

DUGONG FILMS, ROUGH CUT, PICOFILMS, present

Gold Is All There Is



*a film by Andrea Caccia
carved by nature and time*



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Synopsis

A river. A young boy who plays and gets lost in the woods. A naked man who wanders among the trees. A weapon. An illegal hunter. A police officer. A crime from the past. An old gold prospector. Real people, who go about their daily lives in a natural theatre where reality takes on the qualities of a fairy tale, a crime novel, a coming-of-age story. Five men at different stages of life who never meet yet are all part of one, unique, suspended narration.



Director's Note

Since moving back near the River Ticino I have met many people who live in close contact with nature here. During my walks along the gravelly riverbed or in the dark woods, I have often bumped into 'atavistic' figures from another age, who chatted with me, whetted my curiosity, even frightened and amazed me. Their bodies, faces, gestures and shapes hark back to the mists of time, yet still convey a deep, incredibly contemporary understanding of the relationships between man and nature, knowledge and instinct, mind and body.

Their stories of this untold territory led me to this film. Its narrative has a variable morphology that, like a river, continually changes. It flows, branches out, swells and slows but never stops. It illustrates the complexity of reality by splitting up the various parts. An observational film – told through the bodies of its protagonists – it changes throughout by combining the cinematic languages of fiction and documentary. It is both mysterious and tangible, a film made up of earth and flesh, water and mind. In search of the gold hidden in every one of us.

I have always liked rivers. I was brought up in Romentino, one of the small towns in the Ticino Valley Nature Park in the Piedmont region. As a boy, I couldn't wait to go to skim stones in the river with my father and my brother. We would count the number of skips and were always amazed how they appeared to fly along the silver line marking the edge of the riverbank. We would say that by throwing these stones, we had changed their fate. I remember picnics with my mum and dad, then when I was a teenager, drinking beer by the river with friends. I remember the traces left by human beings under the bridges, in the river bends, in the rare tracts of sand. I remember the smell of the brackish water on my skin after swimming, which made me feel a part of nature. I remember solitary walks in the shade of the poplar trees. The smell of summer and the insects. All those signs marking the hunting reserve. I remember the cold and the fear, the heat and the boredom. The feeling of being suspended in time and space.

I lived in Milan for 15 years, during which time I got married and had two children. For the past few years, I've lived in Cuggiono, a town in the Ticino Valley Park in the Lombardy region – on the opposite riverbank to where I was 20 years ago. Whenever I can, I take the kids to skim stones in the river. When I watch their stones skip on the water, before sinking, I ask myself how we could ever think, even for one moment, that our actions could actually change the course of things, of time, of space. I see trees damaged by flooding, the remains of picnics washed away. Beach blankets abandoned among white stones. The

profusion of dragonflies on the bank. The river's water, which continually changes colour. Motionless, I observe the passing of my life, while I look for something that can shine, like that light I saw as a child.

Over the past two years, I have spent many days on long walks through the woods around the river, watching the light fall between the trees, on outings and continual voyages of discovery with my children. Returning to the places of my childhood and exploring new spaces. I travelled the river upstream to its source and sailed its waters to the mouth... That is how the film was born, during a day out with my kids. I was watching them pick wild irises... when Rinaldo, the gold prospector, turned up and his stories helped me see beyond the actual horizon of the river.

The idea took shape and the characters I initially imagined became real, flesh-and-blood people. A poacher, a police officer, a young boy and a naturalist. Feet that trample the earth, human beings that respond to a natural logic of action.

This encounter with the film's characters started to break down the wall separating the idea from its realisation, imagination from reality, shining fresh light and giving me a new perspective from which to observe the wood and its protagonists. Everything took on much greater significance when I started to follow Rinaldo, Filippo, Daniele, Francesco and Roberto. Adapting myself to their pace, letting them guide me through the *hidden parts* of their hearts – each distinct but superimposable – I eventually found the film's essence. Slowly, their real-life searches became *my search for reality*. Here were human beings following Ariadne's invisible thread of life, waiting for their stories to be told thanks to a camera that can walk, pause and breathe in time with them. Using a directing style that transcends a formal mise-en-scene to find a natural and more intimate dimension: from movement to suspension, towards a perceptive stillness where nature and the mind are in equilibrium. Towards a visual *crisis*, or blend, where documentary and fiction hide behind each other, until the (un)natural separation between them is torn down.

The film's style is simple, though quite unconventional. Five characters in a single location. A wood with invisible borders, and, at the heart of the wood, a river. Five intertwining paths, weaving between the river's same banks, bridges and ancient dams, but never meeting.

The endless paths of the five protagonists twist and turn. Nothing is staged, there is no grand spectacle. Simple actions for a film that observes a reality only seemingly always the same, to recount the delicate balance on which all ecosystems rest.

A film carved by nature's raw materials and by time.

Andrea Caccia



Andrea Caccia, director's bio

After studying painting and film direction, he devoted himself to shooting creative documentaries and to teaching visual art as a tool for exposing reality. He directed shorts and documentaries, unaffectedly shifting between genres and creating a personal style that eludes common definitions. His films have been selected for several international festivals, including Venice, Locarno, Rotterdam IFFR, Film Festival, Lussas, Annecy Cinéma Italien, Brooklyn FF, Festival del Cinema Nuovo (Pesaro), Festival dei Popoli. He lives and works in Italy, in the Ticino valley.

Selected Filmography

2016 » doc “Vedozero 2”

2011 » doc “Mi Piace Quello Alto con le Stampelle”

2010 » doc “La Vita al Tempo della Morte”

2009 » doc “Hospice”

2009 » doc “Vedozero”

2003 » doc “Sulle Tracce del Gatto”

2002 » doc “18 Days Around Arrington De Dionyso Quartet”

2000 » doc “L'Estate Vola”

COMPANY PROFILES

DUGONG FILMS (Italy)

The **Dugong** is a large marine mammal, the inspiration for ancient sea-faring tales of mermaids and sirens. From this creature Dugong draws its name, a Rome based production company focused on the blurred line between fiction and documentary. Dugong films have been shown in festivals such as Cannes (*Samouni Road*, 2018, Winner Cail D'Or for Best Documentary), Venice (*Controfigura*, 2017, *The Years*, 2018, Winner of the European Film Award for the best short), Toronto (*Mon Amour Mon Ami*, 2017), Locarno (*The Challenge*, 2016), Rotterdam (*Whipping Zombie*, 2017), and were exhibited in art venues such as Tate Modern and Art Basel.

info@dugong.it

ROUGH CAT (Switzerland)

ROUGH CAT is a production company based in Lugano, founded in 2014 by producer Nicola Bernasconi. It aims at developing and producing films with an eye towards the panorama of European cinema and international co-productions. Among the films produced so far is the documentary *Stella Ciao* which was premiered at 50th Solothurn Film Festival's Prix du public and was screened at several international film festivals. In 2019 ROUGH CAT will release its first long feature film, *I Segreti del mestiere* by Andreas Maciocci, currently in post-production.

info@roughcat.ch

PICOFILMS (France)

Picofilms was founded in 2010 in Paris by filmmakers Penelope Bortoluzzi and Stefano Savona. Among the company's productions are Stefano Savona's *Samouni Road* (Winner œil d'Oro Cannes 2018, co-produced by Dugong), *Palazzo delle Aquile* (2011), *Tahrir Liberation Square* (2011, Winner David di Donatello for Best Documentary), and *Waiting for the Rise* by D'Agostino & Lavorato, winner of Best Short film in Venice 2011.

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Gold Is All There Is

Original Title: Tutto l'oro che c'è

Genre: Creative Documentary

Duration: 100'

Sound 5.1, Color, DCP 2K

No Dialogues

Written & Directed by: **Andrea Caccia**

Director of Photography: **Massimo Schiavon**

Sound Recordist **Luca Bertolin**

Sound Designer **Massimo Mariani**

Editing **Cristian Dondi & Andrea Caccia**

Produced by: **Dugong Films (IT), ROUGH CAT (CH), Picofilms (FR)**

Coproduced by **RSI (CH)**

In Association with **Shoot & Post (SE)**

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