

FORGOTTEN LANDSCAPES

PRESS KIT



A MULTIMEDIA PROJECT

PREPARED BY:

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



I am drawn to abandoned places because of their solitude. They provide peace but also awaken an abundant curiosity of the past.

I am not only fascinated by how a structure is built but how it has evolved. Just as ancient cities are built upon ruins, these places have their layers exposed.

The challenge is to tell or build a story out of fragments and resurrect a structure through collaborative research and imagination.

I have selected these locations because they reveal humanities quarrel with obsolescence. It can teach us about the fragility of humanity and forgotten ways of life.

This cross-disciplinary experiment is the accumulation of a decade of work producing documentaries, films and publications.

I hope that this material will stir curiosity of the past, spark debates and bring the opportunity to develop this into a series on other abandoned locations all over the world.

It is an honour to have this journey start in Malta, the land of my ancestors.

Mark Magro
Director

SYNOPSIS



Forgotten Landscapes is the first in a projected series of multimedia exhibits and publications that brings together artisans and historians to tell the story of four abandoned locations in Malta.

EXHIBITION



The St. James Cavalier in Valletta, Malta will exhibit the material from Thursday, February 16 2017 at 7:00pm until Sunday, April 2 2017 in Space A.

MATERIAL

Artwork

Four artisans were commissioned to produce one original artwork onsite at the abandoned location. The work was finalized at their studio. No limitations were given to size, material or style.

Publication

The book is an amalgamation of research, artwork and photography of the artisans and locations. Heritage Malta, National Archives of Malta and local historians assisted and contributed to the completion of the works.

Film

The film is a collection of four shorts that document the artisans producing their artwork.

DIRECTOR PROFILE



I was born and raised by my Maltese parents in the city of Toronto, in Ontario, Canada, Passionate about the arts from a young age, I have produced short films with friends and family using the latest technology.

In Canada, I graduated from York University and Centennial College with degrees in history, film theory and information technology, I decided to attend the Toronto Film School for Film Production.

Wanted Media was established in 2006 with the intent of combining my love of history, technology and since then I have had the opportunity to produce award winning documentaries, films and publications.

CREDITS

Director

Mark Magro

Painters

Marika Borg
Caroline Said Lawrence
Mark Mallia
Jenie Caruana

Photographers

Kristina Quintano
Dick Woolley
Mark Magro

Publisher

Quintano Publishing

Print House

Best Print

Marketing Design

Yestek Incorporated

Editor

Magda Foremski

Translation

Antoine Cassar

Special Thanks

Heritage Malta
Malta National Archives
Malta National Library
Spazju Kreattiv

LOCATIONS & ARTISANS



Jerma Place was once a four-star seaside hotel situated in the southern Maltese village of Marsaskala.

Built in 1982 by the Libyan Jamahiriya party to improve the Maltese economy, the hotel provided employment to locals and assisted in the transformation of the community from a small fishing village into a popular tourist destination.

The hotel once housed a presidential suite for former Libyan president Muammar Gaddafi. Its derelict and abandoned state provides a powerful reminder to the rise and fall of a foreign dynasty and captures a moment in time when his influence in Malta was strong.

In 2007, the hotel was sold to developers and shortly thereafter closed. After failed attempts to develop the structure into a commercial complex, the site was quickly stripped and left to decay.



Mark is a Maltese native, self-taught in the arts and tutored by the late notable Maltese artist Espirit Barthet. At the age of 28, he held his first solo exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts in Valletta, Malta. The results of this event led him to win a bursary at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence, Italy.

After completing his educational career, Mark decided to travel across Europe. While visiting in France he worked for Pathé, a major film production and distribution company, as a story boarder and photographer. The work garnered the attention of

Princess Stephanie of Monaco and as a result commissioned Mark to produce twenty-one paintings at The Sporting Club in Monaco.

The success of these works led to further art projects and exhibits but it was not until Mark decided to move back to Malta that he became a full-time independent artist. In 2015, Mark exhibited his works *Visible Feelings* at the Miami Art Basel in the United States of America.



Fort Campbell is known as the last fortification built in Malta. It is located on a peninsula near the village of Mellieħa and was built by the British empire during the prelude to the Second World War between 1937 and 1938.

At the time of its construction, advancements in aerial technology demanded a type of fortification that avoided detection. The result was an array of camouflaged concrete structures tied together through a myriad of underground tunnels designed to protect allied planes as they landed in the nearby bay.

The transition in architecture symbolized a change in perception of power. Greatness no longer came from the detailed stonework of grandiose fortifications but from the cold calculated machinery of modern warfare.

After the Second World War, the fortification fell out of use and was eventually abandoned after the British forces left the island during the 1970s.



Born in England and educated at the Harrow Arts Colleges in Uxbridge, United Kingdom, Jeni came to Malta in 1977.

Working as a Graphic Designer and obtaining a post-Diploma course at the Malta College of Arts, Jeni began her career as an Artisan. In 1995, she began to teach drawing and watercolour techniques to adults.

In 2013, Jeni painted live during the European debut of the *Two Room Apartment* at the Hotel Phoenicia in Valletta, Malta for the Malta Arts Festival which gathered recognition and praise locally and abroad.



Aħrax Tower is a coastal watchtower overlooking Armier Bay in the outskirts of the Maltese village of Mellieħa and is the northernmost fortification in Malta.

It was constructed on shortly after the Spanish knight Martin De Redin was elected Grand Master of the Order of St. John in 1658 and was the sixth in a series of watchtowers built to strengthen the coastal defense system.

The physical design of the watchtowers and proximity to each other provided a line of sight across the island. From smoke and cannon to radar, the tower adapted with warfare across the oceans of time and its protection from invaders is an homage to the ingenuity of the Order of St. John.

After the Second World War, the tower became a British Governor's summer residence and then was privately owned before it was abandoned.



Born and raised in Malta, Marika obtained a Masters in Arts at the International Correspondence School in Scranton Pennsylvania, United States of America and Diploma at the School of Arts in Valletta, Malta.

Garnering certificates of Merit from the Maltese and German Society of Arts, Marika has exhibited a number of solo exhibitions around Malta such as *My Passion on Canvas* at the Skuna Exhibition Hall and *Walking Through Colour* at Teatru Manoel.

Markia is part of the Orange Lizards Art Group, a public collective which that showcases art to promote preservation of the Maltese countryside. In October 2016, her work was shown publicly as part of the Orange Lizards at the German Maltese Circle in Valletta, Malta.



The Mgarr Ix-Xini Pumping station was an eighteenth century British public work project located in a valley in the south of Gozo near the village of Sannat.

Prior to its construction, Gozo was facing a fresh water shortage. British Engineer Osbert Chadwick, who gained recognition for his works at Chadwick Lakes in Malta, was brought in by the Governor to conduct a survey. His results found ample ground water in the area but the rough terrain made it a difficult task for extraction.

Starting with coal-power and then transitioning to electric after the Second World War, the station proved to be an engineering marvel. With all its many shafts, pipes, mines and tunnels targeted to provide fresh water to nearby communities it forever changed the way locals lived.

By the 1960s, the underground galleries were extended and merged with the development of another nearby pumping station. With operating costs high and aging machinery, the station was decommissioned and eventually abandoned.



Born in Africa to a Maltese father and Irish mother, Caroline spent an idyllic childhood in Nairobi and Mombasa.

When her family moved from the Middle East, she was sent to boarding school in Surrey, England. Attending the St. Martin's School of Art in London with the full intentions of pursuing a career in Art she decided to return to Bahrain and start a family.

In 2002, Caroline moved to Malta and began a journey to rediscover her Maltese roots. It was during this period that she re-established an independent artist and established an art studio and educational program.

Her work has been showcased at various festivals such as the *Azure & Ochre* solo art exhibit at Birgu, Malta in 2011.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Forgotten Landscapes was a dream concept I had at the Toronto Film School to combine my love of history, technology and arts.

Between 2006 and 2008, Wanted Media produced three Canadian historical documentaries on abandoned locations. These works would become part of a portfolio which would be used to develop a television series on abandoned places all over the world.

In 2009, a trailer and proposal was developed. I pitched to various stations including History Channel and the BBC. At the same time, I also applied for funding at the Canadian National Film board and Hot Docs, a yearly worldwide documentary festival held in Toronto, Canada. In the end, all of the organizations liked the idea but would not support it.

I decided to move on and focused my attention on producing books and other films. It was not until my decision to move to Europe at the end of 2014 that allowed me time to rekindle my love of abandoned places.

I started a Crowdfunding campaign and presented a 48-day challenge where I would travel to select abandoned places in the European Union and produce a short film and history book. The idea did not gain momentum.

In 2016, I decided to simplify the concept and focused on four abandoned locations in Malta. I wanted to utilize local artisans and historians and produce a unique way of bringing the story of these places back to life.

I launched another unsuccessful Crowdfunding campaign but after mentioning the idea to my landlord, who is an artisan, provided me contacts to the artisans that would become part of the project.

I attended a training session at the St. James Clavier in Valletta, Malta for the Spazju Kreattiv program which allows artisans a space to showcase their work. With the

location being ideal for an exhibition, I successfully pitched the idea and was provided a space for their 2017 season.

Heritage Malta was contacted and provided an official support letter. Visiting the Malta National Archives and Malta National Library provided interesting information and references to Historians that contributed additional research material.

I applied for the Malta Arts Grant three times. After the third attempt, I decided to self-finance the project as research was mostly complete, artisans were onboard and an exhibit space was found.

By the end of 2016, all artisans were filmed and the artwork was produced. The behind-the-scenes photographer, who was also friends with my landlord, happened to be an independent publisher and expressed interest in having the book published under her brand Quintano Publishing.

The short films, exhibition layout, photography and book was finalized. A Maltese print house was also found and produced a limited number of copies. Marketing material was also developed by the Graphic Designer that produced all previous marketing material for Wanted Media's documentaries.

PREVIOUS WORK

Short Films



Mark Magro –Director/Producer/Writer/Photographer
Brent Tremain - Cinematographer

[Emotions](#) (2011)

An experimental film on loss and redemption based on the poetry of Rites of Passage

- Financed by Wanted Media
- Showcased at the 2012 Scotiabank Exposed International Photography Festival in Toronto, Canada
- Honorable Mention at the 2012 ReelHeART International Film Festival in Toronto, Canada



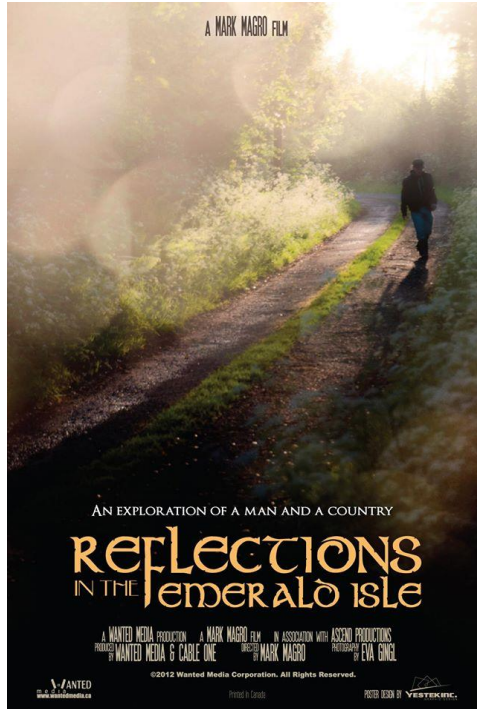
Mark Magro –Director/Producer/Writer/Researcher
Tom Panasiak – Photographer

[Heart of Europe](#) (2013)

An experimental travelogue on the beauty of Poland

- Financed by Wanted Media.
- Showcased at the 2009 GSCA IMAX conference in Indianapolis, USA

Documentaries

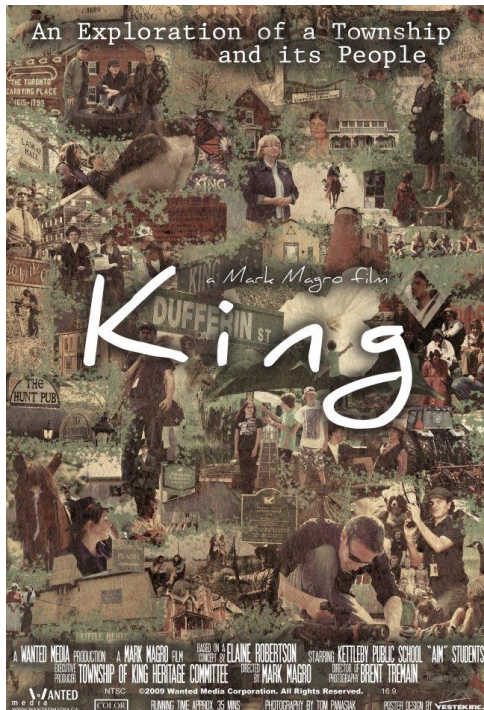


Mark Magro –Director/Producer/Writer/Researcher/Editor
Bret Teskey – Graphic Designer

[Reflections in the Emerald Isle](#) (2012)

A half-hour introspective documentary on a man traveling Ireland in search of its history while reflecting on the life of his dying Maltese father

- Financed by Wanted Media, Cable One and Ascend Productions
- Collaborated with Cable One, Ascend Productions and Yestek Incorporated
- Premiered at the 2012 Moving Images International Film Festival in Toronto, Canada
- Showcased at the 2013 Kinemastik International Film Festival in Valletta, Malta
- Showcased at the 2013 Notte Bianca Festival in Valletta, Malta
- Showcased at the 2013 European Union International Film Festival in Toronto, Canada

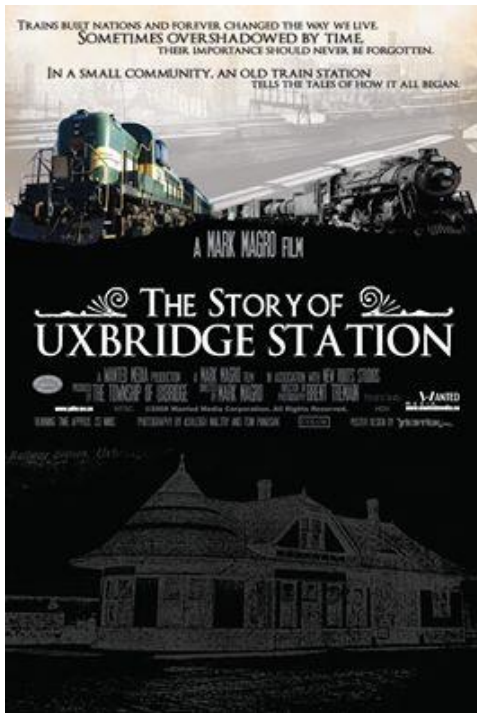


Mark Magro –Director/Producer/Writer/Researcher/Editor
Brent Tremain - Cinematographer
Tom Panasiak - Photographer
Bret Teskey – Graphic Designer

[King](#) (2010)

An hour historical documentary that explores the story of King Township and its impact on Canadian history through the eyes of school children

- Financed by Township of King Heritage Committee and King Township
- Collaborated with Yestek Incorporated, Kettleby Public School, King Township Heritage Committee and Toronto & Region Conservation Authority
- Worked with grade 7 & 8 students from Kettleby Public School
- Premiered at the Country Day school auditorium in King City, Canada
- Won Documentary Award at the 2010 Multimedia Film Festival of York Region in Richmond Hill, Canada
- Won Merit Award at the 2010 International Awareness Festival in Los Angeles, USA

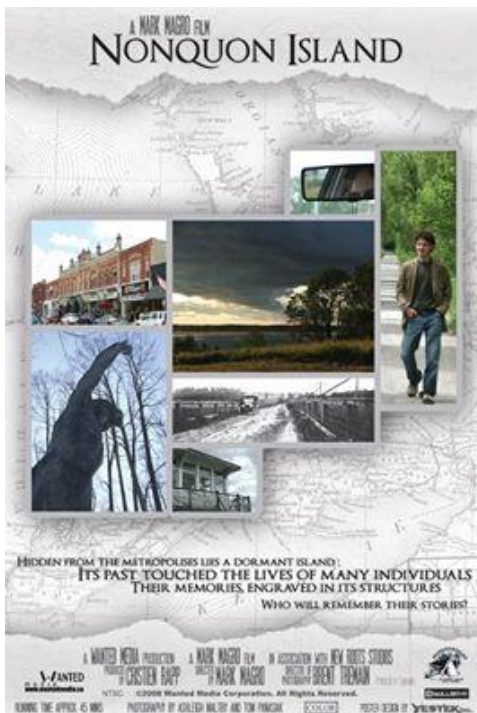


Mark Magro –Director/Producer/Writer/Researcher/Editor
 Brent Tremain - Cinematographer
 Tom Panasiak - Photographer
 Bret Teskey – Graphic Designer

[The Story of Uxbridge Station](#) (2008)

A half-hour historical documentary on one of the few Canadian heritage train services

- Financed by York-Durham Heritage Railway, Township of Uxbridge and New Roots Studios
- Collaborated with Uxbridge Museum, Uxbridge Tourism and Yestek Incorporated
- Premiered at the Uxbridge Music Hall in Uxbridge, Canada
- Showcased at the 2010-2015 Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto, Canada
- Showcased at the Warsaw Polytechnic in Warsaw, Poland
- Showcased at the 2009 ReelHeART International Film Festival in Toronto, Canada
- Showcased at the 2010 Independent Film Festival in Toronto, Canada



Mark Magro –Director/Producer/Writer/Researcher
 Brent Tremain - Cinematographer
 Tom Panasiak - Photographer
 Bret Teskey – Graphic Designer

[Nonquon Island](#) (2008)

An hour historical documentary that explores the neglected structures of Nonquon Island and its historical ties to European and Native American culture

- Financed by Mississauga First Nations of Scugog, Township of Scugog and New Roots Studios
- Collaborated with Mississauga First Nations of Scugog, Heritage Scugog, Yestek Incorporated and Bullseye Studios
- Premiered at the 2008 Canoe the Nonquon Film Festival in Port, Perry, Ontario
- Winner of the 2008 Scugog Heritage Media Award
- Showcased at the 2009 ReelHeART International Film Festival in Toronto, Canada



Mark Magro –Director/Producer/Writer/Researcher
 Brent Tremain – Cinematographer/Editor
 Tom Panasiak - Photographer
 Bret Teskey – Graphic Designer

[Cedar Mains Farm: A Forgotten Landscape](#)
 (2007)

A half-hour historical documentary that uncovers the story behind the abandoned and now destroyed Cedar Mains Farm

- Financed by Heritage Caledon and New Roots Studios
- Collaborated with Heritage Caledon, Peel Regional Archives and Yestek Incorporated
- Premiered at Empire Theaters in Bolton, Canada

Publications

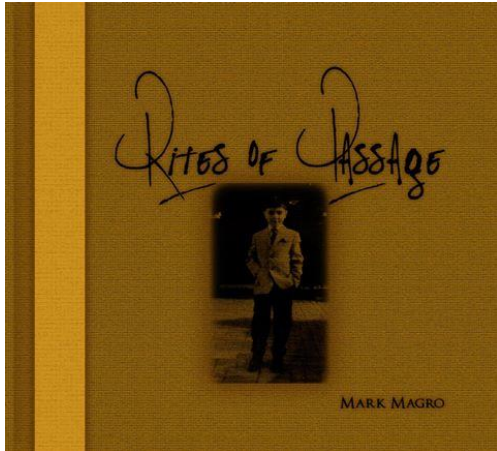


Mark Magro –Writer/Researcher

[Reflections of the Emerald Isle](#) (2014)

A historical and photographic journey of Ireland

- Financed by Cable One and Wanted Media
- Collaborated with photographer Eva Gingl
- Independently published through [LULU](#)



Mark Magro –Writer/Photographer

[Rites of Passage](#) (2011)

A collection of poetry and photography of Mark Magro

- Financed by Wanted Media
- Collaborated with photographer Michael Magro
- Independently published through [LULU](#)
- Honorable Mention at the 2011 New England Book Festival
- Honorable Mention at the 2011 London Book Festival
- Honorable Mention at the 2012 Paris Book Festival
- Honorable Mention at the 2012 San Francisco Book Festival
- Honorable Mention at the 2012 New York Book Festival
- Photography showcased at the 2012 Scotiabank Exposed International Photography Festival in Toronto, Canada



Mark Magro – Writer/Photographer

[How the Maltese Shaped the Toronto Landscape](#) (2010)

A detailed historical article on the evolution of Maltese immigration in Toronto, Ontario Canada.

- Financed by Wanted Media
- Showcased in the Winter Edition of the 2010 Toronto Historical Society publication