

KEN FOSTER

PRESS KIT

INDIECAN ENTERTAINMENT in association with HIGH DEAF PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS  
A JOSH LANER FILM "KEN FOSTER" WRITTEN BY BRAD LANER DIRECTED BY JOSH LANER STARRING KEN FOSTER COSTARRING JOSH LANER  
EDITED BY NOUSHIN TOILAN PRODUCTION DESIGNER JOSH LANER EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MICHAEL KHAZEN PRODUCED BY TAYLOR MILNE



# KEN FOSTER

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## CONTACT

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# ABOUT THE FILM

## PROJECT SYNOPSIS

Out of the shadowy world of Vancouver's Gastown, Ken Foster emerges as an enigmatic figure. A prolific artist, Foster is known as much for his beautifully distorted renditions of iconic cityscapes as he is for peddling them on the streets to support a serious crack habit and subdue a schizophrenic mind. Inside Ken's squalid hotel room we are privy to an intimate look at life in the city's most unforgiving neighborhood and Foster's fragmented approach to his relationships and his work. When Ken's considerable talent is put to the test in Vancouver's Art Battle competition, what emerges is a gut-wrenching portrait of a man caught in conflict between ambition, ego and the desperation of needing his next fix.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

Shot over the course of a year, Josh Laner spent countless hours following Ken Foster through the streets of Vancouver and documenting both his hustle and creative process. The film was largely shot with a two man crew. This allowed the film makers complete freedom to venture into the seedy dark world of Ken's drugs addiction and the methods he uses to sustain it. His art. The result is some of the most stark, raw and viscerally footage to ever come out of Vancouver's notorious Downtown Eastside. This is a bio pic through and through. It offers a unfiltered and uncensored look inside the mind of a schizophrenic man, the one's he loves, and the life he leads. This documentary features a interviews, interactions, and the rabbit hole that is the creative process of a broken, drug addicted artist.

# KEN FOSTER



## SUBJECT

Ken Foster is a Vancouver street art legend turned drug addict. He was adopted into a loving family in 1971 but always felt he never quite fit in with his new home. This was caused in part by mental health issues that would haunt him his whole life.

He joined the Emily Carr College of Art after completing high school, but only lasted a year. His mental health issues largely to blame, as he would soon be diagnosed with schizophrenia, and plagued by voices in his head. Ken was in denial about these issues and turned to “street drugs” to make him feel normal and to take away the pain. He became addicted to crack cocaine and entered rehab twice. But a criminal record wasn’t far behind.

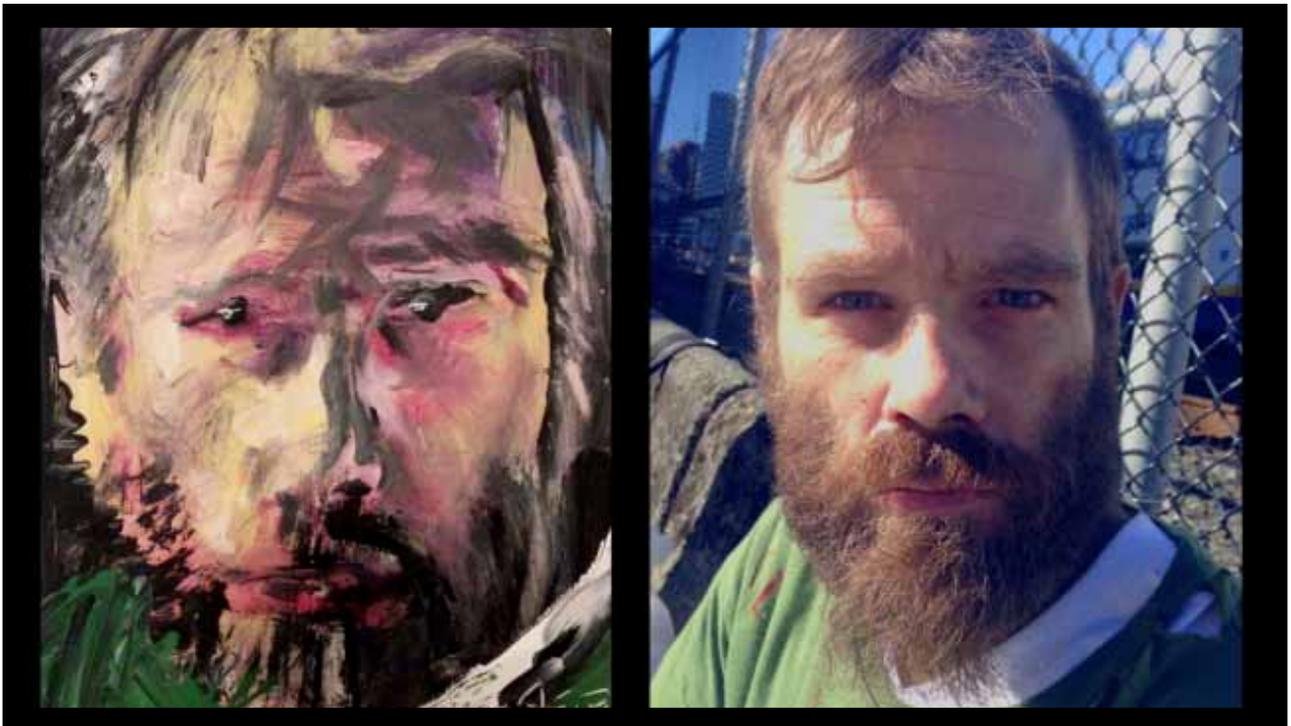
Never anything violent, always minor charges like disturbing the peace while in a psychotic state. He would often become delusional, and claim he received “electrical impulses” from the air. As Ken would go on to learn about his genealogy, his family background was filled with ADHD problems and learning disabilities. On his birth father’s side his aunt had schizophrenia and died at an early age. Still, this knowledge did nothing to stop Ken’s spiral into drugs and schizophrenia, and eventually led him to do numerous stints in jail. Some salvation would come in the form of forensic psychiatrist, who would prescribe him anti-psychotic drugs.



*Ken in his element.*

But unfortunately, it was too little too late, the damage was already done. The silver lining in Ken's life has always been his art. To say he is part of the tortured genius archetype is a massive understatement. Ken speaks to the world through his art in a way that very few can. However, this talent came with a price. Ken feels as though he can no longer use his gift, without using drugs. One begets the other, leaving him in an endless cycle of despair.

Nowadays Ken can often be found wandering the streets of Gastown and the Downtown East Side, peddling his art for a fraction of its value, hoping to score money for his next fix.



*A Ken Foster self portrait....*

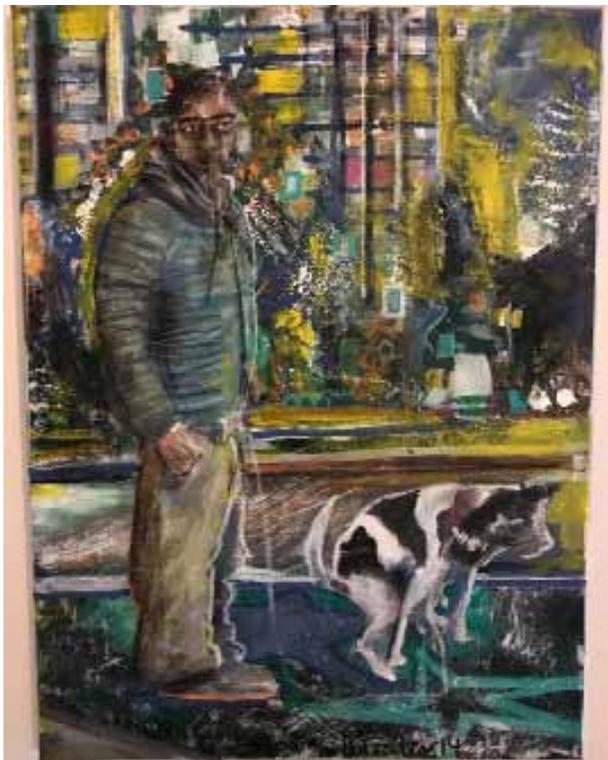
## BIOGRAPHIES

# JOSH LANER



## DIRECTOR

Josh Laner originally hails from Los Angeles CA where he was an editor working on other peoples projects with a mind for his own documentary films. In the spring of 2008 he moved to Vancouver, BC, Canada where finally got his chance to make his first film. *"Wastings and Pain"* was finished in 2009 and enjoyed mild success on the film festical circuit winning two awards for documentary film excellence. His second film *"My Other Me: A Film About Cosplayers"* explores the world of dressing as fictional characters and what prfound effect that has on kids and adults a like. My Other Me went on to win numerous awards and recieved world wide distribution.



In his downtime Josh can often be found in the the streets of Vancouver along with his partner in crime, his dog Pepper.

*Ken's rendition of Josh's faithful pup Pepper peeing on his master's shoe.*

## BIOGRAPHIES

# MICHAEL KHAZEN



## PRODUCER

Michael Khazen, CEO of High Deaf Productions, started his career in film ten years ago. He has since gone on to produce both award winning feature and television content that's been screened the world over on multiple platforms. He has recently finished a slate of feature films to be released in 2018. All of which have received distribution; the metaphysical

horror *Enter to the Circle*, the edgy art house film *The Age of Adulthood*, and the hard hitting documentary *Ken Foster*. Also, simmering in his post production pipeline is the coming of age teenage comedy *Last Night in Suburbia*. Michael has displayed a keen eye for strong projects with great distribution potential. With over 30 producing credits under his belt, he has earned the reputation of being one of Western Canada's most sought after independent producers.



In his downtime Michael can still be found chasing the creative dream, as he is an avid writer and currently in production on his first comic book, Zola Star Canon.

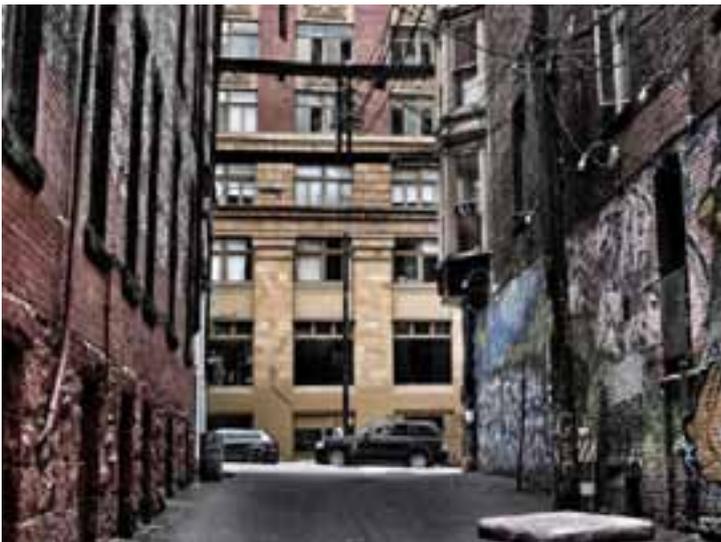
*This painting hangs in Michael's room. It was a gift from Josh Laner*

## SETTINGS

# GASTOWN / DTES



**Gastown** has become known as one of Vancouver BC's most thriving sectors. It is a mix of "hip" contemporary fashion and interior furnishing boutiques, tourist-oriented businesses (generally restricted to Water Street), restaurants, nightclubs, poverty and newly upscale housing. In addition, there are law firms, architects and other professional offices, as well as computer and internet businesses, art galleries, music and art studios, and acting and film schools.



However beneath the posh urban exterior boasts an underbelly of drugs, addiction, and mental health. **Gastown** is also a block away from Vancouver's notorious **Downtown Eastside**.



And it is in this juxtaposition that Ken walks the streets between the dark and the light. On one end resides his addiction in a land of pain and despair, and on the other, the customer base to fuel it, in a world full of vibrance and hope.

SETTINGS

# ART BATTLE



At the heart of the documentary is Ken's journey through **Art Battle**. A live competitive painting event that takes place in multiple cities across Canada. In just 20 minutes, blank canvases are transformed into brilliant works of art while the crowd moves around the easels, closely watching the creative process. At the end of the 20 minutes, the audience votes for their favourite painting and the best moves on. This event has 12 of Vancouver's best professional and emerging artists competing for glory, a sweet cash prize and a spot in the finals where the best in the country are flown to Toronto Canada to compete for a grand prize of \$10,000.

# THE MAKING OF KEN FOSTER

## BEHIND THE SCENES



Director Josh Laner watches the artist's process in action.



Taken towards the end of shooting. Ken's clean cut and preparing himself for art battle.



Fun Fact: Ken's apartment was so dirty, Josh and his assistant Taylor decided to dawn hazmat suits and clean it!



That time the team wore hazmat suits to clean Ken's apartment.

# THE MAKING OF KEN FOSTER

## PRODUCTION STILLS



Time for a toke.



Twenty rock anyone?



Ken looks over his latest masterpiece.



Ken enjoys a timbit!



Ken in his apartment / studio plotting and pondering.



Ken with his mother,

BONUS MATERIAL

# ART OF KEN FOSTER



*Ken does Klimt.*



*Cockfight.*



*Pen drawing from prison.*



*Abbott St shelter.*



*VANCOUVERS ICONIC CITY SCAPE*



*Blood Alley by day.*



*Blood Alley by night.*



*VANCOUVER WATERFRONT BURRARD INLET*



*It's all in the eyes...*



*Sinister Sugar Skull.*