

Napoleon

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Soldier, emperor, lover, statesman. For nearly two decades he strode the world stage like a colossus—loved and despised, venerated and feared. From his birth on the rugged island of Corsica to his final exile on the island of St. Helena, Napoleon brings this extraordinary figure to life.

Napoleon bears passionate witness to a man whose charisma swayed an empire and sparked his exalted belief in his own destiny. He is a figure riddled with contradictions that are the essence of his glory and undoing: his youthful enthusiasm for the ideals of the French Revolution did not prevent him from crowning himself Emperor. His passionate love of Josephine did not prevent him from divorcing her to marry the eighteen-year-old Archduchess of Austria. His military genius did not save him from the disastrous invasion of Russia. His love of France was so compromised by his notions of personal glory that he repeatedly plunged his beloved country into war.

Napoleon's romance with the world unfolds through the testimony of today's great historians, interlaced with impressionistic recreations, and stylized footage of lavish paintings and architectural monuments. Eyewitness accounts are coupled with Napoleon's own personal testament, recounted on the lonely volcanic island of St. Helena, the place of his exile and death. The series sweeps the landscapes of Europe and beyond from the sands of Egypt to the tiny island of Elba, which he ruled like a small empire, to Waterloo, the site of his crushing defeat. Framed by the grand sweep of history, woven from intimate accounts of and by the man himself, Napoleon is a tale as grand as any novel, a story of vaunting ambition and pride ending in exile and loss.

CREDITS

Written and Directed by David Grubin



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