



Dominic Dare

# FootageFest



Steve Kozak

Finally, after a two-year hiatus, FootageFest will make its long-awaited return, this time to the legendary El Portal Theater complex in the revitalized NoHo section of Los Angeles.

Known for its practical panels, exhibitors of niche content, and screenings of archival-packed documentaries, the three-day conference will take place from Friday, September 29 through Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup>.

The fun begins on Friday evening with the launch party at The Federal Bar, followed by a day of panels, meet-and-greets, and networking opportunities. The conference will conclude with a screening of a brand-new documentary at the historic Garland Hotel.

Premiering in 2018, the L.A.-based FootageFest is the brain child of British archival vet Dominic Dare and Late Night clip producer Steve Kozak. Both were frustrated there were no content events held in Hollywood, forcing hundreds in their industry to trapse across the globe to attend conferences like MIPTV and Banff, held in Cannes and Alberta, Canada respectively.

Kozak was also growing increasingly bored at these conferences, where he “wasted weeks on end” listening to the same industry leaders lecture on esoteric subjects like “The Future of Stock Footage.” He wanted to hear from fresh voices speaking about new ideas, and discussing practical matters, particularly “from those who don’t really *want* to speak. Those make the best speakers.”

He also didn’t like speakers that had “bought their way to the microphone”. Kozak is amazed at how sponsors can buy their way onto panels, and subsequently lecture about their own content, disguising it as conferenced-produced content. Little do they know they are watching paid advertising. “They’d probably glean more from watching a *ShamWow* infomercial.”

While Kozak focuses on the panels, it is London-based Dare who brings the true variety to FootageFest, reaching out to researchers and archivists all over the world, successfully attracting professionals all throughout Canada, France, as well as from his home base in London. In 2018 -- FootageFest’s inaugural year -- Dare reached out and partnered with the British researcher’s association, FOCAL International. The following year, he started a partnership with VRSC – the Visual Researchers Society of Canada – and sponsored a dozen researchers to attend their L.A. conference.

This year, Dare has combed the globe for researchers from even farther away lands like Ireland and Lebanon, and invited them into the FootageFest fold. It is their unique content that brings such great value to the organization. “That’s what FootageFest is all about,” Dare says, “searching to find that one piece of rare, niche content that’s going to make your projects pop.”

Dare adds while it is these smaller niche archives that bring tremendous value to the event, he is quick to mention that larger corporate stock houses like Getty Images and Shutterstock support Dare and Kozak's endeavor.



In fact, FootageFest's first conference was sponsored by Shutterstock, and took place at the historic Garland Hotel in North Hollywood, attracting over two dozen archives and over 200 attendees. The following year's event was sponsored by Veritone, relocating to the historic Woman's Club of Hollywood, this time attracting *four* dozen archives and over 300 attendees.

With a stable of sponsors this year including Retro Video, CNN, News Exposure, and 3P Sync – the conference will relocate to a classic Hollywood theater complex: The El Portal Theater is nearly 100 years old -- a true Hollywood landmark that opened its doors in 1926. Its main theater seats 360 people, and the intimate Monroe Forum seats just under 100. Additional events will be held at the trendy Federal Bar next door, the Laemmle Theatres across the street, as well as other locations in the revitalized NoHo section of Los Angeles.

Steve Binder, who produced and directed the 1968 *Elvis Presley Comeback Special*, will be doing a one-on-one interview about his career's amazing highs and lows. In last year's *Elvis*, which was nominated for an Oscar for Best Picture, Binder was portrayed by *Stranger Things*' Dacre Montgomery, and was basically the hero of the story. While he has been a pioneer in crossing racial barriers (famously bringing Petula Clark and Harry Belafonte together resulting in "The Touch" controversy), he has had his failures as well -- ten years later he directed the infamous "Star Wars Holiday Special", as well as Chevy Chase's ill-fated talk show.



Speaking of embarrassing projects, FootageFest will be doing a case study of sorts – about the 1989 Oscars, in which Allan Carr produced a cringeworthy vocal duet between Rob Lowe and yes, Snow White. Not only was Lowe – and the entire opening production number -- eviscerated in the press, the producers neglected to ask Disney for permission to use one of their most valuable properties, resulting in a threat of legal action. The show's writer Bruce Vilanch and Eileen Bowman (the real-life Snow) will join our legal experts to discuss this alleged assault on American TV viewers.



Our “It’s All About the Content” series continues with a News Exposure-sponsored panel on Acquiring News Footage. Participating will be News Exposure Founder (and legendary Chicago stringer) David Lasker, as well as Fox Archives’ Brian Sargent, and Clip Producer Ted Cannon. Others will be announced soon.

A second panel in our content series will focus on Acquiring Celebrity Content, whether it be from traditional stock houses, academy libraries, TV and film studios, or so-called “paparazzi shooters”.

And, of course, returning again for its fourth time will be the Ultimate Fair Use panel, where several top attorneys from top films, as well as TV and film studios, discuss the most recent claims and cases. Hosted again by the former Hulu Attorney Heather Bennett, this is always FootageFest’s most popular panel.



Tom Jennings, whose critically-acclaimed *Lost Tapes* documentary series airs on the Smithsonian Channel, will reveal how his 1895 Films acquires the content for their projects, and addresses issues like music, challenging interview subjects, and other legal concerns.

FootageFest attracts what Dare and Kozak call “the third-party content professional,” which on the “User” side not only consists of researchers and clearance coordinators, but producers, writers, directors and editors. On the “Provider” side, the event not only attracts stock footage professionals, but film and TV studio licensors, production companies, independent shooters, as well as news and viral video agencies.

Go to <http://www.footagefest.com/sign-up> to sign up for the event. You won’t want to miss this one.