



THE TRAILER

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RUBICON (WT)

RUBICON is a story of four fearless, everyday people with extraordinary vision.

Yidan, Indigo, Alina and Frederik live in the midst of the cracks that split between a formerly healthy planet and an uncertain, potentially frightening future. They take us on a journey into their worlds, from infamous wildlife markets in Chinese megacities to mines swallowing up primeval woodland in the heart of Europe, from the troubled plains of the Serengeti into Arctic underwater worlds.

Trying to find a life worth living for in these margins, they each risk their lives taking a stand for their corners of the world - for the animals, trees, for the biodiversity we need to survive, for a stable global climate. In doing so, they each face an overwhelming fight they can't win alone, taking on industry titans, illegal trade mafias, totalitarian regimes, human wildlife conflict and establishment systems that profess to stand for change, but are entirely incapable of doing so. Still they march on.

It's easy to underestimate the impact of these individuals or think that humanity may never affect change, let alone turn systems around. But in times of crisis, when those at the top often fail us, leadership emerges all around. And it looks courageous, empathetic and persistent. RUBICON is a journey with fortifying promise. Yidan, Indigo, Alina and Frederik show us how caring about your backyard and showing up to take a stand everyday, matters.

THE PROTAGONISTS



YIDAN

BEIJING, CHINA

EAST ASIAN SONGBIRD / WET MARKETS /
HABITAT DESTRUCTION



Yidan lives in northern China, a woman in her mid-50s with unquestionable courage. In her lifespan she has witnessed the rise of China and has seen historic cities turn into hyper-surveilled bunker worlds, rice paddy landscapes turn to pale monocultures where wildlife is absent and songbirds in their billions reduced to the brink of extinction. She has witnessed large tracts of her country turn from colour to grey. Unwilling to take it any longer, Yidan loads her black SUV and begins a journey to track down the last of the once abundant yellow breasted buntings. Travelling across China, she busts illegal wet markets and faces a dangerous industry of wild animal trade – the third largest illegal activity in the world. She risks attack from the mafia stronghold, state persecution and her own freedom to free migratory birds from traps. With COVID-19 exposing the danger of wet markets and the importance of natural habitats for combatting viral outbreaks and human health, perhaps Yidan's quest to keep the song bird singing can succeed. With the mafia at her back and the highway ahead, how far can Yidan go if one unconscious step might destroy everything?

INDIGO

HAMBACH FOREST, GERMANY

OAK FORESTS / LIGNITE MINING /
CLIMATE CHANGE / FRIDAY'S FOR FUTURE



While Indigo's contemporaries are being told what to do in lecture halls and concurring jobs, she has a mind of her own and decides to take on a titan of the global power industry. She builds a tree-house in the canopy of a 12,000 year old forest in Germany to stop the neighboring coal mine expansion. For three years she lives in the treetops preparing for the moment the forest will be culled to make way for a hole four hundred meters deep. Indigo and her friends ally to make life hard for the energy giant, but quickly things escalate. Their peaceful protest causes the biggest police operation in the history of the state, confidants die and Indigo is taken into custody. Against all odds, she empowers a wave of climate protests across Europe and 50,000 people show up to support indigo's mission. But are her efforts enough to save the last remaining patch of one of Germany's oldest forest from disappearing?

ALINA

SERENGETI, TANSANIA

THE GREAT MIGRATION / POACHING /
HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT



IT expert Alina grew up in the suburbs of Dar-Es-Salaam. Initially asked to fix a server in the heart of the Serengeti, home to the world's great migration. 5 years later, she has never left. Leading an anti-poaching unit with a labyrinth of software and tech, her daily challenge is to track and release teams to infiltrate the hundreds of poaching units hunting wildebeest, zebra, giraffe and rhino to extinction. Living amongst a community deeply challenged by human wildlife conflict and tied up in a multi-billion industry trading bush meat for world wide consumption, she represents an affront to a way of life. She interferes with an industry which for many represents the only possible source of livelihood, a challenging reality for a young African woman. While passionate to re-stabalise the great migration and hold off a titanic illegal industry, balancing the tension of western conservation with the needs and traditions of the community she calls home.

FREDRIK

OSLO, NORWAY

SHARKS / OCEAN / OVERFISHING / POLLUTION



Our impression that the ocean is limitless has led to large scale over fishing, warming, acidification and wilful dumping of everything civilisation wants out of sight. Diving since he was a child, Frederik has witnessed this degradation of our underwater world but also the absolute wonder of this great unknown. His realm is the ocean, a source of true freedom, the closest man can feel to space without a rocket. Frederik is advisor of Fisheries and Marine Conservation to WWF and unlike our other characters, his methods to expose the challenges facing our oceans are traditional. He spends his days at conferences... speaking, sitting, waiting, policy drafting and engaging with a system that seems set to bore and stifle anything that looks like progress. But, in between digging up rubbish, deep on the ocean floor, Frederik shows up, time and time again. His story throws to light how a multi-lateral, cross sectoral processes of men in freshly laundered suits could even begin to unpick the problems facing our oceans.

THE BACKDROP



THE BACKDROP

The future is always in flux and history never stops - for better or for worse. The noise of media is a constant, anxiety inducing cacophony of doom, warning of global pandemics, species extinction, catastrophic climate crisis, the end of democracy. Never did this drum beat felt more acute and more alive than in 2020.

As we enter 2021, we hope it will be brighter, we hope someone else will fix the problem – like a new government. Or perhaps we can ‘science’ our way out of the mess we’re in? But hope is often what we cling to when we feel we’ve lost control or power to change. RUBICON is not a film about hope, it’s not about someone else providing the fix or suggesting answers to write a perfect future. The Film is about the power of doing something, no matter who or where you are.

Alongside RUBICON’s four fearless protagonist’s, the backdrop of the movie is a planetary crisis, where all the story threads connect.

THE BACKDROP

The reality of global development patterns are revealed and the tectonic shifts in landscapes and civilization traced. Seeing our planet from outer space, we witness the outcome of small-scale local decisions visible from thousands of kilometres away over time. This underlines the destructive as well as healing powers each and every one of us has on Earth and reminds us that resources are not endless... we are bound to a finite system.

The audience travels through time to see changes on the surface of planet earth over the last 30 years through satellite images in time-lapse. This allows us to visualize complex connections of global logistics, economic output, climate developments and the overall impact on species worldwide. Here we build visual connections between the narratives of our geographically far-flung human protagonists, demonstrating that everything on our planet is connected through the actions and decisions we make. The audience is encouraged to see themselves, like Yidan, Alina, Indigo and Fredrik do, as part of the crew on spaceship earth, preparing to face the urgency of now with kindness.

SOCIAL IMPACT

[CAMPAIGN IN DEVELOPMENT]

RUBICON is a high intensity drama, traversing complex global themes and power dynamics with carefully chosen protagonists that cast a courageous effort to challenge the status quo. It's a powerful film. But it's valuable beyond its commercial potential...

RUBICON's goal to inspire a newly energized wave of activism in protecting our environment is an essential global theme for 2021. As more than three billion people currently still live under lock down facing the crisis of COVID-19, we question what the world look like on the other side? Will the engines of greed, consumerism, extraction and industry gear stronger than before? Will we race back to the "old normal"? Or will we recognise this crisis as the greatest opportunity of our time. An opportunity to build a more resilient and sustainable model, to reimagine a brighter future for people and earth?

RUBICON demonstrates the kind of courage, leadership and humanity we all need to embody to imagine and demand a new world vision and the leadership we will need to get there. The social impact campaign will build a critical mass of support, celebrating everyday heroes (those in the film and outside), shaping public opinion and moving 'we the people' to action as a 'lobby for nature' to protect our planet.

SOCIAL IMPACT

KEY IMPACT CHALLENGES



We will shift the narrative from... to...

- ” The crises of our time are complex, global and impossible to solve
 - » Film Impact: Taking a stand in your backyard is a globally significant action.

- ” The system protects the perpetrators and makes heroes into villains
 - » Film Impact: Your actions are not insignificant. If not you, who? if not now, when?

- ” Targets are too low and progress too slow
 - » Film Impact: real change happens one step at a time... show up, then show up again to demand it.

SOCIAL IMPACT

KEY IMPACT STRATEGY

Drawing on communications science for impact and what drives behavior change, the social impact campaign will focus on both digital media and traditional media to reach our target audiences and inspire and encourage a new wave of activism. It will focus on the strength of our protagonists as relatable human heroes, the communities and movements which they have inspired and lead and also elevate the stories of other everyday heroes outside of the film to amplify their momentum and demonstrate the cacophony of action and demand for change.

The impact campaign will focus on:

-**Public activation** via social media aimed at recruiting 'generation future' and 'best age' categories to acknowledge and share the power of everyday voices. This will be supported by engagement with international NGOs and movements to deliver free 'impact screenings' alongside the films traditional distribution and amplifying their own hero voices.

-A **grassroots activation** approach across local communities represented in the film via local events, social platform cross-promotions where we share and amplify the efforts of the projects, NGOs and wider cast of actors and local people behind the film.

-A **top down** strategy to target political bodies (ie UN, G20) and more traditional media to demonstrate the scale of leadership from the bottom and the cross-generational demand for a global reset.

FACTS & FIGURES

THE FORMAT

FEATURE LENGTH 90'-120'
4K CINEMASCOPE

THE SCHEDULE

preproduction
OCT 2016- MARCH 2018

shooting
APRIL 2018 - DEC 2020

postproduction
APRIL - SEP 2021

delivery
OCT 2021

optional online marketing content
JUNE - TBD 2021

(SOCIAL MEDIA BITS AND VR)

EXCLUSIVES

Pre & post COVID-19 out-break footage on Chinese bird & wet markets and illegal bird trading

Intimate access inside Hambach Forest activist community and their evictions in one of the largest police operations in German history

Insights into high risk anti-poaching missions and intercontinental rhino translocations

shoot locations include Tanzania, South Africa, China, Argentina, USA, Spain, Italy, Norway, UK, The Netherlands, France, India, Australia, and Germany offering stories for world audience interest and international content platforms

TARGET AUDIENCE

Generation Future - Inspiring a rising youth segment, highly political and intensely motivated by the courage of relatable activists

Best Ages - Re-engaging a highly educated, wealthy market segment in the freshest wave of activism, encouraging them to stand by their grandchildren as they seek change.

TEAM



ROBERT MORGENSTERN
AUTHOR & DIRECTOR

Director Robert Morgenstern is a seasoned Director and Producer with two International Emmy nominations ("Outstanding Cinematography" and "Outstanding Narrator" Sam Neill) for acclaimed series New Zealand: Earth's Mythical Islands. Co-founder of Atara Film, Robert has led significant co-productions with international partners BBC, National Geographic, ARD, NDR and arte and co-produced fiction films. His debut film Heligoland premiered in 2012 and was awarded Best Newcomer Film at the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival (the Oscars of the wildlife film industry).

KILIAN HELMBRECHT
DIRECTOR

Emerging Director Kilian Helmbrecht's debut documentary One Man's Land was nominated for the Gimme Award in 2018. He has worked as an editor and camera assistant for the NDR/NatGeo WILD doc series America's National Parks and junior director for the NDR/BBC documentary New Zealand: Earth's Mythical Islands.

SINA KNOLL
PRODUCER

Sina is a seasoned documentary film professional. She was co-production manager at Doclights for a number of multi-awarded wildlife films and series, such as National Geographic's Congo (2014), Australia (2015), America's National Parks (2015/16), South Africa (2016), BBC's New Zealand (2016), and behavioural monography White Wolves - Ghosts of the Arctic (2017) for CBC, NHK, WNET, arte and others. Since 2017 Sina is producing freelance and doing PhD research on animal narratives in film.

TEAM



ALEXANDER HASSKERL
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Co-founder of Atara Film, Alexander is an internationally renowned DoP, leading a team to two International Emmy nominations for acclaimed series New Zealand: Earth's Mythical Islands. His first feature film as DoP, *The Strange Little Cat* (2013) premiered at the 63. Berlinale and was nominated as Best Cinematography by German Film Critics and his second feature *Fado* premiered in 2016 was awarded as Best Feature Film Debut by German Film Critics at the 67th Berlinale. His new feature film as DoP *The Girl and the Spider* premiered at the 71st Berlinale this year.



DOCLIGHTS NDR NATURFILM

One of Germany's leading market players, Doclights produces modern and entertaining non-fiction programs including wildlife and documentary series, docu-soaps, reports, new media series or cinema productions for international and German markets.

www.doclights.de



THE BIODIVERSITY FOUNDATION

The Biodiversity Foundation's purpose is to raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity and the dangers of the extinction crisis. The heart of its work is to bring awareness to these issues via social campaigns, film and television. Michael Otto is Chairman of the Board and Dirk Steffans (UN Ambassador for Biodiversity and much loved TV presenter) is Managing Director.

CONTACT

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AN ATARA FILM PRODUCTION

for Doclights NDR Naturfilm and The Biodiversity Foundation