

WHAT LIES BELOW

A FILM BY
EMANUEL HOSS-DESMARAIS

A person wearing a green jacket is seen from the side, sitting on a boat. They are looking out over a vast, greyish-blue body of water under a heavy, overcast sky. The boat's deck and some equipment are visible in the foreground.

BACKGROUND

The future of Canada's wild fish stocks and the habitats they occupy are under assault and our very existence is now at risk. Governments, industry and the public seem oblivious to what is taking place beneath the surface of Canada's 38,000 lakes and rivers that cover 8% of Canada, and the three oceans that constitute the longest coastline of any country in the world.

The fish that had once proliferated Canada's oceans, lakes and rivers were perceived by early explorers as an inexhaustible source of food. Commercial fishers from around the world began arriving off Canada's shores 500 years ago, and have since evolved ever more efficient methods in their race to maximize their unrestrained harvest of this free resource. The civilizations that consequently evolved next to these aquatic environments inevitably witnessed the inexplicable destruction of these systems upon which they had become dependent for their social and economic survival. Industry and government, working hand-in-hand, have accelerated the destruction of both the aquatic environments and fish populations by dumping industrial and human waste into the water, and at the same time, deployed increasingly sophisticated technology to locate and harvest wild fish stocks without any regard for their longevity. Our continued and unrestrained ill-use of these aquatic environments and their dependent life forms is not only resulting in the virtual destruction of these eco-systems and the near extinction of numerous wild fish stocks, but has now placed at risk our future existence.



ABOUT THE FILM

What Lies Below is a Canadian documentary featuring Lawrence Gunther, a blind graduate from York University's master's program in environmental studies and a highly regarded speaker, writer and radio host on the subject of fishing and Canada's aquatic ecosystems. He is visiting and interviewing people across Canada to learn about their concerns and hopes for their local fisheries. The documentary explores what local people are doing to ensure the future sustainability of Canada's water and traditional fisheries. Lawrence Gunther draws on his perspective to explore and share what others aren't able to see taking place beneath the waves.



ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais is a Canadian film director and screenwriter, who won the [Claude Jutra Award](#) in 2014 for his film *Whitewash*. He also won the award for Best New Narrative Director at the 2013 [Tribeca Film Festival](#), and was a shortlisted nominee, with cowriter [Marc Tulin](#), for Best Original Screenplay at the [2nd Canadian Screen Awards](#).

Previously an actor, whose credits include supporting roles in *The Reagans*, *The Day After Tomorrow* and *Mars and April*, Hoss-Desmarais has also worked in advertising as a commercial director, and directed the short films *Table 13* and *Marius Borodine*.

A man wearing a tan bucket hat, a dark green jacket, and a tan life vest is walking a black and white dog on a wooden pier. The pier is made of wooden planks and is situated over water. The background is a hazy, overcast sky and water.

ABOUT LAWRENCE GUNTHER

As a person who was registered blind as a child, Lawrence has made it his life's mission to consider what's taking place in the underwater environments that made us all "blind". Lawrence's passion has led to his earning a [Masters in Environmental Studies](#) which included researching environmental issues impacting Canada from sea to sea to sea. He has lived among the Inuit in Canada's Arctic, hand-lined commercially for Cod off [Cape Breton Island](#), competed professionally in fishing tournaments throughout North America, and invented the world's first fishing boat capable of being piloted independently by someone without sight. Lawrence's work has been well recognized including his receipt of the [Meritorious Service Medal](#) from the Governor General.

www.blindfishingboat.com



BLUE FISH CANADA

Blue Fish Canada was federally incorporated in January 2012 as a non-profit organization. Its charitable activities cover freshwater and marine environment restoration, preservation and conservation, and the promotion of sustainable traditional management of fish stocks. Policies and programs are researched, developed and implemented to restore and conserve freshwater, marine ecosystems and wild fish stocks, and to mitigate the direct and indirect negative impacts of humans. BFC works together with communities and their leaders to share traditional knowledge, useful scientific data, and emerging trends that support environment preservation.

www.bluefishcanada.ca/

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Writer.....	Lawrence Gunther
Director.....	Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais
Producer.....	Alex Sliman
Photography.....	Nicolas Fransolet and Nicolas Bolduc
Editors.....	Arthur Tarnowski and Louis-Martin Paradis
Sound designer.....	Olivier Calvert
Sound design & original music.....	Serge N. Pelletier
Production company.....	Emergence, division of Group Cinelande
Country of production.....	Canada
Shooting format.....	2K
Screening format	Prores 4444 – DCP available
Sound format.....	5.1 Stereo
Aspect ratio.....	2 :35 :1
Duration	1h 19 mins. 45 sec.
Language.....	English



In WORLD PREMIERE at the **PLANET IN FOCUS FILM FESTIVAL**

At the **Art Gallery of Ontario's Jackman Hall**
on Friday October 21st at 8:45pm
317 Dundas Street West
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1G4

www.planetinfocus.org

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