

Gravitas Ventures  
Presents

# THE RISE AND RISE OF BITCOIN

A Documentary by Nicholas Mross



**In Select Theaters beginning October 3<sup>rd</sup>, on VOD October 10th**  
*Official Selection of 2014 Tribeca Film Festival*

**Opening Theaters on October 3rd**

New York: The Quad

Los Angeles: Los Angeles Arena

Cleveland: Cedar Lee

\*On October 7<sup>th</sup>, the film opens in Pittsburgh at Southside Works

RT: 96 minutes, Not rated

<https://www.facebook.com/BitcoinDoc>

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**Visit the website for Trailer, Poster & Press Materials:**

[www.BitcoinDoc.com](http://www.BitcoinDoc.com)

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# Synopsis

Daniel Mross is a 35-year-old computer programmer from Pittsburgh who lives a busy life. Along with balancing work, his marriage, and his kids, Daniel spends much of his time actively involved in all things Bitcoin. After discovering Bitcoin in 2011, his love and obsession for the crypto-currency was born, revealing an uncharted world of new possibilities for him to explore.

With Daniel as our guide, **THE RISE AND RISE OF BITCOIN** takes us on a journey through the rapidly growing world of Bitcoin, following the stories of entrepreneurs and start-ups that are helping shape the new financial frontier. The film looks at the competitive mining market and the various subcultures within the Bitcoin community and encounters a variety of characters each with strong opinions about Bitcoin's social and political impact as an open-source digital currency. Will the rise of Bitcoin bring a monetary paradigm shift that will forever change the world?

**THE RISE AND RISE OF BITCOIN** was directed by Nicholas Mross, produced by Ben Bledsoe, Nicholas Mross and Patrick Lope (who also edited), and was co-produced by Ashley Mross and Daniel Mross.

Gravitas Ventures -- which purchased the film in bitcoins, the first film distributor to do so -- will release **THE RISE AND RISE OF BITCOIN** in select cities nationwide, including New York and Los Angeles, beginning October 3rd and on VOD October 10<sup>th</sup>.

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## **Director's Statement**

I first became introduced to Bitcoin in 2011 when my older brother told me he was beginning to mine these “decentralized digital tokens” on his computer. The idea was so revolutionary, and the possibilities so limitless, it was only a matter of time before I caught the Bitcoin bug myself.

I began filming his fascinating hobby, and it soon progressed into something bigger than we both ever imagined. One person's story led to many more, and every week, new exciting events were unfolding in front of the camera lens.

I'm so proud of this film and the way we were able to capture the early history of this world-changing technology, and the entrepreneurs fighting to make it a reality.

**-Nicholas Mross**

## Featured in THE RISE AND RISE OF BITCOIN

**DANIEL MROSS** is a 35 year old computer programmer and bitcoin miner who explores the rapidly developing world of Bitcoin.

**CHARLIE SHREM** is a headstrong 24 year old Bitcoin advocate and was the CEO of one of the first Bitcoin start-ups, BitInstant.

**JERED KENNA** was the CEO and Co-founder of Tradehill, the first US-based Bitcoin exchange to compete with the market leader, Mt. Gox.

**ERIK VOORHEES** is a Bitcoin entrepreneur and activist who is involved in many Bitcoin projects, most notably the notorious bitcoin gambling site, SatoshiDice.

**GAVIN ANDRESEN** is a computer scientist from Amherst, MA, who worked with Satoshi in Bitcoin's early days and took over as lead developer after Satoshi's disappearance.

**MIKE CALDWELL** is the Salt Lake City-based creator of Casascius Coins, gold and silver coins that act as physical carriers for bitcoins and are featured often in mainstream media.

**MARK KARPELES** is the ex-CEO of Mt. Gox, the once largest bitcoin exchange in the world, which was largely responsible for the early growth of Bitcoin's economy.

**ROGER VER** is one of Bitcoin's biggest evangelists, and his enthusiasm and support has earned him the nickname "Bitcoin Jesus". He's an investor of several Bitcoin start-ups and travels the world promoting Bitcoin.

**JENNIFER SHASKY CALVERY** is the Director of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, a department of the Treasury that seeks to protect the U.S. financial system from money laundering and other illicit activities.

**CAMERON WINKLEVOSS** and **TYLER WINKLEVOSS** of Facebook fame are outspoken Bitcoin entrepreneurs and investors, and claim to own one percent of all bitcoins in existence.

**TONY GALLIPPI** and **STEPHEN PAIR** are Co-founders of BitPay, a Bitcoin specific payment processing company that enables online merchants to easily and securely accept bitcoin payments.

**BRIAN ARMSTRONG** and **FRED EHRSAM** are Co-founders of Coinbase, a Bitcoin wallet service that received significant venture capital and has risen to the top among successful Bitcoin start-ups.

**YIFU GUO** is the creator of the first ASIC-based bitcoin miner which changed the mining game forever.

**MR. BITCOIN** is an experienced narcotics dealer who took his business off of the streets and onto the Silk Road.

**VITALIK BUTERIN** is a programmer, and writer and co-founder of Bitcoin Magazine. He played a significant role in raising awareness for Bitcoin and has contributed to a number of open source software projects.

## Q&A with Director Nicholas Mross

### 1) WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO MAKE A FILM ABOUT BITCOIN?

My brother, Daniel Mross, became very involved in Bitcoin mining in 2011 and it was all he could talk about. As a filmmaker, I decided to start capturing his story, and I quickly developed an interest in Bitcoin myself. The film just expanded from there as the popularity of Bitcoin grew, and we traveled all over, meeting the top Bitcoin entrepreneurs and enthusiasts.

### 2) FOR SOMEONE WHO IS NOT FAMILIAR, CAN YOU TELL US IN LAYMAN'S TERMS WHAT IS A BITCOIN?

Bitcoin is a peer-to-peer digital currency, meaning it is controlled by individuals and not tied to a central authority. It is a fully transparent monetary system, where each transaction is posted to a public ledger which is shared and maintained on a network of computers. Using Bitcoin, you can send money over the internet to anyone in the world as easily as you can send an email.

### 3) WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES BITCOIN SUCH A FAST-GROWING REVOLUTIONARY CURRENCY AND TECHNOLOGY?

Bitcoin is a great advancement as a payment system, especially for the billions of people around the world who don't have access to a bank account. But just as important is the cryptography behind Bitcoin, which has the potential to significantly change the way our society functions. A technology like this has never existed before, and the idea of taking control away from centralized authority structures and bringing it back to individuals is very powerful. Think of how Email or Facebook changed communication, and now imagine that happening with money...

### 4) WHAT KIND OF PREPARATION AND RESEARCH DID YOU DO PRIOR TO SHOOTING?

The majority of my research actually occurred while we were shooting. Bitcoin is such a complex subject that I was constantly learning more about it as filming progressed. In addition, our documentary unfolded as time went by so I was constantly chasing the latest story and news related to Bitcoin and therefore preparation was never ending.

### 5) WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES YOU AND YOUR TEAM FACED DURING PRODUCTION, AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

The biggest challenge in making this project was learning the ins and outs of Bitcoin, so that we were able to make the most comprehensive documentary possible. Bitcoin was, and continues to be, an ever-changing subject matter with an unknown future. Because of that, we filmed anything and everything we possibly could and never turned down an opportunity. New developments were happening practically every day, so by the end of production, the challenge became, "When do we *stop* filming?" Gaining the trust of the Bitcoin community was probably the other most difficult challenge we faced during production. Many Bitcoiners are naturally guarded and private with their lives, but we were lucky enough to break through that barrier and capture the true story. I think the big factor here was that we were filming early enough so people didn't see us as a "band wagon" documentary, but instead, filmmakers that truly cared about the potential of Bitcoin.

**6) HOW WAS IT WORKING WITH YOUR BROTHER, DAN MROSS, AND TELLING HIS SIDE OF THE STORY?**

My brother and I have wanted to work together on something for the longest time, and this turned out to be the perfect collaboration. I won't lie, we had our moments when having a camera constantly rolling became a little old. It can be tough mixing filming and family life, but we knew this was a once in a lifetime opportunity, and my brother was always willing to go the extra mile for the greater good of the project.

**7) HAVE YOU COME ACROSS ANY ANTI-BITCOINERS DURING THE FILMMAKING PROCESS? AND WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE INITIALLY SKEPTICAL ABOUT BITCOINS?**

We reached out to a few skeptics of Bitcoin and included some of their opinions in the film. They were hard to find, and many who are anti-Bitcoin wouldn't be on camera because of the risk of Bitcoin proving them wrong. Bitcoin can be an extremely intimidating concept to grasp and it's still in an experimental stage, so most people are understandably cautious. Many have predicted the end of Bitcoin, but time and time again it's proven resilient and only grown bigger and stronger. One of our biggest goals in making this film was to help the general public expand their knowledge of Bitcoin in an informative and entertaining way.

**8) WERE THERE ANY FOOTAGE OR SPECIFIC SCENES THAT WERE LEFT IN THE EDITING ROOM THAT YOU THINK WOULD HAVE BEEN BENEFICIAL TO INCLUDE IN THE FILM?**

Absolutely! Bitcoin is too big a topic to condense to a 90 minute story. We have hours upon hours of extra footage that unfortunately couldn't make the final cut, and hopefully we'll get a chance to release those stories as well.

**9) DURING THE FILMMAKING PROCESS, WHAT WAS ONE THING YOU LEARNED OR SURPRISED YOU? WHAT WILL YOU TAKE AWAY FROM THIS EXPERIENCE?**

Oddly, the one thing that surprised me the most was how willing people were to be on camera. Sure, we had plenty of people ask to not be filmed, but we had many more that were enthusiastic about the opportunity to be in a documentary on Bitcoin. I think because the subject matter is so cutting edge and there's so much momentum behind Bitcoin, people were just excited to be a part of it.

**10)WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE THE AUDIENCE TO TAKE AWAY FROM THE FILM AND BITCOIN?**

Bitcoin is incredibly innovative and has the potential to bring positive change to millions around the world. We hope the audience will learn about the possibilities of digital currency and the early innovators fighting to make it happen. Ultimately, we made this documentary for the faithful Bitcoin community, and hope they enjoy watching it as much as we enjoyed making it.

# Crew Biographies

## **DANIEL MROSS (SUBJECT & CO-PRODUCER)**

Daniel Mross is a software developer and IT professional from Pittsburgh, PA. He is an expert in database systems with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from Virginia Tech. He has been involved with a variety of startups, including Listmill, LLC, a company he co-founded. Daniel discovered Bitcoin in early 2011 and started mining and investing as a hobby. Today he spends most of his time as a technology consultant, working on software projects involving Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies.

## **NICHOLAS MROSS (DIRECTOR & PRODUCER)**

Raised in Pittsburgh, PA, Nicholas Mross is a director and independent producer who has been actively involved in the Pittsburgh film industry since graduating from the Toronto Film School in 2008. Also a Clemson University Marketing graduate, his background envelops a wide range of experience including web and corporate videos, commercial work, short and feature films, as well as various charity and non-profit projects.

His most noteworthy work is the 2013 feature film *Riddle*, a thriller starring Val Kilmer and Elisabeth Harnois.

Recently, Nicholas launched his own production company, Fair Acres Films, and his primary focus is creating and developing feature length projects, including its first major production, THE RISE AND RISE OF BITCOIN.

## **BEN BLEDSOE (PRODUCER)**

Ben Bledsoe grew up in the entertainment industry. At age 11, he was acting in several television shows and commercial campaigns. At 16, he founded the band Natural, which earned two US Gold Records, toured internationally, and went on to sell over 2 million records worldwide.

Bledsoe first met director Nicholas Mross on the set of "Riddle," a feature film starring Val Kilmer. It wasn't long before the pair teamed back up to create the feature-length documentary THE RISE AND RISE OF BITCOIN, which recently had its world premiere at the 2014 Tribeca Film Festival.

## **PATRICK LOPE (PRODUCER/EDITOR)**

Patrick Lope is an Emmy Award-winning television producer/director. Through his company, Lupo Productions, Patrick began producing the MTV documentary series "True Life" in 2002 and has since created more than 30 hour-long episodes. His documentary subjects have included Muay Thai fighters in Thailand, jockeys, elopers, professional gamers, high school football stars and competitive eaters in Japan, to name a few.

In 2009, Patrick was the director and editor of a documentary titled, "Kanye West Presents: Homecoming." Patrick filmed over the course of several weeks on tour with Kanye West. Other career highlights include a trip to the Brazilian Amazon, where Patrick was the first-ever journalist to live with and film the Panara Indians. Patrick also produced and edited an hour-long documentary titled, "CNN Presents: Fried", on the rise in popularity of a street drug known as "illy".

## **SIMON STEVENS (COMPOSER)**

As an active Composer and Orchestrator, Simon Stevens has been carving out a career in the world of music for film and television with recent projects including scoring the thriller SOFIA, starring Christian Slater, Donald Sutherland and Timothy Spall, and the comedy EXIT STRATEGY.

From 2010 to 2011, Stevens also worked as an assistant and orchestrator for Hollywood Composer Christopher Young, more notably for the films PRIEST and THE BLACK TULIP.

Stevens studied Composition at the Royal College of Music in London with distinguished professors such as Howard Davidson and Ken Hesketh. After graduating from the RCM, he was accepted into the Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television course at the University of Southern California, where he received tuition from composers Bruce Broughton, Christopher Young and Jack Smalley. Stevens was also selected to be mentored by Academy Award-nominated composer James Newton Howard.

## **Credits**

### **Directed By**

Nicholas Mross

### **Produced By**

Ben Bledsoe  
Nicholas Mross  
Patrick Lope

### **Edited By**

Patrick Lope

### **Co-produced By**

Ashley Mross  
Daniel Mross

### **Music By**

Simon Stevens

### **Associate Producer**

Matthew Roszak

### **Executive Producer**

Juergen Mross

### **FEATURING**

#### **In order of appearance**

Daniel Mross  
Tyler Winklevoss  
Cameron Winklevoss  
Gavin Andresen

Erik Voorhees  
Roger Ver  
Charlie Shrem  
Gabe Sukenik  
Zach Harvey  
Brian Mancini  
Yifu Guo  
Alex Waters  
George Mandrik  
Jered Kenna  
Ryan Singer  
Mike Caldwell  
Steve Quezadas  
“Mr. Bitcoin”  
Jennifer Shasky Calvery  
Sergio Demian Lerner  
Trace Mayer  
Stephen Pair  
Tony Gallippi  
Steve Kim  
Brian Armstrong  
Fred Ehrsam  
Fred Wilson  
Mark Karpeles  
Gonzague Gay-Bouchery  
Vitalik Buterin  
David Stein  
Bobby Lee  
Joerg Platzer  
James Angel

**PRODUCTION**

**Assistant Editor**

Nathan Innes

**Animation**

Nathan Inglesby

Kevin Stiller

**Bitcoin Animation**

Duncan Elms

**Writers**

Patrick Lope

Daniel Mross

Nicholas Mross

**Artwork & Graphics**

Eliza Mross

**Sound Mixer**

Lou Teti

**Color & Finishing**

Steve Beganyi

**Narration Recording**

Herman Pearl

**B-Camera, Tokyo**

Cole Stamm

**Opening Music Track**

Jonathan Bartz

**Conference Audio**

Paul Gibbons

**2ND UNIT, GERMANY**

**Production Coordinator**

Aaron Koenig

**Cinematographer**

Joerg Frank

**Sound**

Friedericke Zschau

**SPECIAL THANKS**

Roger Ver  
Erik Voorhees  
Charlie Shrem  
Alex Waters  
Yifu Guo  
Jered Kenna  
Zhou Tong  
Expresscoin

**ADDITIONAL THANKS**

Andrew Tepper  
Damon Hudac  
Adam Draper  
Jeff Garzik  
Charles Lee  
Nicolas Christin  
Ira Miller

Justin Blincoe  
Michelle Voorhees  
Cindy Zimmerman  
Rachel Yankelevitz  
R.C. Hall  
Marcie Braden  
Margaux Avedisian  
Greg Linden  
Dennis Couwenberg  
Carla Gericke  
Wesley Pegden  
Charles Nesson  
Josh Jones  
Jason Archinaco  
Dan Monroe  
Jon Gibbon  
Jonathan Mohan  
Lindsay Holland  
Bill Gaal  
Bob Lowery  
Wade Tucker  
Lee Goldfarb  
Nick Smyth  
Adam Atenasio  
P-R Stark  
Cymbre Walk  
Caroline Greenwood  
Lindsey Bledsoe  
Lea Ann Lope  
Chris Buongiorno  
Brandon Friesen  
Chris Perez  
Michael Donaldson  
Cordula Kahlitz-Post  
Randy Wayne  
Sarah Kargas  
BitInstant  
Tradehill  
Coinapult  
Coinbase  
Bitpay  
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PorcFest  
Pittsburgh Bitcoin Users  
Cups and Cakes Bakery  
Preferred Content  
Dorian Nakamoto  
“notig” (Title Inspiration)  
Anonymous  
The Bitcoin Developers  
Tim May  
Hal Finney  
Satoshi Nakamoto

### **ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE**

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