



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Elevation Pictures, Mercury Films, and Vendome Pictures Announce  
the Start of Production on a Documentary about 21st Century  
Wildfires by Acclaimed Filmmakers Jennifer Baichwal and Nicholas  
de Pencier**

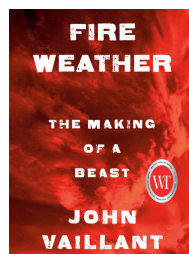
Toronto, ON (June 2, 2025) — **Elevation Pictures, Mercury Films and Vendome Pictures** are proud to announce they have optioned the visionary book *Fire Weather*, and production has begun on a new feature documentary that will explore the global wildfire crisis and the urgent fight to secure the future of life on Earth.

From filmmakers **Nicholas de Pencier and Jennifer Baichwal** (*Long Time Running; Anthropocene: The Human Epoch*), the film will blend cinematic, narrative storytelling with scientific fact to explore both the hard challenges and the enormous possibilities posed by 21st-century wildfires. “Our ambition is to harness documentary’s unique power and art to inform and prepare us for what is rapidly becoming one of the most pressing challenges of our time.” say Baichwal and de Pencier.

Acclaimed author and journalist **John Vaillant**, a brilliant storyteller whose landmark book *Fire Weather* was a finalist for the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction, will serve as Executive Producer and Story Consultant on the project. Vaillant is widely recognized as a definitive voice on the subject of wildfire in the modern era, bringing unmatched insight and authority to the film.

Environmental Defence Canada will be partnering with the production team to provide climate related subject matter and policy advocacy expertise.

Baichwal and de Pencier are set to produce alongside **Christina Piovesan** and **Ruti Prikhoji** of Elevation Pictures. **Vaillant**, Vendome Pictures, and **Michelle Koerner** are executive producers.



### **Praise for the book *Fire Weather*:**

*"All-too-timely. . . . The real protagonist here is the fire itself: an unruly and terrifying force with insatiable appetites. [Fire Weather] is both a real-life thriller and a moment-by-moment account of what happened—and why, as the climate changes and humans don't, it will continue to happen again and again."* —*The New York Times*, "10 Best Books of 2023"

### **Notes to Editors**

### **About Elevation Pictures**

Founded in 2013, Elevation has become Canada's leading entertainment company specializing in distribution and production. Elevation's past production projects include Golden Globe Nominated *French Exit*, starring Michelle Pfeiffer and Lucas Hedges; *Alice Darling* starring Anna Kendrick; *Infinity Pool* starring Mia Goth and Alexander Skarsgard; *A Good Person* starring Florence Pugh and Morgan Freeman; *Bonjour Tristesse* starring Chloë Sevigny and Lily McInerney and upcoming documentary *Lilith Fair: Building A Mystery*, directed by Ally Pankiw and co-produced with Dan Levy.

The distribution arm is best known for releasing *The Imitation Game*, *Moonlight*, *Everything Everywhere All At Once*, *Brother and BlackBerry*. Most recent theatrical releases include *Longlegs*, *Anora*, *Conclave* and *The Brutalist*. For more information, please visit [elevationpictures.com](http://elevationpictures.com)

### **About Mercury Films**

Jennifer Baichwal and Nicholas de Pencier, the founders of Mercury Films Inc., have been making award-winning, critically acclaimed documentaries and films for nearly three decades. Their subjects are eclectic, skewed to art and philosophy, and try to extend formal boundaries without being inaccessible.

### **Jennifer Baichwal**

Jennifer has been directing and producing documentaries for 30 years. Among other films, installations and lens-based projects, she has made 10 feature documentaries which have played all over the world and won awards nationally and internationally. These features include: *Let It Come Down: The Life of Paul Bowles* (International Emmy); *The Holier It Gets* (Best Canadian and Best Cultural Film, Hot Docs); *The True Meaning of Pictures* (Best Arts Doc, Geminis); *Manufactured Landscapes* (Best Canadian Film, TIFF, AI Gore Reel Current Award); *Act of God* (opening night film, Hot Docs); *Payback* (Sundance); *Watermark* (Berlin, Best Canadian Film, TFCA, and Best Feature Doc, CSA); *Long Time Running*, about the beloved Canadian band The Tragically Hip and their final tour (TIFF Gala); and *ANTHROPOCENE: The Human Epoch* (TIFF, Sundance, Berlin, Best Canadian Film, TFCA, and Best Feature Doc, CSA). *ANTHROPOCENE* is a multidisciplinary project combining a feature documentary film; a major international touring exhibition comprising film installations, photographs, interactive murals and Augmented Reality sculptures; two books; and an educational program. Most recently, Baichwal directed *Into the Weeds: Dwayne "Lee" Johnson vs. Monsanto Company*

(2022). The documentary follows the story of groundskeeper Lee Johnson and his fight for justice against agrichemical giant Monsanto (now Bayer), the manufacturer of the weed killer Roundup. The film was the Opening Night Gala at the Hot Docs Film Festival in 2022, and won Best Film Testimony at Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival. She is the only filmmaker to have won the Toronto Film Critics Award for Best Canadian Feature Film three times, all for documentaries. Baichwal sits on the boards of Swim Drink Fish Canada and Access Education Guatemala Children's Fund. She was a Director of the Board of the Toronto International Film Festival from 2016 – 2022.

### **Nicholas de Pencier**

De Pencier's selected credits include Let It Come Down: The Life of Paul Bowles (International Emmy), The Holier It Gets (Best Canadian Doc, Hot Docs), The True Meaning of Pictures (Gemini, Best Arts), Hockey Nomad (Gemini, Best Sports), Manufactured Landscapes (TIFF best Canadian feature), and Act of God (Gala opening night, Hot Docs). He was also the Producer and Director of Photography of Watermark (Special Presentation, TIFF & Berlin, Toronto Film Critics Award, Best Canadian Film, CSA Best Doc), and Black Code (TIFF) which he also directed. He co-directed and photographed Long Time Running (TIFF Gala) about the Tragically Hip's last tour. He was a Co-Director, Producer and Cinematographer of Anthropocene: The Human Epoch which was a Special Presentation at TIFF, before playing at Berlin and Sundance, and again won the Toronto Film Critics Award, Best Canadian Film, CSA Best Doc and also the CSC award for Best Cinematography. Most recently he was the Series Producer for the CBC limited series Summit 72, the Winter Episode Director and principal DOP of Great Lake Untamed (Smithsonian, Terra Matter), Executive Producer of Swan Song (CBC), Wilfred Buck (Crave), and The Optimist's Guide to the Planet (Bloomberg/Crave). A northern treeplanter in his 20s, he has been a lifelong wilderness adventurer, and in 2019 received the Royal Canadian Geographical Society's Gold Medal Award.

### **About John Vaillant**

John Vaillant is an author and freelance writer based in Vancouver, BC whose work has appeared in The New Yorker, The Atlantic, National Geographic, and The Guardian, among others. His journalism, fiction and non-fiction explores collisions between human ambition and the natural world. Vaillant's first book, The Golden Spruce (Norton, 2005), was a bestseller and won several awards, including the Governor General's and Writers' Trust awards for non-fiction (Canada). His second nonfiction book, The Tiger (Knopf, 2010), won the B.C. Achievement Award for Non-Fiction, was a bestseller selected for Canada Reads, and has been published in 16 languages. In 2014 Vaillant won the Windham-Campbell Prize, a global award for non-fiction. In 2015, he published his first work of fiction, The Jaguar's Children (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015), which was long-listed for the Dublin IMPAC and Kirkus Fiction Prizes, and was a finalist for the Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. His latest book, Fire Weather (Knopf, 2023), is a #1 national bestseller that won Britain's Baillie Gifford Prize, a global prize for English language non-fiction. In addition to being a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, the U.S. National Book Award, the PEN/Galbraith Non-Fiction Award, Britain's Wainwright Prize, and France's Prix des librairies Payot, Fire Weather was named one of the ten best books of 2023 by The New York Times, The New Yorker, The Financial Times, and The Guardian, among many other prominent publications. In Canada, Fire Weather won the Shaughnessy-Cohen Prize for Political Writing, the Dafoe Book Prize, the Hubert Evans Non-Fiction Prize, the Lane Anderson Award for Science Writing, and was a finalist for the Writers' Trust Nonfiction Prize.

### **About Vendôme**

Vendôme Group is a leading independent production company with offices in Paris and Los Angeles. Founded in 2004 by Philippe Rousselet—now Chairman and co-CEO alongside Fabrice Gianfermi—the company is known for producing bold, internationally acclaimed content across both French and English-language markets.

Vendôme made history with CODA, the first French-produced film to win three Academy Awards, including Best Picture in 2022. The company specializes in cross-Atlantic productions, offering innovative financing and production strategies that balance creativity and commercial appeal.

Upcoming projects include Lords of War starring Nicolas Cage and Bill Skarsgård, The Man With The Miraculous Hands with Woody Harrelson, and Ibelin directed by Morten Tyldum. The company is also developing a Source Code TV series and recently acquired rights to Fire Weather.

### **About Michelle Koerner**

Michelle Koerner makes her debut as an Executive Producer with this powerful documentary on wildfires. With a background in arts management, journalism, and environmental advocacy, she brings a deep personal commitment to public education and research on wildfire mitigation and adaptation. Driven by a passion for raising awareness about the escalating impacts of climate change, Michelle partnered with the filmmakers to examine both the human and ecological consequences of wildfires—and to envision a future where communities proactively coexist with fire. This documentary marks the beginning of her journey in nonfiction filmmaking, fuelled by a desire to inform, engage, and catalyse change.

### **About Environmental Defence Canada**

Environmental Defence Canada is a leading Canadian environmental advocacy organization that works with governments, industry, and individuals to defend clean water, a safe climate and healthy communities. For over 40 years, Environmental Defence has been actively engaging in environmental issues at all levels of government through engagement with policymakers, impacted communities, civil society organizations, and the general public. They have a strong track record of advocating for ambitious solutions to tackle the climate crisis.

### **For more information, please contact:**

Kate Parkes

[kparkes@elevationpictures.com](mailto:kparkes@elevationpictures.com)

647-448-8556