

# Filmmaker Frederick Kroetsch overcomes Peruvian oddities to make his movie



By Trent Wilkie, Edmonton Examiner  
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Frederick Kroetsch, left, and Kurt Spenrath spend some time together in Peru at Machu Picchu. PHOTO SUPPLIED

On May 10 at noon, as part of the Global Visions Film Festival's Local Visions segment, local filmmaker Frederick Kroetsch will show his short film *The Universal Language*.

*The Universal Language*, a 15 minute film about three Canadian men who travel to Peru on a journey to discover new music, grew into something bigger than Kroetsch originally planned.

"The original idea came from Nathan Richards," Kroetsch said. "He wanted to start a world music festival and film the process of finding the bands.

"He wanted to find the cool rock bands that no one in North America has heard before. He asked me and Kurt Spenrath, my creative partner, to follow them in Peru.

"Since I was the only trained camera operator, I had to film bands using two cameras, which is a lot to juggle. Kurt also always carried a portable LED light for the numerous bars and clubs we were in.

"I also brought a laptop, so I could edit whenever we weren't shooting. Nathan and his two friends, who also help run Open Sky Music Festival, were the 'characters' we follow in the journey."

The journey included a lot of surprises for the team. From eating guinea pigs to happening upon a never-ending party, the crew had to adapt as new obstacles occurred.

"There is a lot of partying in Lima and Cusco. It was pretty nuts," he said. "I was sometimes scared for my life. Thankfully, nothing dreadful happened.

"Apparently it costs \$2,000 to bring a professional camera to Machu Picchu, we had to lie and pretend we're not professionals," Kroetsch added.

"They bought it and let me enter ... but without my tripod. It sucks filming in Machu Picchu without a tripod."

Through it all, Kroetsch got the shots he needed and had some life-changing experiences to boot.

"In the end, it's more of a short documentary," he said. "But who knows how this will all play out. It's a cool idea for a travel music series.

"The goal was also to be a hybrid of music and 'wild on' style craziness, but we dropped all of the craziness from the final edit. It took away from the cool musicians we found.

"Also, Machu Picchu is more beautiful than pictures or video can convey."

For information on *The Universal Language*, visit [www.globalvisionsfestival.com](http://www.globalvisionsfestival.com)

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