



presenting

THE MEMORY OF FISH

a reelblue production

TheMemoryOfFish.com

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LOGLINE

The Memory of Fish is a documentary portrait of one man, the wild salmon he loves, and his fight to free a river.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

The Memory of Fish is a documentary portrait of the intertwined lives of Dick Goin and wild fish, and his fight to free a river. Elwha River salmon fed Dick and his family after they migrated to the Olympic Peninsula during the Dust Bowl. He never forgot his debt to the now disappearing fish. We follow Dick—a pulp mill worker and master fisherman—as he uses his memories and persistence to battle for the biggest dam removal project in US history so that the salmon can come home.

SYNOPSIS

The Memory of Fish follows the life story of a man from Port Angeles, Washington, and his fight to bring salmon home to the Elwha River. Dick Goin was a Dust Bowl refugee, pulp mill worker, and fisherman-turned-river Yoda, whose memory and persistence were instrumental in the biggest dam removal project in US history. They say rivers are like veins, and Goin had salmon running through his. A master among master fishermen, he was one of the oldest voices speaking against the destruction of the Olympic Peninsula, one of this country's most exploited natural areas for its timber, fish, and hydroelectricity. As a fisherman, citizen scientist, educator, and historian of this frontier, both tribal leaders and park rangers agree he has no parallel: Dick was here for the fish.

Dick's love story with the Elwha River began in 1937, as a six-year-old boy running from Iowa with his family in the Dirty Thirties. The Goin family settled on the rugged coast of the Olympic Peninsula where they lived off Elwha salmon. He felt the salmon saved his family and so, his life debt to fish grew. In the 1950s, Dick began keeping detailed fishing journals, which scientists came to rely on for answers and institutional baseline data. Dick's notebooks became cherished sources of wisdom for how the river changed over time, and how it could be fixed. Some said his journals were worth millions.

Over the decades, Dick watched his river slowly die because of the two dams that blocked the Elwha River, disrupting the salmon's natural habitat and restricting all but five miles from the coast for the salmon to run. This devastated wild fish populations and restricted other migrating animals and the cycling of nutrients. Clams, birds, otters, bears and elk also paid the price because the salmon were disappearing. The pulp mill where he worked for 40-plus years polluted everything and it was able to do so because it was being powered by the dams' hydroelectricity. Dick, however, was powered by the memory of fish. He wanted the dams taken down so that the fish could come home. By the early 1980s he became more vocal, using his deep river expertise to stand up to special interests and inspire a groundswell of voices for dam removal. An audio recording of Dick's legendary 1983 speech bends time and helps visualize his memories, allowing us inside Dick's mind to re-imagine what the river could be again.

The Elwha River is a fascinating underwater world, once considered a queen of rivers with all five species of Pacific salmon. We learn the salmon's side of the story too. Like Dick, salmon also

have a sense of home. Born in the gravel of a riverbed, as young fry no bigger than your hand or mine, they swim downstream to the river's mouth and out to the ocean. If they can survive coming of age in the big blue, when the time is right, they swim thousands of miles back to the river where they were born to spawn.

It was a long fight between the communities, the park service, and the federal government to get the dams down – the project start date was repeatedly delayed since 1994 – a long time to stay hopeful. In 2011, the dam removal began; the final chunks were removed in late 2014. This is the largest dam removal project in US history, costing \$325 million dollars, and the second largest federal restoration project after the Everglades. Never before has a river and its inhabitants experienced an emancipation of this magnitude. Witnessing this historical event was the story of Dick's lifetime. For the first time in a century, wild salmon are now swimming in a free flowing Elwha River.

As the Elwha dams were removed, the river became stronger and began remembering its way. However, Dick grew weaker and began losing his memory, as if his mind was unleashed with the river. His clock ticked forward; the river's ticked back. And as the Elwha flowed free, the salmon remembered their way back to the river to spawn. Like Dick, they too were facing death for the benefit of future generations. Through the eyes and memory of Dick Goin, this is a visual portrait of a local hero, a historic place in the American outdoors, and an iconic wild fish.

ARTIST STATEMENT

"A good documentary, like a good argument, backs up a cogent opinion with facts, analysis, and judgment. A great documentary, like a great essay, transcends the prosaic and achieves the power of poetry." –Peter Keough, *Boston Globe*

We need many more river success stories. Communities across the US are struggling with the realities of unhealthy rivers and depressed fish stocks, feeling the impacts of coastal degradation and climate change, and debating dam removal. Salmon populations are at risk in the Pacific Northwest, nonetheless salmon ranks among the top consumed fish in the US. Salmon need cool, clear water to swim in and spawn. Entire ecosystems rely on these fish—and so do we. The effects of water quality and human health extend beyond shores and across state lines. East to west, rivers connect us all.

But, can a river really be restored after a century of damming? What's the secret to staying committed to a cause over a lifetime? And, how do you restore what you can't remember? These were the North Star questions while making *The Memory of Fish*. Part fable, part biography, part nature film, the vision was to tell the comeback story of a wild river through a seminal character, a story that would play out like a good book and stay in your bones.

The Memory of Fish is a timeless cinematic portrait that helps viewers understand why saving rivers and keeping the salmon life cycle complete are important. It's a story that connects river, forest, and ocean communities – coast to coast. Our aim is to have this film shared widely so that many people, and many more rivers, can benefit from this story. Audiences can look to the wisdom of the past to build knowledge of the future.

With *The Memory of Fish*, I wanted to create space to think about rivers and salmon, and our connection to them. As someone who has spent more time in oceans than in rivers, working on this film and spending time with Dick and Marie Goin was a tremendous honor. One of my greatest joys was knowing that Dick lived long enough to see the dams come down and the fish come home. The last time I saw him he gave me one of his fishing rods, which he said would teach me more than any camera could. Dick was always right about everything. But, I wish that he had lived to see the film too.

NOTES ON THE PRODUCTION

With unprecedented access to the legendary Dick Goin, we were gifted a rare opportunity in documentary film to explore the collective dimensions of art and science. I began shooting on location in Port Angeles, Washington, with Sachi Cunningham in 2010. The story was shot over five years – before, during, and after the historic Elwha River dam removal and during the final years of Dick’s life.

Dick Goin is not your typical “environmentalist.” He was a blue-collar worker and a passionate fisherman who believed he had a debt to the salmon because they sustained and saved his family. Archival imagery takes us back to the beginning of Dick Goin’s story: 1937, a six-year-old boy running from dusty Iowa with his family in the Dirty Thirties. Over the years and along the river we continue, learning about the lives of salmon and peeling back Dick’s understanding of the natural world. This film is a requiem of sort—for fish, rivers, and people—but it also looks to the future through Dick and the promise of a second chance for the Elwha River.

Post-production began in February 2015 with editor and writer Erin Barnett and I working together at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, New York; co-producer Emma Jones worked with us remotely from Washington. Writer Fernanda Rossi came on board to help get the story structure and rhythm aligned. The creative collaboration during post-production was incredibly strong and brought this authentic, cycle of life tale to reality. This wasn’t a classic David vs. Goliath story. Dick was one of many over the years who fought to get the dams down. We, however, did want to invite the audience into the life and mind of one man who was part of something much bigger than himself. Visually representing the concept of memory, while also telling the salmon’s side of the story, was a challenge. How would we get inside of Dick’s mind to help viewers re-imagine a river? How would we tell the life cycle of salmon together with the historic dam removal fight? And how would we make it all feel like it belonged in the same movie? As much as I am not a big fan of narration, we knew that this film needed it. We were honored to have the incredible Lili Taylor join the production. Her experienced voice lends authenticity, balancing emotion with grit through the life-death story arc. *The Memory of Fish* benefitted from the script’s macro and micro approaches all along the way as we crafted a fable-like portrait. We stitched together the threads of man-fish-memory by not necessarily marrying them, but rather letting them inform each another. This internal, collaborative storytelling approach also extended to our post-production process. Composer Gil Talmi and sound designer Gisela Fullà-Silvestre banded together; graphic artist Begoña Lopez and colorist Victor Melton worked jointly. This high level of creative camaraderie enabled the delicate balance between an informative biography and a transportive, experimental film. The story ebbs and flows, enabling the viewer to feel a part of

Dick's connection to the river as we go back in time and shift perspectives above and below the river, all while set against the backdrop of a huge marker in American environmental history.

In documentary filmmaking, production surprises abound. One of our biggest challenges was that there was very little visual evidence, especially moving images, of Dick's activism. However, we had one key piece of material: a cassette tape of Dick's infamous 1983 speech when he made a plea to save the Elwha's wild fish. We used the speech audio mixed with poetic imagery to travel through Dick's memories of giant fish that swam in what was once considered the queen of rivers in the Pacific Northwest. Half way through the production, we were also confronted with another tough challenge: Dick's health was fading. On April 12, 2015, Dick passed away at home surrounded by his family.



SOUNDBYTES – DICK GOIN

Dams and fish just can't work together at all because you've blocked their access.

The habitat is actually destroyed... below the dam because the flow of gravel is stopped. That all-important item, which they spawn in, their food supply grows in... slowly but surely, it goes away. So, they always lose when you have a dam.

If you've never seen a river — a live river — you've really missed something.

We were poor as rats when we went to live on the Elwha and you know, salmon was a major, major part of our diet. We probably wouldn't have starved to death, but it would have been a lot harder. From that day on, they became a big part of my life, for food, for recreation, for enjoying looking at them. It just became an integral part of my existence. That's pretty much the reason. I wouldn't know how to turn that off if I wanted to.

I remember as a small boy we used small cedar boats and we rode after them one oar at a time. I have no idea where these huge fish were going, but they're gone now.

I still look at it like what it was even though that's only in my mind's eye. But you know, what has been can be, I think... I hope.

I didn't write just a stock list on Elwha, I wrote stock lists on, oh my God, rivers from the Sol Duc to the Dosewallips... but it turned into something it wasn't ever meant to be. It turned into, "well, this is when I lost what."

Mills have a life. We buy the timber, we get water, we build the mill, we make money, and when everything's gone we walk away. It's that cold blooded, you know, it is. It's a business venture.

You have to dig pretty deep and unfortunately some people never think of everything is connected. They just don't recognize it, particularly when it means a sacrifice. But that's life and that's people.

You can't lie to yourself about that, what your own eyes tell you.

The seasons were known not by the calendar, but by the fish. Spring was here when the spring salmon were in the Dungeness. Summer was here when the kings were in the Elwha. When the hookbills came to the harbor it was fall. And when the steelhead were in the Lyre we knew it was winter.

It was a lively river and the river came to life only when the salmon were in.

I was never afraid to stand up and be counted. If your agenda was power, or irrigation, or development on rivers, even if I was the only fish guy there, so to speak, we had a war. A friend told me one time: you gotta quit running at the dam wall with your head down, he said, all you gonna do is get a headache. Didn't bother me a bit. I just kept marching. This, this effort to take the dams out, why, in the beginning there weren't a lot of people that supported it.

I would like to make a plea for the Elwha and to stress to you that I really feel that time is short if we are going to save the wild fish.

I can't be anything about this dam but bitter. I've looked at it for what would amount to a long lifetime for a lot of people. I just can't... It's a slaughterhouse.

The Elwha was one of the greatest – I... It's very hard for me to convey to you how hard that river died.

Why was it so fascinating? Look at these creatures. They go out and they disappear into a hostile sea. And they travel for way over a thousand miles, and they live there, fighting all the things that's after them, and then they find their way back to this one little place. That's one of the reasons that I have really developed a feeling for fish.

I've lived here for 75 years on the Elwha. I saw the salmon destroyed.

I have faith in this that it's going to work... I am 80 now and I have the belief that I won't see a lot of fish on up, but I firmly believe I'll see some on up the river.

A river, it doesn't want to be tethered, it wants to run around, it wants to be sinuous.

If you notice, that fish is more [and] more seeking quieter water, less current, because its energy is nearly gone and it will be a very short time until she cannot hold in the current and she'll die. And then she will become, she will be returned to the system. But, she has done what she was here for.

TEAM BIOS

Jennifer Galvin

Director, Producer, Executive Producer, Cinematographer, Writer

A scientist and a filmmaker, Dr. Galvin is internationally recognized for her work at the intersection of environment, health, media, and story. She was honored as a vanguard of creative social impact in the 2014 GOOD 100 and as a Change Agent by the Christian Science Monitor. At reelblue, Galvin directs, produces, and shoots commercial to indie projects, including documentary films (reelblue.net). She was selected to American Film Institute's Catalyst Workshop for science storytelling and screenwriting (2004) and to the Pan Caribbean Project for Environmental Film and Wildlife Documentaries Residency held at EICTV, Cuba (2006). Her feature directorial debut, *Free Swim* (2009), about local Bahamians learning to swim, traveled the globe to reduce youth drowning, promote diversity in ocean-related sports, and ignite community coastal conservation. Galvin is a member of New York Women in Film and Television, Pleiades Women's Leadership Network, and ICAIC Muestra Itinerante de Cine del Caribe. She is a board member of Rocking the Boat and the Henry David Thoreau Foundation, and a mentor to Storytellers for Good, Social Innovation Fellowship, and Venture for America. Galvin holds a Doctor of Science (ScD) from the Harvard School of Public Health, a Master of Public Health (MPH) from Yale University, and a Bachelor of Science (BS) from Brown University.

Sachi Cunningham

Director, Co-Producer, Cinematographer

Sachi Cunningham is a filmmaker, photographer, and Assistant Professor of Multimedia Journalism at San Francisco State University. Her award-winning stories have screened at festivals worldwide, and on outlets including the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, PBS FRONTLINE, FRONTLINE/World, and the Discovery Channel. The Emmys, Webbys, and Pictures of the Year International have honored Cunningham's work. A graduate of UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism and Brown University, Cunningham's documentaries focus on international conflict, the arts, disability, and the ocean environment. On land, she has turned her lens everywhere from the first presidential election in Afghanistan, to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. In the water, she has swum with her camera along side everything from 350-pound blue fin tuna to big wave surfers, to Olympian, Michael Phelps. Once an assistant to actress Demi Moore and Director/Producer/Writer Barry Levinson, Cunningham brings a decade of experience in feature films and commercial productions in New York, Hollywood, and Tokyo to her career in journalism and filmmaking.

Emma Jones**Co-Producer, Camera**

Emma Jones is a producer, writer, and photographer living on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. Hailing from southern England, Emma started acting in regional theatre at the age of eleven and eventually found her creative home in the US working in experimental and independent film. Her on-screen performances have been featured in festivals around the globe. Emma has also taken her mastery of storytelling behind the camera with her directorial debut of the silent short film *WAITING ROOM*. In 2016, Emma became the executive producer of *SHIT HAPPENS*, a web series about the agonizing, but somewhat universal, experience of people shitting their pants in public. She currently has several projects at various stages of development, most notably an experimental documentary, *THE HOUSE ON THE BLUFF*, which explores the story of the eroding Sequim bluffs. Emma is learning to play the saw.

Erin Barnett**Editor, Writer**

Erin Barnett is a documentary editor with a knack for shaping complex narratives and social issues into compelling stories. Her most notable feature documentary work includes Alex Gibney's *Steve Jobs: The Man in the Machine* (Magnolia Pictures, CNN Films, 2015), *Food Chains* (Screen Media, Netflix, 2014), and *(Dis)Honesty: The Truth About Lies* (Bond 360, CNBC, iTunes). The documentaries she edited have been official selections at many reputable film festivals including Berlinale, Tribeca, SXSW, San Francisco, and HotDocs. She is currently editing a feature-length documentary about infectious diseases in the 21st century in association with CNN Films.

Fernanda Rossi**Writer**

Internationally renowned writer and speaker Fernanda Rossi has collaborated for 15 years on more than 500 fiction scripts and documentaries, including two documentaries nominated for an Academy Award. The grant proposals and fundraising samples she contributed to received funding from ITVS in the United States and the National Film Board of Canada. She has given lectures in more than 12 countries and at film festivals and markets, such as Hot Docs and Sheffield Doc/Fest. In addition, she is a trainer for special programs and a grant evaluator for foundations. Her book *Trailer Mechanics: How to Make Your Documentary Fundraising Demo*, 2nd Edition, is the bible on demo production according to industry professionals. More about Fernanda at documentarydoctor.com

Gil Talmi**Composer**

Gil Talmi is a world-renowned film composer with a focus on socially conscious projects. Gil's music can be heard in a variety of award winning films and TV programs worldwide, from productions for Warner Brothers, Paramount, and PBS to pro bono collaborations with The International Rescue Committee and StoryCorps. Gil was nominated for a "National News and Documentary Emmy Award" for his work on CBS Evening News. More about Gil at giltalmi.com

Gisela Fullà-Silvestre**Sound designer, Sound engineer**

Gisela is a sound designer/mixer and music composer from Barcelona based in Brooklyn. Some

of her recent credits as a sound designer/mixer include the films *Jack of the Red Hearts* (2016, Janet Grillo), *Donald Cried* (2016, Kris Avedisian), *Lost In the Sun* by Trey Nelson (2014, TBD), *Only Lovers Left Alive* by Jim Jarmusch (2013, Sony), *Beneath* by Larry Fessenden (2013, Chiller, Shout!) and *The Europa Report* by Sebastian Cordero (2012, Magnolia Pictures). As a music composer, she has written music for the MTV documentary *Rebel Music* (2013, Netflix) and the Coca Cola Christmas TV spot (2015). Her sound design for the Prince Rama psych opera premiered at MOMA in 2014.

Begoña Lopez

Graphic designer

Begoña Lopez is a creative director from Venezuela based in Brooklyn, NY. She has worked in Caracas, Buenos Aires, Houston, New York, and Miami. From graphic designing for some of the world's most prestigious galleries to art direction and motion graphics for international filmmakers, Begoña's talents are rooted in a love of art history, architecture, fashion and photography. Learn more about Begoña at begolopez.com

Victor Melton

Colorist

Victor Melton is a senior flame artist who has worked in Buenos Aires, Houston, Miami and New York. Trained as a graphic designer, he then turned to post-production. His main tool is Autodesk Flame, but he is also versed in Adobe After Effects, Illustrator, Photoshop, and 3D workflows (Softimage 3D/Cinema 4D). More about Victor at victormelton.com

Lili Taylor

Narrator

Lili Taylor is an American actress notable for her appearances in such award-winning indie films as *Mystic Pizza* (1988), *Say Anything...* (1989), *Dogfight* (1991), *Short Cuts* (1993) and *I Shot Andy Warhol* (1996), as well as the acclaimed TV show *Six Feet Under* (2002–2005). She has also appeared in several big-budget films such as *Ransom* (1996), *The Haunting* (1999), *The Conjuring* (2013) and *Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials* (2015). In 2013, she became a board member of the American Birding Association.

CREDITS

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Directed by | Jennifer Galvin + Sachi Cunningham |
| Produced by | Jennifer Galvin |
| Co-produced by | Sachi Cunningham + Emma Jones |
| Edited by | Erin Barnett |
| Assistant editing by | Kurt Vincent + Maya Tippet |
| Original music by | Gil Talmi |
| Narrated by | Lili Taylor |
| Written by | Erin Barnett, Fernanda Rossi + Jennifer Galvin |
| Cinematography by | Sachi Cunningham + Jennifer Galvin |
| Sound design by | Gisela Fullà-Silvestre |
| Graphics and color by | Begoña Lopez + Victor Melton |
| Music consulting by | Marchese Taylor |
| Narration recording by | Eric Hoffman at Mr. Bronx Audio Post NYC |

Sound engineering by Gisela Fullà-Silvestre at EDC Sound
Underwater camera by Russ Ricketts + Jennifer Galvin
Additional camera by Singeli Agnew + Emma Jones
Additional editing by Linda Peckham + Sachi Cunningham
Additional imagery by Marie Goin
John Gussman
Russ Ricketts
Tara Champion
Darcy Turenne
Paul Klaver
Jeremy Monroe
Thomas Dunklin
Rory Savatgy
Kévin Peyrusse
Jonathan Martin-DeMoor
Moylatoid
Patagonia
Fox Wilmar Productions
NarrativeLab
Wings Over Watersheds
NOAA Fisheries
Prelinger Archives
Clallam County Historical Society
Washington Archives
Library of Congress

Elwha hearings and historic dam footage courtesy of Robert Lundahl, Robert Lundahl & Associates, from "Unconquering the Last Frontier," 2000

Archival film services provided by Video & Film Solutions

Website + Press Kit by Meghan Keane / meghan.keane.studio

Fiscal sponsorship services provided by The Safina Center

Funding provided by The Heinz Endowments
Patagonia
Theodore Gordon Flyfishers
NY Community Trust
Sunlight Time Fund

FILM SPECS

The Memory of Fish was shot from 2010-2015 with a variety of cameras (GoPro, Sony XDCam, Cannon 5D Mark III and C300, Panasonic HVX) and underwater housings (GoPro, Aquatica). About 70 hours of footage were edited with Final Cut Pro 7. The water projections were shot in real-time with sage advice from Peter Zuccarini. Graphics and animations were made using After Effects. Editing took place at Thoughts In Grey Circles/Konsonant Studios in the Brooklyn Navy Yard from 2015-2016.

Shooting Format: 2K (NTSC)

Preview Format: DVD (Region 0, NTSC), online

Exhibition Format: DCP, BluRay

Picture: Color & BW

Sound Mixes: 5.1 Surround Sound and Dolby Stereo

Aspect ratio: 1.77 (16 x 9 video)

Length: 54 min

Language: English

Forms: Documentary, Feature

Genres: Independent, Environment, Educational, Senior, Biography

CONTACT

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