

ACOPAN TEPUI

Mountain of Gods

Format: HDV 720p25
Year of Production: 2008
Year of Shooting: Nov.-Dec. 2006 (6 weeks)
Length: 43:00 min.
Production companies: medi cine medienproduktions gmbh & drehxtrem

The allure of the unknown, mystical tales, forgotten cultures and a mountain that looms vertically out of the primeval forest: this is the blend of adventure and discovery sought by Stefan Glowacz. He has been on numerous expeditions to the mountains of the world together with Kurt Albert and Holger Heuber but this table mountain, cut off in the Amazonian region of Venezuela, tempted them in an inexplicable way: the Acopan Tepui.

The indigenous Indians call the table mountains Tepuis, houses of the gods. They are the remains of a huge sandstone plateau that once covered the granite prehistoric rock between the northern edge of the Amazon basin and the Orinoco. Over the course of time the plateau was eroded. The Tepui have thus been left as "Islands in Time."

The Acopan Tepui plateau is completely isolated from the primeval forest. In its isolation evolution has created an alien animal and plant world on the plateau, shut away from the rest of the world by a wall of rock, up to 800m high, which soars above the primeval forest like a guardian of some hidden treasure. A mainland Galapagos as it were.

The film carries the viewer off to the secretive world of the Venezuelan rain forest. Experiencing the journey from the metropolis of Caracas to the ancient culture of the Pemon Indians is at the forefront of the documentary. On leaving the bank of the Rio Kuruai the climbers are plunged into a secretive world in the Venezuelan Gran Sabana – following this river over a 100 km in folding canoes, a route that has never been used by foreigners before.

The approach to base camp will only be possible with the Pemon-Indians' help. Cut off deep in the Venezuelan highlands the village elders decide who can go into the jungle and who cannot. The village of Yunek, with its population of ten families, will not only be the last outpost of civilisation but also the first obstacle to be overcome on the way to the summit of

Acopan. The Indians warn them as they consider the Acopan a holy place that should not be defiled by the climbers. And, indeed, heavy rain sets in. Nevertheless, the climbers fight their way up the steep and overhanging wall. In contrast to the jungle they are at home in the vertical world, they know the rules here as well as what dangers they could face.

The climbers' aim is the first free ascent of the North wall of the Acopan Tepui, but the reason for their expedition is their curiosity and the drive to discover new territory. The film follows this curiosity, experiencing it through their eyes without neglecting the magnificent views of the landscape and tense climbing scenes.

Writer / Director / DOP: **Jochen Schmoll**
Producer: **Ralf Dilger**
Executive Producer: **Till Hoffmann**
In cooperation with: **ARTE**

