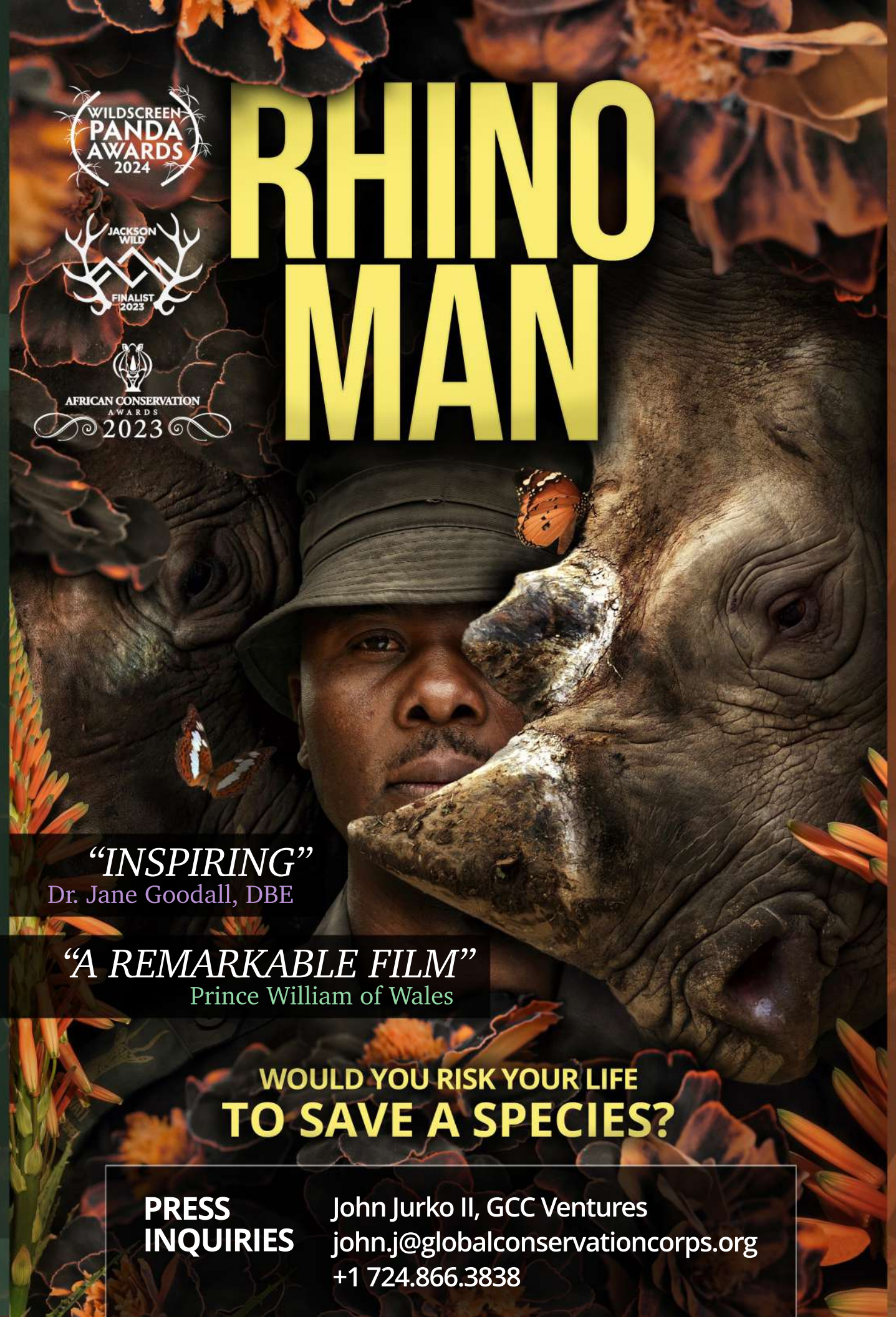




# RHINO MAN



*“INSPIRING”*

Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE

*“A REMARKABLE FILM”*

Prince William of Wales

WOULD YOU RISK YOUR LIFE  
TO SAVE A SPECIES?

**PRESS  
INQUIRIES**

John Jurko II, GCC Ventures  
john.j@globalconservationcorps.org  
+1 724.866.3838

RHINOMAN.THEMOVIE.ORG

DIRECTED BY JOHN JURKO II

PRODUCED BY FRIENDLY HUMAN

A FILM BY GLOBAL CONSERVATION CORPS



# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## THE INSPIRATION **MARTIN MTHEMBU**

Born in the highlands of the KwaZulu-Natal province, Martin came of age fighting as a soldier in the South African military. He then used his knowledge to train over 15,000 rangers around the world.

Martin was a mentor to director/producer Matt Lindenberg during their time at the Southern African Wildlife College near Kruger National Park. After Martin's untimely death, Matt was inspired to carry his torch. These were the beginnings of *RHINO MAN* and Matt's nonprofit the Global Conservation Corps.

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# RHINO MAN

▶ WATCH TRAILER

A POWERFUL EXPOSÉ OF RHINO POACHING AND A WINDOW INTO THE LIVES OF THE HUMANS ON THE FRONT LINES OF CONSERVATION.

## Logline:

An insatiable demand for rhino horn, and a population terrorized by organized crime syndicates, fuel a violent rhino poaching war in South Africa. *RHINO MAN* is the inspirational story of the field rangers who step up to protect our wildlife.

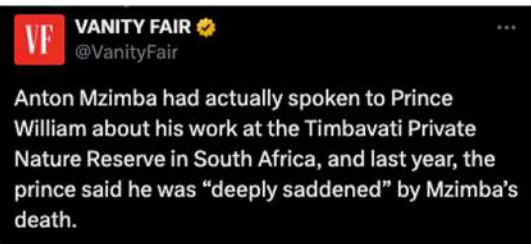
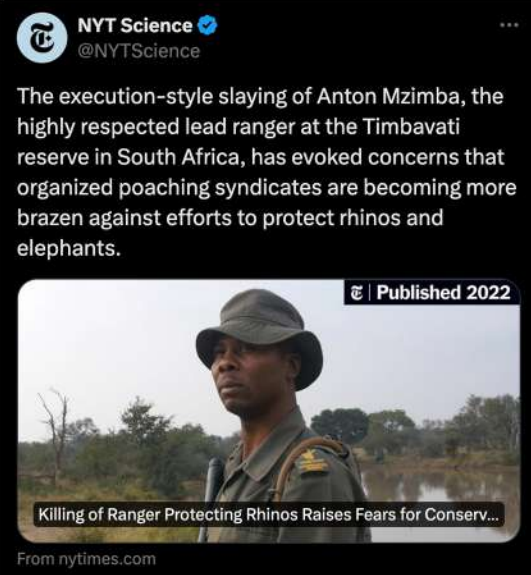
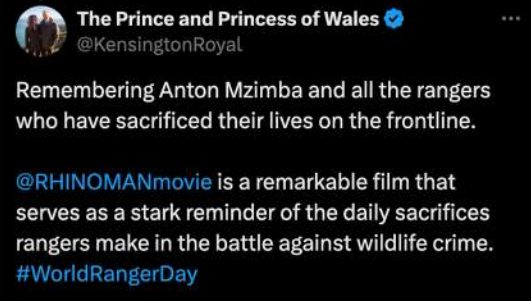
## Synopsis:

*RHINO MAN* follows Anton Mzimba, the head ranger of the Timbavati, as he protects their rhinos. He faces long deployments, dangerous working conditions, and constant threats to his life. Nearby, a legendary trainer, Ruben de Kock, struggles to inspire a group of 41 candidates, as he and his wife take them through a rigorous ranger selection.

Tragedy strikes when Anton is assassinated at home by a poaching syndicate. Ruben laments the loss of his friend. Prince William and the international community cry out for justice. We're left with Anton's hopeful message, and the determination of the rangers who vow to carry his torch.

*"RHINO MAN highlights the immense debt we owe to rangers, the true heroes in our efforts to protect the world's wildlife." ~ Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE*

7 Awards, 3 Nominations, 20+ Festivals





# SUPPORT FROM PRINCE WILLIAM

After the murder of Anton Mzimba, the *RHINO MAN* team connected with **United for Wildlife**, the conservation arm of The **Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales**. This led to directors John Jurko II and Matt Lindenberg speaking at the 2022 United for Wildlife Global Summit. There they met **Prince William**, starting a relationship that has continued to develop.

united  
for  
wildlife

VANTY FAIR

## Prince William Honors a Slain Wildlife Ranger During a Rare Engagement

The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Edinburgh attended a Tuesday screening of the documentary *Rhino Man*, which honors the legacy of Anton Mzimba.



After the screening Prince William recorded a video introduction, which has been used at all festival and impact screenings.



 **The Prince and Princess of Wales** @KensingtonRoyal

Congratulations to the RHINO MAN team! Such an important story being told, great to see it being recognised. 🌟  
[@united4wildlife](#) [#endwildlifecrime](#)

 **United for Wildlife** @united4wildlife

What a week! On Tuesday, Prince William and The Duchess of Edinburgh joined leaders in global conservation at a private screening of *RHINO MAN*, a documentary about courageous field rangers who risk their lives to protect South Africa's rhinos from being poached to extinction 🦏

### PHOTO:

Director John Jurko II, ranger Leitah Mkhabela, and ranger Orlat Ndlovu meeting with Prince William and Duchess Sophie before the London screening of *RHINO MAN*.



# FEATURING ORIGINAL SONG - "WHO WILL STEP UP?"

Famous South African songwriters Sipho Mchunu and Mandisa Dlanga, along with composer Simón Wilson, wrote a Zulu anthem about the loss of a brother fighting to protect wildlife. The implied question is: Who will step up to fill the void he left?



\*Artist biographies available upon request.

FIND THE SONG AND THE ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK ON SPOTIFY, APPLE MUSIC, AMAZON AND MORE.



## POSTER ARTWORK

BY MARCEL VAN LUIT

Marcel is a multidisciplinary artist known worldwide for his modern surrealistic works. He is a digital artist, painter, sculptor, and animator. His clientele includes celebrities such as Drake, Lionel Richie, Paris Hilton, Post Malone, and Naomi Campbell.

He was attracted to the heartfelt story of *RHINO MAN* donating his talents to the movie and the cause.

# JOHN JURKO II

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



*RHINO MAN* is not just a conservation film. It's a universal story of the human condition, a heroic tale of struggle against all odds. It's a story of friendship, of love, and of loss, filled with real humans who are determined to leave the world a better place.

I was first connected to *RHINO MAN* in 2017. I was attracted to the original trailer, which was full of heart and of people fighting to save a species that was on the brink of extinction. At the time, I knew very little about South Africa, rangers, or the rhino poaching crisis. All I knew was that I wanted to work with people creating projects like *RHINO MAN*.

Little did I know, a year later I would be leading the completion of the film. My first impressions when I watched the original cut were that it was missing a central story arc, and for me that arc needed to focus on the human side of the story. We chose our main characters from the mix — Anton Mzimba, Ruben De Kock, and Martin Mthembu — and we planned a two-week shoot in South Africa to fill in the story gaps. That trip changed my life forever.

The poaching crisis is something far more complex than anyone can imagine from the outside. It's a mixture of forces, from the economic disparities left by the aftermath of apartheid, to the demand for rhino horn as traditional medicine and status symbols in China and Vietnam, to corruption at every level of leadership. When the average annual salary in South Africa is less than \$23,000 USD, and as low as \$2,500 in the rural areas surrounding Kruger National Park, it's no wonder people are easily tempted into taking a rhino horn worth upwards of \$80,000 on the black market.

There are wonderful documentaries which dive into every aspect of the rhino poaching crisis. This is not the approach I wanted to take. We developed a few scenes highlighting the dynamics and aftermath of poaching, however their main purpose was to give context to the story, to set the stakes. The real heart of the film would be the the unsung heroes on the front lines. To see not only the work they do, but their passion for the job, their deep bonds with each other, the challenges and dangers they face, and their struggles to provide for their families.

We accomplished this by building trust and deep relationships with our main characters and their families over the course of years. My co-director Matt Lindenberg is South African and spent over 12 years in the Kruger Area training and teaching at the Southern African Wildlife College. He also spent many years working with rangers, NGOs, and people in the communities. I spent over 5 years working and filming with rangers, spending nights at their homes in the communities, and staying in constant communication with them while we developed the film.



We always took the approach that we wanted to be an instrument for the rangers' voices. We listened to their stories and opinions. We shared the filmmaking process every step of the way, and we allowed them and their families to see the film and give it their blessings with each new version. Not only has everyone in *RHINO MAN* told us they are proud of the film and that it does their lives and work justice, but we've also been endorsed by the leading ranger associations including the Game Rangers Association of Africa and the International Ranger Federation.

Throughout production, we captured passionate interviews and intimate real-life moments, supplementing those with cinematic footage to heighten the emotion of both. Our original score by Simón Wilson with featured South African artists, Siphos Mchunu and Mandisa Dlanga, was an effort to pull elements of African rhythms, instruments, and verse together with classical orchestral compositions to elevate the beauty and heart wrenching moments of the film.

We made a strong creative decision to keep all voice overs in the mouths of our main characters, working with them to develop scripts to stay true to their own words. We did not want an outsider's voice guiding this story. We felt the narration should come from within, as the genesis of this project was a promise to give the rangers a platform to share their experiences with the world.

Something else I never expected to happen through the creation of this film was to become close friends with everyone involved, especially our lead, Anton Mzimba. I spent close to a year in South Africa between 2018 and 2021, and much of that time was working with Anton and his rangers. When I left, we kept in constant touch. He would encourage me to keep pushing forward, knowing the impact that the film could have. I would ask him about his family, the reserve, and how we could continue to support his team.

Tragically, Anton was murdered at his home in front of his family by a rhino poaching syndicate on July 26th, 2022. It was a devastating moment for everyone close to him. We all rushed to support his family and his team. The international community cried out, including Prince William, who called for justice. After much deliberation, we decided it was important to include his death and memorial in the film with his family's blessing. Anton worked with us for 7 years to get this story out to the world, and I felt it was our duty to tell it as it is, with all of its ups and downs. Its loves and its losses. We decided to end the film with Anton's hopeful dream for the future, knowing that his legacy has the power to inspire true change for our rangers and our planet.

I hope viewers of *RHINO MAN* come away with a sense of the beauty of South Africa. I hope they connect to the immediacy of the dangers and devastation of the poaching crisis. Most importantly, I hope they are inspired by the stories of the rangers, become advocates of their work, and support them through our Social Impact Campaign. At minimum, I hope they are inspired to take action toward a higher calling of their own, whether that's in conservation or some other passion deep within their hearts.

## BIO

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John Jurko II is the lead director and producer who has overseen the completion of *RHINO MAN* since 2018. After receiving a BA in Film Production and Philosophy, he lived in LA, where he worked in the camera department of many indie films. He then moved to Atlanta, where he was drawn to *RHINO MAN* for its story and potential as a social impact project. He created and hosts The Rhino Man Podcast to further build awareness of the importance of rangers, the rhino poaching crisis, and our need to connect local communities to protected areas. John has presented to audiences such as His Royal Highness Prince William, government, international financial crime delegates, law enforcement, and conservation NGOs.

# MATT LINDENBERG

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER



## PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

*RHINO MAN* was the first project I started at my non-profit Global Conservation Corps (GCC). The idea was to create a short video to tell the world about the rangers. When we started, very few people were talking about the rangers and their sacrifices to protect the rhinos. It was an important story to tell. The making of this film was an extremely difficult but rewarding challenge. At the end of the day, the mission was to honor my mentor Martin Mthembu and tell the ranger's story.

During filming, we were always supporting the rangers with backpacks, watches, boots, all kinds of tactical equipment, which enabled us to build an amazing relationship with the team at the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve. One day when we were filming, I noticed that one of the most senior rangers, Anton Mzimba, was looking really down. I asked him what was wrong? He shared his concerns saying "How long can we hold the line, buying time? What is the world doing?" He shared that local children were becoming further disconnected from nature and wildlife. Even his own kids were not exposed. For him, this concern was far greater than rhino poaching. If the next generation did not love wildlife who would replace him and his rangers?

Anton's question not only changed the course of GCC to focus more on the youth, but it shaped our mission with the film. To not only reveal the story of these heroes, but to do it in a way that would inspire that next generation. Now with Anton gone, it is more vital than ever that his legacy of love for wildlife and the development of children carry on. So many amazing people came together to support this film since its inception, and I'm grateful that after 9 years we were able to bring *RHINO MAN* to the world!

## BIO

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Matt Lindenberg is the Founder and Executive Director of the Global Conservation Corps (GCC). He is South African born and has spent six years working with and training rangers at the Southern African Wildlife College. Matt has his Masters in Conservation Biology from Grand Valley State University. He started *RHINO MAN* as a way to honor his late mentor Martin Mthembu, and to bring awareness and support to the rangers. Over time, this has led to the development of GCC and their Future Rangers Program, which today reaches over 40,000 students and aims to bridge the gap between communities and wildlife. Matt is a spectacular and sought-after public speaker, who has spoken to audiences such as His Royal Highness Prince William, government, banking executives, law enforcement, NGOs, and universities around the world.





# ANTON MZIMBA

FILM PARTICIPANT, FORMER HEAD OF RANGER SERVICES AT THE TIMBAVATI PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE, CONSERVATIONIST, ADVOCATE

## PARTICIPANT PROFILE

Anton Mzimba (February 11, 1980 – July 26, 2022) was a highly decorated, South African field ranger who spent his 25 year career working at the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve (TPNR). He was assassinated during the production of *RHINO MAN* in an attack widely believed to be in connection with his work as a ranger preventing rhino poaching in the Greater Kruger Area.

Anton began as an erosion fieldwork team member at the TPNR. Over the years he worked his way up to basic field ranger, full corporal instructor, and finally to the Head of Ranger Services, where he oversaw the ranger team and security operations of the entire reserve.

The *RHINO MAN* team began following Anton in 2015. His passion and dedication to the work shined through in every interaction. The team became close friends with Anton, and his guidance through the process of developing the story was invaluable. As the relationship developed, he came to serve as a technical advisor to the Global Conservation Corps (GCC) contributing to the development of their Future Rangers Program, which provides conservation education and career pathways to local youth.

Anton believed that rangers were the final line of defense for wildlife. He constantly repeated that, "Rangers are buying us time. It's what we do with that time that matters." Anton's message of hope and his dream for the next generation is featured at the end of *RHINO MAN*.

Tragically on 26 July 2022, after months of receiving threats, gunmen appeared at Anton's home. According to police, they acted as if their car had broken down and they requested help. When they approached Anton, they shot him and his wife. Anton did not survive his wounds, but his wife made a full recovery. As of this writing, no arrests have been made in connection with his murder.

Anton's death raised the attention of the international community and brought calls for justice from many in the conservation space, including Barbara Creecy, then Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, South Africa and Prince William of Wales, the Founder and President of United for Wildlife.



ANTON MZIMBA FEATURED IN

The New York Times

DAILY EXPRESS VANITY FAIR

People The Telegraph

ALJAZEERA Bloomberg Businessweek

INDEPENDENT

DAILY MAVERICK



“What I’m doing, I’m not doing for my own sake. I’m doing this for the world, for my children’s children, so that one day when I hang my boots, they are going to enjoy the wildlife.”

~ Anton Mzimba

## ANTON’S AWARDS

In 2016, Anton won **Best Field Ranger** at the **Rhino Conservation Awards** run by the Game Rangers Association of Africa (GRAA).

Posthumously, Anton won **Best Game Ranger** at the GRAA 2022 **African Conservation Awards**, and in 2023 he won an **IUCN/WCPA International Ranger Award**.







# RUBEN DE KOCK

FILM PARTICIPANT, FOUNDER OF  
AFRICAN FIELD RANGER TRAINING  
SERVICES, RANGER TRAINER

## PARTICIPANT STATEMENT

Field Rangers are the true guardians of our natural world. I hold the belief that if there were no Field Rangers there would be no conserved areas left. It's not the scientists, managers, philanthropists, or social media activists who are responsible for nature's last strongholds—it's the Field Rangers. They are the ones who put their lives on the line, enter the danger zone, fight, physically and mentally, to keep the ever-dwindling natural resources safe.

A Field Ranger faces danger from every angle. From the wildlife they are protecting, the forces of mother nature—cold, rain, heat, wind—often with a lack of essential resources. They step into the fray on a daily basis, risking their lives in the face of well funded poachers and syndicates. Yet, they persevere. Every time someone visits a game reserve and witnesses the beauty of wildlife, they are witnessing the sacrifices of a Field Ranger. They are, in my mind, true conservationists.

For over 30 years, I've dedicated my life to training these rangers—preparing them to step into the field, equipped to survive and protect. It's more than a passion; it's a calling. Watching young men and women develop the resolve to defend what's left of God's Garden is the greatest reward I can receive. I'm a people person, and Field Rangers have proven to be some of the best humanity has to offer.

When I was asked to be part of *RHINO MAN*, I joined without hesitation, eager to honor my late friend and fellow trainer, Martin Mthembu. As the film progressed, I realized its potential to give Field Rangers the recognition they deserve. My only request to the filmmakers was simple: make the rangers look good. And they have. This film shines a light on the courage of heroes like Anton Mzimba, whose death only deepens our commitment to training the next generation and supporting their fight.

## BIO

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Ruben de Kock has been training rangers in Africa and South East Asia since 1992. He was the Field Training Officer for the Bureau of Natural Resources in KwaZulu-Natal before the conservation bodies in Natal amalgamated. He started the ranger training company, African Field Ranger Training Services (AFRTS) with his wife, Marianne, and friend, Martin Mthumbu. Together they trained rangers for 13 years. They sold AFRTS to the Southern African Wildlife College and continued to train rangers as part of their programming. In 2019, Ruben moved to Cambodia and took the position as WWF's Tiger Reintroduction Lead. In 2020, he began working in his current role at LEAD Ranger as their Development Manager. There he assists in the development and internalization of trainers for ranger teams across Africa.

# FACTS & STATISTICS



## RHINO POACHING BACKGROUND

Rhinos have been around for millions of years and play a crucial role in their ecosystems. They are important grazers and browsers, consuming large amounts of vegetation, which helps shape the African and Asian landscapes.

The latest African rhino poaching crisis (white and black rhino species) began in 2007 with the increase in demand for their horn in China and Southeast Asia. The horn is often ground into a powder and used in traditional medicine as a headache cure. Rhino horn is made of keratin, which can be found in your hair and finger nails. It does not have any significant scientifically proven medicinal properties. More recently, rhino horn has been used as a purported cancer cure, an aphrodisiac, and a status symbol in the form of engravings and libation cups.

At the height of the crisis, in 2015, rhinos were being poached at up to 3 per day. Since 2007, Kruger National Park has lost nearly 10,000 rhinos. Worldwide, rhino numbers have dipped to 27,000. After a lull, poaching in South Africa is on the rise.

**500,000 RHINOS ONCE ROAMED AFRICA AND ASIA. AROUND 27,000 REMAIN.**

World Wildlife Fund

**KRUGER NATIONAL PARK'S RHINOS HAVE DECLINED BY 59% SINCE 2013.**

Save The Rhino International

**MORE THAN 7.5 TONNES OF RHINO HORNS WERE SEIZED DURING THE PAST 10 YEARS.**

Wildlife Justice Commission

## REMAINING RHINO SPECIES

**16,830**

*White*

**6,487**

*Black*

**4,000**

*Greater One-Horned*

**76**

*Javan*

**47**

*Sumatran*

INTERNATIONAL RHINO FOUNDATION



**OVER 140 RANGERS LOSE THEIR LIVES IN THE LINE OF DUTY EACH YEAR.**

Thin Green Line

**BETWEEN 2006-2021 HOMICIDE ACCOUNTED FOR 42.2% OF RANGER DEATHS. CASUALTIES APPEAR TO BE INCREASING OVER TIME.**

International Ranger Federation

**IT WILL REQUIRE 1.53 MILLION MORE RANGERS TO MEET THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE TO PROTECT 30% OF THE PLANET BY 2030.**

Re:wild

# FACTS & STATISTICS



*“Rangers are buying us time. It’s what we do with that time that matters.”*

*~Anton Mzimba*



## RANGERS BACKGROUND

Rangers, forest guards, wildlife officers. They serve under various titles and their work is vast, yet one thread unites them: They all work to protect the natural world. Conservation couldn’t happen without them.

The term “ranger” refers to any professional involved in the protection and management of national parks, natural areas, wildlife and cultural sites. They patrol protected areas, monitor wildlife, prevent poaching, engage local communities in conservation, help communities resolve human-wildlife conflicts, and assist with tourism.

Ranger work is often gruelling and dangerous. These men and women remain in remote field locations for long stretches of time, separated from home and family for weeks or even months. Ranger salaries are typically low, and teams often lack the necessary equipment, training, or working conditions required on the job. They deserve recognition and support.



# SOCIAL IMPACT CAMPAIGN

## OUR VISION

Raise the necessary funds to Inspire, Train, and Support the next generation of our planet's wildlife guardians through our impact partners.



INSPIRE

**IF YOU DON'T LOVE SOMETHING YOU WON'T HAVE A REASON TO PROTECT IT.**

The Global Conservation Corps engages thousands of children across Africa through their Future Rangers Program. They build empathy and skills through classroom education. They connect youth to conservation experiences like their first game drive. And they track the best candidates, creating opportunities to become conservation leaders. Every ranger begins as a child who is passionate about the natural world.

## TRAIN

The Southern African Wildlife College and LEAD Ranger train thousands of rangers each year across Africa and beyond. Together they provide a combination of training for new ranger candidates, advanced courses for continued career development, and training for indigenous ranger trainers, who are then able to return to their units and communicate new skills in their local languages.

**A WELL TRAINED RANGER IS A SAFE, HAPPY, AND EFFECTIVE RANGER.**

TRAIN

## SUPPORT

**BETTER GEAR AND BETTER CARE MEAN HIGHER MORALE AND HAPPIER FAMILIES.**

The Thin Green Line provides emergency equipment for ranger teams in need. In many cases rangers lack proper life insurance leaving their families without a source of income or financial support. In these desperate times, the TGL steps in to assist these families with their Fallen Ranger Fund. A portion of funds raised will go toward our continued support of the rangers of the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve.



# CONNECT

## WEBSITE & EMAIL

[rhinomanthemovie.org](http://rhinomanthemovie.org)  
[info@rhinomanthemovie.org](mailto:info@rhinomanthemovie.org)

## TRAILER & PODCAST

[trailer.rhinomanthemovie.org](http://trailer.rhinomanthemovie.org)  
[rhinomanthemovie.org/podcast](http://rhinomanthemovie.org/podcast)



## INSTAGRAM

[@RhinoManTheMovie](https://www.instagram.com/RhinoManTheMovie)



## FACEBOOK

[@RhinoManTheMovie](https://www.facebook.com/RhinoManTheMovie)



## TWITTER

[@RhinoManMovie](https://twitter.com/RhinoManMovie)



## YOUTUBE

[@RhinoManTheMovie](https://www.youtube.com/RhinoManTheMovie)



## LINKEDIN

[@The Rhino Man Podcast](https://www.linkedin.com/company/TheRhinoManPodcast)



## TIKTOK

[@RhinoManTheMovie](https://www.tiktok.com/@RhinoManTheMovie)



[DOWNLOAD MEDIA](#)

# SELECTED CREDITS

A full credit list is available upon request

**Directed by**

John Jurko II  
Matt Lindenberg  
Daniel Roberts

**Produced by**

Matt Lindenberg  
John Jurko II  
Justin Walker

**Executive Produced by**

Lee Gowdown  
Sam Konigsberg  
Josh Lumsden  
Robert Bath  
Joe Mari  
David Fein  
Peter Eastwood

**Co-Produced by**

Andrew Ackerman  
Sabine Carion

**Edited by**

Jacob Ross  
Cristian Lora Troncoso

**Cinematography by**

Nick Smith  
John Jurko II

**Composer**

Simón Wilson

**“Who Will Step Up?”**

Written and performed by  
Sipho Mchunu, Mandisa Dlanga  
and Simón Wilson

**“Rhino Man”**

Written and performed by  
Paul Thomaz

**Finishing and Color by**

Company 3  
Colorist Bryan Smaller

**Featuring**

(in order of appearance)

Ruben De Kock  
Martin Mthembu  
Anton Mzimba  
Orlat Ndlovu  
Kabelo Mmoledi  
Marianne De Kock  
Axel Tarifa  
Yvette Taylor  
Peter Knights, OBE  
Dr. William Fowlds  
Dr. Johan Marais  
Altin Gysman  
Simangele Mthembu  
HRH Prince William  
Steven Whitfield

**Endorsed by**

International Ranger  
Federation  
Game Rangers  
Association of Africa





# RHINO MAN

IS SUPPORTED BY



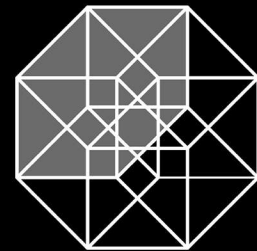
united  
for  
wildlife

Deloitte.



SOUTHERN AFRICAN  
WILDLIFE COLLEGE

TANGLEWOOD  
FOUNDATION NZ



ManchesterCF  
Financial Intelligence