

Director's statement

I have always been passionate about the value of time spent in nature and believe that nature belongs to all of us regardless of gender, race or income. I believe that kids need nature now more than ever: the solitude, the uncomplicated beauty, and the inspiration found in the natural world are critical to our well-being. The reminders are all around us of how disconnected kids have become from nature and just how negatively this affects them in mind, body and spirit.

When I found out that five young women would be living semi-primitively in the Oregon Cascade Mountains for an entire year, I was absolutely delighted. What an amazing adventure! When I shared this information with others, I was astounded by how many people truly believed that five women couldn't possibly do this, and well, a fire was lit!

This being my first film, I saw a place where my activism, love of nature, creativity and Virgo pickiness could coalesce. I wanted to make a film that was hopeful and visually beautiful and that carried a message inspiring all of us to spend just a little more time outside. I also wanted to document the young women's experience with as little interference as possible. I knew immediately that to make the film I had in mind I'd need to surround myself with gifted filmmakers and I have been unbelievably lucky in that regard. From our cameraperson to our social media interns, everyone on the crew has taken this project to heart. Likewise, I have been heartened by people in the broader film community who have supported, consulted and educated me along the way.

What started as the story of five young women became focused on one of them in particular: Tori. She has attention deficit disorder, dyslexia and short-term memory problems that made learning in traditional settings difficult and led to social problems in high school, which many kids can relate to. Yet in nature she came alive! Her confidence was boosted by learning and retaining names and calls of birds, identifying plants and animals, and finding herself not just on level ground with her peers but actually forming deep friendships.

It is my great joy to bring you *Earth Seasoned*...#GapYear

