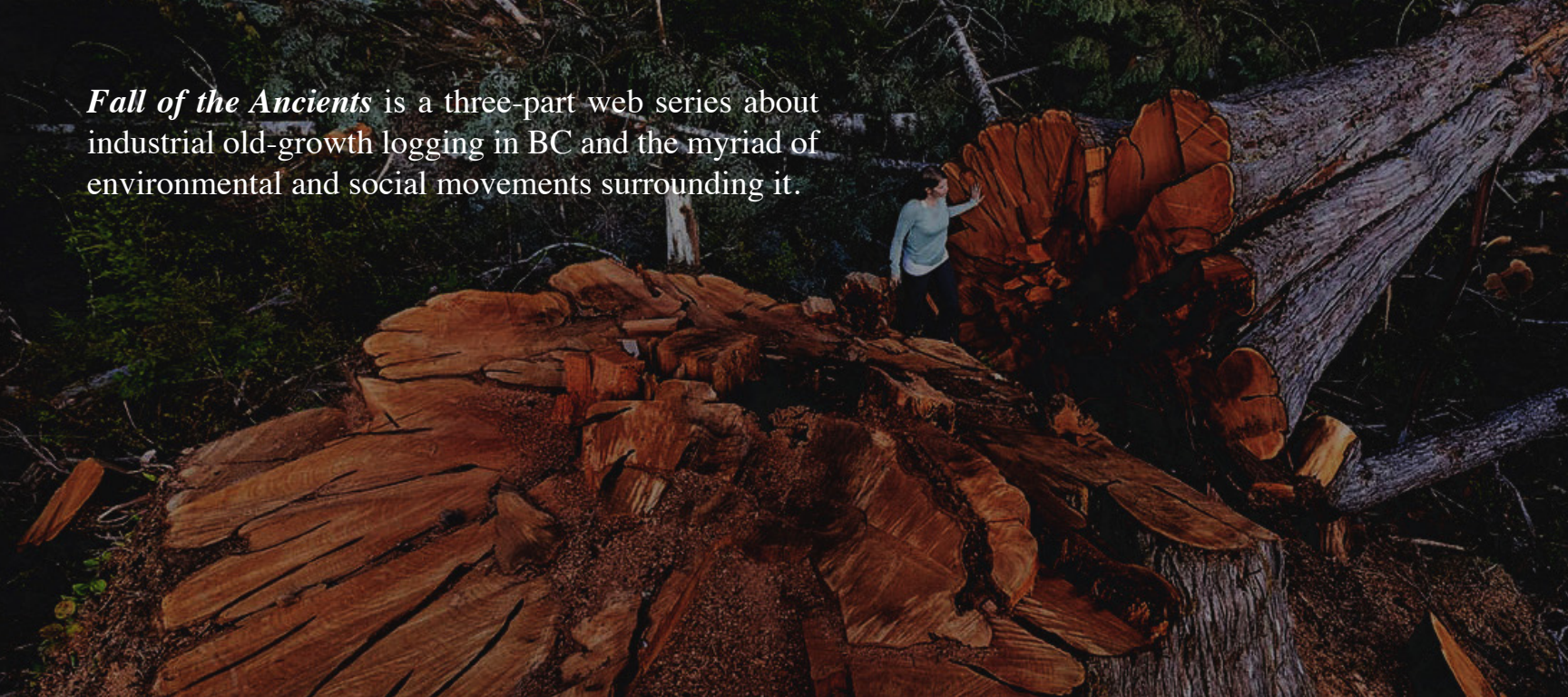




*Fall*  
*of the*  
*Ancients*

web series development proposal – directed by Santiago Bessai

*Fall of the Ancients* is a three-part web series about industrial old-growth logging in BC and the myriad of environmental and social movements surrounding it.



Since 2020, environmental activists fighting against logging at Fairy Creek have brought widespread attention to the industrial harvesting of old-growth trees in British Columbia. After multiple injunctions in 2021 the provincial court put a two-year ban on old-growth cutting, which expired on June 8th, 2023. Timber harvesting projects have resumed... more Ancients will fall.



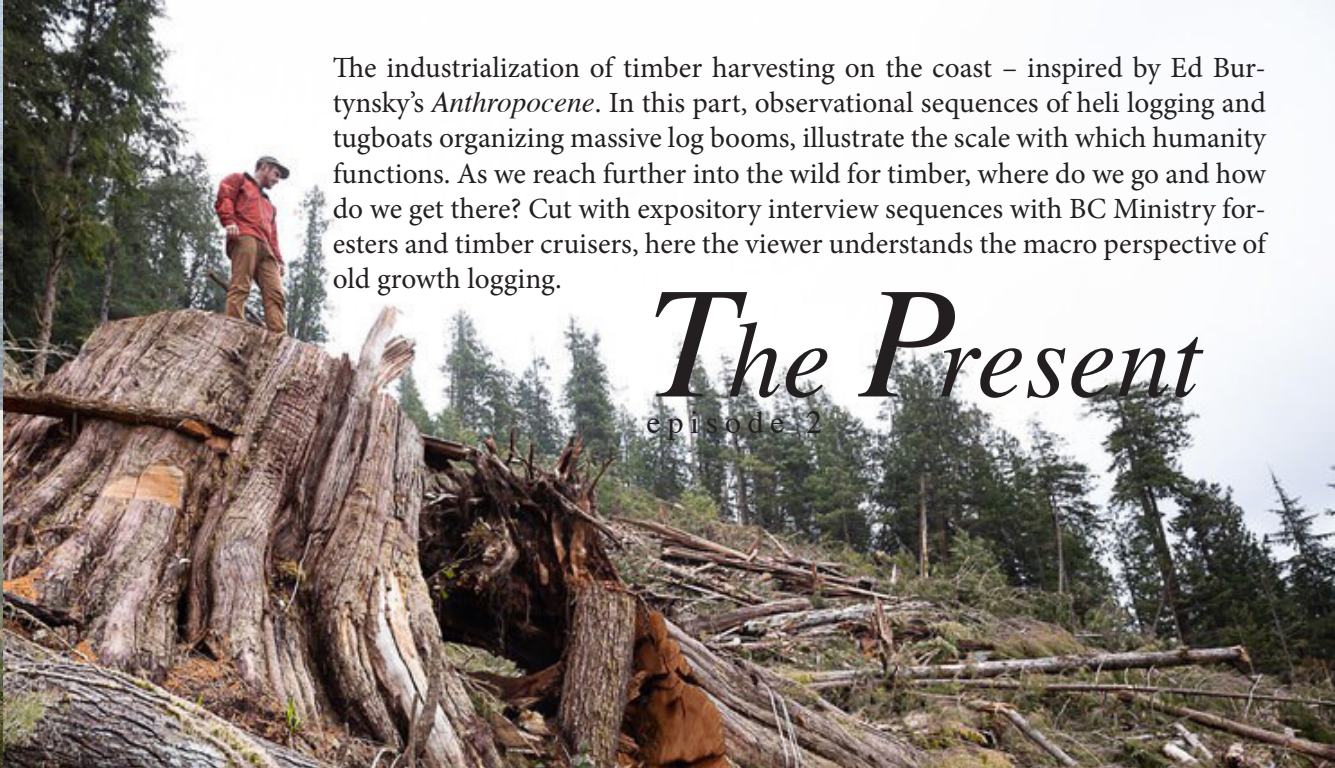
This series seeks to explore the old growth logging debate with 3 episodes of 25-30min. Each will focus on different characters on various front lines of the industry – equipping the viewer to participate in the debate and inspire more discourse in the future.

# *The Past*

episode one

The first part of the series will focus on the traditional knowledge holders on Vancouver Island. Through observational sequences of youth protesting at the blockade, and expository scenes with Pacheedaht Elder Bill Jones and other indigenous knowledge keepers, we learn about the history between the people and old growth – and why they fight so hard to keep them standing.





The industrialization of timber harvesting on the coast – inspired by Ed Burtynsky’s *Anthropocene*. In this part, observational sequences of heli logging and tugboats organizing massive log booms, illustrate the scale with which humanity functions. As we reach further into the wild for timber, where do we go and how do we get there? Cut with expository interview sequences with BC Ministry foresters and timber cruisers, here the viewer understands the macro perspective of old growth logging.


# *The Present*

episode 2


# *The Future*

episode three

*When all the ancients have fallen what can we put back?*

A man wearing a red helmet, an orange high-visibility shirt, and a safety vest is walking through a field of fallen branches and debris. He is carrying a large, light-colored canvas basket filled with small evergreen saplings on his back. He is looking off to the side with a focused expression. The background is a dense thicket of dry, brown branches and twigs, suggesting a logging site or a forest in the process of being cleared.

The final chapter of the series will look at what is to come. Here we follow a group of coastal tree planters on the long journey to an old growth cut block, where they tirelessly reseed the gnarled land – one tree at a time on the side of a mountain. Giving context to the piece is Suzanne Simmard’s research on Mother Trees, and the science behind the fight to maintain old growth stands. Simmard’s research will be applied to new logging ideals exemplified by Dirk Brinkman, a pioneer in reforestation, as a way of imagining a new logging practice that is informed by ancient tradition.



## *DEVELOPMENT*

We are currently seeking \$15k in development funding. These funds will support research into old-growth logging practices, as well as the relationship with the Land-back movement and Fairy Creek protests. It will also support test filming this summer as the production team goes into the field to find the series' cast of characters.

# MARKETS

A person wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and dark pants stands in a dense forest, reaching out with both arms to touch the moss-covered trunk of a large, ancient tree. The forest floor is covered in fallen leaves and ferns, and the background is filled with lush green foliage and sunlight filtering through the canopy.

Once out of development this film will seek production funding through the CMF, Telefilm, CBC, HotDocs and other private or crowdfunded sources.

This project will be marketed as a POV, Environmental, Nature documentary series. It is intended for Canadian viewers who are interested in the climate crisis at home and wish to become more informed and/or involved. A secondary audience are European markets interested in the Canadian natural landscape – Scandinavia, Germany. To reach these audiences the series will seek distribution on an accessible streaming platform for documentaries like CBC Gem or Netflix.



# *SUSTAINABILITY*

Fall of the Ancients is dedicated to acknowledging the rich heritage of the First Nations along the BC coast. We are committed to collaborating with local Indigenous communities to ensure that the filming locations are chosen with utmost sensitivity to cultural and environmental considerations. By actively engaging with First Nations representatives, the series aims to incorporate traditional knowledge and perspectives into its narrative. The production team recognizes and respects the territorial sovereignty of the First Nations, striving to create a platform that not only showcases the beauty of the BC coast but also promotes the preservation of Indigenous cultural values and environmental stewardship.

We are committed to maintaining a sustainable production footprint through a comprehensive approach that aligns with eco-friendly practices. The crew emphasizes waste reduction by implementing a thorough recycling program and minimizing single-use plastics on set. And actively engages with local environmental organizations to promote sustainable practices and encourage positive change in environmental behaviors.