

A DOCUMENTARY BY TOMMY DILGER



CAN A COMBAT VETERAN FIND THERAPY AND PURPOSE  
THROUGH WAR REENACTING?



# REALFAKEWAR

A SHORT DOCUMENTARY BY **TOMMY DILGER**

TPD PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

## REAL FAKE WAR

PRODUCTION TYPE..... SHORT FILM

RUNTIME..... 15 MINUTES 25 SECONDS

GENRE..... DOCUMENTARY/WAR

COMPLETION DATE..... 5/25/2025

PRODUCTION BUDGET..... \$2,000

LANGUAGE..... ENGLISH

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN..... UNITED STATES

COUNTRY OF FILMING..... UNITED STATES

FORMAT..... 2048X1080, 23.976, 1.90:1, STEREO SOUND

LINKS..... PRESS KIT ASSETS: [GOOGLE DRIVE](#)

INSTAGRAM: [HTTPS://WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/REALFAKEWARFILM/](https://www.instagram.com/realfakewarfilm/)

TRAILER: [HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/WOBoA9MHjVw](https://youtu.be/WOBoA9MHjVw)

# SYNOPSIS

*Logline:* *Real Fake War* is a deeply personal documentary that tells the story of Travis “TJ” Truax, a Marine Corps combat veteran struggling to cope with PTSD through war reenacting.

**100 Word Synopsis:** As a troubled teen, Travis “TJ” Truax joined the marines to find a sense of purpose, but he wasn’t prepared for what he would experience overseas. Upon returning to the states and leaving the marine corps years later, his teenage hobby of war reenacting took on a new, deeper meaning. For TJ, reenacting and his deployment to Afghanistan blend together as he navigates his life after the end of 20 years of war in the middle east, the onset of PTSD, and the loss of his friends to suicide.



Stills from *Real Fake War*

Full Resolution Downloads Available [HERE](#)

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



Real Fake War stems from my interest in military history and war reenacting, which I began at age 16. I met TJ in 2019 at a reenactment in our home state of Michigan and we have become close friends in the years since. When finding a subject for my thesis film, I knew that TJ had a unique and interesting story that needed to be told.

For the first 19 years of my life, the United States was at war in the Middle East. With the fall of Kabul in 2021, I reflected on what it meant to experience peacetime for the first time in my life and the effect 20 years of war had on its veterans and the country as a whole.

As TJ opened up to me about his experiences in the wake of the US' sudden pullout from Afghanistan, I learned that many veterans feel that the US turned its back on a country it spent 20 years fighting in, with veterans feeling that the government has failed them and the people of Afghanistan leading to extremely high suicide rates with vets.

In Real Fake War, I explore the after effects of this war on a deeply personal level and how a hobby like war reenacting allows TJ to experience a recreation of his traumatic experiences in combat in a safe way.

# SUBJECT BIO



## TRAVIS "TJ" TRUAX

TJ Truax was born in Livonia, Michigan in 1993. He grew up listening to stories from his grandfather, a Vietnam Veteran, engrossed by his family's military history. He began war reenacting in high school. As a troubled teen in a punk band, TJ knew he was going down a dark path and had to make a change. He joined the Marine Corps at age 17, and was sent to Afghanistan in 2013. During his 6-month tour he witnessed fellow Marines being severely wounded by gunfire and IEDs, dead and injured Afghan civilians, and exchanged gunfire with the Taliban.

TJ went on to serve 6 years in the Marines, but he never stopped reenacting. As he left the Marines and began to process his trauma, reenacting has taken on a new meaning. In the years since the fall of Kabul, reenacting has become a way for TJ to relive his combat experiences in a safe environment and find the sense of comradery and purpose he misses in the civilian world.

Like many veterans, TJ has struggled with mental health and has lost friends he served with to suicide. He credits the friends he has made through reenacting for helping him navigate his mental struggles and considers it his one true passion. TJ currently works as a mechanic and lives in Livonia with his wife Rachel, a fellow reenactor.

# CREW



**WILLIAM EICHLER**  
**PRODUCER**

A Director Of Photography and producer with credits including Chicago Fire. Producer/director of "Civil War Digital Digest" and "Revolutionary Gazette" at Look Around You Ventures.



**SEDIKA MOJADIDI**  
**SUPERVISING PRODUCER**

Award-winning independent documentary filmmaker and producer, director of "Facing the Dragon". Currently a film professor at SCAD



**TOMMY DILGER**  
**DIRECTOR**

Award-winning independent documentary filmmaker and SCAD graduate. Director/editor of "Victory Journal" and "Skip Liberty: Shooting in Vietnam".



**GABRIEL GORSUCH**  
**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

A Cinematographer from Tennessee and SCAD graduate with a keen eye for compositions and passion for telling real, human stories.



**AIDAN REED**  
**EDITOR**

An editor from Raleigh, NC and SCAD graduate that works in sports and documentary. With a passion for creating stories from real life, he has worked with North Carolina State University and the Savannah Ghost Pirates.

# CREDITS

## SUBJECT

Travis "TJ" Truax

## CREW

Director Tommy Dilger

Producer William Eichler

Supervising Producer Sedika Mojadidi

Editor Aidan Reed

Director Of Photography Gabriel Gorsuch

Post Sound Shawn Tishler

Graphic Designer Wren Yates



Stills from Real Fake War

# LOGOS



# PRODUCTION STILLS



# TJ'S ARCHIVAL PHOTOS

