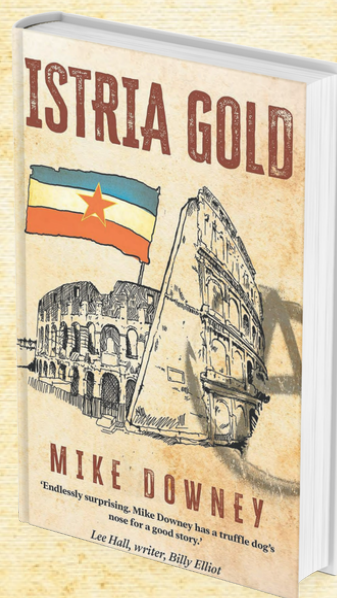


**“Endlessly surprising. Mike Downey has a truffle dog’s nose for a good story.”
Lee Hall, writer of BILLY ELLIOT**

ISTRIA GOLD

Mike Downey

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Paperback | Ebook | £20/€25 | 978-1-7398906-2-9



From award-winning filmmaker and producer Mike Downey comes an ambitious and atmospheric historical thriller debut, the first in a trilogy starring Marco Mihailić. Set on Croatia’s Istrian peninsula, *ISTRIA GOLD* explores the turbulent region’s history, culture and traditions, bringing it to life in the grand tradition of authors such as Martin Walker and his Bruno Courreges series.

PRAISE FOR ISTRIA GOLD:

“Downey...shares his infatuation of this landscape steeped in conflict, history and glorious food – especially, the truffle. This precious tuber is both a real and narrative mycelium, embedded within the Istrian soil, connecting Downey’s fascinating characters through centuries of turmoil - characters as rich and complex in flavor as the truffle. Downey is a passionate tour guide as well as a nimble storyteller.”

Melanie Finn, author of THE HARE and SHAME

“Downey has the uncanny ability to switch between wildly different storytelling eras, leaving us longing for the one left behind, only to find ourselves instantly immersed in the next...his depictions are so grippingly authentic, the man must possess a time machine.”

Michael Kalesniko, author of PUCKER UP and HOWARD STERN'S PRIVATE PARTS

“Mike Downey and his Istria Gold is a novel that is at once epic and startling!”

Rebecca Lenkiewicz writer of Oscar® winning movie, IDA

LONDON, 2019: After undercover cop Marco Mihailić is drummed out of the Metropolitan Police he seeks refuge with his family in Croatian Istria. He finds a world utterly changed from his childhood, and one in which his beloved grandfather Nino's truffle-dealing escapades have got him into the kind of trouble that he can no longer handle.

ROMAN ISTRIA, AD 81: 18-year-old Lucia desperately needs to escape the gladiatorial games, and her beloved English mastiffs are her way out. Although trained to kill in the arena, her loyal companions Brutus and Britannica have a secret ability that is the key to Lucia's freedom: their ability to smell out beds of truffles. They will help make her fortune and take Lucia and her family away from the violence and horror of the games.

ISTRIA, 1943: Brothers Pino and Nino Mihailić have seen waves of invaders beat, kill and imprison their innocent neighbours in war-torn Istria. Driven by fear and revenge, they join Tito's Partisans. Within a year Pino's star is riding high after a series of guerrilla victories, but Nino sees another way out of this war: his dog and the lucrative truffles they find in the countryside.

About the author:

Mike Downey is a filmmaker, activist and author. As a filmmaker, he has worked with the likes of James Ellroy, Colm Tóibín and David Grossman. He is currently Chairman of the European Film Academy and is a member of the BAFTA council. In 2021, he was awarded an OBE for his services to World Cinema and has served on boards and as artistic director for some of the most prestigious film festivals and organisations around the world.

He is co-founder of The International Coalition for Film Makers at Risk, has worked with the White Ribbon Alliance for over a decade and recently started an Emergency Fund for film makers in the Ukraine.

A former tutor on Sheffield University's Creative Writing for Film course, he has published several lengthy tomes about film production and written articles for publications ranging from Vogue to Variety. Istria Gold is his first novel and was inspired by his passion for the history and culture of the region he has called home for 25 years.



Mike is available for interview and to write features.

For review copies and more information please contact Jaime Witcomb on Jaime@inkeditorial.co.uk