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TREE STORIES Series
September 2016

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DRAMA

TREE STORIES

AUTHORS

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DIRECTORS

Christophe D'YVOIRE, Henri DE GERLACHE

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CAMERA LUCIDA PRODUCTIONS, ARTE

GEIE

FORMAT

5 x 52', 2014-2016

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VERSIONS

English - German - French

TERRITORY(IES)

Worldwide.



This series is a 5-episode journey, combining nature's finest tree specimens with the unique stories of the people that live alongside them.

The trees that are featured across Europe - from Greece to Sweden - stand as references to time, witnesses of collective life and sources of spirituality. Others represent, quite simply, aesthetic encounters. From the ends of their roots to the tips of their crowns, ten trees recount stories and converse among themselves, in this beautiful blending of nature and culture.

Season 2 coming soon !



LIST OF EPISODES

01 - THE WATER LORDS	NEW HD
03 - THE ROOTS OF CHILDHOOD	NEW HD
05 - THE GODS OF NATURE	NEW HD

02 - GENERATION TO GENERATION	NEW HD
04 - THE TIME CONQUERORS	NEW HD

NEW**01 - THE WATER LORDS****DIRECTORS**

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TERRITORY(IES)

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These two trees are essentially brothers, but what sets them apart is the astonishing environment in which they have developed and grown.

The Plane tree of Peilz lords over a tiny 40m2 island on Lake Geneva. Like a vegetal lighthouse, it serves as a beacon for fishermen and locals, and as a refuge for a colony of cormorants. With each new season, the plane tree's branches undergo spectacular change. Two legends surround the tree, which is said to be the sole survivor of three plane trees planted in 1851. One dates from the mid 19th century, when a young English couple, who were betrothed to be married, were staying at Hotel Byron, near Chillon Castle. The other claims that the island was given as a present to Queen Victoria by the Swiss Federal Council, during one of her stays in the region.

HD

Its Greek associate in Geroplatanos has been basking in the sun for nearly 1,000 years, in South Thessalonica. This truly gigantic tree has a trunk that measures 15.51 metres in circumference, and its vast branches, spanning a width of 30 metres, shade the small square on which it seems to be strangely installed. As though it were sunken into the ground. The tree's roots are fed by a constant source of clean water, which is said to share the same age as the tree! Located in the centre of the village, it is a favourite meeting place for gossip and festive gatherings. In May, the village community, preceded by the pope, come to pay homage to the tree.



NEW

02 - GENERATION TO GENERATION

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These two trees are very different in size and nature, but are united by the central element of their history - fire.

The Nail Oak of Herchies is not noted for its size, age or splendour but for its curative properties, and for the legend that has surrounded it for centuries. In contrast, the ancestor-yew trees lord majestically over the heart of the village of la Haye-de-Routot, at the foot of the church, like perpetual statutes commanding the respect of all. The Yew trees of La Haye-de-Routot are the guardians and witnesses of the Feu de St Clair, which takes place every year in July. This bonfire tradition has been perpetuated for 5 centuries and is celebrated with more than a pinch of pride by the local inhabitants who witness the population of the village swell tenfold for the occasion!

HD

As for the Nail Oak of Herchies, it is not nature that links it to fire, but the healing powers that are attributed to it, as well as its singular history. 60 years ago, the ancient tree was set on fire through an act of vandalism, and following the fire, the decision was taken to plant a new one. In addition, the tree is reputed to heal skin conditions, and burns in particular. When the oak becomes overloaded with dressings, the farmer and owner of the surrounding area burns off some of the bandages.



NEW

03 - THE ROOTS OF CHILDHOOD

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Despite their very different climatic situations, these two venerable trees have defied the passage of time.

The thin, isolated Spruce tree, standing tall on the Fulufjället mountains, in the central province of Dalarma close to the Norwegian border, is said to be the world's oldest tree! Carbon dating confirms that its roots are indeed over 9,550 years old! (although its trunk is only a few centuries old). Geologist Leif Kullman, who discovered the tree, called it "Old Tjikko" in homage to his deceased dog. Scrawny in appearance, it attracts the attention not only of the scientific community, who ponder the mysterious phenomenon, but also that of curious visitors, who organise walks to it.

HD

The Oletta Olive Tree is a nigh on thousand-year-old ancestor that enjoys excellent health! It still produces 300 kilos of olives a year, which are harvested in winter using nets fixed to the base of the tree. The tree is the pride of its owners and local inhabitants of the surrounding area, and on account of its impressive measurements (a 300m2 crown!), it is said to be the island's most imposing specimen.



NEW**04 - THE TIME CONQUERORS****DIRECTORS**

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Worldwide.

These two specimens are linked to communities that are different to say the least!

Local inhabitants keep the exact location of the White Leaved Oak in the Malvern Hills a secret. They will, however, divulge information to interested visitors. The oak remains a place of Pagan legends: the tree is obviously venerated. Tibetan-style flags are attached to its branches, as are ribbons, garlands and even dolls. The White Leaved Oak is said to be located in a mystical place, with strong links to druid rites. One legend evokes the existence of the "Perpetual Choirs": druids take it in turns to sing continuously in the surrounding nature or in churchyards. This mysterious tree has remained the meeting point of a community of hippies, hence its nickname "The Hippie Tree" given to it by amused locals.

HD

The Himmelsberg Linden is a "Tanzlinde" or "dance tree". In Germanic countries, some lindens used to be shaped according to a very precise ritual, and supported by wooden props or stone pillars. Dance lindens were created for holding a wooden dance floor underneath their foliage. The specimen of gigantic proportions in Himmelsberg is said to have reached the venerable age of at least 700 years, making it one of the oldest trees in Germany. Its branches were pulled outwards and attached to pegs, so that the villagers could dance or sit down under the tree. As was the custom, the linden was the centre of village life: a place of festivities, but it also served as the tribunal court.



NEW

05 - THE GODS OF NATURE

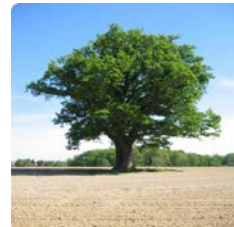
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HD

Despite their obvious differences, what characterises and links these two trees most is the human attachment to them. Friars live beside the Italian Cypress tree, perpetuating the legend linked to it and to Saint Francis of Assisi. For the Upmeyer Oak, which bears the name of its benefactors, the same family has been looking after it down through the generations.

For generations, the tree has been linked to the same family, of which it is their symbol. It is known as the "Upmeyers Oak". Thanks to a hole in its trunk, its age has been evaluated at roughly 500 years. Its isolated location and its very robust health (despite some scars left by lightening) make it one of the most beautiful trees in Germany, and certainly one of the most well known in Lower Saxony. The 3 generations of Upmeyers: Wolfgang (50 years old), the owner of the farm, his father Gustav (83 years old) and Wolfgang's son Mathias (24 years old) each have memories linked to the tree, and claim they would be prepared to do anything to keep it in good condition.

The 700-year old Cypress tree can be found among the cloisters of the Villa Verucchio Monastery, built in honour of Saint Francis. Legend has it that, during a walk, Saint Francis, saw his clothes hanging on a branch of the Cypress tree, which he had used as a stick. He is said to have tried to burn the branch in vain, and then planted it in the ground, saying: "If you won't burn, grow!". Since the year 2000, the tree is in an upright position once again, thanks to three metal pillars supporting the old Patriarch's weight. The tree features a "rust belt", a metal tie that was fixed to it in 1800 to support the various branches, after Napoleon's soldiers tried to burn it. Saint Francis allegedly stopped at the foot of Verucchio, where a small hermitage was located, and carried out miracles there, before founding the monastery, which is still occupied by friars today.



NEW**TREE STORIES - SEASON 2****AUTHORS**

Henri DE GERLACHE, Christophe D'YVOIRE,
Yannick CHEREL

DIRECTORS

Henri DE GERLACHE, Yannick CHEREL,
Christophe D'YVOIRE

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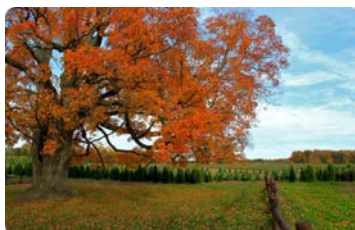
The documentary series invites viewers on a voyage of discovery in which we encounter amazing trees in different parts of the world

Through the stories told by people who live near them, we find out how different cultures in both hemispheres view this shared natural heritage. The series emphasizes the staggering diversity of tree species by focusing on a pair of trees in 2 different countries in each programme, including non-European species such as baobabs, the giant redwood, the Indian banyan and the monkey puzzle tree.

1. ANCESTOR TREES - THE MONKEY PUZZLE OF CHILE AND THE BAOBAB OF SENEGAL
2. GIANTS AND PYGMIES - THE GIANT REDWOOD OF AMERICA AND THE BONSAI OF JAPAN
3. EMBLEMS - THE CHERRY TREE OF JAPAN AND THE MONTEZUMA CYPRESS OF MEXICO
4. SACRED TREES - THE INDIAN BANYAN AND THE SYCAMORE FIG OF ETHIOPIA
5. SOURCES OF NOURISHMENT - THE MANGO TREE OF INDIA AND THE MAPLE OF CANADA



PROVISIONAL DELIVERY: OCTOBER 2017



THEMATIC INDEX

NATURE & DISCOVERY

TRAVEL - ADVENTURE 6

TREE STORIES	HD	6
01 - THE WATER LORDS	New HD	7
02 - GENERATION TO GENERATION	New HD	8
03 - THE ROOTS OF CHILDHOOD	New HD	8
04 - THE TIME CONQUERORS	New HD	9
05 - THE GODS OF NATURE	New HD	10
TREE STORIES - SEASON 2	New HD	11

ALPHABETICAL INDEX

01 - THE WATER LORDS.....	7
02 - GENERATION TO GENERATION.....	8
03 - THE ROOTS OF CHILDHOOD.....	8
04 - THE TIME CONQUERORS.....	9
05 - THE GODS OF NATURE.....	10
TREE STORIES.....	6
TREE STORIES - SEASON 2.....	11



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