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## Professor Revisits His Past with Acclaimed Film on Chile's Pivotal 'Woodstock'

Mar-12-2012

When Gary Fritz headed to South America last year to document the ramifications of Piedra Roja, Chile's 1970 version of Woodstock, he simply wanted to preserve the history of the pivotal festival that he had helped organize as a teenager.

Fritz, a biological sciences professor with little filmmaking experience, had no idea the resulting documentary would resonate so deeply with Chileans that it would even be chosen over a Martin Scorsese movie for film festival honors.

Fritz's film, "Piedra Roja," is a two-hour, close-up look at how the festival profoundly affected Chilean society during a time of social and political upheaval -- the inception of Salvador Allende's socialist government and the subsequent military coup d'etat.



Emotional interviews with some of the festival's organizers illustrate how their involvement with the festival changed the courses of their lives as they dealt with backlash from both conservative Chileans and outraged government forces.

Fritz spent 40 days in Chile filming interviews with people who had been involved with the festival. At the time, he planned to simply submit the resulting footage to the Chilean national archive. But he soon realized the story needed to be seen more widely.

He submitted it to the IN-EDIT International Film and Music Documentary Festival in Santiago, Chile, which chose it -- over Martin Scorsese's film on George Harrison -- as its inaugural film in December. In January, it was shown in the Festival of the Arts in Valparaiso, Chile. Fritz plans to continue with the film festival circuit.