



SKULL ROCK

Unearthing the dark nature within.



Logline

After the death of their father, Joan returns to the Land to settle with her siblings over fracking developments forcing her to confront the power rooted in Skull Rock.

Pitch Paragraph

- Skull Rock is an Eco-thriller that is contained, female driven, and based on an actual location. Hidden in the Southern Ohio hills Skull Rock has remained unseen, etching itself into formation by the slow waters of time. The 30-foot monolith is an unmistakable omen of death.
- Skull Rock is a story of a woman who lives a seemingly successful detached life, that is suddenly thrust back to the wilderness and her dysfunctional sibling dynamics. It forces her to reexamine what is essential in relationships to others and the earth itself. A journey to overcome selfish motivations, it explores love, grief, beliefs, and sacrifice; rendering her and everyone involved transformed.
- The tone is a unique blend of nature documentary effects and grounded realism in emotional connections; it plays at the pace of a psychological thriller with the heart of a family drama. With an undercurrent of supernatural and historical components, it promises a breathtaking and believable cinematic experience with a message of conservation.





Overview

- ECO-THRILLER
- REAL OHIO LOCATION
- NATURAL EFFECTS
- CHARACTER DRIVEN
- BASED ON HISTORY OF AREA
- NATURE DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE
- FOUNDED ON PLANT & HUMAN BIOLOGY

World

- Skull Rock is hidden at the Land, a remote property in Southern Ohio.
- Exploiting the natural changes and weather events using long term time-lapse, vast aerial views, and intimate angles creates a visceral experience of the power and will of the Land.
- A blend of nature documentary and supernatural thriller, it is grounded in realism with endearing emotional connections and heart pounding suspense.

The Gaia Hypothesis: The Earth lives as one sacred living being



Themes

Man vs. Nature / Good vs. Evil / Self vs. Whole

Driven by the unrelenting power of nature, the nonstop march of time, the elusive experience of loss, and survival through perseverance.

Explores land ownership, rights to exploit, and the imprint left behind.

Greed, envy, pride, and fear contend with the force of forgiveness, courage, sacrifice, and love.



A photograph of a two-story white house with a dark roof and a small cupola. The house has a front porch with white columns and a railing. It is surrounded by lush green trees and grass. The image is partially obscured by a black curved shape on the right side.

Characters

- **Joan**, dedicated and level-headed, living detached from her family and land. Wants justice for her father and sister's deaths. She is determined to uncover the culprit. She is met by a lack of solid answers, loneliness, and the dark influences of the land, putting everyone at risk.
- **Sam**, the big-hearted older brother, struggling with his failures. He wants to protect his sisters and rooting out Skull Rock as a real threat. He is thwarted by his obsession and vulnerability to temptation by overindulgence and inaction.
- **Peter**, a genuine man of the land, pushes against his low beginnings though unable to shake his imposter syndrome. He wants a valid claim to the property and profits, as well as acceptance into the family. Forced to face rejection, Peter fights against the forces of evil for redemption.
- **Keva**, a reflective beauty, finding it hard to see past her point of view. She wants to preserve the land and expand her perceptions to show respect for the power of the property. Her beauty turned to vanity, twisted by selfish urges in the shadow of Skull Rock.
- **Skull Rock**, the land's focal point of dark energies, emanating from the stone facade. Growing in strength over time, it awakes when the balance is disrupted. Twisting time and impulses, it sets the stage for demise; only to be quieted by total submission.

Synopsis

Joan, a rising coastal land developer in Florida in her 40s, is focused on growing her success with streamlined control and a solitary lifestyle. An anchoring connection remains to her father, Abe, who reaches out as a fracking survey team arrives, and unknowingly has Joan authorize a worker to chop down the tree at the base of Skull Rock; having remained hidden, it now sends a ripple of echoes into the dark valley in which it lies.

Joan is suddenly disrupted when contacted by the local sheriff who has found her father's body. Absorbing the loss, she must meet with her estranged siblings at their remote Ohio property to negotiate the terms of a pending fracking contract. The tensions rise as disagreements mount over proceedings and Abe's cause of death. Still, none of them know about Skull Rock.

That night, Keva, the free-spirited younger sister, casts doubt on the fracking, pushing to stop operations. Peter, the long-time family friend and property caretaker as a teen, secretly involved with Keva, remains neutral despite his claim to the earnings. Sam, the vulnerable older brother, is more interested in the locals' superstitious stories about their place. Joan, determined that there is foul play involved, suggests they hire someone to investigate. By early morning Keva is found submerged in the river, her body tangled into the roots of a towering sycamore – she cannot be revived.

Heartbroken, Joan vows to remain until the culprit is unearthed, single-mindedly searching for someone to blame. Peter runs from his grief and hides away from the Land, abandoning his responsibilities to the family. Sam pushes deeper into the legend of Skull Rock, spiraling into alcoholism and conspiracy theories. Descending into Winter, the presence of a dark unbalance emanates from the hidden valley of Skull Rock, as it slowly takes its toll on them all.

Joan digs through every possibility from the locals to the gas company members, even uncovering the body of a missing survey worker. At odds with her brother and the sheriff, Joan's clues don't amount to a viable suspect. With nowhere left to turn Joan is forced to look to the land, at the history of Ohio frontiersmen and natives, the fracking, the biology of the earth – hunting until the ground slips from her feet, careening her into Skull Rock.

Before she can tell Sam, he's given over to the distortions and is pulled into the forgotten well on their property. Joan works to rescue him, bringing him to the hospital, his fate now tied in her mind to the effects of Skull Rock. Coming down to visit Sam in the hospital, Peter returns to the land. His arrival reveals his involvement in her father's death to Joan, who presses him to confess. Abandoning reason Joan knocks him out and drags him to the ledge of Skull Rock for a final reckoning.

Fates hanging in the precipice- Joan and Peter wrestle on the edge with their last chance to end the cycle of darkness that is permeating from Skull Rock to the roots of them and their land... before it spreads beyond their borders.



Related Content



- Skull Rock is Haunting of Hill House meets Annihilation and Winter's Bone.
- Enthralling locations, interesting characters and gripping action.



Sources





Comparison Casting

- Joan: Jodi Comer
- Sam: Matthew McConaughey
- Keva: Emilia Clarke
- Peter: Milo Ventimiglia

Cast of eclectic characters, offering rich opportunities for exciting casting.



Abe: Michael Douglas
Penelope: Connie Britton
Danny: W. Earl Brown
Lawyer: Steve Buscemi



Henry: Tom Hardy
Charlotte: Gal Gadot
Kate: Frances McDormand
Bonnie: Kathy Bates

Screenplay Competitions

Skull Rock is a tight thriller that has been thoroughly developed, including extensively workshopped with Sarah Cornelius, creative executive at the award-winning Whitewater Films.



Wonderfully unique concept that intertwines family drama and supernatural/thriller genres effortlessly. The character-driven plot is compelling and the ability to intertwine multiple timelines is exceptional. The well-written dialogue and relationships between the primary characters are highlights of the script.

- Heart-pounding, suspenseful, keeps us on our toes
- A lot of commercial potential, appeal to large audience
- Tone is just subtle enough to blur the lines between supernatural and realism
- The climax in which Joan and Peter face off at Skull Rock is excellent



Producibility

- The screenplay is devised for efficiency and ease of production based on the property details, with gripping action and suspenseful twists.
- Stunning B-roll nature footage is being collected that is critical to the story. The use of natural effects from weather phenomena and Ohio's seasonal changes are devices employed to create the influence of Skull Rock, rendering an eerie dynamic between the land and its inhabitants.
- The budget is low to moderate. The modest funding already in place, along with the secured locations and wide audience interest, makes this a very attractive investment.
- Skull Rock is a unique take on the successful framework of "A Monster in the House", highlighting a rural demographic that brings a fresh view and sound to audiences. Including the Ohio history of the location with the science of nature, it becomes a haunting look at how we are connected.

Screenwriter

- I am passionate about this story because we now face the power of nature with only each other to rely on.
- Having a few siblings, I know this unique, yet universal relationship is one that could truly shed light on our shared human experience.
- I have deep roots to the location and crafted the story to accurately reflect the people and history, while maintaining a production mindset.
- I am a strong collaborator, dedicated artist with over 20 years of experience, stout environmentalist, and Ohio native. I am eager for partnerships and to bring this film to life.



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Thank you for considering Skull Rock
and viewing the location at
www.RiverlandFilms.com

