

A Tailor in The Making

What we think we are is true



Feature Documentary

Running Time: 72min 04 sec

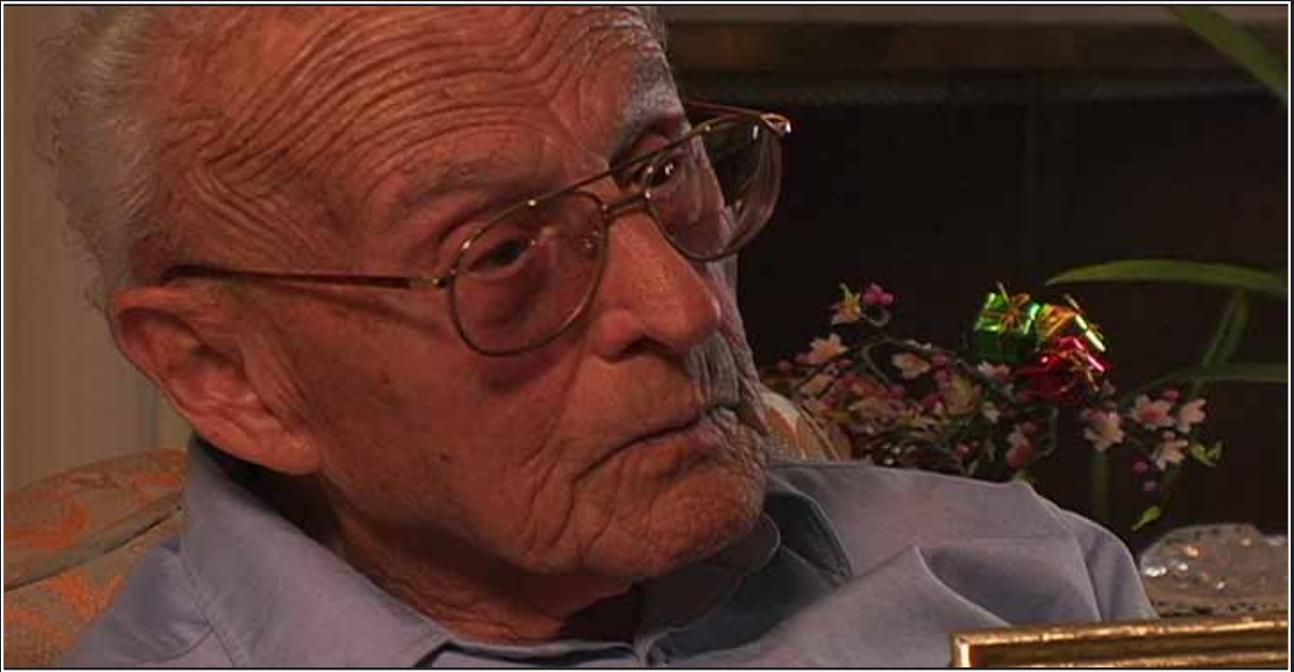
Log Line



Even in the harsh conditions of Nazi death camps, some prisoners created art, and this helped them to heal and maintain a sense of identity, in a place of cold, numeric regulation and dehumanization.

Short Synopsis

A Tailor in The Making examines how creativity energizes and heals those who are suffering. In Buchenwald, Terezin and Auschwitz, some prisoners created art as a means to escape and express what could not be spoken. This moment allowed them to connect with their individual identities, in a place of cold, numeric regulation and dehumanization. Some of the works still exist, hidden in the corners of cell blocks and barracks. Through the words, dreams and paintings of Ben Altman, a survivor of five camps in Poland, a lifetime of memories pour forth.



Long Synopsis

A Tailor in The Making examines how creativity energizes and heals those who are suffering. In Buchenwald, Terezin and Auschwitz, some prisoners created art as a means to escape and to express what could not be spoken. This moment allowed them to connect with their individual identities, in a place of cold, numeric regulation and dehumanization. Some of the works still exist, hidden in the corners of cell blocks and barracks.

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In his childhood Ben felt a longing to paint and draw. But the wars in Poland prevented any realization of it. In order to survive, Ben followed his father, and became a Tailor. But his lifetime of memories did not stay dormant. A release of powerful images cover the walls of his home. They speak the words that he could not.





Director Statement

I first discovered the existence of concentration camp prisoner art about a year ago. As I saw the images for the first time, one of the first things I thought about was why these prisoners would bother with it. More so, why would they risk their lives to do it? If someone was discovered creating art, especially art depicting Nazi atrocities they would most likely be executed. I discovered that this art was something they had to make for themselves, in order to maintain their sense of identity. The Nazi methods to break people down and dehumanize, were not as effective when used upon prisoners who maintained a connection to imagination.

Director Bio

This is Matt Webber's first feature film. A Graduate of the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, Webber has three short films as well. "The Fix", "Flow" and "Deep Blue Dream." Matt was born and raised in Sacramento CA. He first worked at a local newspaper in town, as a writer, but the paper closed down soon after he started. He then worked at a pre-press lab, making film negatives and proofs. His last job before going to film school was at a magazine. This wasn't the fit he was looking for. This is what pushed him into film school. Four years later, his first film out of school is A Tailor in The Making.



Production Notes/Anecdotes

4x4 needed

When Adam (cinematographer) and I were in Europe, we started off in Germany and over the next few days drove through the Czech Republic and then into Poland. When we were in Germany, we did something I have always wanted to do. Drive the Autobahn. It is everything you have ever heard. The roads are immaculate. We rented an Opel Merkur and from Frankfurt airport I drove first up to Weimar, near where Buchenwald is. We get out onto the A-5 going north, and I eased into it at first, but eventually I pushed the pedal to the floor to see how fast is fast. It turns out for our car, not really. You need an Audi, BMW or Mercedes and Porsche, obviously, to keep up with traffic. Even at full speed, about 100mph, we were relegated to be in the slow lane.

When we crossed the border in to the Czech Republic, it was different. It is a much poorer country and the roads show that. Much of the terrain is mountainous, and rugged to begin with. From high speed, we went to slow defensive driving, avoiding potholes and construction. We found our way to Prague after driving all day, and it's a good thing we got there during the day. I drive in San Francisco, a nightmare for cars. But Prague was another level. One-way streets emerging from, tiny alley streets, rough brick roads, and lots of bridges. But the best part was that we were driving through one of the oldest cities in Europe. Eventually we found our hotel and parked the car and left it there.

The most difficult day of all was the drive from Prague to Poland. It rained all day, every second, and there were tons of little villages along the way so we could never get momentum. The advantage in that though is we got to see the countryside up close. You can see how WWII, in fact the reminders of all the wars that came to Poland, are still evident in the landscapes. It looked like someone's backyard, but behind an old wooden fence a military tank sat facing outward. I don't think the tank worked at all, so I assume it has been sitting still since it was parked there.



Production Stills



Contact Information

Matt Webber - Writer/Director/Producer
916.601.9026
batscribe@hotmail.com

Hard copies of production stills, director photo,
and promo postcard available upon request.

