



**When his world was stolen, Mark Hogancamp made a world of his own.**

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# Loglines

## One Sentence

After a vicious attack leaves him brain damaged and broke, Mark Hogancamp seeks recovery in Marwencol, a 1/6th-scale World War II-era town that he creates in his backyard.

## 60-Word

After a brutal assault leaves him brain damaged and broke, Mark Hogancamp seeks recovery in Marwencol – a miniature World War II-era town that he builds in his backyard. When his stunning photos of the town are discovered by the art world, Mark is forced to choose between his fantasy life and the real world he’s avoided since his attack. (Documentary Feature)



## Synopsis

On April 8, 2000, Mark Hogancamp was attacked outside a bar in Kingston, New York, by five men who beat him literally to death. Revived by paramedics, Mark had suffered brain damage and physical injuries so severe even his own mother didn't recognize him. After nine days in a coma and 40 days in the hospital, Mark was discharged with little memory of his previous life.

Unable to afford therapy, Mark decided to create his own. In his backyard, he built Marwencol, a 1/6th scale World War II-era town that he populated with dolls representing his friends, family, and even his attackers. He used the small dolls and props to redevelop his hand-eye coordination, while he dealt with the psychological trauma from his attack through the town's many battles and dramas.

Mark started documenting his miniature dramas with his camera. Through Mark's lens, these were no longer dolls — they were living, breathing characters in an epic WWII story full of violence, jealousy, longing, and revenge. And he (or rather his alter ego, Captain Hogancamp) was the hero.

When Mark's stunningly realistic photos are discovered and published in an art magazine, his homemade therapy suddenly becomes "art," forcing Mark to make a choice between the safety of his fictional town and the real world he's avoided since his attack.

Shot over the course of four years, Jeff Malmberg's documentary intertwines the dual realities of Mark Hogancamp to tell the whole story of Marwencol — a surprising tale of love, secrets, pain, and adventure.



## Director's Statement

**From Jeff Malmberg, Director of *Marwencol***

When I first read about Marwencol in *Esopus Magazine*, I originally thought it would make a great short film. There was something really interesting going on in the photos that made me want to learn more. So I got in touch with Tod Lippy (editor of *Esopus*). He was incredibly protective of Mark, but he eventually put us in touch and I flew out to meet Mark.

At first glance, Mark could easily be judged as hermetic and creepy - he's a grown man who spends his days playing with dolls. I realized pretty quickly that although this could make a compelling short (as *This American Life* later proved), it would miss something important.

That was four years ago.

Since then, I've realized that my goal with the film is to turn that immediate snap judgment about Mark on its ear. I want to blur that clear line of rational thought and judgment within the audience ("he's creepy," "he's bizarre") by making the audience an active participant in Mark's recovery and journey. Who's to say that Mark's constructed reality is any less valid than most people's "real world?" In *Marwencol*, they may find more love, pain, morality and feeling than in their actual lives.

Mark is a living lesson in not judging people so quickly, and his story touches on issues that a lot of people deal with today in silence... alternative lifestyles, healthcare problems, post-traumatic stress.

With respect to his photographs, I tried to touch on the nature of art, and how some of the best art comes from conflict. It has an honesty that art from pure cleverness just doesn't. And that makes it beautiful, but at the same time, it makes it very private. A very private experience that all of us want to share in.

And finally, I wanted to get people thinking about the subjective nature of reality. Mark has two realities – *Marwencol* and the real world. Most of us would like him to live and succeed in the real world. I'm occasionally still guilty of hoping that Mark will "wake up" and realize what a huge opportunity his artwork is. But Mark loves his life in *Marwencol* and doesn't want to be an "artist." Some of us might see that as tragic, but is it? I think that central question will define whether a viewer sees the film as the tragic tale of a broken man or the uplifting resurrection of a gifted artist.

## Director Biography

### Jeff Malmberg, Director/Producer/Editor

Jeff Malmberg is a documentary director and editor whose debut film *Marwencol* has won 25 international awards, including two Independent Spirit Awards, Best Documentary of 2010 from Boston Society of Film Critics and Rotten Tomatoes, and the Grand Jury Award for Best Documentary at the SXSW Film Festival. The Los Angeles Times calls *Marwencol* “an exhilarating, utterly unique experience” while the Village Voice says that the film is “exactly the sort of mysterious and almost holy experience you hope to get from documentaries and rarely do.”

As director, Jeff was honored with the Jacqueline Donnet Emerging Filmmaker Award from the International Documentary Association, Best New Filmmaker from the Boston Society of Film Critics, HBO Documentary Films Emerging Artist Award at Hot Docs, and the Cinematic Vision Award from Silverdocs. *Marwencol* was released theatrically in the fall of 2010 by The Cinema Guild (US) and KINOSMITH (Canada), and on television in the U.S. (PBS’s *Independent Lens*), the U.K. (Channel4), Australia, Belgium, China, Sweden and New Zealand.

In 2007, Jeff produced and edited the Independent Lens feature *Red White Black & Blue*, a documentary that uncovers the lingering war wounds of aging WWII veterans. *Red White Black & Blue* premiered at the Locarno Film Festival and aired on PBS’s *Independent Lens* in 2007. Malmberg also produced and edited the Fox Searchlab short film *Broadcast 23*, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2005.

Malmberg has worked as a film and television editor for over a decade on critically acclaimed films and series for PBS, A&E, the History Channel, TV One and BET. He is currently working on his second film with partner Chris Shellen through their production company, Open Face.

## Crew Biographies

### Tom Putnam, Producer

Tom Putnam's previous films have played over 300 film festivals. They include the documentary feature *Red White Black & Blue* for PBS/ITVS, which was the only American film chosen to be part of Critic's Week at the 2006 Locarno Film Festival. His short film *Broadcast 23* premiered at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival, and he also wrote, produced and directed the popular short film *Tom Hits His Head*, one of the most widely seen short films of all time and the winner of 15 major awards, including the Spirit of Slamdance at the Slamdance Film Festival and the Grand Jury Prize at Aspen Shortsfest. He is currently completing his second feature documentary, *Burn: One Year on the Front Lines to Save Detroit*.

### Matt Radecki, Producer

Matt Radecki co-directed and edited *TV Junkie*, which won a Special Jury Award at the 2006 Sundance film festival and aired on HBO. He also served as producer and co-cinematographer on the PBS documentary *Red White Black & Blue*. More recently, Radecki edited *Who's Back*, shot by DA Pennebaker, which appeared on the definitive Who DVD collection *Amazing Journey*. Since graduating from USC's School of Cinematic Arts, Radecki has produced several narrative films including *Chasing 3000*, *Zerophilia* and James Elroy's *Brown's Requiem*, and is the co-founder of Different By Design, a Los Angeles-based production and post-production company.

### Chris Shellen, Producer

Chris began her career as a Creative Executive at the Paramount Pictures-based Cort Madden Company, where she developed projects such as the Emmy-winning HBO movie *Something the Lord Made*. In 1999, she moved into interactive entertainment and marketing, where she has designed and produced award-winning campaigns and content for every major film studio, as well as for brands such as The Gates Foundation, ABC, Barbie, Coca-Cola, GE, Oprah's Harpo, Henson and Target. Chris is a graduate of USC's School of Cinematic Arts and *Marwencol* is her first produced feature. She is currently working on a new documentary with Jeff Malmberg, as well as a book about Mark Hogancamp and *Marwencol*.

### Kevin Walsh, Producer

Kevin Walsh has written for Warner Bros., National Lampoon, Boom Studios and others in media ranging from feature films to comic books. With Evil Genius Entertainment, he has written and produced numerous comedy shorts, including the 2008 George Lucas Award winner *Padmé*. He has also worked as a consultant for Paramount Vantage, Castle Rock Pictures, Mandalay Pictures, and primarily DreamWorks, where he helped to develop several projects, including *Transformers*, *The Lovely Bones*, *Galaxy Quest*, and *The Road to Perdition*. Kevin is a graduate of the USC School of Cinematic Arts and *Marwencol* is his first produced feature.

## **Ash Black Bufflo, Original Music**

Ash Black Bufflo is the musical project of Jay Clarke. A founding member of Portland-based bands the Standard and Dolorean, Jay has played with Grails, Loch Lomond, Eric Bachmann, Holy Sons, All Smiles, and many others. Together with Jeff Stuart Saltzman, Jay composed the award-winning score for the PBS documentary *Red White Black & Blue*.

## Film Credits

Directed, Produced, and Edited by  
JEFF MALMBERG

Produced by  
JEFF MALMBERG  
TOM PUTNAM  
MATT RADECKI  
CHRIS SHELLEN  
KEVIN WALSH

An OPEN FACE Production

In Association with  
DIFFERENT BY DESIGN,  
Los Angeles, CA

Original Music  
ASH BLACK BUFFLO

Camera  
JEFF MALMBERG  
TOM PUTNAM  
MATT RADECKI  
KEVIN WALSH

Sound Design  
PETE KNESER

Colorist  
BRIAN HUTCHINGS

Sound Mix  
PETE KNESER

Music Supervisor  
ANNIE LIN

Title Design  
PETER GRANT

Additional Photographs  
DAVID NAUGLE

Equipment Loans  
ROBERT WILLIAMS  
LESLEY LANGS

Super 8 Transfer  
SPECTRA FILM & VIDEO

World Film Sales  
ANDREW HERWITZ

Cut Watchers  
KAZ BRECHER  
AMY HIMSEL RADECKI  
EDWINA LANTIGUA  
CHRIS MORTENSEN  
KATE O'BRIEN-CLARKE  
DAN O'CONNOR  
LORI PUTNAM  
MARK ROWLAND  
TERI SHELLEN  
NAOMI SPIRO

Very Special Thanks  
TOD LIPPY

Special Thanks  
JEFF BLAUVELT  
DAVID COURIER  
JOEL HELLER  
JOAN LAMB  
TOD LIPPY  
DAVID AND ANN MALMBERG  
NORA NOONAN  
JANET PIERSON  
A.J. SCHNACK  
VILLAGE VOICE  
WHITE COLUMNS GALLERY

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## Technical Specs

Running time: 83 mins.

Shooting formats: DVCam video, Super-8 film

Aspect ratio: 1:1.77 (hard matte)

Sound: Stereo (English)

Rating: Not Rated

Available screening formats: HDCAM, NTSC DigiBeta, PAL DigiBeta (limited), DVD

## Awards

### FESTIVAL

SXSW Film Festival	Grand Jury Award, Best Documentary
Cleveland International Film Festival	Nesnandy + Schwartz Award, Best Documentary
IFF Boston	Special Jury Award, Best Documentary
Hot Docs	HBO Emerging Artist Award
Seattle International Film Festival	Grand Jury Award, Best Documentary
Silverdocs	Cinematic Vision Award
Comic-Con	Best Documentary Judges' Choice Award (Best Overall Film)
Fantasia International Film Festival	Best Documentary
Woodstock Film Festival	Maverick Award, Best Documentary
Vienna International Film Festival	DER STANDARD Readers' Jury Award
Whistler Film Festival	Grand Jury Award, Best Documentary
Mendocino Film Festival	Best Film on the Arts
Belfast Film Festival	Maysles Brothers Award, Best Documentary
Docville Belgium	Best International Documentary
Biografilm Festival (Italy)	Best Life Award

### INDUSTRY

International Documentary Association	Jacqueline Donnet Emerging Filmmaker Award
Boston Society of Film Critics	Best Documentary of the Year Best New Filmmaker
Toronto Film Critics Association	Best Documentary (Runner Up)
Chlotrudis Society	Best Documentary of the Year
Rotten Tomatoes	Golden Tomato, Best Reviewed Documentary
Cinema Eye Honors	Outstanding Achievement in a Debut Feature Film
American Library Association	Notable Video for Adults
Film Independent Spirit Awards	AVEENO Truer Than Fiction Award Jameson FIND Your Audience Award