



## COOPER and HEMINGWAY: THE TRUE GEN

### PRESS KIT



### COOPER & HEMINGWAY: THE TRUE GEN

Documentary Feature | 150 min | 16:9

Written & Directed by John Mulholland

Produced by MODA Entertainment, Inc.

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Writer/director John Mulholland is available for interviews and/or appearances.

## SYNOPSIS

*“Coop is a fine man; as honest and straight and friendly and unspoiled as he looks. If you made up a character like Coop, nobody would believe it. He’s just too good to be true.”* Ernest Hemingway on Gary Cooper.

And if you made up a character like Ernest Hemingway, how many would believe it? The mercurial Hemingway left people enchanted, hostile, endeared, confused, charmed, bruised, bitter. To everyone, he was an extraordinary, unforgettable presence.

Hollywood’s tight-lipped Common Man and the most famous American writer of the 20th Century ...utter opposites ... nothing in common ... impossible as friends ...and yet these two celebrated Americans -- Gary Cooper and Ernest Hemingway -- were the best of friends, from 1940 right up to their deaths a mere seven weeks apart in 1961.

Today, 47 years after their deaths, their intriguing and at times contentious friendship -- which roamed from Idaho and New York and California to Cuba and France -- resonates on fascinating and diverse levels.

To examine the lives of these two American icons is to examine masculinity in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century -- where it came from, how it developed, and what it means to men and women in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We live in an age when a man who doesn’t “express” his feelings, who doesn’t “open up” to others, is looked upon with disfavor, if not outright contempt. Given this mood, the Hemingway/Cooper friendship is even more intriguing; because their friendship serves as a perfect -- a supreme -- example of something which is far, far too glibly disparaged in today’s climate; i.e., a deep, unapologetically masculine friendship.

Not cold. Not distant. Not emotionally stunted. Rather, a friendship in which needs and admiration are circuitously expressed; through gestures small, muted; and when language is used at all, it is kept to an indirect minimum. Silence is not a state which need be filled with talk. Silence is not unnerving ... threatening.

As artists (A word both men scoffed at), the writer and the actor were masters of minimalism. Indeed, both men pretty much own this century’s patent on *“less is more.”*

Before Raymond Carver, Eudora Welty, Ha Jin, so many others, there was Hemingway. As Elmore Leonard has said: *“Ernest Hemingway influenced more writers than any other author. Period.”*

Check out Liam Neeson, Viggo Mortensen, Josh Hartnett, etc. Cooper was there first. As Tom Hanks says: *“Watching Gary Cooper in his first film, WINGS from 1927, we’re seeing the future of screen acting. He does something which is far closer to ‘being’ than acting.”*

Long before today’s paparazzi, there were the 1920s, the dawn of celebrity as we know it. Cooper and Hemingway both came to public consciousness at this time. Just as today is a mine field for the famous, so too back then. How Cooper and Hemingway handled their fame defined both men over their entire careers.

Fashion is a dominant force in today's culture. But as Bill Blass pointed out, it was Gary Cooper who led the way. Cooper, Blass said, was one of only two men to have had a lasting impact on masculine fashion in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Indeed, it was Gary Cooper who invented the stone-washed jeans! Givenchi hailed Cooper as a man of utter fashion perfection.

In this day, when many movie stars are heavily involved in politics, Cooper was there ahead of them. Cooper, the so-called conservative, stood up in 1951 and put his career on the line for an ex-Communist, screenwriter Carl Foreman. He risked blacklisting himself when he threatened to walk off HIGH NOON if Foreman's name were removed. Nor was Hemingway silent during those brutal HUAC days. His comment that the HUAC Congressmen "*were lower than snakeshit*" would sound right at home on any of today's free-wheeling political blogs.

Today's medical news is often dominated by new drug treatment for bi-polar behavior, new ways to treat manic-depression. So, too, in the 1950s. Hemingway had suffered severe head trauma after a plane crash in Africa in 1954. It took a toll on him, emotionally and physically. On top of which, his inherited mood disorder had grown increasingly severe. The drugs for his hypertension were causing deep depression, which was being treated by electro shock therapy. Which caused Hemingway to lose his memory, which is fatal to a writer. Thus creating even greater depression. The more things change ...

But THE TRUE GEN is far more than just a study of these two extraordinary men. It is also a study of America in this century. For their internationally renowned careers were played out over the same five turbulent decades: the hedonistic 20s ... the grim Depression 30s ... the war-ravaged 40s ... and the deceptively slumbering 50s. Smack into the erupting sixties. Their final, poignant chapter closed at the beginning of a decade which would challenge many of the very ideals and precepts which both men so prominently represented.

Their torch was passed to a generation with new ideas about masculinity and heroism.

However, September 11, 2001, changed everything. Since 9/11, Americans have begun taking a new look at courage, at masculinity. And they're looking, not to our own times, but back to another time to understand what real masculinity is, to come to grips with what manhood means in the face of impossible odds.

Not the courage of a so-called super-hero. But the courage of an ordinary man facing extraordinary circumstances. Not muscle-bound, ultra-professional warriors, not bullets-don't-kill, super-masculine, super-heroes. Ordinary people ...

A long time ago, Ernest Hemingway and Gary Cooper dealt with this very subject, as no one had before, as no one has since. Hemingway's fiction and Cooper's persona -- which served as Hemingway's alter ego on screen -- was never about brute winning, smash-mouth masculinity. What made/makes it so special, so moving, so *timely*, is that it was not about masculinity as a one-note, implacable force of nature, rather, it was about the self-respect that comes from comporting oneself with courage in the face of impossible circumstances.



Hemingway's fiction has suddenly become timely indeed. Hemingway hated war and his fiction is ferociously anti-war. His novels and stories examine the complexity of war, of men's fears in the face of battle. In fact, Leonardo DiCaprio has purchased the rights to *BELL TOLLS*, with the intention of playing the Cooper role, Robert Jordan. A character whom both Sen. Barack Obama and Sen. John McCain have called their favorite fictional character.

Today, politicians around the globe, from American Presidents to leaders in Germany and Japan, champion themselves as latter-day Gary Coopers. However, perhaps nothing speaks to Cooper's timeless international legacy more than his presence in bars and cafes throughout Poland, in cities and hamlets. Huge colorful posters showcase Gary Cooper in his iconic role in *High Noon*. Under the headline 'At High Noon', there is the red solidarity banner of the Polish Solidarity movement. The date, June 4, 1989, was the date of the first truly democratic Polish elections. Cooper is carrying, not a gun, but a ballot.

And so, perhaps Gary Cooper and Ernest Hemingway didn't really pass the torch, perhaps they merely lent it.



## VIEWER QUOTES

"One of the few--, make that very, very few documentaries which captures the complex man who was my father. Mulholland has given us an Ernest Hemingway whom I recognize. Trust me, this is rarely the case."

**Patrick Hemingway, son of Ernest Hemingway**

"True Gen shows my father as he really was. People have often asked how Ernest Hemingway could have been friends with Gary Cooper. These people are talking about the shallow public images of both men. True Gen is about the men behind those shallow images. How wonderful to see something which shows who my father really was."

**Maria Cooper, daughter of Gary Cooper**

"I must tell you, it left me speechless ... probably the best documentary I have ever seen."

**Frank Military, Senior Vice President of Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.**

"True Gen is s genuine piece of work. So moving and so deeply felt. These two iconic Americans have been dead almost half-a-century and I had tears in my eyes by the end, as if they'd just died. True Gen is a remarkable piece of documentary filmmaking."

**Craig Gilbert, documentary filmmaker**

"True Gen is a fine, fine documentary. At once both informative and entertaining. Two-and-a-half hours went by so fast, couldn't believe it was over. Excellent!"

**Glen Charles, creator/writer "Cheers"**

"True Gen is a genuinely great documentary. And in exploring the lives of two legendary Americans, the documentary also explores the history of America in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. I was enthralled from beginning to end."

**Alphie McCourt, author of "A Long Stone's Throw"**

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

### Why Gary Cooper and Ernest Hemingway?

Tony Soprano on Gary Cooper: *"What ever happened to Gary Cooper? The strong, silent type. That was an American."*

Who is this man, this Gary Cooper, so admired by Tony Soprano, of all people?

Or consider:

*"High Noon is my favorite picture. And Gary Cooper is my favorite actor."*  
President Dwight Eisenhower.

*"I've always been most proud of Gary Cooper for how he handled himself. He is still my favorite."*  
President William Clinton.

President Bush on ex-Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi telling him: *"You're like Cooper." I said, 'I'm like Cooper?' He said, 'Yes.' I finally figured out what he meant."*

Three U.S. Presidents, decades apart, *hardly* politically in synch, and yet, on one issue they are: Gary Cooper.

And consider this, three admiring actors:

*"In only one scene in the first film to win the Academy Award for Best Picture, WINGS, we see the future of screen acting in the form of Gary Cooper. He is quiet and natural, somehow different from the other cast members. He does something mysterious with his eyes and shoulders that is much more like 'being' than 'acting'."* Tom Hanks

*"Gary Cooper was our favorite, growing up. Sergeant York, that's what we wanted to be. Coop still is my favorite."* Clint Eastwood

*"I had dreams - fantasies really - about acting. I watched Gary Cooper as a boy. That's who I wanted to be."* Djimon Hounsou ('Blood Diamond'), from Benin, West Africa.  
Hounsou first glimpsed his destiny in the Gary Cooper films that filled the small rural theater in his childhood in the 1970s.

Who is this actor, this Gary Cooper?

How about this: Donna Karan, Ralph Lauren, Bill Blass, and Givenchi are hardly alike in their fashion statements. Yet, all four are in agreement in the most influential male fashion influence in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Yup, Gary Cooper.

And when Peter Wood needed an American ideal to represent dignity, manliness and wisdom in contrast with today's bitter, angry social and political landscape in his book, 'A Bee in the Mouth: Anger in America Today' (pub. Jan. 4, 2007), he chose none other than Gary Cooper.

Just who is this Gary Cooper, anyway!

Which is exactly what Ernest Hemingway asked himself when he met Cooper in 1940 in Sun Valley, Idaho: "Can Cooper be this real? Nobody can be this real. Nobody can be this natural."

And while we're on Hemingway, what about him, today, from our perspective?

"Robert Jordan is one of my literary heroes. I go back to *For Whom The Bell Tolls* a lot. Along with Shakespeare, it is one of my favorites."

*President-Elect Barack Obama*

"My favorite character, my ideal, really, is Robert Jordan in '*For Whom The Bell Tolls*'. Hemingway really understood what it is to be a man, in every sense of the word."

Senator John McCain

And speaking about today's POV, Leonardo DiCaprio is in full agreement. He's optioned '*For Whom The Bell Tolls*'.

"Hemingway was my ideal. As a writer and as a man who lived life to the fullest."

Gene Hackman

Gary Cooper, of course, played Jordan in the 1943 film. Interestingly, as Hemingway's son Patrick, says: "*My father had Cooper in mind when he was fashioning that character.*"

*"Ernest Hemingway influenced more contemporary authors than any other writer. By far. Including me."* Elmore Leonard

*"We didn't just want to write like Hemingway. We wanted to live like Hemingway!"*

Robert Stone

Nor is Hemingway's appeal limited to actors and writers.

Consider this:

Decades after his death, he is still the most popular tourist attraction in Cuba.

And in Key West, too.

A mere *writer*!

Or this: The Ernest Hemingway Furniture Line has grossed more than one hundred million dollars. A furniture line. Named after a writer. How can this be? Who *is* Ernest Hemingway?

That's exactly what Gary Cooper asked himself when they met in 1940. How could the man who wrote the achingly sensitive and fiercely anti-war novel, '*A Farewell To Arms*' (the film version of which starred Cooper in), be this monstrous tabloid cartoon?

And therein lies a tale ...

**John Mulholland, Writer/Director  
Cooper & Hemingway: The True Gen**



## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

### John Mulholland, Writer/Director

John Mulholland wrote and directed *Cooper & Hemingway: The True Gen*, a documentary exploring the friendship of two-time Academy Award-winning actor Gary Cooper and Nobel Prize-winning author Ernest Hemmingway, narrated by Sam Waterston.

Mulholland also wrote and directed both: *Inside High Noon* (narrated by Frank Langella), on the behind-the-scenes controversy during the filming of *High Noon*; and *Of God & Country: Sergeant York* (narrated by Liam Neeson).

He is currently in pre-production on *Bogart & Huston: Quite Irreplaceable*, a documentary on the professional and personal relationship between Humphrey Bogart and John Huston.

Among his other documentaries: *On MacBeth*, *Eastern European Composers*, *Charles Dickens and 'A Christmas Carol'*, *Liza Minnelli on Meet Me in St. Louis*, *Reflections on Gaslight*, and *As Time Goes By: The Children Remember on Casablanca*.

John Mulholland is also a popular speaker on a wide variety of subjects and has given lectures and talks on Classic Hollywood, Gary Cooper and Ernest Hemingway, across the United States. He is also currently the host of the online program ICONS RADIO HOUR. Added to his portfolio are several articles, chronicles, and bios for major newspapers and magazines throughout North America.

## PRODUCTION CREDITS

Writer/Director/Producer  
Director of Photography  
Editor  
Animation Graphics  
Asst. Editor  
Sound

Producer

Associate Producer

Production Company

Executive Producer  
Consultant  
Consultant  
Research  
Original Music  
Arranger  
Spanish Translations  
Photographs Courtesy of

Footage Courtesy of

John Mulholland  
Alex Eaton  
William Welles  
Richard Zampella  
Brian McNulty  
Charles DeBold  
Brian Miklas  
Shannon Mulholland  
Richard Zampella  
Karen O'Hara  
Patricia Weichert  
MODA Productions  
  
MODA Entertainment  
Maria Cooper  
Patrick Hemingway  
Jack Green  
Byron Janis  
Peter Calandra  
Gloria Garcia  
The Gary Cooper Estate  
JFK Library, Hemingway  
Rene Villareal  
Time/Life Pictures  
Corbis  
The Gary Cooper Estate  
JFK Library, Hemingway  
Streamline Video

## CAST

*(In alphabetical order)*

|                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Narrator                  | Sam Waterston           |
| Voice of Ernest Hemingway | Len Cariou              |
| Additional Voices         | Norma Crawford          |
| On Camera Participant     | Susan Beegel            |
| On Camera Participant     | Bill Blass              |
| On Camera Participant     | Rosemarie Burdwell      |
| On Camera Participant     | Nancy Comely            |
| On Camera Participant     | Warren Cowan            |
| On Camera Participant     | David Duncan Douglas    |
| On Camera Participant     | Kirk Douglas            |
| On Camera Participant     | Nancy Dryer             |
| On Camera Participant     | Peter Duchin            |
| On Camera Participant     | Anthony Duke            |
| On Camera Participant     | Jonathan Foreman        |
| On Camera Participant     | Brian Garfield          |
| On Camera Participant     | C.Z. Guest              |
| On Camera Participant     | Jim Harrison            |
| On Camera Participant     | Jack Hathaway           |
| On Camera Participant     | Mother Dolores Hart     |
| On Camera Participant     | Charlton Heston         |
| On Camera Participant     | Mrs. Jack Hemingway     |
| On Camera Participant     | Patrick Hemingway       |
| On Camera Participant     | Sean Hemmingway         |
| On Camera Participant     | A.E. Hotchner           |
| On Camera Participant     | Donald Hyatt            |
| On Camera Participant     | Maria Cooper Janis      |
| On Camera Participant     | Stuart Kaminsky         |
| On Camera Participant     | Elmore Leonard          |
| On Camera Participant     | Pia Lindstrom           |
| On Camera Participant     | A.C. Lyles              |
| On Camera Participant     | Forest "Duke" MacMullen |
| On Camera Participant     | Peter McCrea            |
| On Camera Participant     | Lee Clark Mitchell      |
| On Camera Participant     | Peter Munson            |
| On Camera Participant     | Patricia Neal           |
| On Camera Participant     | Robert Osborne          |
| On Camera Participant     | Father Gene Phillips    |
| On Camera Participant     | George Plimpton         |
| On Camera Participant     | Steven Prince           |
| On Camera Participant     | Dean Rehberger          |
| On Camera Participant     | Richard Schickel        |
| On Camera Participant     | Richard Shepherd        |
| On Camera Participant     | Bud Schulberg           |
| On Camera Participant     | Richard Smitten         |
| On Camera Participant     | Larry Swindell          |
| On Camera Participant     | Robert Stack            |
| On Camera Participant     | Rene Villarreal         |
| On Camera Participant     | Tim Zinnemann           |