



FASTNET FILMS PRESENTS
COLONY
PRESS KIT

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INTRODUCTION

We admire some documentaries for their artistry and others for their urgency. Rarely do we see a film that combines both those qualities as impressively as this debut by directors Carter Gunn and Ross McDonnell. Their unlikely topic is the world of honeybee keepers during the on-going crisis of “colony collapse disorder.”

Beautifully photographed by McDonnell and skillfully edited by Gunn, their film “Colony” follows several American beekeepers over the course of eighteen months as the country’s economy spirals downward. Among them is David Hackenberg who first identified colony collapse disorder when he mysteriously lost 80 million bees from his Florida hives. Many keepers blamed insecticides for killing more than one quarter of bees in the U.S. But no one had any evidence. We see the beekeepers search for solutions, testify before politicians, and confront pesticide manufacturers.

The mystery is like something out of science fiction and has dark implications for the future. Because our agriculture depends on pollination, when bees are in trouble, so is society. The term “busy as a bee” gains deeper meaning when you hear the quirky entrepreneur David Mendes describe his migratory pattern. Packing thousands of hives onto a tractor trailer, he travels across the country, renting out his bees to farmers for weeks at a time, following crop cycles from Maine to Florida to California.

At the heart of this film is the Seppi family, newcomers to the beekeeping world, guided by their deep Christian faith. Based in California, the Seppis contract their bees to almond growers who require over 1.3 million hives for the world’s biggest pollination. As the Seppis face the collapse of their colony and the economy, tensions course through the family.

Gunn and McDonnell carefully compose these scenes, attaining an intimacy without being intrusive. The filmmakers are equally capable at filming on the microcosmic scale, drawing us into the world of bees and causing us to root for their survival as much as our own.

Thom Powers
Toronto International Film Festival

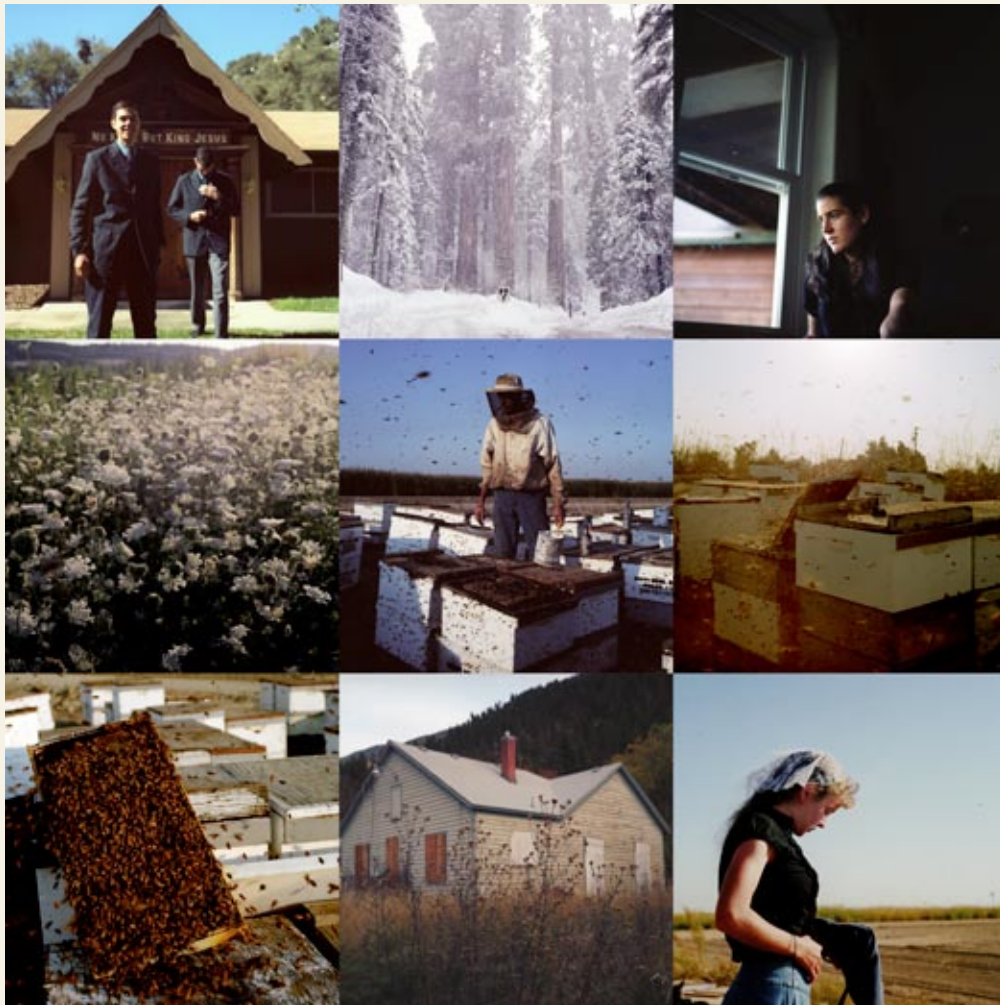


SYNOPSIS

The unexplainable phenomenon known as Colony Collapse Disorder has left landscapes of empty beehives all across America, threatening not only the beekeeping industry but our food supply.

As scientists and beekeepers search for the cause, Colony captures the struggle within the beekeeping community to save the honeybee and themselves.

Colony documents a time of unprecedented crisis in the world of the honeybee through the eyes of both veteran beekeeper, David Mendes, and Lance and Victor Seppi, two young brothers getting into beekeeping when most are getting out. As Mendes tries to save the nation's collapsing hives, the Seppi's try to keep their business alive amidst a collapsing economy.



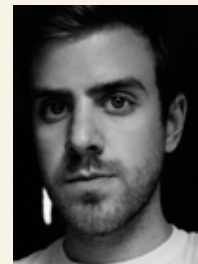
FEATURED CHARACTERS

LANCE & VICTOR SEPPI
DAVE MENDES & DAVID HACKENBERG
RANDY OLIVER
DAVID & ESTHER SEPPI
DR. JERRY BROMENSHENK
DINAH, REGINA & JO DAVID SEPPI
DAVID FISCHER, PHD,
GEORGE 'BEE MAN' CLUTTER,
JANE EGGMAN, DAVID WESTERVELT
PERRY MILLER, COLIN HENDERSON, PHD,
PASTOR WARREN CAMPBELL
AND MORE...



DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Carter Gunn is a documentary filmmaker based in Brooklyn, New York. Since graduating from the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan, Carter has worked extensively in both production and post-production on a wide ranging number of television shows and documentaries most notably HBOs *'I am Animal: The Story of Ingrid Newkirk'*, *'No End in Sight'* and *'Quest for Honor'*. *'Colony'* is his feature length directing debut.



Ross McDonnell was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1979. He completed his BA in Communications Studies at Dublin City University and his MA in Film from DIT. He has worked on a wide variety of commissions, long-term projects and grant awards as a photographer, cinematographer and director. *'Colony'* is his first feature length film.





TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Presentation Format: HDCAM
Aspect ratio: 16x9
Sound Format: Dolby Stereo
Language: English
Subtitles: Yes (Selected Scene)
Running Time: Approx. 88min.

PRODUCTION CONTACTS

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