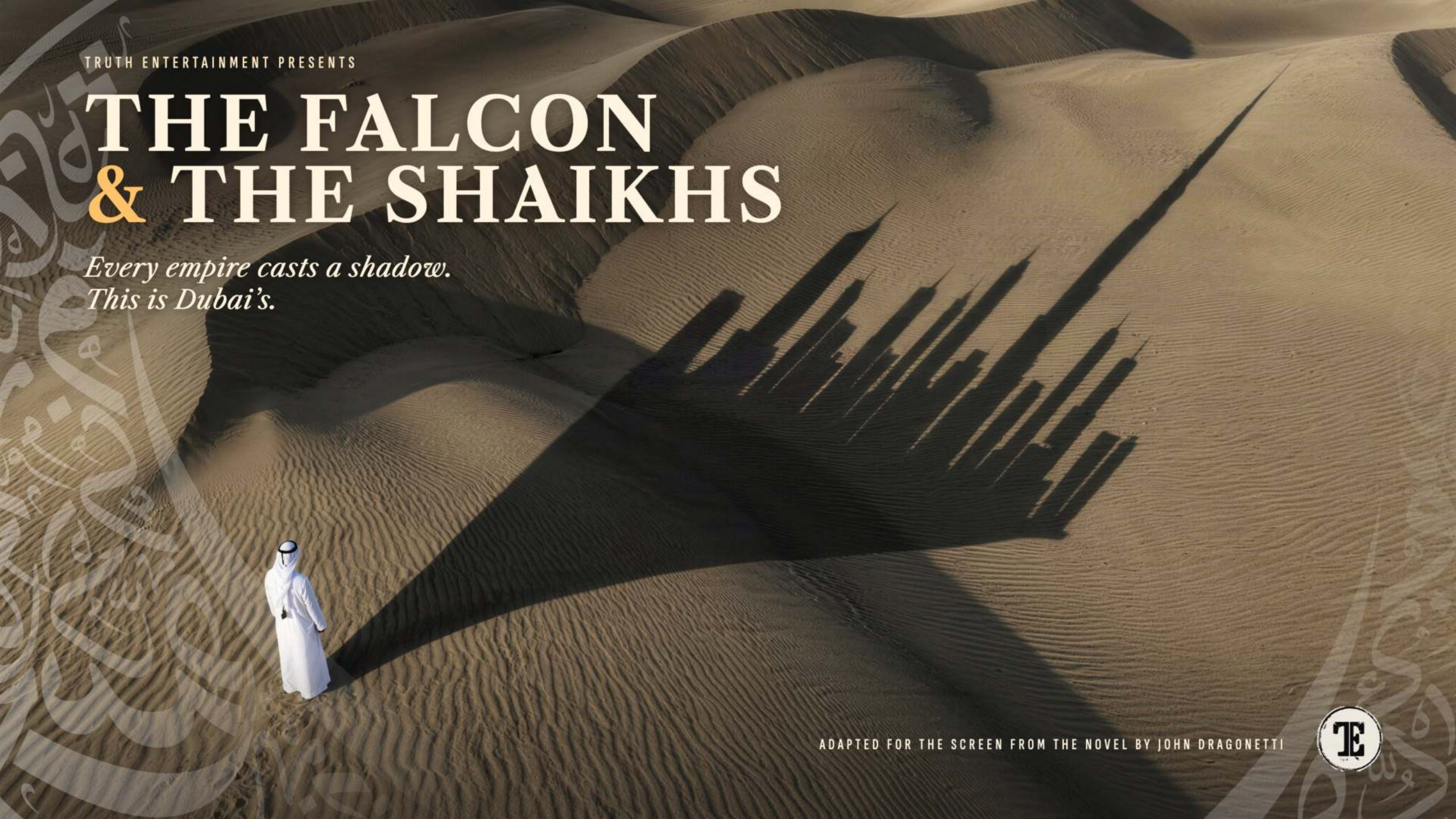

TRUTH ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS
THE FALCON & THE SHAIKHS
Every empire casts a shadow.
This is Dubai's.
ADAPTED FOR THE SCREEN FROM THE NOVEL BY JOHN DRAGONETTI

KINGS, CRIMINALS & CRUDE

The Godfather meets Lawrence of Arabia and Syriana.

Organized crime money in a desert oil boom. A casino in Ras Al Khaimah. Betrayals, a palace coup, gold smuggling, and a war staged for the cameras. And at its center, one man trying to save his soul, or sell it.

THE NEXT HAVANA

Cuba is gone.
The family needs a new one.

New Orleans, 1965. A crime family sends its heir, Lou Falconi, to a small town on the Arabian Gulf with $500 million to lend to its Ruler and get the oil flowing. On the plane he writes his objectives. Loan. Oil. Casino. Profit. Then he pauses, adds one more, and underlines it twice: COME HOME.

TWO DUNES

“Dubai is not Havana.”
“No, but neither was Havana
until somebody built it into it.”

Dawn, March 18, 1965. On one dune, the Ruler of Dubai looks at his small town and sees schools, hospitals, ports, and a city that could outlive oil. Miles away, on another, Lou Falconi looks at the same town and sees margin for the taking.

THE WRONG HAND

“And if it trusts the wrong hand?”
“It is a costly mistake indeed.”

Lou and his two escorts are ambushed in the mountains of Ras Al Khaimah. One goes down, shot in the chest. Lou crawls to him under fire, packs the wound, and fires back with the man’s own rifle. In New Orleans, blood made you family if it was yours. In Ras Al Khaimah, it makes you family if you’ll spill it for someone else.

THE TEN TOLA

“Intelligence.”
“Hospitality.”

Lou pitches the Ruler a social club where oilmen, bankers and contractors can drink, talk, and reveal things they shouldn’t. No gambling in Dubai. He names it after the ten-tola gold bar, “Dubai’s most honest dishonest export.” Behind a one-way mirror above the bar, every table is wired. “You’re building a bar that rats on people?” “A confessional booth.”

THE PRICE OF THE GROUND

"That's how men like me sleep. We list the benefits in the morning and leave the screams to the night."

Lou needs the old warehouses on the Creek to disappear completely. He flies in an arsonist from New Orleans, and on the night of April 29, 1965, they all burn to the ground. The insurers at Lloyd's of London pay the traders, the oil companies get the land, and Dubai finally moves forward.

THE WHITE FALCON

“From this day forward, His Highness will call you Abyad Saqr. The White Falcon.”

Lou brings the Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah a white falcon from the Canadian Arctic, and the oil concession is signed. Then the Ruler takes his hand, gives him a new name, and one word: “Family.” In Lou’s family, a nickname is paid for in blood. He hasn’t paid for this one yet.

THE TAPE

“The next shipment comes in next week. The Iranians already said it’s a go.”

1967. The Ten Tola’s wired tables catch Lou’s nemesis, Nic Nicandro, on tape. The plan: mercenaries land on Greater Tunb Island, Iran clears them out and keeps the island, and a son who wants his father’s chair takes it with Iran’s money. Lou brings the proof to the father. “What must be done?” “We let them land. Then we film it and send it to every newsroom in the world.”

THE PRESS RELEASE

“Remember, if you die, at least die at the proper exposure and facing the light.”

August 1967. The press releases are written before a shot is fired. The mercenaries hit the beach expecting an empty outpost. A flare turns night into day, the Bedouin rise from the dunes, and the invaders surrender on camera. By dawn the headline is going around the world: “Ras Al Khaimah repelled foreign mercenaries.”

THE LAST PAGE

“Airport, sir? To fly home to the States?”
“No. I am home.”

The family sent Lou to take what he could from Dubai and come home. The job is done. Before dawn, alone above his empty bar, he opens his ledger to the page that says what he came here to take, crosses it out, and writes one word: Home. He stays.

PAGES, PRESTIGE & POPCORN

PAGES

DUBAI

A novel of gold, oil and insurgency, by the author of The French Connection.

THE FALCON AND THE SHAIKHS

The novel by John Dragonetti, adapted for the screen.

PRESTIGE

SYRIANA

Oil as a system of favours, told from inside it.

MUNICH

A period operation, and what it costs the man who runs it.

POPCORN

ARGO

A covert operation staged as a movie production.

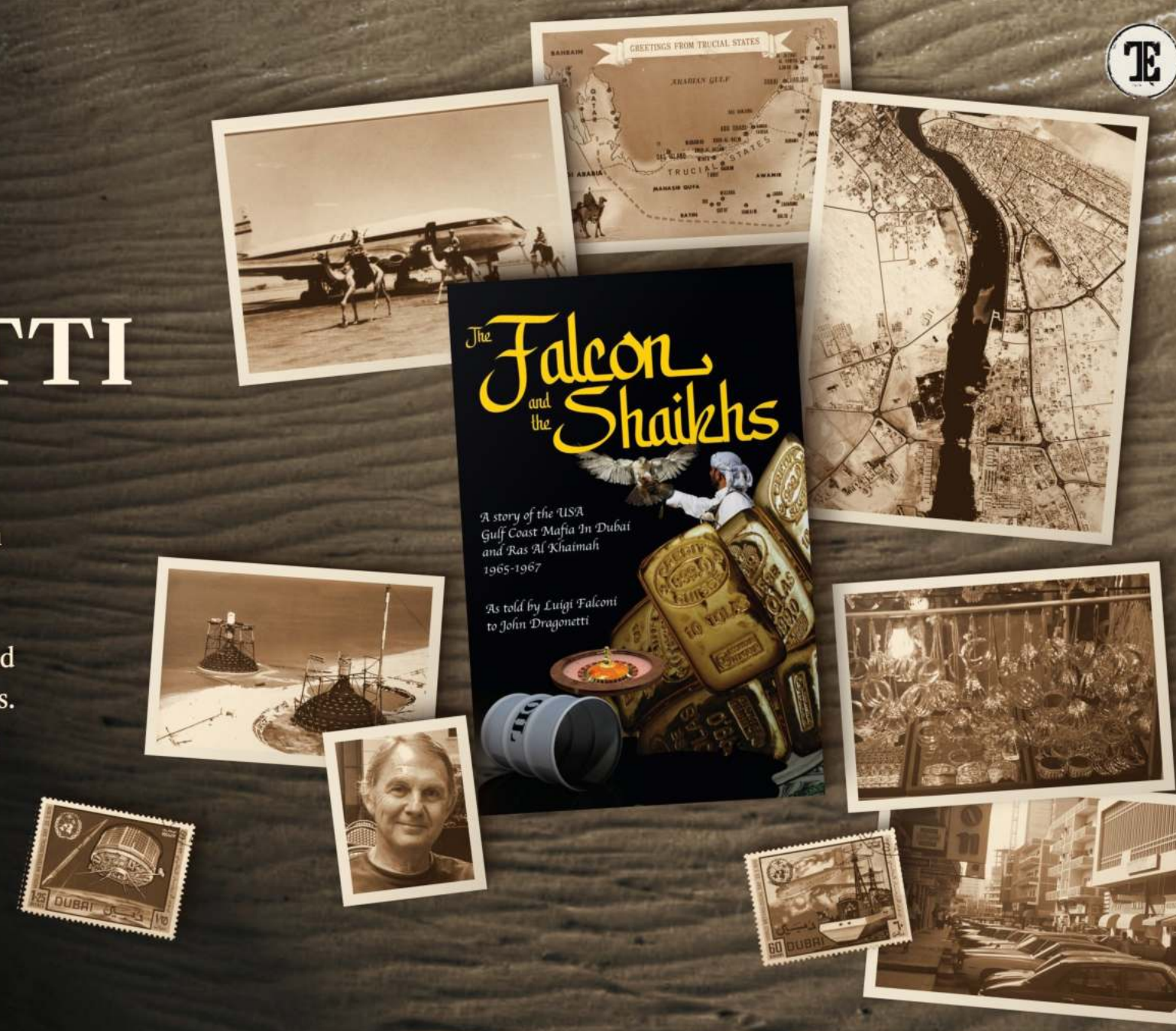
AMERICAN HUSTLE

Period crime with the wit left in.

FROM THE NOVEL BY

JOHN DRAGONETTI

Headmaster of the American School in Dubai from 1974, then in business there until 2013. The Falcon and the Shaikhs is historical fiction set in Dubai and Ras Al Khaimah from 1965 to 1967, before the United Arab Emirates was formed, and uses actual events, experiences and real people as models for some of its characters. It is the prequel to The Duke of Dubai, his first novel. And yes, there really was a casino in Ras Al Khaimah in 1965.



ADAPTED FOR THE SCREEN

ROBERT SZANTO

“In New Orleans, if a man held your hand, he was either your priest, your uncle, dying, or about to die.”

“But in Dubai, it meant business was going well enough that neither party needed to die just yet.”

LOU FALCONI, PAGE 17

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

JOE NEWCOMB

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Founder of Truth Entertainment, whose first production, Dallas Buyers Club, earned six Academy Award nominations and won three Oscars. A former professional baseball player, he is today Chairman and CEO of Truth Industries.

JOHN DRAGONETTI

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER · AUTHOR OF THE NOVEL

Headmaster of the American School in Dubai from 1974, then in business there until 2013: 37 of his 40 years in the Middle East. The novel is the prequel to his first, The Duke of Dubai.

COSIMO BLODGETT

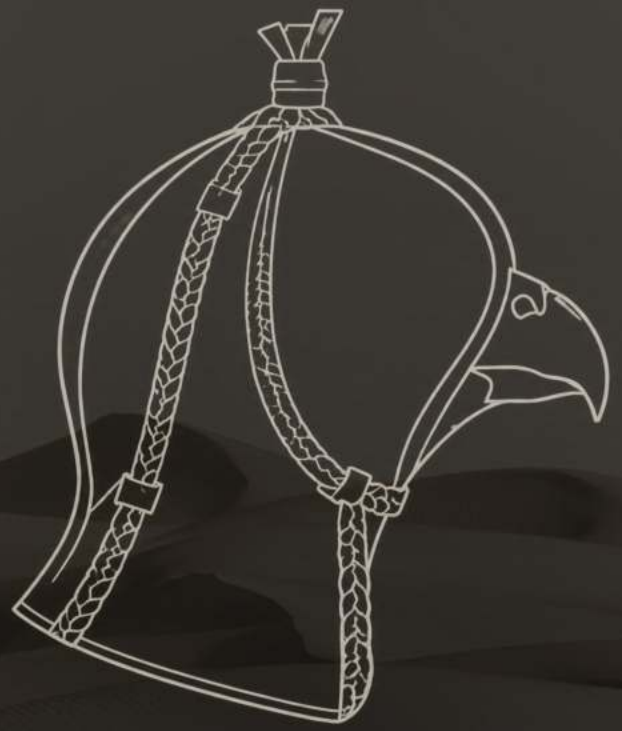
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Partner and President of Truth Entertainment. He takes a film from concept to distribution, working with writers, directors and financiers to shape intellectual property, and helps lead the Round Top Film Festival.

ROMERO MARCELLO

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

An oilfield saturation diver off Iran and India, then vice president of an offshore construction firm in Dubai, diving and hunting with the young shaikhs, before coming home to New Orleans in the 1980s.



THE FALCON & THE SHAIKHS

"Dubai will remember what you did."
"I also hope it forgets some of how I did it."

ADAPTED FOR THE SCREEN BY ROBERT SZANTO

FROM THE NOVEL BY JOHN DRAGONETTI

TRUTH ENTERTAINMENT

IN MEMORY OF

KELLY MAHONEY

Friend and Collaborator