



Documentary / 75 min / English



## FIRST RUN FEATURES

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## Short Synopsis:

This breathtaking film follows an historic attempt to summit the world's most challenging peak on the 100-year anniversary of the Duke of Abruzzi's landmark K2 expedition in 1909. World-class alpinists Fabrizio Zangrilli and Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner team up with veteran climbers Jake Meyer and Chris Szymiec in a dangerous foray of high altitude mountaineering.

The documentary also examines the history and geography of the Karakoram mountains while contemplating the risks, rewards and personal nature of exploration in an age when there are few blank spots left on the map. The second highest peak on Earth at 8,611 meters, K2 is also one of the most dangerous mountains to climb: for every four people who have reached the summit of K2, one person has died trying.

## Full Synopsis:

K2: SIREN OF THE HIMALAYAS is a feature documentary showing the adventure, peril, teamwork and serenity of a mountaineering group's attempt to summit the world's most challenging peak. Shot in Pakistan in the summer of 2009, the documentary follows world-class alpinists Fabrizio Zangrilli and Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner with veteran climbers Jake Meyer and Chris Szymiec in a breathtaking glimpse into the world of high altitude mountaineering.

Director Dave Ohlson joins this group's attempt to summit K2 on the 100-year anniversary of the Duke of Abruzzi's landmark K2 expedition in 1909. The documentary also examines the history and geography of the Karakoram mountains while contemplating the risks, rewards and personal nature of exploration in an age when there are few blank spots left on the map. K2 is the second highest peak on Earth at 8,611 meters. It is also one of the most dangerous mountains to climb, with its peak eluding even the most devoted professional alpinists.

For every four people who have reached the summit of K2, one person has died trying. Harsh weather conditions and demanding technical climbing have made producing documentary films on K2 extremely difficult, and footage from these expeditions is rare, especially compared to its slightly taller and more frequently scaled counterpart in Mount Everest. Ohlson shot most of the breathtaking climbing footage with his team on HD digital cameras and 16mm film.

## Director's Biography:

Dave Ohlson grew up in the San Francisco Bay area and learned to climb in the Sierra Nevadas. His passion for climbing, travel and photography have taken him to Alaska, Nepal, Tibet, Africa and Pakistan. While continuing to run Ursus Films he is now working his way through medical school.

K2 Siren of the Himalayas is Dave Ohlson's first film.

## On The Mountain:

### Fabrizio Zangrili – Alpinist

Based in Colorado, Fabrizio spends a good portion of every year guiding in Nepal, Tibet and Pakistan. When he's not guiding he pursues personal goals on some of the biggest mountain faces in the world. <http://fabriziozangrili.blogspot.com/>

### Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner – Alpinist

Originally from Austria, Gerlinde now calls Germany home, where she lives with her husband Ralf Dujmovits. In 2011 Gerlinde became the first woman to climb all 14 of the world's 8,000-meter peaks without oxygen when she reached the summit of K2 via the rarely climbed North Pillar. She was named the 2012 National Geographic Explorer of the Year. <http://www.gerlinde-kaltenbrunner.at/en>

### Jake Meyer – Alpinist

Jake is based in the UK near London. When he was 21 years old, he became the youngest Brit to climb the Seven Summits after reaching the top of Mt. Everest. He is a sought after speaker for corporate and charitable organizations where he uses his experiences in the mountains to motivate and entertain. <http://www.jakemeyer.co.uk>

### Chris Szymiec – Alpinist

Based in the Canadian Rockies, Chris spends most of his time guiding on mountains in India and Pakistan. He has led successful expeditions to several 8000 meter peaks including Cho Oyu and Broad Peak. <http://ganeshadventures.com/>

### The Duke of Abruzzi – 1909 Explorer

The Duke led expeditions all over the world during the late 19th and early 20th century. He travelled to the Wrangell St. Elias Range in Alaska, the Rumenzori's of Africa and in 1909 he travelled to K2 to "contribute to the solution of the problem as to the greatest height to which man may attain in mountain climbing."

### Vittorio Sella – 1909 Photographer

Sella was undoubtedly the greatest mountain photographer of his time. He accompanied the Duke on several expeditions and also explored the Alps and Caucasus extensively. He was considered a master by none other than Ansel Adams.

## Production Notes:

K2 is the second highest peak on Earth at 8,611 meters. It is also one of the most dangerous mountains to climb, with its summit eluding even the most devoted professional alpinists. For every four people who have reached the summit, one person has died trying. Harsh weather conditions and demanding technical climbs have made producing documentary films on K2 extremely difficult, and footage from these expeditions is rare compared to its slightly taller and more frequently scaled counterpart, Mount Everest.

Ohlson and his team shot the climbing footage on HD digital cameras and 16mm film during the 65-day expedition. Ohlson partnered with Webby and Emmy® Award-winning director Jason Reid to supervise the film's editing and release

## Praise for K2: Siren of the Himalayas

"4.75 out of 5 Pitons. This is a REAL movie about REAL climbing... the most accurate and down-to-earth depiction of big mountain climbing out there."

- Emilie Cortes, Sierra Journal

"The cinematography knocks you on your heels, amidst stunning giants above sweeping glaciers...Extremes in climbing share a certain kind of calling, but this song of K2 has a pull all its own."

-Chuck Jaffee , The Union

"To a man or woman, these alpinists speak of the beauty and truth of the slopes, of the quality of being fully alive way up there on them, of the physical demands, the addiction to climbing, and of the risks... Recent The Summit fused real footage with great amounts of re-creation to image the deadly August 2008 day on this mountain... K2:SH is the better, crisper picture."

-ReelTalk Reviews (Rotten Tomatoes)

"See this magnificent film that not only manages to convey the seductive and fatal beauty of the queen of the Karakoram but also expresses the spiritual bond that grows between men and women who share this addictive environment... Do not miss it!"

-It's Just Movies (Rotten Tomatoes)



## FILMMAKER DAVE OHLSON TALKS ABOUT 'K2: THE SIREN OF THE HIMALAYAS'

Way back in 2007, filmmaker Dave Ohlson was in Namche Bazaar talking to climber Fabrizio Zangrilli about Luigi Amedeo di Savoia's 1909 expedition to K2. Savoia, better known as the Duke of Abruzzi, led a team to 20,500 feet, the highest point reached on the mountain up to that time. Ohlson mentioned to Zangrilli that 2009 would be the 100th anniversary of the Duke's expedition, and that it sure would be nice to make a film about it. Zangrilli remembered that conversation and, early in 2009, he called Ohlson. He was guiding a team up K2, and the filmmaker could tag along. While following Zangrilli and crew, Ohlson met other climbers on the mountain, including Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner. (No member of Zangrilli's team reached the summit in 2009, but everyone returned home safely.) Ohlson released a short on YouTube about the expedition in 2010, but now he's making a full-length documentary that will go deeper into the history of mountaineering on K2. He's looking for a little help via Kickstarter. I emailed him to find out more.

### **What was the hardest part of filming this movie?**

If I could go back and do this again, I would be so much better at it. There are so many difficult aspects. One is that I was on a climbing expedition, not a filming expedition. So on the way in, when I stopped to do some shooting, everyone passed me and I wouldn't see them again until the evening. Once we were in base camp I realized I wasn't going to get enough sunlight to keep my batteries charged. Then I had some equipment failure that meant I couldn't use more than half my batteries. It was very frustrating and I had to be careful how much I shot because of it.

Once I was on the mountain, I found new obstacles. I had to keep my camera in my backpack so any time I wanted to pull it out it was kind of a hassle. Take off the backpack, anchor it, dig inside the pack, pull it out, etc. Sometimes, I would pull it out to shoot but I'd be breathing so hard it was difficult to keep the camera steady. In hindsight, it would have been nice to have a lighter camera for use on the mountain, but finances were tough and I barely made it happen with my existing equipment.

### **What was the most rewarding part of filming?**

The great thing about filming on K2 is that you get to film on K2. It's spectacular. The views are incredible and the mountain itself is so complicated and dynamic. Bringing back images that try to capture that is a lot of fun. The mountains in this part of the Himalayas (the Karakoram) are really unlike any others. The glaciers absolutely fill the valleys between the towering peaks. And the relief is so great. K2 itself rises 12,000 feet above base camp. I also really enjoyed the historical aspect of our trip. Realizing that we were walking through the same places that the Duke of Abruzzi and his photographer, Vittorio Sella, did 100 years before was very rewarding.

**How long did it take?**

I spent about two and a half months in Pakistan and since then I've been slowly working on the post. In the last year I was able to pay for our 16mm film to be converted to video. I flew to Colorado to interview Fabrizio and did interviews remotely with Chris Szymiec and Jake Meyer [who were also on K2 in 2009]. I've also partnered with Webby and Emmy Award-winning director Jason Reid and his production team to edit with me and get all the post completed. The Kickstarter campaign has been launched to help pay for the costs associated with finishing. So in the end it will have been three years from start to finish.

**In the trailer, it's mentioned that K2 is a different sort of beast than Everest. Why is it important for people to understand this difference?**

Everest has captured the popular imagination for a long time. Certainly, it is the highest mountain in the world. But we wanted people to understand that there are other challenges out there, bigger challenges. For the people who really pursue the extremes of high-altitude mountaineering, Everest is not the end game. I want people to have a better appreciation of that.

**What do you hope the end result of the movie will be?**

I would like the end result to be a film that makes the world of high-altitude mountaineering a little bit more accessible to the average viewer. I want to tell people about the amazing journey of the Duke of Abruzzi, the incredible photographs of Vittorio Sella, and give them a little insight into why people still pursue these types of adventures.

[http://www.outsideonline.com/outdoor-adventure/climbing/mountaineering/The-Queen-of-Rock-Gerlinde-Kaltenbrunner.html?utm\\_medium=xmlfeed&utm\\_medium=twitter&utm\\_campaign=rss&utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_source=twitterfeed](http://www.outsideonline.com/outdoor-adventure/climbing/mountaineering/The-Queen-of-Rock-Gerlinde-Kaltenbrunner.html?utm_medium=xmlfeed&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=rss&utm_source=rss&utm_source=twitterfeed)



## **Adventurers of the Year: Mountaineer Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner**

Austrian mountaineer Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner won't stop trailblazing

MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2013 By: GRAYSON SCHAFFER



2011, Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner solidified her mountaineering legacy by becoming the first woman to bag all fourteen 8,000-meter peaks without supplemental oxygen. She followed that up in 2012 by completing the hardest line of the season from Everest Base Camp: the rarely attempted Scott Route up 25,790-foot Nuptse, first ascended in 1979 by a team of British climbers. In May, the 41-year-old Austrian joined German David Göttler on the brutally exposed, avalanche-prone line, tackling it in four days. It was just the third successful attempt up the route, which ascends a 5,791-foot wall, and they did it without the aid of oxygen or high-altitude porters. They were also just the 19th and 20th people to reach Nuptse's main summit. This summer, Kaltenbrunner sets her sights on Denali, most likely via the difficult Cassin Ridge route and the highly technical Moose's Tooth. "It's been a dream for me to climb in Alaska," she says. "I'm very much looking forward to it."

## Cast & Crew

Directed by	Dave Ohlson
Produced by	Jason Reid Andy McDough
Co-Executive Producers	Afnahn Kahn Adrian Versteegh
Edited by	Darren Lund Jason Reid Dave Ohlson
Associate Producers	Adam Brown Colin Baxter Darren Lund
Cinematography	Dave Ohlson
High Alt. Cinematography	David Gottler
16mm Cinematography	Adam Forslund
Original Score	Jonathan Haidle
Colorist	Darren Lunch
Maps GFX	J Baab
Titles	Jon Garn
Graphics Assistents	Colin White Darius Escandar
Featuring	Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner Fabrizio Zangrilli Chris Szymiec Jake Meyer



Narration	Simone Leorin
1909 Film & Photograph	Vittorio Sella
Stills Courtesy of	Decaneas Archive Fondazione Sella
Footage Courtesy of	Museo Naziolale Della Montagna
Add'd Photography & Video	Fabrizio Zangrilli Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner Chris Szymiec Jake Meyer Tunc Findik Dave Watson Austin Vince Richard Carter Dil Bhusan Pathak Ralf Dujmovits Santiago Quintero Maxut Zhumayev National Geographic The McDonnell Family Chris Klinke Tommy Heinrich
3D Elevation Model	DLR German Aero Space Center