has 30 years experience producing films about the natural world, will show segments from his films that feature Yosemite “as the birthplace of the national park idea,” discuss the historic context of the film clips and offer insights into how the films were made. Coming in the wake of the centennial celebration of the national parks and at a time when the role of the national parks is being called into question, Vasser’s presentation is timely.

From the first film he produced about Yosemite at age 19 to his latest about the fate of the American desert, Vasser has been ahead of his time, often leading the discussion about critical environmental issues. His films have appeared on PBS as well as other channels and he was a primary director of the acclaimed NBC series *Unsolved Mysteries*. His 1980 film “Generation on the Wind” was nominated for an Academy Award. For more about Vasser’s life and career, see: <https://bcpfilms.com/>

“It’s been a wild ride,” said David Vassar in a 2016 interview for an event marking the centennial of the national parks. “I’ve told stories about America’s great National Parks, treasured and lost landscapes, and epic conservation battles. People will protect what they love, and documentaries bring the issues, people, wildlife and landscapes home. I hope we’ve made a difference; there’s more to be done.”

Vasser is the first of five speakers who will present during the 2017-2018 season. For additional information, see the Rae Dorough Speaker Series Website: <http://raedoroughspeakerseries.org/>

Season tickets are available for the five-speaker series as well as for individual presentations. Individual presentation tickets are \$16 for students and range from \$32 to \$40 for adults. Tickets are now available online <http://raedoroughspeakerseries.org/tickets/> or may be purchased at the Bankhead Theater box office, 2400 First Street, Livermore, Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6 p.m., or by calling (925)-373-6800.

The speaker series honors the late Rae Dorough, a respected Livermore resident and strong supporter of cultural events. Members of her family were the initiating sponsors in 2008. The series is sponsored in part by Lawrence Livermore National Security, LLC, The Hertz Foundation, Sandia National Laboratory, Tri-Valley Conservancy and ImageSetters.

Tickets – 925.373.6800 or www.bankheadtheater.org | PO Box 592 | Livermore | CA 94551