



A MARINE'S GUIDE TO FISHING

A Short Fiction Film Introducing Matthew Pennington
Written & Directed by Nicholas Brennan

"a powerful, captivating... peek into the life of a soldier returning home"

Bangor Daily News

"an understated, moving film"

Portland Phoenix



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1) About the Film:

"A Marine's Guide to Fishing" is a 15-minute fiction film telling the story of a young veteran's return to his old job in a New England dockyard on his first 'Alive Day' - the one year anniversary of the day he was severely injured overseas.

Written and directed by Maine-native Nicholas Brennan, the film stars 27-year-old Pittsfield, Maine resident Matthew Pennington, who served three tours of duty with the U.S. Army in Iraq and Afghanistan before suffering an injury in 2006 very similar to the one endured by the character he plays.

The film is ultimately a story about hope and healing and how we can all find our way back to life with the support of those around us.

The film was shot on location in South Portland, Falmouth and Kennebunkport, Maine.

2) Contact Info:

General & Press Inquiries:

Nicholas Brennan, Director
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207.939.9767

Sales Inquiries:

John Logan Pierson, Producer
JL@jlfilms.com
561.866.8232

3) Matthew's Story:



Matthew Pennington makes his acting debut in *A Marine's Guide to Fishing*. After growing up in Maine and Texas, Matthew joined the Army at seventeen, where he served for six years with three tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the age of 23, Matthew was hit by an IED during an ambush while driving a Humvee in Iraq. He lost his left leg below the knee and severely damaged his right leg. He was honorably retired as a Sergeant and received both the State of Maine Silver Star and the Purple Heart, among various other medals.

Suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder several years after coming home injured from Iraq, **Matthew Pennington** found himself reaching a breaking point.

"I was really withdrawn. I would make things up in my head about what people meant," Matthew says. "PTSD really made it hard to talk to anybody at all. I had to do something to move on. I couldn't live like that anymore."

When a friend sent him a casting notice for a short film shooting in Maine, Matthew decided to give it a try. That decision changed his life.

Matthew, a 27-year-old Army veteran, had spent several years struggling to recover from an IED attack in Iraq that left him with a Traumatic Brain Injury, a below-the-knee amputation and PTSD. He had been through multiple VA hospitals in both Maine and Texas with mixed results and had begun to wonder if he'd ever get better.

Instead, through the process of acting, Matthew began to find peace. *A Marine's Guide to Fishing* allowed him to step out of his comfort zone, to break through the demons that were haunting him.

Being able to act through the pain associated with his war experiences, Matthew began to heal his wounds.

"I just feel better. It kind of made everything a lot clearer," he says. "I don't feel like I'm gonna freak out any more. I feel normal again. I can move on."

His wife, Marjorie, sees a changed man - back to the man he was before his injuries.

"He's got a smile on his face. He can hug again," she says.

Together, Matthew and Marjorie are now looking to share Matt's story with other veterans and supporters through "Operation: A Marine's Guide", a country-wide tour of the film accompanied by inspirational speeches from Matthew and director Nicholas Brennan.

Matthew is excited to now have the opportunity to share his story and hopes his performance in *A Marine's Guide to Fishing* helps inspire other young veterans and their families going through similar struggles.

4) Director's Statement:



Nicholas Brennan is a journalist and filmmaker currently based in New York City. Born and raised in New England, he is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. His previous film, the short documentary "Hard Rock Havana", premiered at the 2010 Tribeca Film Festival.

A *Marine's Guide to Fishing* has been a very personal journey for me. I began this project in the spring of 2009 after a stinging realization that I couldn't honestly count a single member of the US military as a close friend. I found this to be a really sad, though not uncommon, situation and set out to try and change that. I first dedicated myself to meeting as many young veterans as I could. Meeting up in bars, in homes and VA hospitals, I started listening to their stories. I ended up spending several months with dozens of young vets as they generously shared a part of themselves with me.

I then dedicated myself to sharing these stories with the broader world in a way that would hopefully enable civilians like myself to learn more about the lives of young veterans while also inspiring those veterans with a story that was ultimately about hope.

Time and again, the stories that struck me most were those about the experiences young vets go through when they come home.

After the parades and the hero's welcome, what comes next? How do you go about picking your life back up again, especially for those who came home with life-changing injuries? What about the unseen scars, like PTSD? These are the questions I wanted to explore with *A Marine's Guide to Fishing*.

The film became a combination of these stories I had learned from veterans as well as a bit of my own experience spent growing up along the coast of Maine.

To cast the lead role, the film's producer John Logan Pierson and I set out to find the right person ("Casting a young male, amputee, ideally from New England, ideally a veteran, who can also act..."). After three months of searching, we found the perfect fit: Matthew Pennington. It has been a tremendous honor to work with Matt on this project and he has been truly courageous to share a part of himself on screen.

Now that the film is complete, my hope is that it will serve as a bridge between the military and non-military world — helping to spark a conversation around how to support our country's young veterans as they transition back home and offering hope and healing to the hundreds of thousands of veterans like Matthew suffering from PTSD.

A Marine's Guide to Fishing was director Nicholas Brennan's senior thesis at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. To contact Nicholas, please call (207) 939-9767.

5) Operation: A Marine's Guide

Our mission is to use *A Marine's Guide to Fishing* to spread awareness for veterans suffering from invisible illnesses like PTSD and TBI and to show them and their families that there is hope and a way out. In order to spread our message, we have organized **Operation: A Marine's Guide**, a cross-country speaking tour by the film's lead actor Matthew Pennington.

Each **Operation: A Marine's Guide** event features a screening of the short 15-minute film followed by an inspirational keynote speech from Matthew, who leads a discussion about his own struggles with PTSD and how he has ultimately been able to find peace after coming home.

The first leg of the tour begins in Maine in May 2011 with a 10-day road trip to Washington DC, where the film will be screening at the GI Film Festival as well as at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and for several veterans groups. We will be traveling in an RV donated by Destination RV Rentals and stopping along the route for additional screenings hosted by local community groups.

Previous screenings of *A Marine's Guide to Fishing* have been used to support veterans groups like the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, a national organization aimed at helping disabled veterans and their families adjust to civilian life.

We are currently fundraising and booking screening dates for the Washington DC trip as well as for a second leg of **Operation: A Marine's Guide** starting in June 2011. To support our cause, please visit www.amarinesguide.com or contact director Nicholas Brennan at (207) 939-9767 to learn how you can join our team.



6) Production Stills:



Connor (**Matthew Pennington**) watches the sunset over the coast of Maine in a scene from the short film "A Marine's Guide to Fishing." (Courtesy Mad World Media)



Connor (**Matthew Pennington**) during a reflective moment on the water in this still from the short film "A Marine's Guide to Fishing." (Courtesy Mad World Media)

6) Production Stills (cont.):



Lead actor **Matthew Pennington** and director **Nicholas Brennan** discuss a scene during production on the short film “A Marine’s Guide to Fishing” in Falmouth, Maine while crew members (L-R **Brendan Barry**, **Jesse Magur** and **Jeffrey Ryan Kelsey**) get ready for the shot. (Courtesy Mad World Media)



Lead actor **Matthew Pennington** and director **Nicholas Brennan** discuss a scene during production on the short film “A Marine’s Guide to Fishing.” (Courtesy Mad World Media)



Cast and crew prepare for a scene during production of “A Marine’s Guide to Fishing”. The film was shot along the coast of southern Maine. (Courtesy Mad World Media)

7) Full Credits:

Connor Matthew Pennington
Fuddy Thomas Olson
Jimmy Roy Horne
Shane Thomas Campbell
Staff Sergeant Brett Cox
Ben Henry Haynes

Producer John Logan Pierson
Unit Production Manager Lynn Kippax
Executive Producer Sebastian Engstroem
1st Assistant Director Andrew Geller
2nd Assistant Director Jesse Magur
Director of Photography Matthew Troy
Assistant Camera Antonio Stanley
2nd Assistant Camera Julia Miller
Key Grip Jim Collins
Grips Shawna Paul
Joe Atherton
Neill Gemmel

Best Boy Electric Paul Morin
Production Designer Charlotte Royer
Art Director Sam Bush
Prop Master Eric Matheson
Lead Man Fredrick Jordan
Set Dresser Paul Royer
Art Assistants Kathy Eliscu
Calvin Pépe

Sound Recordist Brendan Berry
Boom Operator Jeffrey Ryan Kelsey
Special Effects Makeup Conrad Maurais
Stunt Coordinator Michael Waye
Water Vessel Coordinator Michael Brennan
Assistant Editor Adam Saiewitz
Colorist Brandon Roots
Editorial Advisor Emmett Brennan
Sound Design Arjun Sheth
Foley Artist Natasha Hendrix
Original Score Dan Capaldi
Music Production Zach Jones
String Player Stacey Benben
Casting Assistant Julian Brand
Craft Services Sarah Speare
Katie Willmann
Set Photographer Drew Doyle

7) Full Credits (cont.):

Special Thanks to the Young Veterans Involved in this Film

Anton Satler
Bryan Iglesias
Drew Doyle
Jamil Brown
Jason Everman

John McClelland
Jesse Magur
Mariel Sosa
Matthew Pennington
Michael Hallinan

Peter Meijer
Mike Scotti
Peter Kim
Roman Baca

Friends and Supporters

Adam Playford
Alexi van Heerden
Ana Adlerstein
Anastasia Heuer
Andrew Calkins
Anne Hyland
Ben Millard
Beppie Cerf
Brad Powell
Brett, Marti & Jacee Cox
Chris Lutyens
Clare Montgomery-Butler
Clinton Britt
Cpt & Mrs. Bill Brennan
David & Kerry Wall
David Devlin
Dawn Ahearn
Eliot Caroom
Emilie Coolidge
Emma Willmann
Emmett Brennan

Ethan Nelson
Eva Goetz
Frances Nolde
Helga & Steven Ryder
Hugh Fortmiller
Janeen McCrae
Jed Rathband
Jeff Willmann
Jeongki Lim
Jesse Aicher
John Bordeaux
John McClelland
Karson Yiu
Kat Ching
Kate Arnold
Kathleen Alfiero
Katie Willmann
Katy Hoffmann
Kevin Brennan
Larry Butler
Lu Caldara

Lynn Kippax
Lynsey Wood
Margo Kellar
Maryann Russell
Mitzi Cheever
Nancy & Tom Crowe
Nick Clark
Norm Fast
Oscar Bergkamp
Patricia Nitzburg
Paul & Isabella Bergkamp
Paul Bedard
Peter Meijer
Rachel Nichols
Robin Keyser
Rosamond Warren
Sarah Longley
Sarah Speare
Simone Crowe
Simone Wren
Susan Cheever
Tom Speare

Special Thanks

Bob Haskell
Jay Hallett
Handy Boat Services
Randy Visser
SMCC Media Center
John Seymore
The Maine Studios
Lea Girardin
Maine Film Office
Town of Kennebunkport
Don McMaster
Mussel Cove Association
Aspacia Marina
Jeff's Marine Services
Kickstarter

Laszlo Santha
Mark Arywitz
Gary Shimokawa
Mom, Dad, Emmett, Katie
Stephen Springer
Walter Reed Army Medical Center
John Bielenberg
Project M
Bernie's Place
Anania's Variety
Steve Kaye at Kaye Lites
Marc Perez at Sirk Productions
Moving Picture Institute
Marine Executive Association
Veterans Across America

Eric Paternot
Laura MacDonald
Lynn Kippax
Peter Kim
Brett Cox
Eva Goetz
Damien Royer
Mandy Menaker
Frank Antonio Lopez
Ben Steinfeld
James Doyle
Andrew Carey
Graham Haynes
Elizabeth O'Neil
Chris Lutyens

7) Full Credits (cont.):

Shot on Location in Falmouth, South Portland and Kennebunkport, Maine

"CATCH AND RELEASE"

Performed by Jason Everman
Written by Jason Everman
Recorded by Tom Carlisle
Published by Mentally Guitared Music
© 2010 (ASCAP)

"FRESH AIR"

Written and Performed by Billy Libby
Recorded by Billy Libby
Published by You Spelled Out
© 2011 (ASCAP)

For more information about how to support young veterans, please visit:
saluteheroes.org or IAVA.org

Contact the Filmmaker:
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nicholasbrennan.com

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Produced at New York University Tisch School of the Arts,
Maurice Kanbar Institute of Film and Television
Undergraduate Film & TV

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8) Technical Specifications

Total Runtime: 0:14:55

Format: High Definition Video

Country of Origin: USA

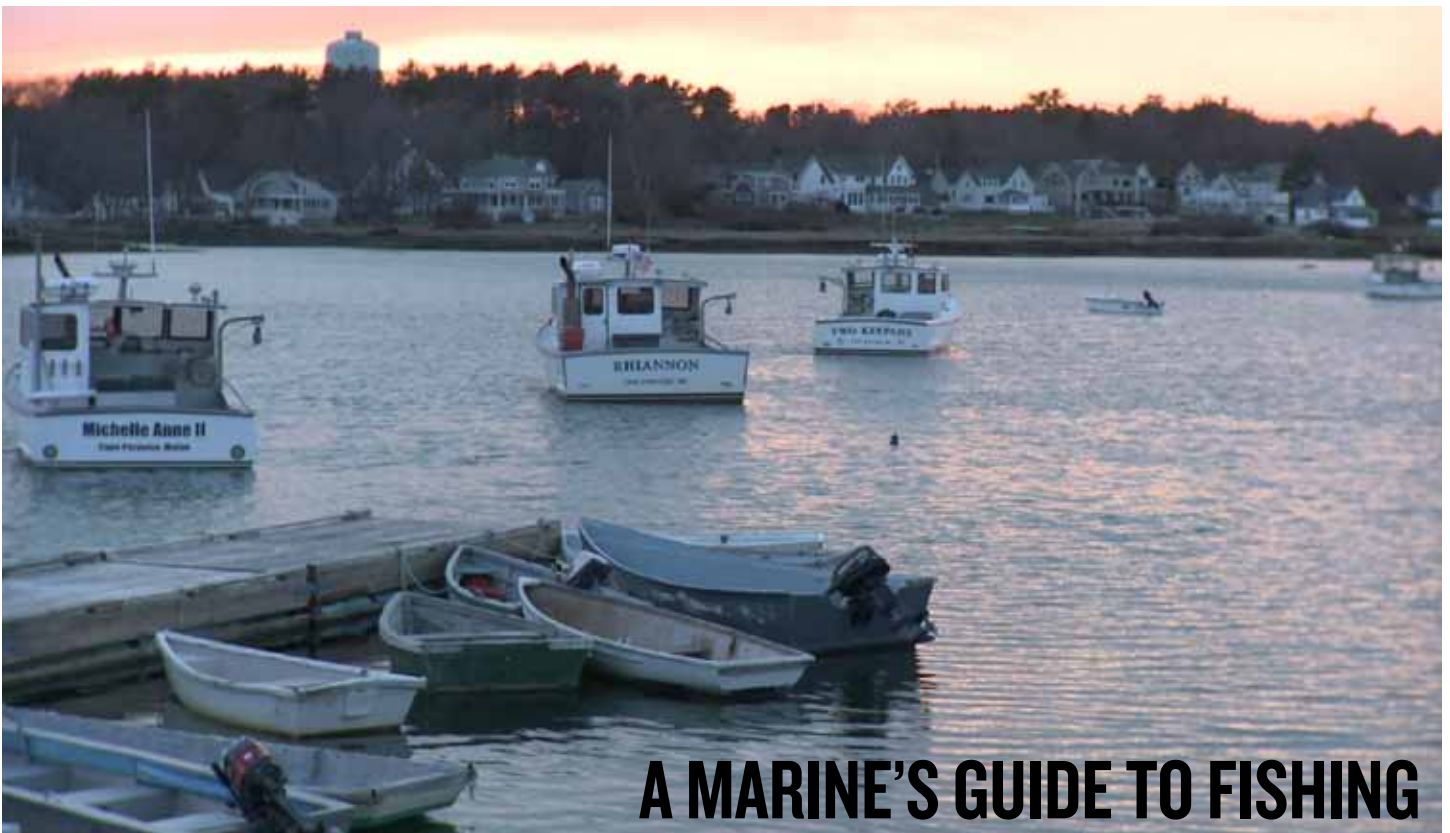
Language: English

Completion Date: March 2011

Web site: <http://www.amarinesguide.com/>

Trailer: <http://www.vimeo.com/20591630>

DVD preview screeners are available upon request



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