



FILM TO HIGHLIGHT ABQ BALLOONISTS

The world has long known Albuquerque as the capital of hot air ballooning. So, when the ballooning documentary *Wind Riders* debuts on May 3 at the Manhattan Film Festival, it should come as no surprise that Albuquerque had a hand in its creation.

The film, which has been in the making for nearly a decade, follows the legendary Albuquerque ballooning team of Richard Abruzzo and Carol Rymer Davis. Using archival footage, the documentary follows the balloonists in the years leading up to their 2010 entry in the Gordon Bennett Cup, the world's oldest gas balloon race. As many locals know, the journey ended in a tragedy that rocked the ballooning community when Abruzzo and Rymer Davis were lost over the Adriatic Sea on September 29, 2010.

Abruzzo's widow, Nancy, still lives in Albuquerque, and says the film was difficult to watch, but also beautiful. "The film certainly brings all of the old emotions to the surface," she says. "But it was really thrilling to see the passion that (Richard) had for ballooning. The film provides a very unique insight into gas ballooning and shows the beauty of it and the joy it brought to Richard." Nancy says

the filmmakers were very sensitive and aware of the feelings the film may invoke for the members of the Abruzzo and Davis families.

In the film, Abruzzo and Rymer Davis compete in various long-distance ballooning races, battling the mental and physical fatigue imposed by the demands of the sport. The film also is an emotional and heart-warming look at gas ballooning, which involves lightweight gases such as hydrogen and helium to achieve lift, rather than hot air. Another focus of the documentary is Bill Hughes, a retired military pilot who takes joy in floating passengers in hot air balloons over New York state.

"We're honored for this opportunity," says producer and director Emi Katayama. "In recent years entering to a recognized film festival has been very tough for documentary films as the number of indie films have increased to thousands."

A date has not yet been set for an Albuquerque release, but Nancy Abruzzo says plans are in the works. To find announcements and news about *Wind Riders*, visit the film's Facebook page, @windridersfilm. —TH

A Crawl Through ABQ Textile Art

The third annual New Mexico Fiber Crawl is making a stop in Albuquerque May 17-19. Whether you are a fiber enthusiast or just wanting to explore more of the art world, this event has a wide-ranging list of activities from demonstrations by weavers, knitters, spinners, felters, embroiders, and even new media artists presenting exhibits like "Fiber as a Metaphor". Attendees can get up close with the artists and learn about their day-to-day process of creation. The experience can be tailored to your personal preference via the New Mexico Fiber Crawl website.

"New Mexico has a robust fiber art community that extends further than yarn," says spokesperson Danielle Rose. "You have the super fine arts, sheep to shawl demonstrations, and just super fun activities, which can be found right in the streets of Albuquerque."

Included in the crawl is the opportunity to go behind the scenes of many stores and studios, such as Kei and Molly textiles where their production facility will be opened to the public. "There are many influences that contribute to the rich heritage of the fiber arts and, especially with this event, the possibilities are endless and you can find something for everyone," Rose says. —TV

