

Drawing: Gracey Ringstad

## Festival Review: Robert Plant, "Free Solo"

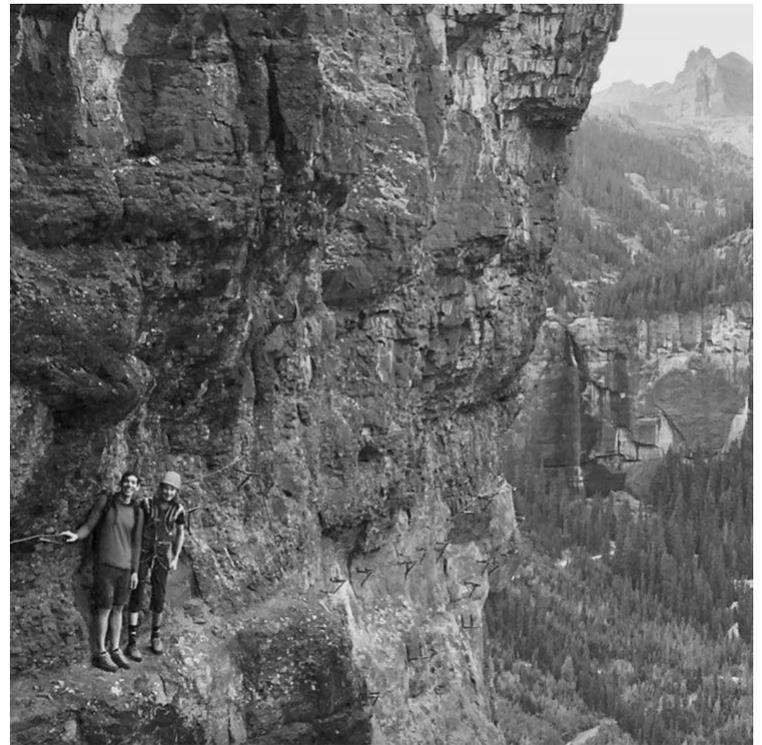
By DAVID ALMARAZ & JAKE SEWARD

This year's 25th Annual Blues & Brews Festival was a widely anticipated event with amazing headliners like Led Zeppelin's Robert Plant, Ben Harper and Charlie Musselwhite, and a couple of festival familiars returning yet again, Gov't Mule and Booker T's Stax Revue. This widely known event takes place every year in Town Park at the east end of Telluride. Food, games, friends, and a lot of good, live music and dancing shape this festival into the loved attraction it is.

Thousands travel here every year from all over the globe to partake in these various festivities

During the weekend of September 14<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup>, we all heard the familiar groovy tunes, blasting from the stage speakers from dawn till dusk. Other notable acts that performed were JJ Grey & Mofro, Anders Osborne, Samantha Fish, Monophonic, The Marcus King Band, Valerie June, The California Honeydrops, Son Little, Pee Wee Hayes, and Marco Benevento.

"Free Solo" is a National Geographic documentary that follows a young and seemingly fearless climber, Alex Honnold, on a quest to climb Yosemite Park's highest wall, El Capitan, without



Alex Honnold & Wiley Holbrooke pose while taking in the Via Ferrata. Photo:

any means of safety. It was the feature film that was premiered to Telluride students and staff only, as the festival kicked off another year.

In the film we follow Honnold, a man with no physical representation for fear, whose passion for rock climbing has changed him into what can only be described as "machine made" for climbing. The documentary, directed by Jimmy Chin and Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, accurately illustrates all aspects that come with the sport of free soloing: the hard work that a climber must put themselves

through to perfect a climb and the mental preparation that comes with a challenge that has repercussions as severe as death.

Honnold took time to answer students' questions after the film screened. It was obvious he really enjoyed talking to kids about his passion. He even took the time to do some climbing with high school student Wiley Holbrooke. A true inspiration and positive role model, I can honestly say that "Free Solo" was one of the most suspenseful documentaries that I have seen, one of the few that I would be willing to watch again, and one that I would recommend.



Robert Plant rocking the Town Park Stage.

Photo: Blues & Brews

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