

# REFLECTIONS IN THE EMERALD ISLE

## PRESS KIT



Photography by Eva Gingl

A HALF HOUR FILM

Prepared by:

**WANTED**  
media

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May 2012

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30 MINUTES | SHORT FILM | © 2012 WANTED MEDIA CORPORATION

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT	3
SYNOPSIS	4
PRODUCTION NOTES	5
CREW BIOGRAPHIES	7
PREVIOUS WORKS	8
CREDITS	9



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Ireland has been a melancholy place to me. I have always found myself there at points of emotional turmoil.

I wanted to combine how I felt over the course of developing this project, alongside the knowledge I accumulated in the field of filmmaking.

Throughout the past five years, I have been developing a style which incorporates an intense personal expression with logical sensibility.

Locations and visuals characterize the timeline. Music provokes an emotion. Words connect to a memory. Together these elements form a living identity.

I believe this project has taken Wanted Media to a new plateau. It challenged and pushed me to dream again.

**Mark Magro**  
**Director**



## SYNOPSIS

*Reflections in the Emerald Isle* is an exploration of a country through the eyes of a young man as he examines his father.

Historical stories of visited locations forms a character called the Creator. It embodies Irish culture at a personal and interpretative level.

Past film and photographs showcase the story of the young man's father. Similarities and comparisons are drawn to represent an emotional journey.

Who determined their choices? What were the results? Do we leave a legacy? These are the questions asked by the young man as he reflects.

An accumulation of fragmented memories are layered throughout the landscape. Embedded in children, structures and art are the stories one leaves behind.

As the young man begins to conclude his exploration in Ireland, powerful realizations are made. There are low points and high points in life. No matter where or when one exists, we all share in the ability to draw similarities.



## PRODUCTION NOTES

My fascination with Ireland began back in 2008. I had traveled to Ireland then on vacation with my girlfriend where we cycled the countryside. The relationship was going downhill and my memories of the trip were terrible. By the end of the voyage, I was an emotional wreck.

After my trip to Ireland, I had the opportunity to visit my parent's motherland in Malta with my entire family. It would be the last time we would all be there together as a family unit. When I arrived back home, I learned of the shocking news that my girlfriend was going to leave me for a man back in Ireland. I wanted her back and so the concept of this project was born.

I originally created a proposal that was structured as a historical documentary exploring the landscape with a poetic narrative. Having little knowledge of the story of Ireland, I contacted my good Irish friend, William Jenkins, who was also my history professor at York University.

In 2009, I had potential plans of developing this project into a 3D IMAX film. I pitched the idea for the film at the 2009 Giant Screen Cinema Association annual event in Indianapolis, USA. I received positive feedback but no results to move forward with the project in 3D IMAX.

Next, I presented my idea to broadcasters and applied to government and private grants. After a series of rejection letters, I sought further guidance from my former teachers at the Toronto Film School.

I met with several people who were a bit more familiar with the film industry. They suggested I take a more personal approach. After revising the proposal multiple times and developing a marketing package, once again my efforts were not rewarded. Frustration was evident and I began to feel like a dog chasing his tail.

In the winter of 2009, I met Eva Gingl through a mutual friend named Elaine Robertson. Elaine was a teacher who had worked with me on my fourth documentary, *King*. Her friend Eva owned a cable company and was looking for staff to teach and produce media for broadcast.

By 2010, I was working full-time with Eva as a Creative Director and after several discussions with her about a need for new projects, I pitched the Ireland concept. She liked it and the project was resurrected.

It was also during this time that my father became ill. He was in intensive care at the hospital and I felt extreme pressure to balance my professional and personal duties. Work became a way for me to deal with the intense emotions.



I allocated one month to film in Ireland. A camper was booked to maximize filming opportunities. Locations were painstakingly researched and then mapped out to formulate a road trip taking me across Ireland.

I visited my father in the hospital before I left to Ireland. What I did not know then, was that this would be the last time we talked. I remember holding his hand and telling him I would see him soon.

We had a very rigid and dense schedule, paired with a minimal crew. Eva would take photographs and assist when necessary while I drove and filmed. I found myself working around the clock every day.

The locations explored were majestic. I was often times speechless and wondered how everything would fall into place. The last filming took place at the Mourne Wall. At this point, I was physically and emotionally exhausted but excited to begin the task of piecing it all together.



From Ireland, we travelled to Scotland to film additional footage for Cable One. While in Europe, I took some time to visit my family in Malta. It was the first time I was there completely alone.

With each phone call to my mother, I realized my father was losing his fight to stay alive. As I sat near his older brother in the house my father grew up in, I felt scared. I booked an early flight back home.

The day after I arrived back home, my father died. I was devastated. After the funeral, the Ireland project helped me deal with the loss. As I reviewed the footage, my mind and heart wandered back to my time spent in Ireland. As each frame played on the screen I envisioned how the film would take shape.

It was at this moment when I decided that this was going to be a film of personal reflection, rather than a historical documentary. I would tell the story of my father's life and Ireland's landscape as it relates to how I felt at the time of filming.

I decided to rent an old Super 8 projector and began digitizing hundreds of hours of home movies. The process at some points was extremely painful. I found myself breaking down as I grieved the loss of my father.



When I sat down and began to piece together all the footage, I contemplated how best to merge the landscapes of Ireland and my emotional journey, along with my father's life story without creating a sense of confusion or disengagement for the audience.

In February 2012, a rough cut was created. By May 2012, a final cut was completed. Post-production was complete and marketing materials were developed.

I hope this project will inspire people to understand the importance of our parents, especially fathers, in our lives. Some may be distant or estranged, but they are a part of us.





## CREW BIOGRAPHIES

### MARK MAGRO

Mark Magro is a first-generation Canadian born and raised in Toronto. With a background in history, film and technology, he created Wanted Media in 2007 to utilize his talents and develop original content. Since its origination, Mark has written, directed and produced several international award-winning documentaries, short films, photographic and literature projects with his creative team and growing list of collaborative contacts.

## IN COLLABOATION WITH

### ASCEND PRODUCTIONS

A subsidiary of Cable One, a Independent Canadian Cable Company, it is a collaborative organization geared towards producing environmental and experimental media that incorporates the creativity of different artists in the medium of film.

## PREVIOUS WORK

### King (2010) - *Director/Producer/Editor/Writer*

- Financed by Township of King Heritage Committee
- Collaborated with local teachers, archivists, councillors and public organizations
- Worked with students in grade 7 & 8 from Kettleby Public School
- Won documentary award at 2010 *Multimedia Film Festival of York Region* Richmond Hill, Ontario
- Won *Merit Award* at the *International Awareness Festival* in Los Angeles, USA
- Showcased at the 2010 *ASK Festival* in King City, Ontario

### The Story of Uxbridge Station (2008) - *Director/Producer/Editor/Writer*

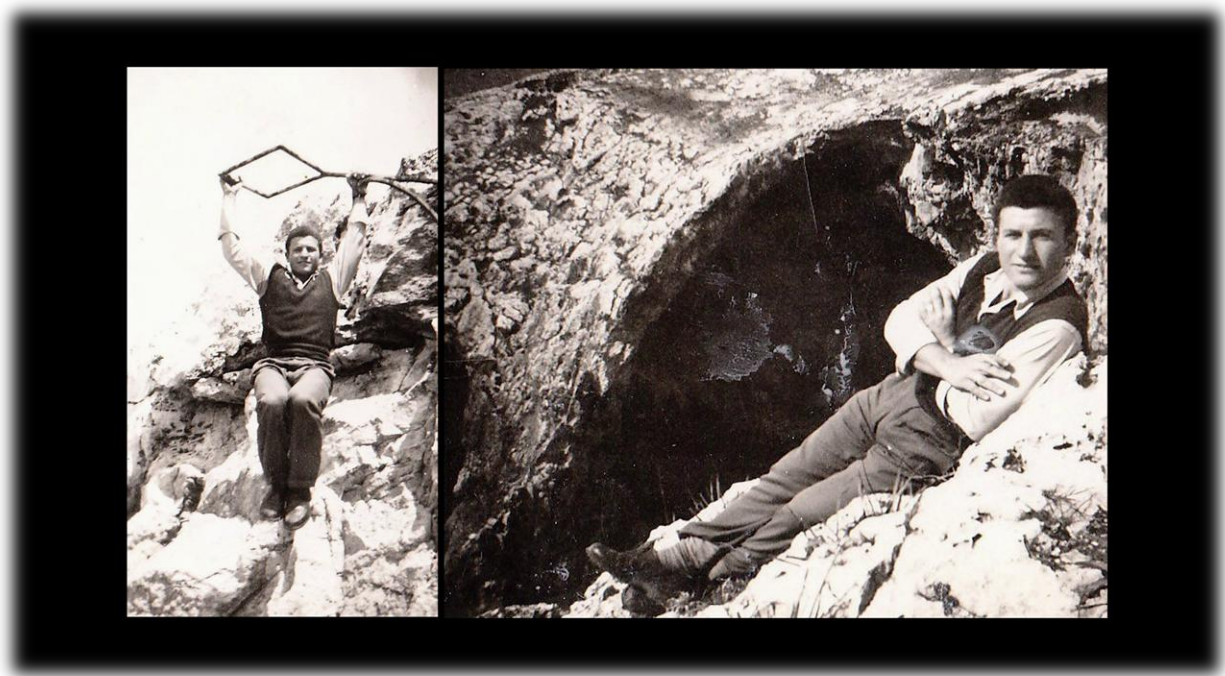
- Financed by York-Durham Heritage Railway & Township of Uxbridge
- Collaborated with local historians, councillors and administrative officials
- North American distribution by Echelon Studios in Los Angeles, USA
- Showcased at the 2009 *Canadian National Exhibition* Toronto, Ontario
- Showcased at the 2009 *ReelHeART International Film Festival* Toronto, Ontario
- Showcased at the 2010 *Independent Film Festival* Toronto, Ontario

### Nonquon Island (2008) - *Director/Producer/Writer*

- Financed by Mississauga First Nations of Scugog & Township of Scugog
- Collaborated with local First Peoples, archivists and councillors
- Winner of the 2008 *Scugog Heritage Media Award*
- Premiered at the *Canoe the Nonquon Film Festival* - May 10<sup>th</sup> 2008 Town Hall 1873 Port Perry, Ontario
- Showcased at the 2009 *ReelHeART International Film Festival* Toronto, Ontario

### Cedar Mains Farm: A Forgotten Landscape (2007) - *Director/Producer/Writer*

- Financed by Heritage Caledon
- Collaborated with Heritage Resource Officer for the Town of Caledon and Peel Archives
- Premiered at Empire Theatres - February 16, 2008 Bolton, Ontario



## CREDITS

### DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

Mark Magro

### EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Cable One

Wanted Media

### PHOTOGRAPHER

Eva Gingl

### WRITER

Mark Magro

### MUSIC

Jamendo

### SOUND EFFECTS

Freesound

### POST-PRODUCTION

Wanted Media

### HISTORICAL LIAISON

William Jenkins