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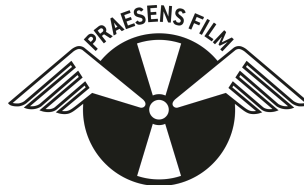


THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS

Directed by **Michael Dweck & Gregory Kershaw**

Ab 11.11.2021 im Kino
84 minutes

Distribution Suisse
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Deutsche Synopsis

Tief in den Wäldern Norditaliens ist der wertvolle weisse Alba-Trüffel zu finden. Begehrt und für manche unbezahlbar, bleibt uns die kostbare Wurzelknolle ein Rätsel. Der Trüffel lässt sich nicht kultivieren. Mit keiner noch so spitzfindigen, einfallsreichen, eigens dafür entwickelten Technologie gelang es bisher, Trüffel zu finden und auszugraben. Die einzigen, die wissen, wo er zu finden ist und wie man ihn ausgräbt, sind ein paar Hunde mit ausgeprägtem Spürsinn und ihre ergrauten menschlichen Gefährten – italienische Älteste mit Spazierstöcken und teuflischem Sinn für Humor, die sich meistens nur nachts auf die Suche machen, um die Fundorte möglichst geheim zu halten. Erstaunlich ist es, wie eine verschrobene Gemeinschaft von Trüffeljägern, einen fieberhaften, weltumspannenden Preis- und Warenhandel für Trüffel beeinflusst. Einfühlsam und beeindruckend, gelingt es den Filmemachern Michael Dweck und Gregory Kershaw, uns einen Einblick ins Leben dieser wortkargen, anfangs schwer zugänglichen Trüffeljägern zu geben und dem einzigartigen Kreislauf des im Waldboden wachsenden weissen Goldes zu folgen bis er im edlen Restaurantteller als Gaumenfreude serviert wird.

LOGLINE

In the secret forests of Northwest Italy, a dwindling group of joyful old men and their faithful dogs hunt for the world's most expensive ingredient: the white Alba truffle. This real-life fairy tale celebrates human passion in a community struggling to protect its fragile land and a way of life forgotten in time.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Deep in the forests of Piedmont, Italy, a handful of men, seventy or eighty years young, hunt for the rare and expensive white Alba truffle—which to date has resisted all of modern science's efforts at cultivation. They're guided by a secret culture and training passed down through generations, as well as by the noses of their cherished and expertly trained dogs. They live a simpler, slower way of life, in harmony with their loyal animals and their picture-perfect land, seemingly straight out of a fairy tale. They're untethered to cell phone screens or the Internet, opting instead to make their food and drink by hand and prioritizing in-person connections and community.

The demand for white truffles increases year after year, even as the supply decreases. As a result of climate change, deforestation, and the lack of young people taking up the mantle, the truffle hunters' secrets are more coveted than ever. However, as it soon becomes clear, these ageing men may just hold something much more valuable than even this prized delicacy: the secret to a rich and meaningful life.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Deep in the forests of Piedmont, Northwest Italy, a handful of men, seventy or eighty years young, hunt for the rare and expensive white Alba truffle—which to date has resisted modern science’s efforts at cultivation. They hunt through the night, guided by a secret culture and training passed down through generations, as well as by the noses of their cherished and expertly trained dogs. They are the last of their kind, carrying on a way of life that is rapidly disappearing in the modern world.

Here, there is a commitment to a simpler life, where handmade food, daily labor as exercise, a connection to community and nature, and a passion for the hunt are the mechanics that keep people physically and mentally young. It’s a world built on the simple pleasures that have been forgotten in the modern era: the quiet simmering of freshly-picked tomatoes; the hours spent in conversation at the dinner table; communing with beloved animals, treated as kin; the mystical forest, where truffles grow at the roots of tall oak trees that breathe in the night; receiving a truffle-tinged blessing at church; or the unaware belting of an off-key folk tune on the drive home.

However, climate change is drying up the lands where rains used to be plentiful. Deforestation is destroying trees whose symbiotic roots have given life to truffles for centuries. The young people, who would be carrying on their family's traditions, have left the small towns in search of stable work. *THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS* captures this endangered culture at a key moment in time: for the men who have made truffle hunting their lifelong passion, their way of life, and very existence, is under threat.

As truffles become more and more elusive, the competition has grown fiercer and these men keep the secrets of their hunting grounds to themselves. They lead their closest friends astray with little white lies, hunt at night without flashlights, and cover up their footprints and car tracks behind them. They have little trust in each other, let alone an outside world that constantly threatens to impinge upon their way of life.

In *THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS*, audiences can, for the first time, take a peek into this secretive world, driven by incredible characters with an unshakable passion coursing through their veins. These ageing men who inhabit a fairy tale land may just hold something much more valuable than the prized delicacy they hunt: the secret to a rich and meaningful life.

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

The secret forests of Piedmont, Italy hold a mystery.

The white Alba truffle grows at the roots of tall oak trees. No one knows how or why it grows where it does. Some say a white truffle can only grow at the base of a tree where lightning has struck. Others think it is dependent on the phases of the moon, or magnetic fields. Some even believe it is the work of witches and warlocks. When it blooms, it produces an aroma unlike any other, a sweet subterranean musk that seduces and enchants. It is one of the rarest and most expensive ingredients in the world.

We are both obsessed with finding places and people that have escaped the sameness of global culture. We look for hidden worlds that possess a beauty that might be overlooked, or perhaps have chosen to remain hidden. It was the enigma of the white truffle that drew us in and led us to the truffle hunters. They are men who are old in years but young in spirit, who spend their days and nights hunting for truffles with their faithful dogs in forests that have beckoned them since they were children. They live close to the land, guided by tradition. Time seems to have stopped in the days of their youth. Digital technology and globalism have not yet upset the rhythm of life. The natural world is an inescapable fact of their daily lives and a lifelong blessing which remains with them as they pass through the twilight of their lives.

Today, the mystery of the white truffle remains. Our film is a portrait of a fragile place and a passionate group of people who are a reminder that this beautiful world still has much to celebrate.

A CONVERSATION WITH DIRECTORS **MICHAEL DWECK & GREGORY KERSHAW**

The Alba white truffle is an enchanting and expensive delicacy, more costly than gold, whose rarity has only driven up its global demand. It can't be cultivated, but blooms only on one strip of land, in the incredibly rich soil of Piedmont's Langhe region in Northern Italy.

It is here that filmmakers Michael Dweck and Gregory Kershaw have ventured to bring to light the ancient traditions behind the hunt, through the men (and their prized dogs) who keep the truffle hunting culture alive. Before production, Dweck and Kershaw immersed themselves in the world of the truffle hunters. They came to know the rhythms of their lives, and the secrets of this mysterious trade. They filmed for three years through small Piedmont villages including Santo Stefano Belbo, Monforte d'Alba, and Roddino. They followed the hunters into the forests, spent time with their families, and observed the magic that filled their daily lives.

The film is composed in mosaic structure, a series of vignettes set up in artfully composed single-frame shots. Told through incredibly rich colors, painterly lighting, and an evocative soundscape, each scene feels like a tableau vivant come to life.

How did you both come across this culture and decide to make a film about it?

Michael Dweck: In the summer of 2017, we had just completed our previous film, *The Last Race*, and we decided to take some time off. I found a hilltop village in the Piedmont region of northern Italy. It was one of those places, seemingly lost in time, that felt like a different expression of what life could be.

At the end of that summer, Gregory and I reconnected in New York, and it turned out that he had spent time traveling through the same area that summer. Something was pulling us both back, rumors of a group of old men that only came out at night “hunting” for white truffles in the surrounding forests. At that point, it was just an idea, pulled from whispered stories and local lore, but there was something in the stories we heard that seemed to encapsulate the magic we had felt there. The next week, we decided to head back together to see what we could find.

What was most challenging in getting to know these characters?

Gregory Kershaw: We came into these communities as outsiders and it took time to gain their trust. Eventually, we were invited in, and little by little were shown the things that outsiders don't see. Sometimes it felt like nothing was happening, but we eventually realized that this time was essential. We were learning and making small discoveries that would eventually come together and form our understanding of the entire sphere of relationships that made up the community.

For example—two of our characters, Angelo and Egidio, were cousins, but they hadn't spoken to each other in 10 years, despite living two miles away from each other. They had these two totally different philosophies on the world of truffles. Angelo is a purist who refuses to truffle hunt anymore because he was disgusted by the commercial world that surrounds it. And Egidio is a truffle hunter who thinks he has unlocked the secret of cultivating white truffles, which is impossible. But that's what he spent his whole life doing. It took us a while to understand all these little relationships and discover who will spark something interesting when they're in the same room together.

How did understanding their lives inform how you filmed the scenes?

Michael Dweck: We wanted the audience to be immersed, to see and study their lives the way they were. By capturing this world in largely static one-shot scenes, we created the possibility for the magic of this place to emerge. Our approach was less about naturalism and more about creating the feeling of a fairy tale, transporting the audience into our subjective perspective on life as we feel it should be. Each day was an opportunity to film a new page of the storybook. We set out to make a film that would express something deeper than facts, and translate the feeling of this place, its mystery and magic into a cinematic experience.

Gregory Kershaw: Most days we spent very little time with the camera rolling, instead we were engaged in the truffle hunters' lives observing their routines, their relationships, the way they lived, and the objects they surrounded themselves with,

and most importantly building relationships with them. A lot of that came through our Italian co-producer Letizia Guglielmino, who has an extraordinary ability to connect with people. That knowledge guided where we put the camera, who and what we included in the frame, and how we shaped the light. But once we did start to roll, because we had done all that work, we could step back and the truffle hunters would quickly forget about us and go on with their lives.

In many places, where people have consumed a lot of media and reality television, there is a hyper awareness of the camera and what it means to be filmed, so there's sort of a performance that goes on. Most of the truffle hunters we were filming have never owned a TV, and as a result, they had a beautiful innocence that allowed us to explore their world with a depth that we never could have imagined going into the project.

Watching the film, you get the sense that you're entering into another era. Was that intentional?

Michael Dweck: Yes, it was a very conscious decision to take the viewer back in time. Entering into the world of *The Truffle Hunters* should be an escape from technology and what we see as some of the failures of our modern era. There's a feeling of magic and mystery throughout. They live in small, isolated villages where the sound of a car is rare. It's a world without plastic. Every object, every part of the house, is built on layers of history.

Gregory Kershaw: In many ways the truffle hunters we filmed with still live in the world of their youth. They listen to the same music they've listened to all their lives, they work the land they grew up on, they hunt for truffles in the same forests they've always known. It was like falling into Italy in the 1960s, and we wanted the audience to experience that same feeling. What we felt when we were with them defined how we created the shots, how we shaped the light, how we composed the frames, how we built the sound design, how we selected the music.

How did their culture impact the visual look of the film?

Gregory Kershaw: The exteriors feel magical and enchanting. The colors and sounds are real, naturalistic, but slightly heightened, just a tiny bit richer and more vibrant than any place you've ever been. The truffle forests are places of mystery and while at times they can be dark and foreboding, they seduce our characters with their beauty. The commercial world has a different feel. It lacks the warmth, the magic. Characters are moved by money. It's part of the same fairy tale, but just a little bit closer to the world we know.

Michael Dweck: Once the content of a scene was selected, we shaped the mood and emotion through light and composition. The paintings of Caravaggio, Rembrandt, and Titian formed the foundation for our visual process. Their homes felt like paintings. Their lives were paintings. Everything they were doing was based on traditions going back five, six, seven generations.

How did you film from the canine point of view?

Michael Dweck: Dogs are incredibly significant to the lives of truffle hunters, in some cases even more so than their human relationships. So we wanted to show their perspective. After months of unsuccessfully experimenting with different advanced technology stabilization devices, we met a local Piemontese shoe cobbler who offered the simple solution of fabricating miniature camera harnesses that strapped unobtrusively around the dog's head.

The footage we were able to get with these harnesses provides a kinetic counterpoint to the static frames of the human perspective and thrusts the audience into the thrill of the hunt. We placed lavalier microphones directly onto the harness systems to capture the dogs' breathing, sniffing, digging, and communication with the truffle hunters as they traveled through the forests together.

How did you approach the sound design?

Michael Dweck: We worked with the incredible sound designer and mixer, Stephen Urata of Skywalker Sound, to build a soundscape that mirrored the deliberate approach we took to creating the images. Every sound used in the film was selected to be enchanting and beautiful. We chose sounds that would seduce our audience into the magic of this world and carry the emotion of the story.

Gregory Kershaw: In portraying the truffle forests, we found that sound was sometimes more important than the image. We wanted to create the feeling that the forest, the truffle hunters, and their dogs were, in some way, a unified whole. To do this, we worked with our sound team to explore the idea of a forest breathing, all of nature coming together in a sonic harmony. For the interior soundscapes, we focused on building environments that were cozy and warm. Wood stoves with pots of pasta sauce boiling on top. The gentle patter of dog paws on stone floors. We worked to express the feeling of their domestic lives removed from technology, and create the feeling of everything we wish a home could be.

What surprised you most about the ancient traditions around truffle hunting?

Michael Dweck: It's an entire world built on secrecy: where they hunt, how they train their dogs, and mostly, if they ever find any truffles. They don't tell their wives, their best friends, their priest, *no one*. The first couple of hunters we met, Aldo and Renato, were 86 and 90, and very close friends. They've had breakfast and lunch together almost every day for 80 years, and they never once shared their secret truffle spots.

Gregory Kershaw: The reason is, if there's a tree that produces a truffle one year in a certain spot, it's likely that tree will produce another truffle that size the next year. So they have these elaborate maps and systems that allow them to track year by year where a truffle will grow and when it will bloom. One truffle hunter might tell you that it's based on the phases of the moon. Another might believe that a truffle will

only grow where lightning has struck, or that they grow along electromagnetic fields. No one really knows and that's what makes this world so intriguing.

Your work explores cultural ecosystems on the verge of becoming extinct. What is most at risk here?

Gregory Kershaw: Truffle hunting will continue because there is huge demand for truffles, but the forests that produce truffles are under a lot of pressure from climate change, deforestation, agricultural pollution. It all has a big impact on the natural ecosystem. At the same time, modernity, technology, and globalization is changing the local culture. There are of course good things that come with this change, but spending time with the truffle hunters was a reminder of all the little things we are losing: a connection to nature, cooking our food, knowing where it comes from, a connection to our family and community, a connection to animals. That's what their lives *are*. You realize how rich their lives are because of that. Their culture grew out of the land they live on, and they in turn spent their lives giving back to that land.

Michael Dweck: A lot of what we are exploring here is what it means to be connected. Most of the modern world exists in this web of disconnect through digital technology. The world of the truffle hunters is almost completely disconnected from digital technology, and spending time with them, you see what that means for their lives. Their daily rituals of storytelling at the bar, having meals with the family, and shopping in the markets are invaluable to their social and physical well-being. One

day we were filming, Egidio was complaining to Angelo ‘How come when I call you, you never pick up the phone?’ Angelo replied, ‘Well if you tell me when you’re going to call, I’ll plug in the phone.’

Gregory Kershaw: So if somebody wants to get ahold of Angelo, they don't text him. They walk through a wooded trail to get to his house and knock on his door. He lives in the middle of nowhere but he has people coming in to hang out and talk all day. And it seems like, oh yeah, that's kind of what should happen. When our truffle hunters go into town to buy meat, they're not buying it from an anonymous supermarket; they're buying it from the person who actually raises and butchers the cows himself. All these little things add up to a real community. And I think that's a big part of what keeps these guys going. It's what keeps them young.

Was it important to address climate change and its effects on their environment?

Gregory Kershaw: We didn't set out to make a film about climate change, but the impact of climate change is part of the truffle hunters' daily lives. The white Alba truffle is extremely delicate and only grows on a thin strip of land that is mostly in Northern Italy. As the global climate changes, the delicate balance in that land is shifting and truffles are becoming harder to find every year. They talk about the old days, meaning 20 or 30 years ago, when they would plow the fields and truffles would come up like potatoes. When you hear their stories about how they experience the climate changing, you realize how fragile our planet is, and you realize how much

climate change is already impacting people now. It can't help but make you concerned for what's to come.

How did Luca Guadagnino come on board as one of the film's executive producers?

Michael Dweck: One of our EPs, Christos Konstantakopoulos, is friends with Luca. He mentioned to us that Luca bought a piece of land in Piedmont with a truffle forest. There are truffle hunters on that land that Luca has a deep affection for and we think our film reflected a lot of what he loves in that world. He came on and offered to do whatever he could to support the film. Having someone with his depth of knowledge in the film industry and profound sensitivity to the world has been amazing.

Is there hope that the traditions of the truffle hunters will live on?

Michael Dweck: There are a lot of challenges facing the continuation of this world. Some of them are global, like the changing climate and the transformative forces of technology, but there are also local issues like agricultural pollution and deforestation.

One day we were out with one of our truffle hunters, Sergio, and he got a call that someone was cutting down one of the forests where he hunts. By the time we arrived, the land was stripped bare. A whole forest of 100-year-old truffle trees was gone. Sergio just started crying. And there's a guy with a chainsaw and his crew

who stripped the land, loading the cut trees onto big trucks. Sergio walked right up to him and said, ‘You destroyed my passion, my life, generations of truffles.’ And the guy said, ‘I paid \$200 to the landowner for this wood that I’m going to sell. Your truffles are not my concern.’ But that's the reality of it. It’s all very fragile and it doesn’t take much for it to disappear.

We’re exploring the idea of creating a program that will help truffle hunters protect their land and educate future generations on sustainable truffle hunting techniques. We think it’s important that this tradition continues. The truffle hunters are the guardians of these forests and encouraging the next generation of truffle hunters is a way of ensuring that this tradition continues.

What can people learn from the incredible passion of these characters?

Michael Dweck: Well, it's finding the meaning of life. That's of course what everyone searches for and these guys have found it, which is really refreshing. For these guys, their happy place happens to be the forest and it happens to be their dog. It's a very beautiful, simple life.

Gregory Kershaw: When we talk about finding the meaning of life, it sounds very highfalutin and esoteric. But when you're around them, it's so simple: to have connections to the people around you, to have connections to your community, to have connections to nature and to do something you love. When you're around them it seems obvious—you're like, yeah, you got it figured it out! (Laughs.)

What do you want audiences to take away from the film?

Gregory Kershaw: The world is facing a lot of challenges. There's a lot of horrible things happening to our planet and human life. And there are a lot of great films that are telling those stories about the problems in the world. But we wanted to make a film that celebrates the joy in life and the beauty in this world. There are people who have held onto what makes us truly human, what it feels like to be alive and live a really rich life at 89 years old.

We also want to remind people that there is still a lot of hidden beauty in this world. Not everything's been discovered. There are still secrets out there.

THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS CAST OF CHARACTERS

CARLO GONELLA

The world's last remaining truffle hunters are incredible characters. There's **Carlo**, an 88-year-old hunter with piercing blue eyes. He climbs out the window in the middle of the night to go hunting with his dog **Titina** (Little Tina). Despite his wife **Maria Ciccìu**'s constant pleading with him to stop, she knows his happiness comes from the hunt. He is overjoyed when his local priest tells him it's likely he will be hunting truffles long into the afterlife.

AURELIO CONTERNO

Aurelio, 84, has no heirs, and thus is constantly badgered by younger, less-experienced hunters to pass on his secret spots. His true child is **Birba**, a gorgeous dog who is treated like an exalted family member. She sits on the table and eats truffle dishes with him, sharing in their good fortune. He confides in her as to no one else, telling her his biggest fear is finding a woman to take care of her after he passes.

ANGELO GAGLIARDI

Angelo, 78, a poet and farmer, with his corduroy bell-bottoms, blue beret and patterned cardigans, has a wardrobe seemingly straight off a recent Milan runway. No one would guess that, like everyone here, his clothes are handmade, stitched from

pieces of fur, wool, and leather, or passed down to him by neighbors. He drives around on a 1941 tractor, and makes his own tools to fix any issues whenever something breaks.

Despite living on land historically rich with truffles, Angelo has given up the hunt, frustrated with what he sees in the world: deforestation, rival hunters poisoning innocent dogs, new hunters prematurely picking a truffle, which destroys its spores from ever blooming again. Angelo has a deep connection to the land and cries whenever a living tree is cut down.

EGIDIO GAGLIARDI

His cousin, **Egidio**, 83, is a truffle hunter and salesman. He has spent his life trying to cultivate white truffles. He analyzes spores and seedlings under a microscope and works with a crew of scientific and spiritual experts to understand exactly where to plant trees. But it's a long waiting game. He waited 30 years for the first forest to grow, and the results were less than ideal. Out of anyone, however, Egidio has succeeded most in creating the right conditions to increase the likelihood that trees will grow better truffles.

SERGIO CAUDA

Sergio, 68, hunts daily with his dogs Fiona and Pepe. He scales rugged mountain sides going where no one else would dare go. He is very social, and often runs into other hunters in the woods. We begin to understand just how secretive this world

is as we eavesdrop on these conversations. As they discuss their days, speaking of areas that are too picked over, we don't know if the hunters are spinning tales to lead their competitors astray.

GIANFRANCO CURTI

And we see the world of commerce, which is also run by a set of traditions that dictate the territories and hunters they can buy from. **Gianfranco**, is a well-dressed seller who is struggling to meet the market demand with increasingly low supplies. He sells to clients all over the world via phone, but also locally to Michelin-starred chefs in cash transactions on the street.

PAULO STACCHIN

And **Paolo**, 78, is the authenticator, the judge who can put into words the often indescribable perfume of a great truffle. He examines each truffle one by one to determine its quality and value before passing it on to high-stakes sales and auctions, where one particularly large and round truffle sells for \$110,000.

THE DOGS

BIRBA, BIRI, FIONA, CHARLIE, NINA, TITINA, and YARI

CREW

Directed by MICHAEL DWECK and GREGORY
KERSHAW

Produced by MICHAEL DWECK and GREGORY
KERSHAW

Cinematography by MICHAEL DWECK and GREGORY
KERSHAW

Co-Producer LETIZIA GUGLIELMINO, RENÉ
SIMON CRUZ JR.

Executive Producer LUCA GUADAGNINO, MATTHEW
PERNICIARO, MICHAEL SHERMAN,
LANCE ACORD, SAM BISBEE,
WENDY NEU, CHRISTOS V.
KONSTANTAKOPOULOS, REGINA K.
SCULLY, PATTY QUILLIN, GERALYN
WHITE DREYFOUS, MOLLY LEWIS,
ADAM LEWIS, LESLIE BERRIMAN,
NION MCEVOY, CAMERON
O'REILLY, JIM SWARTZ, SUSAN
SWARTZ, LINDA WEINMAN, BRUCE
HEAVIN, JAMIE WOLF

Associate Producer CECILIA LUPPI, HALLEE ADELMAN,
IVY HERMAN

Edited by CHARLOTTE MUNCH BENGTSSEN

Original Music
Composed by ED CÔRTES

Sound Designer and
Re-Recording Mixer STEPHEN URATA

FILMMAKER BIOS

Michael Dweck, Director/Cinematographer/Producer

Michael Dweck is an award-winning filmmaker and visual artist known for his narrative photographic and film projects. His work depicts the beauty and intricacy of human life, while exploring on-going struggles between identity and adaptation within endangered societal enclaves. His directorial debut, the feature documentary, *THE LAST RACE*, premiered at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival. In 2019, he was a Sundance Institute Catalyst Forum fellow, and Sundance Music and Sound Design Lab fellow. *THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS* is his second feature documentary film.

Dweck's projects incorporate mediums ranging from photography and sculpture to film and sound. His notable photographic series include: *The End: Montauk, N.Y.*, *Mermaids*, and *Habana Libre*. Dweck's works have been featured in solo and group exhibitions at museums and galleries worldwide, and are part of international art collections, including the archives of the Department of Film at The Museum of Modern Art in New York/AICP, where two of his long-form television pieces reside.

Dweck holds a degree in Fine Art from Pratt Institute. During his earlier career as a highly regarded creative director, Dweck received over forty international awards, including the coveted Gold Lion at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity.

Gregory Kershaw, Director/Cinematographer/Producer

Gregory Kershaw is a documentary and narrative filmmaker whose work explores the complexity of humans confronting an ever-changing world and is recognized for its atmospheric and visually-driven approach. He was a producer and director of photography on *THE LAST RACE*, which screened at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival. In 2019, he was a Sundance Institute Catalyst Forum fellow and Sundance Music and

Sound Design Lab fellow. Previously, he directed documentaries that explored the impact of climate change on rural indigenous communities and the current species extinction crisis filmed in remote locations around the world.

THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS, Kershaw's first documentary feature as a director, premiered at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival and then went on to be selected for over 35 international festivals, including Cannes, Telluride, New York, and Toronto. The film was shortlisted for the 2021 Oscars' Best Documentary Feature Film. He is a graduate of Columbia University's prestigious MFA film directing program, where he wrote, directed, and lensed narrative films.

Charlotte Munch Bengtsen, Editor

Coming from a background as a dancer and photographer, Charlotte edited her first notable documentary AMERICAN LOSERS by Ada B. Soby in 2006. Charlotte soon realized she could bring all her tools together in this craft and decided to dedicate herself solely to the career of editing. In 2009, she graduated from the National Film and Television School in England. Since then she has edited a number of award-winning documentaries, including THE ACT OF KILLING (Joshua Oppenheimer), THE BASTARD SINGS THE SWEETEST SONGS (Christy Garland), COMPLAINTS CHOIR and PETEY & GINGER (Ada B. Soby), A WHITE MAN STORY and QUEEN OF THE GODS (Linus Mørck), TANK CITY and HUMAN SHELTER (Boris B. Bertram), THE RAVEN AND THE SEAGULL (Lasse Lau) and recent award-winning short film LONDON ARABIA (Daniel Jewel). Her latest feature documentary WAR PHOTOGRAPHER (Boris B. Bertram) has just been nominated for the Danish Robert Award (January 2020).

THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS is Charlotte's second collaboration with Michael Dweck and Gregory Kershaw. She previously worked with them on THE LAST RACE which premiered at Sundance 2018.

Ed Côrtes, Composer

Ed Côrtes is an award-winning Brazilian musician and composer with a career spanning advertising, symphonic works, theater, pop music and cinema. He composed the soundtrack, along with Antonio Pinto, for Fernando Meirelles' four-time Academy Award-nominated film CITY OF GOD. Ed later founded Tentaculo, a highly-sought after Brazilian creative studio. Besides working as a film composer, Ed Côrtes frequently makes music for ballet and contemporary dance. His dance works have been performed all over the world.

Stephen Urata, Sound Designer

Stephen Urata began working at Skywalker Sound in 2011. Since then, he has worked on a wide variety of projects including independent films, documentaries, international films and Hollywood blockbusters. He's committed to supporting independent filmmakers achieve their vision and bringing innovation and inventiveness to big budget productions.

He's worked on commercials by Nike, Mercedes Benz, and Apple, among others.

Films he's worked on include: Tom E. Brown's PUSHING DEAD, Robert Krzykowski's THE MAN WHO KILLED HITLER AND THEN THE BIGFOOT, Rian Johnson's STAR WARS: THE LAST JEDI, and Terrance Malick's A HIDDEN LIFE. Stephen has also worked on David Fincher's Netflix series MINDHUNTER.

Before his work in film, he grew up playing piano and then moved on to playing and teaching drums in performing arts groups around the Bay Area.

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Beautiful Stories, Production Company

Beautiful Stories was founded by Michael Dweck and Gregory Kershaw, the filmmakers behind the documentary features THE LAST RACE (Sundance 2018) and THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS (Sundance 2020), to continue telling stories that celebrate the unexpected beauty of overlooked cultures and communities around the world.

Bow and Arrow Entertainment, Production Company

Bow and Arrow Entertainment was founded in 2014 by Matthew Perniciaro and Michael Sherman to create a focus on artist driven narrative and documentary motion pictures.

Bow and Arrow recently premiered Elyse Steinberg and Josh Kriegman's THE FIGHT, Michael Dweck and Gregory Kershaw's THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS, Sam Feder's DISCLOSURE: TRANS LIVES ON SCREEN and the multi-filmmaker created OMNIBOAT: A FAST BOAT FANTASIA at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival.

Recent films include Rashid Johnson's NATIVE SON, an adaptation of Richard Wright's famed novel for HBO, which premiered as the Opening Night selection of the 2019 Sundance Film Festival and Alex Ross Perry's HER SMELL, starring Elisabeth Moss, which has been named by The New York Times, Vanity Fair and Indiewire as "one of the best films of 2019".

Park Pictures, Production Company

Founded in 1998 by executive producer Jacqueline Kelman Bisbee and renowned filmmaker/cinematographer Lance Acord, bicoastal/London-based Park Pictures has an auspicious track record of discovering and mentoring new filmmaking

talent and infusing all projects with big screen production values. In 2008 Jacqueline and Lance partnered with producer Sam Bisbee to start Park Pictures Features. Producing award-winning work in both commercials and film for over two decades, Park has been honored with an Academy Award, Emmy wins in commercial and documentary filmmaking, and the Palme D'Or for Production Company of the Year at the 2019 Cannes Lions.

Park Pictures Features premiered four new feature films at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival: Ekwa Msangi's FAREWELL AMOR; Andrew Cohn's THE LAST SHIFT; Michael Dweck and Gregory Kershaw's international documentary THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS; and Kim A. Snyder's U.S. documentary US KIDS.