

KCET and USC Libraries: LA as Subject

Based on the article, "Wild L.A.: Mountain Lions, Grizzly Bears & the Land that Once Was," by Nathan Masters, this video is an experimental film that focuses on the story of the extinction of the California grizzly. By telling the history of extinction the story of the grizzlies' lost habitat and the relationship of indigenous and non-native people of California to the formidable mammal will emerge.

The tone of the film is contemplative and pushes viewers to think about the line crossed when the last grizzly was killed. What is the difference living with or without indigenous wildlife?

Structurally, the film is composed of interviews featuring Dr. Paula Schiffman ("The Los Angeles Prairie") and Dr. Jared Aldern ("From Los Vallecitos to Lost Valley") intercut with live-action green screen footage of a grizzly bear. Dr. Schiffman's interview will be used to highlight the impact of the grizzlies' extinction on the fauna of Los Angeles whereas Dr. Aldern's interview will relate native people's stories of the bear.

The green screen footage of the grizzly bear will provide a frame where archival elements such as maps of where grizzlies lived in California, illustrations of captures, journal entries, policy documents (e.g. California Fish and Game Department), as well as landscapes of (relic) habitats will play inside and outside the bear's form. This stylistic treatment of archival components will be the metaphorical window into the past and work as haunting imprints of history on the mammal that no longer walks the prairies of Los Angeles.



I am also exploring creating infographics in the style of Marcel Dzama's bear paintings that illustrate: the grizzlies' physical stature compared to humans; bear population timeline; and bear namesake given to California landmarks, parks, cities, etc.



Original music will be scored by Aaron Olson and will support the haunting tone.

Production Team:

Producer & Director Laura Purdy
Editor Laura Purdy
Cinematographer Neal Brown
Motion Graphics Alban Cooper
Sound Design Josh Derry
Music Composer Aaron Olson

Research Material:

- Masters, Nathan. "Wild L.A.: Mountain Lions, Grizzly Bears & the Land that Once Was," LA as Subject
- Aldern, Jared. "From Los Vallecitos to Lost Valley" *Boom*
- Storer, Tracy I. & Tevis, Lloyd P. *California Grizzly*
- Kelly, Allen. *Bears I Have Met-And Others*

Interviews:

Paula Schiffman, Ph.D
paula.schiffman@csun.edu

Terrestrial Ecologist
California State University Northridge
"I spend a lot of time exploring and thinking
about wildness."

Jared D. Aldern, Ph. D.
jaldern@prescott.edu
Environmental Historian, Ecological Restoration-
ist, Educator.
Prescott College