

THE FISHERMAN'S NET

A photograph of a man in a small, blue and white boat on the ocean. The man is shirtless and is using a long wooden pole to maneuver the boat. The boat has a simple wooden frame structure on top. The water is a deep blue-green color, and the sky is a pale, hazy blue.

PRESS KIT

MEDIA & FILM CONTACT

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SYNOPSIS

Zanzibar is home to numerous coastal communities who rely primarily on fishing for their survival. The Fisherman's Net follows Abdulla Abdulla to explore the relationships and interconnectedness of a local fishing community off Zanzibar as they work together to overcome their challenges as climate change, overfishing, and a growing tourism sector threatens their beaches and ancestral waters.





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The Fisherman's Net seeks to drop the viewer into a world that otherwise may not be experienced. This short documentary highlights a way of life that is in danger of fundamental change – the fishing communities off Eastern Zanzibar.

I have always found fishing communities fascinating, and this was especially true on Zanzibar. Visiting this tropical island, you consistently walk past locals working on boats, repairing lines, or you see them out in the distance fishing. It is easy to miss out on a whole other world.

So, I decided to spend a day filming with local fisherman. I wanted to better understand and show their world.

Before sunrise until later afternoon, I explored the world of the fisherman with Abdulla. What originally seemed like a story on fishing methods, time spent on the water, and selling the fish turned into a story about community and support. Helping each other to find helmsman, repair an engine, discuss boat and driver plans for tourist groups, and sharing the fruits of their work in the shadow of the beating sun, I realized the importance of every member under the fisherman's network and how they are all key to the survival of the culture and community.

The Fisherman's Net was honored as one of five "Official Nominee" for the One Day Doc Competition from the Art of Documentary© 2022.



MAIN CHARACTER

Abdulla Abdulla lives at the Eastern Coast of Zanzibar and has been fishing his ancestral waters for years. Respected as the leader and one of the best fisherman in the area, Abdullagoon – as he calls himself – not only looks after his own family but takes care of his entire community of fisherman.



WHY THE FISHERMAN'S NET

Fish is the main staple in the Zanzibar diet and fishing provides the primary source of income for 28% of the people there. Fishing has been a part of the local communities for as long as Zanzibar has been inhabited.

With the decline of the ancient spice trade, Zanzibar's leaders changed focus and began to set their sights on making Zanzibar a tourist destination. While the tourist industry has brought another source of income to many of the communities, its impacts have also been profound on both nature and human lives. In numerous studies, many fishermen report tourist activities have negatively impacted their primary source of income.¹ In addition to this, climate change is causing ocean temperatures to rise, forcing fish to deeper waters making fishing yields lower. Additionally, bleaching of coral reefs is destroying a whole ecosystem that these fishermen rely on for bait and small fish. Because of these factors, these fishermen's livelihoods are anything but certain.

These statistics and facts have been demonstrated in studies thoroughly. *The Fisherman's Net* gives those communities a face, allowing us to experience their lives – even if only for a day. It sheds a light on fishing communities that will ultimately have to face the challenges of the future. By identifying with these fishermen, we have a chance to change our own behavior to protect not only Zanzibar's culture and existence, but fishing communities all over the world.

1. Have the fishing communities of Zanzibar Island benefited from increasing tourism development? May 2016, Journal of Development and Agricultural Economics 8(5):95-107

 Follow Our Steps | Documentaries

THE FISHERMAN'S NET



A SHORT FILM BY
CHRISTOPHER LARSON

TEAM



DIRECTOR AND EDITOR- CHRISTOPHER LARSON

Christopher Larson is a Director, Editor, and Producer who has completed several successful short films such as *Social Fabric* and *The Inside*. His passion is telling human stories of society and dedication, while focusing on the daily life of his characters.

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COMPOSER - GUARÁ

Guará is a composer/singer/songwriter from midwestern Brazil based in Lisbon. After living in magical Dublin and in stunning Berlin, he chose the sunny Portuguese capital to catch new songs and dock his dreams.

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TRAILER

