

Documentary Treatment

Slightly Out of Focus The Life and Work of Robert Capa

Logline: This is the exciting true story of the adventurous and life and times of Robert Capa, the noted war photographer. From his humble upbringing, to his first photography jobs, and on to his experiences in Europe during the Spanish Civil War and World War II, his extraordinary life is covered in fascinating detail.

Treatment: Starting with his birth in Hungary, the film will cover the life and career of Robert Capa. Using interviews of noted scholars and historical footage, as well as examples of Capa's work, the film follows Capa from his first gigs to his more noted work, covering his professional and personal life. Pressured to leave Hungary because of his supposed leftist political leanings, Robert moved to Paris, where he changed his Hungarian name to Robert Capa in order to have a more socially acceptable name to work under. After gaining some notoriety for his photographic work for various magazines, Capa was sent to cover the Spanish Civil War. During this time he fell in love with a girl who would later be killed in the conflict, shattering Capa's world. While in Spain Capa also became close friends with the famous expatriate author Ernest Hemingway; a relationship that would continue for the rest of his short life. After his experiences in Spain, Capa returned to France and covered events there, gaining a reputation for his photographs of labor dispute strikes and political rallies. When World War Two broke out, Capa went out as war photographer again, eventually landing with the first wave of American Soldiers at Omaha Beach on D-Day. Most of those first photographs of the invasion were destroyed when an overeager technician overheated the developing film prints. After the war Capa moved to America, where he still kept in touch with Hemingway and tried to make it in Hollywood, eventually to have an affair of sorts with film star Ingrid Bergman while she was starring in Alfred

Hitchcock's film, "Notorious." Capa died when he accidentally stepped on a landmine while covering the conflict in Vietnam between the French colonial army and Vietnamese insurgents. His friend Ernest Hemingway delivered the eulogy at his funeral.

Documentary Outline-

- 1. Early life:** Covers Capa's childhood in Hungary. We deal with his education, family background, and his formative years.
- 2. Life Abroad:** This section will cover Capa's life as he finishes his studies abroad and seeks to make something of himself in Paris. It covers his early employment and photographic work, as well as his propensity toward riotous living and general adventurousness.
- 3. Spanish Civil War:** This section describes Capa's time in Spain covering the civil war that had torn the country apart. It talks about his first real love and her death, as well as his experiences with Ernest Hemingway, who was also involved in the war. Also covered is his photographic work during this period, which produced many of his most dramatic and remembered images and rose him to international notoriety. During this time we also see his interest in capturing images of the everyday life of ordinary people affected by these terrible struggles.
- 4. World War II:** In this section we see Capa following the American army as a war correspondent. He eventually lands with the first wave of attacking soldiers on Omaha Beach on D-Day. The section covers his experiences, as presented by him in his autobiography, "Slightly Out of Focus," and through examples of his work during this time.
- 5. American Playboy:** Capa's life after immigrating to America; His books and writing career, as well as his attempts to break into the movie business. This section also covers his many affairs, most notably one with film actress Ingrid Bergman. This sections also follows

Capa through his assignments in post-war Japan and finally his last assignment in Vietnam, including his death and funeral.

Strategy: Most of the major events covered will be presented using dramatic reenactments, using voice-over narration. Several scholarly interviews will also be conducted and used to explain and present information. Many of Capa's photographs will be presented as well, in concurrence with the time period being explained as outlined above. B-roll footage will be needed, including but not limited to establishing shots of various historical locations where Capa lived, worked, socialized, etc... in France, Spain, and America. All footage will be shot in high definition video. Possible people to be interviewed are: Capa's brother, who will speak about his relationship with Capa while growing up and give insights into some of the major events of his brother's life. Also interviewed will be various accredited historians and experts that will give historical background to the events presented and talk about the importance of Capa's body of work. There will also be the need to obtain copies of the issues of the various magazines that Capa photographed for, whether they be actual vintage magazines or on microfilm. Stock footage will be used to present the look and feel of the times, as well as to show actual footage of the events that Capa was involved in.