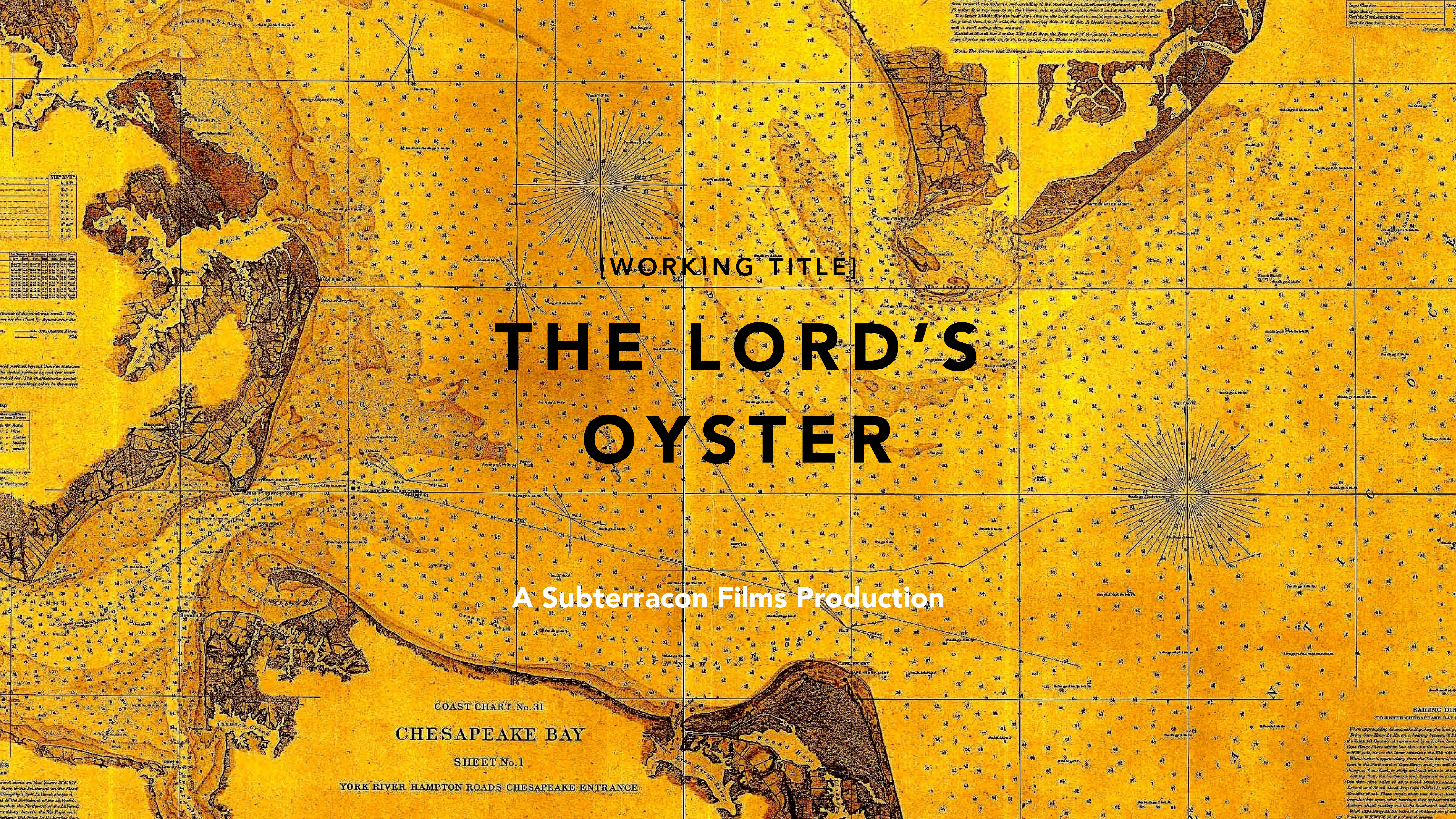


A Working Deck for
The Lord's Oyster

This is a working document intended for investor development and not for public dissemination. The deck is subject to additions and amendments throughout the pre-production process. Images and story-lines included in this document may not be original to our film, and may be subject to copyright. They are used to convey an impression of the film's planned content.

Prepared by: Paul Lewis — Producer
Subterracon Films, 2023



been covered to 6 fathoms, and extending to the Westward and Southward to the Westward of the Bay 15 miles. It is very deep on the Western side, usually reaching from 2 and 3 fathoms to 10 & 12 fathoms. The inner side of the Bay shows the usual depth and character. They are 4 miles long and from 1 to 2 miles wide, the depth varying from 3 to 12 fathoms. The distance from the point of the Chesapeake to the point of the York River is 12 miles. The point of the Chesapeake is 12 miles from the point of the York River. There is 10 fathoms water at the point of the Chesapeake and 12 fathoms at the point of the York River.

VIII. XVII

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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[WORKING TITLE]

THE LORD'S OYSTER

A Subterracon Films Production

COAST CHART No. 31

CHESAPEAKE BAY

SHEET No. 1

YORK RIVER HAMPTON ROADS CHESAPEAKE ENTRANCE

SAILING DIRECTIONS TO ENTER CHESAPEAKE BAY

When approaching Chesapeake Bay, keep the light on the Cape Henry Light to the right, and the light on the Cape Charles Light to the left. The distance between the two lights is 12 miles. The light on the Cape Henry Light is 12 miles from the point of the Chesapeake and 12 miles from the point of the York River. The light on the Cape Charles Light is 12 miles from the point of the Chesapeake and 12 miles from the point of the York River.

“An oyster leads a dreadful, but exciting life”

–M.F.K. FISHER

THE FILM CONCEPT

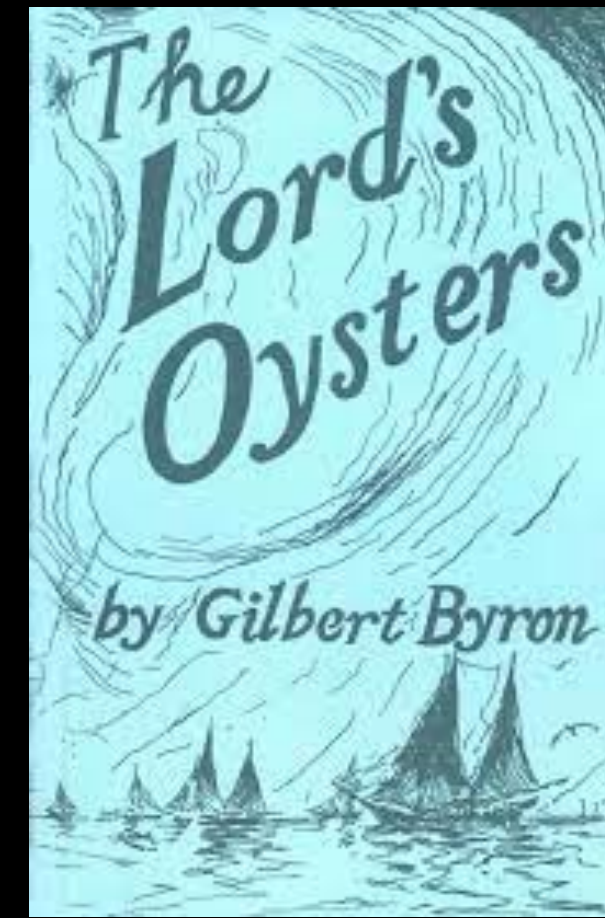
The Lord's Oyster is Subterracon Films' working title for a new documentary exploring the Virginia Chesapeake Bay region and its close and vital relationship with the oyster. The film will discover personalities, events and places that have reimagined and restored the oyster harvests, while uncovering the personal and historical relationships that define those who work and live along the Chesapeake waterways.

Using our preferred "direct" film techniques, the film will offer those on camera the opportunity to tell their stories without commercial or editorial manipulation. Those who harvest the oyster; to those who work to protect the oyster populations; to those who are current guardians of the waterman's, and waterwoman's, culture, are re-discovered and allowed to tell their story in context.

This film is not a travelogue. It allows original and authentic sounds and language to take center-stage, both educating and entertaining the viewer.

Oyster disease, overfishing, population collapses, and habitat loss are a drama that has famously played out over the last 150 years. The population health of the oyster not only plays a natural role in cleaning the waterways, but is also a reflection of the health of the world, top-side.

The oyster's story is a dramatic one. The film brings new and contemporary stories into view, and gives us a sense of this continuing history.



Like many of my projects, this one had its inspiration, at least partly, from a book.

Published in 1957, *The Lord's Oysters*, a novel about growing up the son of a Chesapeake Bay waterman, was a well-read classic for a time. Conceived and written when the oyster fishery was plagued by the disease Perkinsis Marinus, there was something Twain-like in the way it depicted a certain American life - a simple, natural existence through hardships that couldn't be ignored.

The book is largely forgotten today, but it offers a strong and first-hand impression of what a working life on the river had come to mean, the resulting echoes of which one can still be felt today.

— PL

WHY TELL THIS STORY NOW?

Every so often, important subjects need to be revisited, their stories retold for better understanding and new perspectives. The importance of the oyster to Virginia waterways and cultural life is worth re-visiting.

Subterracon's brand of independent and direct filmmaking will provide a unique experience for the viewer, a deeper exploration than the usual travelogue or food show. The film will act as both a document to the experience and as an entertainment that educates its audience.



“What we find, we find. It is an act of faith and discovery. With a healthy dose of imaginative looking.”

A film like *Lord's Oyster* cannot be pre-determined in full. A script cannot be written ahead of time.

What separates our film from a traditional travelogue will be our practice of genuinely looking and listening to those who are telling their story. There is no need to build reproductions into the film when we allow what is authentic to take center stage.

Life on the water has a certain rhythm. The film finds its inspiration from that water-music.



STYLE AND TONE

The film is an act of artistic and cultural discovery, rooted in conversation, which becomes a document of the unfolded experience in cinematic form. The result is able to withstand critical scrutiny, while engaging, provoking and entertaining the audience.

Our vision puts faith in the “direct” approach, where the words and images of those captured on film serve as the underlying script and creative force. There is no superimposed narrator to “box the story in,” keeping the relationship between viewer and subject as undiluted as possible. The director’s voice will be felt in the “white space at the edges,” at both point of capture and through the editing process.

The film is built by weaving together two separate modes of original audio/visual capture.

The first is ‘direct filmmaking’, where we will discover, through personal and impromptu storytelling,, and of those who have helped built those places through daily acts of living, working and investing.

The second is formed by historical, archival and scholarly elements, including interviews and original research. These provide context and structure for the informal and direct elements captured contemporaneously.

Richard Leacock and Les Blank are starting points of creative cinematic influence.



Mance Lipscomb
A Well-Spent Life
Les Blank Films

The past and present
create an impression
of a future.



CONTENT IDEAS

- A farm to table journey of the oyster, from the waterways along the Virginia Rivers of the Chesapeake, to rural communities like Gloucester and the village of Hobson, to the population center and end-market hub of Virginia Beach.
- The importance of the oyster to healthy rivers and waterways.
- The personalities at the heart of oyster harvesting, preservation, and the cultural identity of those who live and make a living off the water.
- A mirror to history: oyster fishing has long been part of Virginia history. What are the changes that have occurred as it has moved into the 21st Century?
- Understanding the importance of the oyster fishery to Virginia today through interviews with watermen, scholars and community leaders.
- An exploration of the forgotten: images and stories from Virginia's past and their vestiges today.
- The importance of families to both the work and celebration of the oyster harvest.



GATEWAY TO FREEDOM: BLACK OYSTERMEN OF THE PAST

Long before the collapse of slavery at the end of the Civil War, significant numbers of blacks turned to the water in search of freedom.

Free blacks recognized the uncommon opportunities there early on, carving out livelihoods as oystermen, boatmen and other maritime trades that could be taken up with relatively little harassment and interference from an often hostile white world.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

"Telling a story that relies on discovery requires patience and the willingness to look deeply into truthful context and intention. I have spent the last ten years working with films that have the art of conversation at their core, listening and allowing those who are in front of the camera to tell their story without it being manipulated and altered for a pre-conceived notion."

Paul Lewis — Producer / Director

Principal at Subterracon Films, Paul is the Director and Producer of the feature length documentary, *It Was the Nightingale: The Unreliable Story of Ford Madox Ford*, as well as the short documentary, *Rosalyn Engelman: The Color of Memory*. He is also the Producer / Director of the short films, *I Am A Story: Self-Portraits at the Warehouse*, and *Kent to Connemara: Ford Madox Ford's Legacy in Ireland*.



MUSIC AND SOUND DESIGN

With *The Lord's Oyster*, sound design will have almost equal footing with our video capture, taking advantage of the natural rhythm and movement of the waterways. The vastly experienced and award-winning Kelley Baker is our sound-designer and producing partner. We couldn't be in better hands.

Kelley Baker

Kelley was sound designer for major films like *Goodwill Hunting*, *Finding Forrester*; *My Own Private Idaho* and other Gus Van Zant films. He is the Producer/Director of *Bird Dog* and *The Gas Cafe* and the documentary, *Dangerous: Kay Boyle*. He has written several books on independent filmmaking and teaches extensively across the United States.



OUR NONPROFIT SPONSOR

Subterracon projects have been approved for fiscal sponsorship from the premier arts support organization, Fractured Atlas, allowing for tax-deductible giving and public funding.

Designed to educate, invigorate and entertain a global arts community, sponsorship by Fractured Atlas ensures our projects are produced successfully, transparently and in a fiscally responsible manner.



What We Want

Strong, independent contributors who believe passionately in the value of documentary film and/or the subject, and who want to support a project with regional and national ambitions.

What We Need

A consortium of screen-credited contributors responsible for 75% of our budget. Total project budget estimated: \$115,000.

What You Get

- An opportunity to invest tax-deductibly in cultural programming
- Access to early screenings of the film
- Named on-screen credit
- All production perks

ESTIMATED PROJECT BUDGET

This is an estimate only and subject to changes that might arise from production choices and/or events.

July - August 2023: Pre-Production phase: research, project planning, team-development, early establishing interviews: \$20,000

September 2023 - January 2024: Production Phase: all original audio/visual capture, archival material, photography:\$35,000

February - August 2024: Post-Production Phase: full edit, post-production services, etc.: \$40,000

Licences / Legal: \$15,000

Fringes / Misc.: \$10,000

Total Estimated Budget: \$115,000

Film Details:

Planned Running Time: 30-40 Mins

Production Dates: August 2023 - August 2024

Producer / Director: Paul Lewis

Production Co.: Subterracon Films

SUPPORT THE PROJECT

Major Donor Giving Levels

Authors' Club — \$5000+ "PATRON" —shared, "back-end" on-screen credit.

VIP — \$10,000+ "SUPPORTED BY" — on-screen, "back-end" credit.

Associate Producer — \$20,000+ "ASSOCIATE PRODUCER" — on-screen, "front-end" credit

Producer — \$50,000+ — "PRODUCER" -screen, full-frame, front-end credit.

Executive Producer — \$100,000+

For more information, please contact us through our website:
www.subterracon.com

Why Become a Patron of this Film?

Becoming a contributor to Subterracon Films by supporting *The Lord's Oyster*, is an opportunity for an individual or corporation to invest in cultural programming that is produced responsibly, transparently and professionally.

Subterracon's work reflects the values of its contributors, who ensure its commitment to moral and artistic rights and processes, while exploring subject matter of interest to a global community.

Your support ensures that this kind of unique Independent filmmaking can happen at all.

About Us

Subterracon is a media production company based in Virginia, USA, which looks to produce strong, unique cinematic content for a global audience.

Our goal is to develop and produce projects featuring undiscovered and under-appreciated subjects with essential value to current and future cultural communities.



Subterracon Films – PO Box 12315, Richmond, VA 23241 www.subterracon.com

contact: Paul Lewis t. 540-419-7855 paul@subterracon.com