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Lost film by Texas filmmaker Eagle Pennell to screen at Bullock Museum Dec. 16

Regional classic that inspired Sundance part of Texas Focus lineup

DECEMBER 3, 2015 (AUSTIN, TX) — Texas filmmaker Eagle Pennell's 1978 film, "The Whole Shootin' Match," will be shown in the Bullock Texas State History Museum's Texas Spirit Theater on Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 7 p.m., followed by a Q&A with one of the film's stars, Sonny Carl Davis ("Thelma & Louise," "Bernie," "Fast Times at Ridgemont High").

The film is part of the Bullock Museum's Texas Focus film series, and this screening is offered in partnership with the University of Texas Press, which released Pennell's indie classic on DVD this year with South by Southwest founder Louis Black serving as executive producer. "The Whole Shootin' Match" has been a lost film for years with rare screenings and no known decent prints available in any medium. Finally, a near-mint film print was located and has been digitally restored and this version will be shown at the Bullock Museum.

"The Whole Shootin' Match" tells the story of two middle-aged country boys and close friends, Lloyd (Lou Perryman) and Frank (Sonny Carl Davis), who work as partners on a variety of manual labor jobs in order to scrape by. In search of fast cash, Lloyd and Frank pursue an idea they hope will bring them steady cash flow, only to find the associates they've entrusted with their plan have deceived them. Disenfranchised by the inequality of favor in life, the two men are confronted with the battle between perseverance and the long-winded blow of becoming too weary.

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Originally a 16mm, black-and-white film, the movie is a classic example of regional cinema, in this case featuring Central Texas.

The film took the audience award at the Utah/USA Film Festival in 1978, as did Pennell's 1984 indie film "Last Night at the Alamo." In 1978, Arthur Knight of "The Hollywood Reporter" selected "The Whole Shootin' Match" as one of his best American films of that year and wrote, "By the end of the film, Pennell has made you 'care' – mainly because he never demeans his characters, or makes them look foolish for the sake of a cheap and easy laugh."

His characters connected with critics, and "Austin-American Statesman" writer Patrick Taggart wrote, after seeing the film in 1978, "...rarely is the working-class Texan portrayed with more honesty – and compassion and humor – than the films of Austin moviemaker Eagle Pennell."

Then 25-year-old Pennell made the film for only \$15,000. Robert Redford would remark after its release that it served as an inspiration for him to start the Sundance Film Festival.

Pennell grew up in Lubbock and developed an interest in film in his teens utilizing his father's Super 8 camera and his siblings as cast members. After spending time as a student in the Radio, Television and Film Department at The University of Texas at Austin, Pennell decided to pursue filmmaking full-time fueled by the desire to record and show his vision of Texas life.

Pennell made films that were regional, but hoped that they would reach a wider audience. Chuck Pinnell, Eagle's brother and composer of the music in "The Whole Shootin' Match" said, "Eagle had the ability to control people and take them on journeys."

Eagle Pennell died in 2002 at the age of 50, but left behind a name in the film world that represents the trailblazing nature of what it means to be a Texas independent filmmaker.

Louis Black has produced a deluxe boxed set that includes two DVDs with the fully restored feature film; an original feature-length documentary, "The King of Texas;" a fully restored version of Eagle Pennell's first short film, "A Hell of a Note;" archival interviews and news stories; and three commentary tracks. The set also includes a bonus audio CD with the soundtracks of "The Whole Shootin' Match" and "The King of Texas" composed by Chuck Pinnell and featuring Slaid Cleaves. It is available from University of Texas Press and in the Bullock Museum Store.

The screening and Q&A with Sonny Davis will be held at the Bullock Museum, 1800 N. Congress Ave., in the Texas Spirit Theater on the second floor. A limited number of tickets are available. Cost is \$3 for Bullock Museum members and \$5 for non-members. Parking is free in the Museum's garage. For more information and tickets, visit TheStoryofTexas.com.

About the Bullock Museum

The Bullock Texas State History Museum, located at 1800 N. Congress Ave. in downtown Austin, includes three floors of exhibitions, IMAX® and 4D special-effects theaters, a café and museum store. The Museum collaborates with more than 700 museums, libraries, archives, and individuals to display original historical artifacts and host exhibitions that illuminate and celebrate Texas history and culture. For more, visit TheStoryofTexas.com or call (512) 936-8746.

Bullock Texas State History Museum

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