



# THE MAN OF THE MONKEY

A FILM BY DAVID ROMBERG





**Format**      *Documentary | HD |      1.78:1 | 5.1 sound*

**Production**      *2020 | Brazil | Portuguese with English subtitles*

**Genres**      *Mystery, Journey, Latin American, Ecology, Brazil, Islands, Travel*

**Running Time**      *90 minutes*

**Directed By**      *David Romberg*

**Contact person**      *David Romberg | 267-231-0961 | [Info@manofthemonkey.com](mailto:Info@manofthemonkey.com)*

**Trailer:**      <https://www.manofthemonkey.com/trailer>

**Website**      [www.manofthemonkey.com](http://www.manofthemonkey.com)





# LOGLINE

Intrigued by the tale of a strange man living in isolation with a chimpanzee, filmmaker David Romberg travels to his childhood home in Brazil to find him, only to discover that the tale pales in comparison to what he uncovers.



Set on a remote jungle island, “The Man of the Monkey”, unravels a labyrinth of interconnected uncanny characters, all seeking refuge. Amongst them, an exiled Argentine Jewish artist haunted by phantoms of the past, a former prisoner with nowhere to go, and a suspected Nazi living in isolation with a monkey.

Moving between personal and collective histories about political turmoil and displacement, the film illuminates the intricacies and contradictions by which trauma defines our identities in the never-ending search for a home.

# SYNOPSIS



# *Directors Statement*

While this documentary unfolded over the course of ten years, the origin of the story goes back much further. In the mid 1970's, my father, seeking refuge following an escape from the Military Dictatorship in Argentina, built a small house on an island off the coast of Brazil. Ilha Grande and its few inhabitants, which included my family, existed largely secluded from the rest of the world.

The early portion of my childhood was spent living "off grid" on this remote island. We lived with no electricity or running water and our food was largely supplied by gardens and daily fishing. On quiet, star filled nights, my father shared fantastical stories and myths surrounding this mysterious island's history. He shared tales of pirates seeking hidden treasure, and of spirits that roamed the forests at night. But there was one story, the Man of the Monkey, that fascinated me so much, it lingered well into my adulthood. My father would speak of a German man with a spooky disposition living deep within the rainforest. The daunting man took a female monkey as his wife and together, they scared away all passersby. My father warned, "You must never venture too far in the forest or he will capture you". (continues)



For reasons I could not quite understand at the time, that story remained ever so prominent in my mind. While my family ultimately left the island, my intrigue of the dangerous tales persisted. After all, there was no shortage of dangerous tales in my family's history, including my Grandfather's escape from the Cosacks in Russia, a harrowing escape from Nazi Germany by my grandmother, and my father's exile from Argentina during the "Dirty War". These stories were often shared with the younger generations as both a cautionary measure and a grim reminder of our history.

As I grew older, I learned new details surrounding the complex history of my family. I became aware of the Nazis that escaped capture in Europe, only to live freely in South America. I heard stories of escaped Nazis living next door to their Jewish victims, who also fled to South America. I thought back to my father's tale of the mysterious German man living on the island. Was there truth to this tale? Could it be possible we were cohabitating our little island paradise with a Nazi? Ultimately, this question became the catalyst to return to my childhood home on the island. I was determined to unravel the mystery behind the Man of the Monkey.

What I ultimately discovered in my journey, would irreversibly change my understanding of my family's history. What started as a journey to find the meaning behind a childhood tale, became an unfolding of a transgenerational trauma that I had also inherited. In retracing the tracks that brought my father and the Man of the Monkey to the same remote island in search of sanctuary, I found myself creating a new story. A new, rather complicated story of the meaning of refuge and the never ending search for home.





# Awards

Heineken VOCES Award



TFI Latin America Fund

IFP Documentary Filmmaker Lab participant



TFI/A+E INDIEFILMS STORYLAB participant

The Princess Grace Award



# BIOS

## Director/David Romberg

David Romberg spent his childhood living in Brazil and Israel. Currently he is based in Philadelphia and is a professor at Muhlenberg College. He has been supported by the Tribeca Film Institute's Latin American Media Arts Fund Heineken VOCES Grant, The Princess Grace Foundation Grant and was selected to participate in the 2014 IFP Documentary Labs Program. David has also recently become a fellow of the Robert Flaherty Seminar and was awarded a Princess Grace Special Project fund to develop his upcoming docu/fiction film "The Return".



## Producer/Robert Girvin

Bob has over 15 years of experience in accounting as a CPA and holds degrees in Accounting and Finance from Villanova University. In addition to Producing "Man of the Monkey," in 2013 he received his MBA in International Business, graduating with honors, from the Thunderbird School of Global Management in Arizona.

## Consulting Producer/Daniel Chalfen



Daniel J. Chalfen is a Peabody and duPont winning and multiple-Emmy nominated film and television producer and a co-founder of Naked Edge Films. His documentaries have premiered at the world's foremost film festivals, including Berlin, SXSW, Toronto and Tribeca, have been released by companies including Samuel Goldwyn Films, Participant Media, Kino Lorber, and FilmRise and have aired/streamed worldwide including on Al Jazeera, Amazon, ARTE, CBC, DirecTV, Discovery ID, HBO, More4, Netflix, NHK, Showtime, PBS and ZDF, among others.

## Cinematographer/Gaston Girod



Based in Buenos Aires Argentina, Gaston Girod has shot commercials, fiction films and documentaries including "Panama - A Land Divided, a World United" (2013) by Abner Benaim, "The Eye of the Shark" (2013) by Alejo Hoijman, "AU3 Autopista Central" (2010) by Alejandro Hartmann and most recently the documentary "Ruben Blades is not my name" by Abner Benaim.

## Editor/Carlos Cambariere



Carlos Cambariere is a graduate of the Center for Cinematographic Research. He has worked extensively with Miguel Pérez (both academically and professionally) and director Juan Bautista Stagnaro. He has recently worked on films such as "Lightning in the Dark" (2014), "The Son of God" (2016), and television shows such as "Conservation Heros" for National Geographic and "Un gallo para Esculapio" for TNT.





























# *CREDITS*

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY DAVID ROMBERG

PRODUCED BY ROBERT C. GIRVIN // DAVID ROMBERG

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MICHAEL RIEDERS // MIMI BOHM // ROBERT H. GIRVIN

CONSULTING PRODUCERS DANIEL CHALFEN // JIM BUTTERWORTH

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER JOSH MADOFF

CINEMATOGRAPHER GASTON GIROD

EDITOR CARLOS M. CAMBARIERE (EDA)

ORIGINAL MUSIC JOSH MADOFF

PERFORMED, RECORDED AND EDITED BY JOSH MADOFF

CELLO PLAYED BY ALBAN BAILLY

SOUND DESIGNERS MANUEL DE ANDRÉS // JOSH MADOFF



ADDITIONAL SOUND RECORDIST LINCOLN OLIVEIRA DOS SANTOS

DIALOGUE EDITOR NICOLÁS CECININI

EFFECTS EDITOR SEBASTIÁN PAPPALARDO

EFFECTS EDITOR ASSISTANT JOAQUÍN FARINA

FOLEY ARTIST SEBASTIÁN "CHAMBER" SONSOONI

FOLEY RECORDIST RAFAEL MILLÁN

FOLEY EDITOR PEDRO GALLO

VOICE OVER RECORDIST AND SUPERVISOR JOSH MADOFF

SOUND SUPERVISOR AND RE-RECORDING MIXER MANUEL DE ANDRES

SOUND STUDIO FACILITIES TRITÓN SONIDO

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION SOUND RECORDIST LINCOLN OLIVEIRA DOS SANTOS

COLOR CORRECTION AND GRADING LU LARREA

POST PRODUCTION COORDINATORS IN ARGENTINA FEDERICO NOVO  
NICOLAS GROSSO // LE TIRO CINE

CONSULTING EDITORS ALEJO HOIJMAN // ELIA GASULL BALADA  
GREG YOUNG // VALERIE KELLER

ASSISTANT EDITORS JOE LEE // MARK RUSSELL  
JUAN PABLO MENCHON // MARIANA DURAN (EDA)

ADDITIONAL CAMERA OPERATORS BENTO MARZO // RODRIGO MAIA  
DAVID ROMBERG // DANIEL VENOSO // MARCELLO PIZZATO  
DANIEL BRENNAN // RYAN KUNA

WRITING CONSULTANT BETSY KAGEN

LINE PRODUCER IN BRAZIL **MARIANA NEDER**

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS **TAMARA LHOTELIN // AMPARO AGUADO**  
**ERIC MICHAEL RILEY // NATALIA AMARANTE FURTADO**

ASSISTANT PRODUCERS **LESLIE KOREN**

**PARTICIPANTS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE**

**OSVALDO ROMBERG // SANDRO RAMOS PIMENTS // IVONETE DE OLIVEIRA CRUIZ**  
**HERALDO DE OLIVEIRA // JEFERSON SOUZA // WELINGTON RAMOS CASTRO**  
**WESLEY RAMOS CASTRO // SEU HEITOR ROSA // OSVALDO CARNEIRO CRUIZ // BENEDITO DA COSTA**  
**CEZAR AUGUSTO DOS SANTOS // TONY MONTANA // MARIA DA CONCEIÇÃO DO ROSÁRIO**  
**BENEDITO CRISPINO DO ROSÁRIO // MARIA DA CONCEIÇÃO DIAS**  
**SEU TIÃO // SEU CLARINDO // ARNALDO PAES // RENATO BUYS**  
**RENATO MARQUES DA MOTA // LEONARDO ANDRADE BACELAR**  
**CONSTANTINO COKOTÓS // ALEXANDRE GUILHERME DE OLIVEIRA E SILVA**  
**JÚLIO DE ALMEIDA // ALEXANDRE BORBA DA SILVA // ALDO MANUEL DO SANTOS**  
**NAIRA MACIEL // MINEIRO // MAURI MARTINS // RAQUEL ROMBERG // LILI FREIMAN**  
**ISABELLA FLOHR // INGRID FLOHR // JOERG MERTENS**

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**TRANSLATIONS** **AMANDA RUZZA // CAROLINA RODRIGUES MEREDIOS**

**SET DESIGN** **ROBERT H. GIRVIN**

**ARCHIVISTS** **CECILIA NURIA GIL MARIÑO // SILVIA ANDREA OLEKSIKIW**

**SPECIAL THANKS**

**NAKED EDGE FILMS // LE TIRO CINE // ALO BRASIL // KICKSTARTER**  
**INTERNATIONAL HOUSE PHILADELPHIA // TEMPLE UNIVERSITY // CAROLINE MILLET**  
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**THUNDERBIRD SCHOOL OF GLOBAL MANAGEMENT // KELLY AUBEY AND FILM BAR // DAS TOR MAGAZINE**