

4-27-2016

The Principality of Sealand: Citizens Around the World

Laura Kulik
lkulik@lion.lmu.edu

Elizabeth Holland
moviemaniacgirl@gmail.com

Dawson Taylor
dawsontaylor.com@gmail.com

Recommended Citation

Kulik, Laura; Holland, Elizabeth; and Taylor, Dawson, "The Principality of Sealand: Citizens Around the World" (2016). *Grants & Fellowships*. 7.
<http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/honors-grants-and-fellowships/7>

This Honors Summer Research Fellowship is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors Program at Digital Commons @ Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in Grants & Fellowships by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu.

THE PRINCIPALITY OF SEALAND:

CITIZENS AROUND THE WORLD

BY

LIZ HOLLAND ('18)

LAURA KULIK ('18)

& DAWSON TAYLOR ('17)

ABSTRACT:

Documentary filmmaking is the process of capturing reality on film, of entering into the world and extracting the stories that are, in fact, stranger and more fascinating than fiction. As both honors students and filmmakers, we intend on making films that elucidate reality, emphasize truth, and simultaneously educate and empower captivated audiences. The story of The Principality of Sealand is one worth exploring cinematically and candidly through the art of documentary. Following the principality's establishment as a sovereign entity in 1967, the small island, six miles off the coast of eastern Britain, has struggled for liberty and recognition ("About Us"). We, as filmmakers, LMU honors students, and individuals concerned with global interests, want to examine and capture Sealand's historical struggle and cultural impact on film. We hope to produce a film that captures the essence of Sealand's struggle for independence as well as the incredible popularity that the Bates' independent nation-state has garnered internationally and pop-culturally.

NARRATIVE

The Principality of Sealand is, in its history and existence, a study of binary opposition, of being and not being simultaneously. Sealand, a former-Fortress island built in the North Sea during the Second World War, was founded in 1966 by Roy Bates, a former infantry major and pirate radio broadcaster (“About Us”). He declared the fortress island an independent state and named himself the owner and leader of “Sealand” (“About Us”). In the fall of 1968 Roy was taken to court by England, and the judgment ruled that the UK courts had no jurisdiction; a de facto recognition of Sealand’s independence was thus proclaimed (“About Us”). The nation, as it is today, is both recognized and ignored, a member of international activities and an excluded from the global conversation. Sealand exists as an enigmatic cousin to “real” countries; with a flag on Mt. Everest and athletic representation in smaller international competitions, Sealand flourishes, conversely, the nation is not recognized amongst the United Nations (despite conversations between the principality and organization) or in most large-scale international competitions such as the Olympics. Sealand, despite not being a political power, has infiltrated the global, cultural consciousness; the principality is featured in both non-fiction and fiction literature and films including *The Sea Forts*, *E Mare Libertas*, and a film in pre-production with the working title, *Sealand*. Every small victory, however, only underscores the large losses of the island-state. We, however, will put both to film. To create a comprehensive document of Sealand’s history and contemporary existence we must examine all elements, all dichotomous acceptances and rejections; we must become citizens of Sealand, for better or worse.

METHODS

As we are already in contact with members of the Sealand royal family, we will travel to the Principality of Sealand as well as England to film b-roll footage of both countries and their

landmarks, as well as interviews of a number of individuals related to Sealand. Our interviews will include members of the Sealand royal family, including His Royal Highness James Bates and Prince Michael Bates; Darren Blackburn, the first Sealand official athlete; Kenton Cool, the mountaineer who planted the Sealand flag on Everest; Basil Simonenko, the composer of the Sealand national anthem; Vicki Barker, an NPR host and pirate radio expert; as well as a number of other historians and Sealand citizens. Moreover, we have requested access to archival photos and footage of Sealand, and hope to incorporate these documents in our final product. Finally, we hope to interact with any citizens and historians who have knowledge of Sealand while in England in order to gain a more retrospective understanding of Sealand's place in British history, as well as in global context. Both the contemporary and historical lenses will be employed during our interview and filming process.

EXPECTED RESULTS

At the end of the process we expect to have a twenty to thirty minute documentary film about the phenomena that is the Principality of Sealand. Our documentary will be a study of Sealand as both a cultural and historical phenomena; the popularity of the independent nation-island, as well as the initial fight for independence and Sealand's place in history will be among our main topics. And, although documentary structure and plot are hard to assure before actual footage has been shot, we hope to focus specifically on the fascination that the public has with Sealand—why individuals all over the world (ourselves included) would pay money to be a citizen of an unpopulated island, why the Bates family fought for the land, and why athletes, musicians, etc would affiliate their work with Sealand. Hopefully the answers to these questions will illuminate the purity of an underdog story and highlight the fascination that humankind has

with the prospect of independence, of owning a piece of this world, of being free to pursue manifest destiny and make a mark on the cultural consciousness.

WORKS CITED

"About Us." *The Principality of Sealand*, 2015. Date Accessed: Jan. 20 2016.

<<http://www.Sealandgov.org>>

"IAMA I'm Prince Michael." *Reddit.com*. Reddit, 2014. Web. 8 Feb. 2016. <

https://www.reddit.com/r/IAMa/comments/1cgo6n/iama_im_prince_michael_of_the_principality_of/>

"Sealand." *MicroWiki*. Wikia, 7 Apr. 2015. Web. 08 Feb. 2016.

<<http://micronations.wikia.com/wiki/Sealand>>.

"Sealand." *IMDb*. IMDb.com, 2016. Web. 08 Feb. 2016. <

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0438973/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1>

Strochlic, Nina. "Welcome to Sealand." *The Daily Beast*. Newsweek/Daily Beast, 20 Feb. 2014.

Web. 08 Feb. 2016. <<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/02/20/welcome-to-sealand-this-island-is-a-sovereign-nation.html>>

BUDGET¹

Laura Kulik

Item	Cost	Total
Round Trip Plane Ticket to London	\$1027.00	\$1027.00
Lodging	\$50.00 per night	\$1050.00
Round Trip Train Ticket to Scotland	\$98.00	\$98.00
Round Trip Train Ticket to Germany	\$107.00	\$107.00
Misc. Travel (Taxis, buses, boat to Sealand)	\$500.00	\$500.00
Sound Package Rental	Sound Devices 633 Mixer/Recorder (Includes lavaliers, boom pole, shotgun microphone) - \$500.00 per week	\$1500.00
		Final Total: \$4382.00

Elizabeth Holland

Item	Cost	Total
Round Trip Plane Ticket to London	\$1027.00	\$1027.00
Lodging	\$50.00 per night	\$1050.00
Round Trip Train Ticket to Scotland	\$98.00	\$98.00
Round Trip Train Ticket to Germany	\$107.00	\$107.00
Misc. Travel (Taxis, buses, boat to Sealand)	\$500.00	\$500.00
		Final Total: \$2782.00

¹ *The budget is based on estimations, not specific pricing—more specific pricing will come as the schedule becomes finalized.

Dawson Taylor

Item	Cost	Total
Round Trip Plane Ticket to London	\$1027.00	\$1027.00
Lodging	\$50.00 per night	\$1050.00
Round Trip Train Ticket to Scotland	\$98.00	\$98.00
Round Trip Train Ticket to Germany	\$107.00	\$107.00
Misc. Travel (Taxis, buses, boat to Sealand)	\$500.00	\$500.00
RED Scarlet Camera Package Rental (3 Weeks)	\$700.00 per week (Private Rental from ShareGrid)	\$2100.00
		Final Total: \$4882.00

TENTATIVE TIME LINE

Leave for England

Visit Sealand

Interview Period

Visit Germany

Visit Scotland

Return to United States