

Maxine Trump



**THE
DOCUMENTARY
FILMMAKER'S
ROADMAP**

A Practical Guide to Planning,
Production and Distribution

A Focal Press Book

ROUTLEDGE



The Documentary Filmmaker's Roadmap

The Documentary Filmmaker's Roadmap is a concise and practical guide to making a feature-length documentary film—from funding to production to distribution, exhibition and marketing. Using her award-winning film *Musicwood*—a *New York Times* Critics' Pick—as a case study, director Maxine Trump guides the reader through the complex lifecycle of the documentary film. Her interviews with lawyers, funders, distributors, TV executives and festival programmers provide a behind-the-scenes look that will assist readers on their own filmmaking journey.

Written from the perspective of a successful documentary filmmaker, the book covers mistakes made and lessons learned, a discussion on the documentary genre, crowdfunding, pre-production through post, test screenings, the festival circuit distribution, legal pitfalls, fair use and more. Perfect for documentary filmmaking students and aspiring filmmakers alike, this book emphasizes the skills needed to succeed in a competitive production market. An appendix includes useful web links for further study, a list of films for recommended viewing and sample release forms.

This concise guide is ideal for the classroom or as a quick reference out in the field, at a budget meeting or in the editing room.

Maxine Trump got her start in radio and television, working for seven years in development and commissioning for BBC Comedy in the UK. She emigrated to the US in 2003 to become a director of television commercials and has received both Gold and Silver BDA awards for her work. She went on to direct short documentaries and TV shows for various networks including TNT, the Sundance Channel and Discovery.



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The Documentary Filmmaker's Roadmap

A Practical Guide to Planning,
Production and Distribution

Maxine Trump

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
NEW YORK AND LONDON

First published 2019
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Trump, Maxine, author.

Title: The documentary filmmaker's roadmap : a practical guide
to planning, production and distribution / Maxine Trump.

Description: New York : Routledge, 2018. | Includes index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018006726 | ISBN 9781138070875 (hardback) |
ISBN 9781138070882 (pbk.) | ISBN 9781315114873 (e-book)

Subjects: LCSH: Documentary films—Production and
direction—Handbooks, manuals, etc.

Classification: LCC PN1995.9.D6 T78 2018 | DDC 070.1/8—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018006726>

ISBN: 978-1-138-07087-5 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-138-07088-2 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-11487-3 (ebk)

Typeset in Warnock Pro
by Apex CoVantage, LLC

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Introduction

I'm a filmmaker and after five years of production, two more years of festival tours, and theatrical openings and community screenings, I have finished my feature documentary, *Musicwood*. After all that time, I can finally say I'm a feature filmmaker, and that feels good.

In full confession I have worked in the media all my life. I started in radio comedy for the BBC almost straight out of university, after a small stint working for a film composer agent, and then worked my way up to a Development Executive. Wanting to be involved in production rather than stay in development, I emigrated to America with BBC America, where I learned how to write, produce, direct and edit TV trailers. I finally left in 2005 for the freelance world. It was then that I started making branded content, otherwise known as short form documentaries for TV networks (that were financed by certain paid sponsors). It was here that I found my love for documentaries.

In 2000 whilst still at the BBC in London (and in the comedy development world) I remember having a life-changing experience. I watched the documentary *Dark Days*, which changed my perception of documentaries forever and was my favorite film for a very long time. I would talk to everyone and anyone about it.

But what made the most significant change in my career? After all it's unusual to move from scripted and fiction development to non-fiction; often it's the other way round, if at all. So after being freelance in the US for three years, I had a period of time where I was waiting for my work visa and couldn't be contracted for any paid employment. As a short commercial filmmaker I offered my services for free to a large non-profit organization, and there I found the story of my first feature film, *Musicwood*.

I'd like to give a moment of pause here to reflect on that a little bit. I moved from my normal working environment (in the media) to a new experience, which meant I was also stuffing envelopes for this nonprofit and that's when

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I found my story. There is a reason that John Berger's book *Ways of Seeing* is so popular: we all have our own vision; that comes from our own experiences and everyone is in different places of opportunity. I was once told by a brilliant comedy writer that he would often take a break from his writing world and do something completely different. Once he taught basketball for a high school. Story ideas often come to you when you're off experiencing something else entirely not just stuck in the process of production all the time. Make sure to make those opportunities in your life and get out and meet those amazing characters or make room to hear their stories.

The production and making of *Musicwood* took five years. Don't balk at that figure as I was working on other projects, on other TV documentaries throughout that time. And we were following a story, a story unfolded for the characters over that period of time.

I was told many times that after production ends, and you've finished the edit of the film, the work doesn't end there. As a novice feature filmmaker I don't think I understood quite what meant, and it would have been really useful if I had fully comprehended that statement. This book aims to fill in those gaps. It will give you a full and detailed journey from early research through to production, editing and distribution. I needed this book when I was making my film and I couldn't find one out there that wasn't a tome and too heavy to carry around with me all the time. A book that would take me through the "whole" journey. All the steps from budgeting, funding, production through to distribution. So much of our time is spent raising funds for our films, that I deliberately provide a lot of details in that chapter of the book.

So how did this book come about? I am an avid note taker – notes, notes, notes, on backs of envelopes, on the back of my hand, on scraps of scraps. And I keep every one of them, every word of advice, every film festival panel I attended, every consultation I paid for, every book I read and every film I analyzed. This book is a distillation of all of my notes, which I see as cheat-sheets in a way. As long as I knew that I had checked off and checked in with all of these notes, I would be ok. And then my Producer thought someone else might benefit from these notes, other novice filmmakers, perhaps you?

I wrote two articles with my producer for the great film website *IndieWire* about what I'd learned. So this book is really a continuation of these articles. Of course, there are books out there that do a much more detailed job and in-depth analysis of documentary "making." Books that I have dipped in and

out of all the time, like Sheila Curran Bernard's *Documentary Storytelling* and Michael Rabiger's *Directing the Documentary*. They are thorough, thick and film-saving books: read them.

I'm thinking of this as a companion of sorts to those books, as a brief and focused reference for practical advice, the kind of advice I would have loved to have been given while making my film.

Also, the only reason I have all of these notes in the first place is that the documentary community is amazing. I have to thank some of the best directors and editors in the world who met with us and sent us their scripts and gave us amazing advice in the production of *Musicwood* and afterwards.

I am lucky enough to live and work in New York City and hence have been able to meet with many of the contributors to the "In Conversation With section" of the book. We chat with the generous Kat Vechio of Fork Films, Debra Zimmerman of Women Make Movies, Justine Nagan of POV, Raphaela Neihausen of DOC NYC and Pam Torno of ITVS Digital. What a great list of fabulous film women.

I also want to thank the fantastic editor Matt Hamacheck who kindly reviewed my analysis of his editing of *Cartel Land*, the brilliant lawyer Chris Perez whose section on "Fair Use" is the best advice you can get. And I can't ignore Marshall Curry for his kind words about *Musicwood* that really encouraged us back when we were making the film. Surround yourselves with those people whose work you respect. And then all of our amazing Kickstarter supporters and funders (thank you Patagonia) who make most of our films possible.

For the purposes of this book, in each chapter, I will outline the practical information I think you'll need and that I used for my last film. I use *Musicwood* as a case study to analyze (it's available on iTunes and Amazon if you haven't seen it). I'll let you know what we did that worked, what didn't work so well and what I would do differently next time.

Musicwood is an adventure-filled journey, a political thriller with music at its heart. We follow an unusual band of the most famous guitar-makers in the world (Bob Taylor of Taylor guitars, Chris Martin of Martin Guitars and Dave Berryman of Gibson Guitars) as they travel together into the heart of one of the most primeval rain forests on the planet. Their mission: to negotiate with Native American loggers and change the way this forest is logged

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before it's too late. Enter Greenpeace, a radical environmental group, and soon all are battling over a forest that is the last of its kind on the planet.

Musicwood has had a lot of success: it screened in over 100 cities and towns, got distribution both in the US and internationally, and had a limited theatrical engagement. We screened in theaters, film and music festivals, libraries, on TV and on airplanes. We won festival awards, it was a *New York Times* Critics' Pick and was often chosen as a Critics' Choice by other outlets. We're even at 100% on Rotten Tomatoes!

But like all films, it took a ton of work to get there. *Musicwood* I have to admit is a social issue documentary and was very hard to market. But through determined perseverance, after our premiere, the film continued its life for the following four years, we're still getting royalty checks for rentals, purchases and screenings.

We dove headfirst into the deep end of feature documentary making—yes, my Producer had TV documentary experience and I had made short and hour long documentaries for various TV networks, but this experience was completely different and totally immersive. Sometimes it felt like we were barely keeping our heads above water. But don't despair, everyone feels like this and this book should help.

If someone had given me all these notes at the outset, taught me some of these practical methods, we would have made fewer mistakes, maybe the film would have been better, maybe. But then again I never think what I do is that great, but that's what keeps all of us hungry to learn more and push ourselves, it's the artists Achilles heel.

As novice filmmakers we learned to doggy paddle and eventually swim; we refined our style and technique as we went along. I can say I am now really happy with the film we made.

Think of these notes as your own personal inflatable water wings: if you're learning to swim in the documentary deep end, these are here to help keep you afloat. So let's dive in!

Research: Choosing Your Story

Filmmaking is hard. Know that, recognize it, you are about to embark on a process that you will be committing much of your free time. But, it is the most rewarding work I have ever done. I love the Sean Penn quote, “If it doesn’t end up on screen it will end up in you.” For many of the films I have made I have as many stories to tell about them.

It’s not only a journey of making a film; it will have a profound effect on your life too. So why have you chosen the story you are about to tell? Will it be a story you will remain passionate about for years to come? Is there a story to follow, where things change over time? Can you imagine talking to everyone you know about it? Have you already started? These are all good questions to ask yourself before you start embarking on your film journey. Your why, your need, to make the film, and why should it be you.

My why for *Musicwood* was no one was telling this Native American story that was so shocking and surprising, and I was the only one who had access and was willing to give these people a voice. Was it some white colonial guilt that I was itching, making recompense, maybe, mixed in with being always interested in stories about the underdog. Peppered with being very passionate about rain forests, and this huge rain forest in America that no one knew about. And then there is music and fine craft making. Meditative, magical, full of drama and surprise, with a tremendous backdrop. I was in.

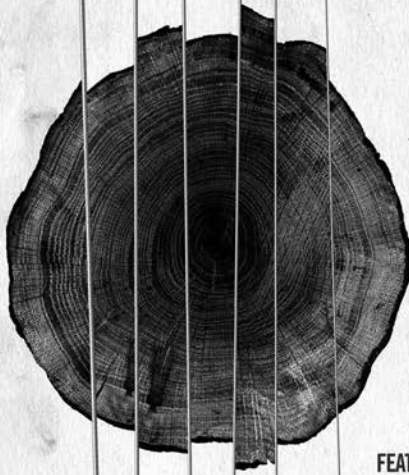
"Compelling, eco-themed documentary...of vital interest..."
— *The Hollywood Reporter*

"Extremely well-done...very dramatic..."
— *Film Journal*

"Thoughtful...wrests clarity from complexity..."
— *New York Times Critics' Pick*

MUSICWOOD

THE DOCUMENTARY



FEATURING:
THE ANTLERS
STEVE EARLE
KAKI KING
LAMBCHOP
SERGIUS GREGORY
TURIN BRAKES
YO LA TENGO

A POLITICAL THRILLER WITH MUSIC AT ITS HEART.

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FIGURE 1.1 *Musicwood* theatrical poster

I once heard Kristen Johnson (cinematographer and acclaimed director of *Camera Person*) talk about the three needs of filmmaking. The need of the person that is being filmed, the need of the person taking the image, and the third need, of those who will be watching these images. All great needs to be conscious of when beginning your research journey, you need all three if you want your film to be seen. The third being just as important as the first and second.

Then what about the first need, the characters themselves, the people in your film. Do they have struggles? Do they want something badly and are actively pursuing it? The adage is very true of “character is action” and “drama is conflict.” You may have to start developing skills where you can tell if a character has charisma. Is there something you can like about them (because you will be spending months of your life with them)?

The filmmaker Robert Greene told Tribeca Film festival that he looks for characters who have layers to their personalities or performative qualities. The director Jesse Moss talks about finding subjects who are natural performers, but also conflicted characters who have strong contradictions and impulses. But the key word is “natural” performers; be careful of people lighting up just for the camera—you don’t want actors in your documentaries unless of course there is a reason for it.

Other filmmakers won’t pick up the camera until they’ve hung out with their characters first. Yet others will do it straight away. Ramona Diaz does test shoots, even filming in moments of silence. Diaz told Tribeca that she considers how characters handle silence as very telling and unpredictability is key. Will your characters surprise you? Chris Hegedus talks about the optimal character being the person who is often risking all to pursue a dream.

Don’t be put off in telling a difficult story. Research the best material, or best contact, that will make the best film. Go to secondhand bookshops, research online articles, of course, but you’ll be surprised what you find from browsing, in libraries, that’s how the hugely successful Netflix documentary series *Wild Wild Country* came about, from researching in libraries. Watch all the videos you can find on the subject—anything that can help inform you about the story you are trying to tell. Talk to people on the phone, be as informed as possible, but don’t be afraid to ask people what they think, or how they can help, or whom they might know. With the best research you will be armed with the easiest access points to your story.

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With our last film *Musicwood* we found characters that we thought would be the people we would follow but they then led us to better characters with more impactful stories. They had more extreme personality traits, or had the most to lose, or the most to gain. So be flexible and listen to your gut instinct; we're all individual and we may be drawn to different subjects for different reasons—that's why there are so many different films out there.

With *Musicwood*, it was going to be a difficult story to navigate: filming in a remote location with inaccessible characters like CEOs of huge US corporations, Native American tribes, tough-as-nails loggers and radical environmentalists.

Heads of companies or CEOs can often be the most media trained, so be aware of that when thinking of following their story. They may not offer the character revelations on camera that make for exciting films. We were lucky in that the head of Taylor Guitars for example, had built his guitar company from scratch. Had so much charisma, was a musician himself but also made himself available to us when we needed to film. Rare for a founder, CEO or president of a company.

As a female white British filmmaker, I hadn't picked the easiest of stories to tell. A Native American story that brought my own white woman guilt and colonial ancestry to the table. I made sure to reach out to the Native American Museum and other tribal members that weren't associated with a Native American corporation and asked them to be on my advisory board. We brought on a consultant from one of the tribes early on in production. If we were fully funded at that time, we would have made sure to have a member of production also Native American. We used contacts to make introductions rather than reaching out to the tribes themselves, so there could be a level of trust from the beginning.

Some of our experts in forest ecology were very nervous about the film we were making. They would take a phone call, give me material, or lead us to a great contact but then would quite vehemently tell us our film was a mistake as it could adversely affect this threatened forest. I read a ton of books on the issues presented in *Musicwood* before I approached specialists on the subject. This way, I didn't sound like a complete idiot on the phone, and I could express knowledge about the issues. I think this definitely did win over a number of people who were hesitant to talk to us.

Later, when the film was finished, some of these same initial skeptics sent us wonderful emails, telling us it was the best film they had ever seen on the area. That felt amazing.

Remember as you're researching stories or "casting" characters you are not only building trust with these people but they might become the best patrons for your film, word of mouth is often the best way to get anyone to watch your film, so treat everyone with respect. Whether they will be your antagonist or protagonist in your film.

It can be hard if you are making a film in another country or another state to meet with a character before you shoot. If someone hasn't recommended them, if you haven't spoken on the phone with them (which would be incredibly rare) or there are no you tube interviews with them on camera then make sure to fly in early and meet with them before shooting. They may have a great phone voice, but are shy in person and unbearably shy in front of the camera.

You also never want to agree to payment for any participation in a documentary film. The characters will feel compromised and because you are paying them they may very well only tell you what they think you want to hear. It won't be authentic and you may experience editorial problems because the information isn't factual.

I like to learn by my mistakes, or at least be prepared for the situation happening again. I like to interview in situ, in the environment that the character dwells in. I say "dwell" rather than "work" or "live" because then it's open to interpretation, what environment best emulates who your character is everyday or the role they play in your film. Because whatever appears in the shot will be read symbolically by the audience. So if for whatever reason you can't control the environment, carry some duvetyne (black material that absorbs light, so doesn't show wrinkles) and clips with you so that you may be able to dress a set quickly. This isn't ideal but if you've had a character that is integral to your film but hard to pin down maybe this is the perfect solution. It keeps the background neutral but black. Not the best backdrop color but if this is the only chance to interview this subject, that you have tried hard to secure then maybe this is your only option. There are also seamless papers that you can purchase, but they are bulky and heavy and not easy to carry.

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My favorite films for in situ interviews happen to both be films that involve teenagers: *Rich Hill* and *Racing Dreams*. The directors filmed in the teenagers' bedrooms, in the streets where they hang out, underneath bridges, while they're smoking, etc. It really gives you a flavor of who the characters are just by the location and what is in the scene.

Marshall Curry talked about casting for *Racing Dreams*; he spent time with a lot of children before deciding on the three characters he would follow. When casting he would ask them questions about anything else but what he needed for the film to get a sense of their character, bearing in mind they *are* the film. He would ask questions like: Is their bedroom tidy? or What do they think of God?

And remember sound. Especially in locations. If you want to film scenes externally in South East Alaska (where *Musicwood* takes place), sea planes are very popular and they make a lot of noise; so do boats. You may have gone to the location to scout in the early evening but what happens at 11am in the morning when you're trying to film? Are you on a flight path? Is there construction?

ARCHIVE OR THIRD PARTY MATERIALS

Research can also include trying to secure third party materials—that is, any material not owned or shot by you. We explore Fair Use and copywriting etc. in more detail later in the book. When you begin casting characters or speaking to your experts you may begin to start building a research bank of media they have, can send you (or where you might find it) and who owns it.

Start creating a clearance log sheet (see Figure 11.1) and see if they can send you the material straight away. One filmmaker takes a scanner with him to his interviews so that there is no need to chase photos etc., as it can be an arduous process.

If you think you need media from a TV network archives they may have a minimum duration, I had a quote for one piece of archive that would cost US\$1,500. An expensive line item in your budget so are there creative solutions you can use that might be the ephemera of the story? What was the weather like that day? Where are we? How are we feeling at this point of the film?

An archive producer can definitely negotiate better rates for you if you do need that certain clip as they have relationships with these libraries. And don't forget many libraries provide archive material for free—National Archives, Congress—if they are owned by the government. What about government departments like NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)? They provided me with some amazing submersibles footage. If your film is heavy on archive it may be worth spending a day at these libraries in DC. Embassies, The Federal Reserve, President libraries—if you tell them you are conducting research they tend to be more approachable. And at the end of the day it might be cheaper to use a graphic designer and maybe create your own text headlines or simple, low cost, motion graphics.

If there is some great archive online that you can download that gives credence to your argument in the film then that can possibly allow you to use it for free if used correctly. See the chapter regarding “Fair Use” for details (Chapter 11).

2

Pre-production

I want to start this chapter with some advice, something that filmmakers often overlook: if you want an audience, you have to think of your audience. Now that I work as a consultant, I see filmmakers neglecting to think of this all the time. What do I mean by that? I mean think about who you're trying to reach. Michael Moore believes that you should never forget that you are entertaining people. I often think of someone who works for Greenpeace; they don't necessarily want to come home and in their own time turn on a film about forest destruction unless there is a surprising and startling story behind it. If you are passionate about an issue think about how you can tell a story to make people care. This doesn't mean you can't be creative, but with feature documentaries we're trying to get our work widely seen. With short documentaries you have more ability to not work within limitations, and that can be their inventive beauty. I'm not saying box yourself in with your feature, but do consider where you want it to go, and that will help with funding.

INSPIRATION/EARLY ANALYSIS AND PREP

Marc Singer's 2000 film *Dark Days* was the film that made me want to make documentaries. His black-and-white photography, extraordinary characters

and access, and DJ Shadow-written score made for a documentary that was extremely cinematic. I honestly don't think I had seen a theatrical documentary before. It set me on a path of seeking out documentaries that were exciting, electrifying, absorbing, thought provoking and as cinematic as possible.

So when it came time to make *Musicwood*, my Producer and I constantly analyzed documentaries that we loved. We watched them over and over, in pre-production, during production and while in the edit. We broke them down scene by scene, and examined what tricks they used to make their films come alive. For us, any of Marshall Curry's or Amir Bar-Lev's films were good places to start; you probably have your own favorites. We watched many films, and thoroughly analyzed three (*If A Tree Falls*, *The Pat Tillman Story* and *Daughter from Danang*, in case you're curious). I mean we got the scripts, annotated them and even loaded the films into an editing program timeline to manually diagram the cuts and music and VO (voice over)—anything to really see how these excellent films were structured.

Try to think of the tone of your film when in pre-production as that will really dictate how you will work. How do you want the film to look? Are there special techniques involved (animation, graphics, recreations)? Whose POV (point of view) will it be from? How will it *feel*?

If you can really identify the major plot points of the story you want to tell, it will help you to define the most important aspects of filming your documentary.

But what is a plot point or story beat? I can best describe this by any element of a story that puts pressure on your character.

When we break down the story structure of *Cartel Land* later in the book (Chapter 10), you will even see how finding out someone is a father is a plot point because where it is placed in the story puts pressure on our character. If we find out a character is unsafe for example, we care even more in the next scene if we find out he has three young children. Or if he's fighting a drug war and find out later that he was an addict himself.

With *Musicwood*, it was hard to plot the storyline because the story really changed direction as time went on (this is true of many documentaries). There was also much we didn't know; for example, the complex history of

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the Native Alaskan Corporation or how this corporation had fought *against* environmental protections for their land. However this could be found out easily by taking time to research, conflicts already existed in the story. We decided to start our film when a new piece of the forest (in protected areas) contentiously was possibly going to be made available to log.

At one point, we were told by a biologist that it was easier to get environmental protection standards agreed with oil corporations, in Alaska, than to get them from the Native Corporation featured in our film; we're not sure if this is true but the passionate comment made an impression. We heard incredible stories from other biologists who constantly lived in fear, had their cars destroyed, had been bullied and even shot at for their published reports.

This helped give us a full and detailed backstory for some of our characters before we met them. Which really helped us think of scenes. Also the more time you spend with your characters the better idea of whether these are people you believe and trust. What struggles and obstacles do they have? Start mapping out scenes you want to capture that can express these moments that will reveal character.

Write a synopsis of the film you want to make, or the story you think you are telling. This can be a half page and is a short explanation of what you will putting on screen (roughly about 500 words is often the length grant proposals expect, longer than a logline). Or maybe write a more involved treatment of roughly two pages long. This will help you really understand how you will tell the story. Who are the characters? How will you show us their struggles? What locations will you take us to? How will the scenes make us feel? What does your protagonist want? Who will they meet along the way that will aid or abet them on their journey.

Here is our synopsis example for *Musicwood*:

The Musicwood documentary follows a Coalition of the world's foremost guitar-makers (Martin, Gibson, Taylor, Fender) as they attempt to save the old-growth trees of Alaska's Tongass National Forest, the largest contiguous coastal rain forest in the world.

To do this they have had to drop their competitive differences, unite as the Musicwood coalition and travel to Alaska to deal with the largest

privately owned logging company in the area, Sealaska. A logging company of Native Americans who have been in the area for 10,000 years. Native Americans who've notoriously been given a raw deal from the US government. So cultures will clash. To get them to change won't be easy, as it's their livelihood that's also at risk. "It will be as close to a miracle as we are likely to see in our lifetime." — Chris Martin, CEO Martin Guitars.

So the stakes are high.

At risk is the heart and soul of the acoustic guitar ...

the fate of a rare forest ...

and the survival of our world itself.

Musicwood is the story of a journey, the building of a relationship that will cross boundaries and prejudices in an attempt to solve an issue that affects us all. We join the Musicwood Coalition on their journey to Alaska and go behind-the-scenes in their negotiations. As we watch the cutting down of 700 year-old Spruce trees to make baby diapers in China, we hear how important these trees are to people that live in the forest. It is a rare chance to hear the Native American perspective, the film documents the guitar-makers' struggle to build a relationship with the Native Americans that acknowledges the injustices of their past, but fights to preserve the forest for the future.

Featuring exclusive performances with some of the most exciting acoustic musicians of the day, Musicwood gives the guitar and the forest its own voice. The footage of the forest is breathtaking as is the craftsmanship of guitar-making that we have filmed at the famous workshops

Musicwood is an ecological investigation, a cultural history and an adventurous journey to the heart of a primeval forest. It is a hopeful story of CEOs becoming activists, a story about music that may build a bridge across a centuries old divide, and help protect the largest coastal temperate rain forest in the world.

Although the forest destruction is an important topic, we wouldn't have made the film if we didn't have Famous Guitar CEOs fighting to save it. We made a film about forest destruction multilayered and exciting, full of characters because trees can't speak for themselves.

For an example of a good synopsis check out the HBO documentary website and read about any of their documentary films. The synopsis will really tell

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you what you will see, not the history of the story or the issue that is the undercurrent of the whole premise of the film. I have seen too many treatments that are just a history of what happened and why the story exists. Not what is the story we are going to see on screen.

Preparing a synopsis or treatment will help you define your story and will eventually have multiple uses for raising funds, applying to festivals and as marketing material. Maybe save it on Google docs, keep revising and revising until the film is what you want it to be.

Many filmmakers prepare shooting scripts. It is reported that Jessica Yu, who makes both fiction and non-fiction, brings her scripted sensibility to her documentaries and pre-scripts her films, as do Stan Neumann and Patricio Guzman. Guzman states that having a plan allows you to surrender to what you encounter. I know this rings true for me personally: if I script or more often with my features make a beat sheet, I know I have the major plot points and shots covered in that scene, and then if something better comes along when I'm in the field then I can analyze the strength of replacing shooting that scene for this new and possible stronger and more exciting dialogue and shots. Essentially giving me the confidence to drop some shots or locations for this new and better action.

With short documentaries, I help my students prepare a shooting script. Imagining what people will be telling you in scenes, what *vérité* you may capture that will reveal a plot point is all supremely useful. Not only for the story arch but when planning schedules for shoot days. The scripts I prepare for clients have two columns, on one side you will have the video column and on the other the audio column. This video column allows you to imagine what the best action or location could be for certain dialogue. It will help then to start building a shot list to capture those moments. And the audio column will enable you to think of the questions you might be asking your characters to enable you to capture a response that is similar. You can then start preparing shot lists and interview questions as separate documents. Ask yourself: What questions can I ask to reveal that answer, to hit that story beat or plot point? See the production chapter on questions etc. (Chapter 5).

Take a look at this pre-production shooting script for a short documentary "Trumps Against Trump" which appears on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfsbSoRkmxQ).

Video	Audio
GFX title card reads Trumps Against Trump	Music comes in
Maxine to camera, Maxine shows birth certificate	<i>Maxine:</i> "My name is Maxine Trump, here's my birth certificate to prove it, in case somebody would argue otherwise."
Maxine EXT outside Trump building with name of building in shot	"It used to be ok seeing my name everywhere, when Donald Trump was just a TV celebrity, but now it's just embarrassing."
Someone walks into frame asks Maxine a question	<i>Person on street:</i> "If you're a Trump you must be voting Trump?"
Maxine	<i>Maxine:</i> "Nope."
INT Maxine to camera in office	"And his campaign team assume I'm voting Trump."
Turn camera around to crew in shot	"So with the help of my crew I'm going to see if other Trumps have the same problem."
Crew saying hello	<i>Crew:</i> "Hello"
Close up of computer search of Facebook names	<i>Maxine:</i> "All the Trumps in New York seem related to Donald Trump."
Maxine in MS phone call to Fred Trump	"Is Fred there?" <i>Fred:</i> "Nope...you can contact his son Donald Trump."
Wide shot Maxine picks up her cat while at computer	<i>Maxine:</i> "He can't grab my pussy."
Maxine looking at Facebook, on screen reads Rebecca Trump (no relation)	"So here's one...that even has 'no relation' in her Facebook title."
EXT UNION SQUARE meeting other Trumps. Maxine walks in, camera follows to reveal other Trumps.	"Hi, I'm Maxine Trump."

(Continued)