

Faith

Young Filmmakers presents

the art of believing

**VIDEO
PROJECT**

explores diversity and similarity and the ways in which belief influences the lifestyle of the youth of Darebin presented by:



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Department of Immigration and
Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

**YOU
ME
AUSTRALIAN**
living in harmony



Faith

the art of believing

What is faith and where do you get it? If you have faith, how do you keep it? If you keep faith but never use it, is it really faith?

Edwina Entwisle The Project Coordinator.

Faith: the Art of Believing explores in film, the diverse expressions of faith in the lives of young people.

Is faith a matter of black & white? Or is it about all the shades of grey in between? What is the link between Christian forgiveness and Buddhist compassion? Perhaps the more interesting question in the twenty first century is, what are the common threads?

The young filmmakers who met and filmed young people from different faith communities, observed and documented the role faith played in young people's lives. They were interested in young people's explanation of their beliefs and what part, if any, these beliefs played in their daily lives.

In the age of the information super highway and genetic engineering how did these young people relate to their faith as a source of making sense of the world?

In these short films the filmmakers discovered a world where faith continues to be relevant to many young people's lives and is as dynamic, complex, evolving and ever-changing as the young people themselves.

Edwina has been involved in the arts all her life, working as a performer, director, writer, teacher, facilitator, broadcaster and most recently in film. She has toured extensively with several theatre companies and directed award winning shows. Her passion is exploring communication in all its forms. Currently studying for her Masters Degree in Creative Art she is most interested in projects which serve to contribute to the development of community and social justice.



"During this project I have seen the incredible feats which faith can perform. When people pool their energy and ideas, great things can happen. It has been a wonderful experience for me working on Faith: the Art of Believing. Being given the opportunity to produce a positive documentary is a satisfying achievement, especially at a time when faith and hope have worn a little thin. The richness that our Australian

Multicultural community has to offer is a resource that has opened up to me in working on this project. I have met and worked along side some incredible people who work passionately for what they believe in and have inspired me with their commitment and drive. I would like to thank all who have been involved with this project from the young people who gave of themselves and opened their lives to the project, the filmmakers, who have worked tirelessly, the great support of those who gave their time and energy to the Advisory Committee, and to the City of Darebin and Darebin Ethnic Communities Council who had the vision to create this project."

Helena Ashton

Helena works in multimedia, sound and vision. Her achievements to date include producing and presenting for Earthspirit Program on PBSfm, producing, writing and presenting for Radio Jam Room on Channel 31, coordinating and hosting 'The Chamber Sessions', improvisational evenings for Melbourne artists and designing and hosting for special one off events. Helena is also the mother of one.

Buddhism & The Middle Way

'Buddhism & The Middle Way' explores the beauty of friendship and the fusion of spiritual and cultural values amongst youths in the Vietnamese community in a contemporary Australian society. The film explores themes of friendship, goddess worshipping and kung fu. In my exploration of young Buddhists I found that all races bring different flavours to the harmony of a multicultural society; and are all equally valid to develop their way of being – thus the middle way is achieved. Buddhism is then a rather unconscious backdrop for this documentation about humanity. Faith here is extended to other areas that are not of religious nature – but Faith is the gift that we can all share while we exercise humanity for one another in some way – or perhaps in the 'middle way'.



Daniel King



Daniel King is an indigenous Australian and has been working with in film, television and art industries for the past five years. Daniel's family originates from the Awabakal (Newcastle) and Thungguti (Kempsey) peoples.

As a writer/director Daniel has produced three short films. The first titled "Identity" made in 1999 won best documentary at the 2000 RMIT University Film Festival. The second, "The Opportunists" made in 2000 was selected for screening at a number of festivals including the St.Kilda Film Festival and as a part of Melbourne's Annual Fringe Festival. In December 2001 Daniel wrote and directed "Mirror Images", which was awarded Best Film at the 2001 RMIT Video Production Awards, Best Film at the "Love your work" Open Channel Film Competition and the Best Film at the "Altered States" Mushroom Pictures film competition.

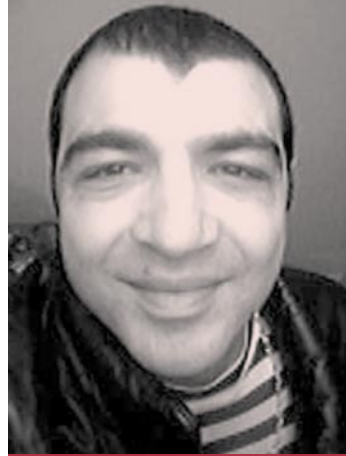
Mirror Images was also selected for screening at the 2002 St. Kilda film festival and the Sydney Opera House (2002 Tudawali awards), the Australian embassy in France and the Rotterdam film festival in Holland. Daniel has also produced a corporate video dealing with koori youth and perspective in education, training and employment for VAIEA.

In addition to film, Daniel has also worked in a number positions within the arts industry including, visual arts coordinator at the Bless Your Big Black Arts Festival (2001), curator of numerous indigenous art exhibitions that recently includes the exhibition titled, Ab-Normal (2002 Next wave festival), coordinator the "What's Black and Short?" film night and recently coordinated the Reel Dirt film festival for the 2003 Bless Your Black Arts festival.

"One of the major things that is important to me is to change the opinion of negative stereotypes about indigenous people that non-indigenous people seem to have, and to take on the responsibility to raise awareness to this issue".

Indigenous Spirituality. This short documentary looks at the childhoods of two young Indigenous girls growing up in an urban society. Through this story we see the contrast of traditional and urban spirituality and the part that white culture has played on the learning, understanding and teachings of Indigenous spirituality.

Mehmet Kochan



Mehmet began his career in the arts as a performer, youth worker and arts manager before turning his attention to film. He has produced Access News Environmental for Channel 31 whilst sound engineering for local Melbourne bands. He was awarded an SBS Scholarship for the Australian Screen Directors Association and awarded Best Documentary Film at the Barcelona Film Festival for "The Demon Fault", a film he co-wrote and produced with Elizabeth Tadic which screened on SBS "About Us".

I initially set out to explore the diversity of Islam through young people and their respective denominations. However, after meeting with the young people and through the preliminary off camera interviews, my direction and line of questioning changed. In a sense these young people became co-directors. There was a much more important issue emerging than one of denomination. A central issue for most was to be accepted as an Australian. Culturally, these young people neither identified as Anglo Australian or with their parents' country of origin and religion. Rather, these young people, through social cross pollination, are forging a rapidly growing, and diverse cross-cultural hybrid. An Ausislam.



Monique Mahony

Monique Mahony has been involved in numerous independent film and artistic projects. In 2003 Monique participated in another Darebin Arts Council project called Short Attention Span, in which she directed and produced a documentary as part of a mentorship program initiated by the Council. In 2004 Monique and her creative partner, Rebecca Louise began an arts production company called Spiral Productions, Monique directed and co-produced a project entitled Taking Note, (written & co-produced by Rebecca), a multi-arts production involving film, theatre and soundscape. They intend to work in the multi-arts field, combining different and unique artforms in order to create new artistic experiences. Monique also has a Bachelor of Arts/Humanities in Cinema Studies at La Trobe University.

This Christian segment of the documentary was interesting to make. I got to see and experience many different cultures all worshipping the same God in different and unifying ways. The physical aspect of the filmmaking was great and a big reminder of the importance of logistic organisation. This segment as with the others is not designed to preach about Christianity or any of the other religions, but to merely open up a dialogue of exploration into some of the other cultures and beliefs of some of the people who live, study and work in Darebin. I hope you enjoy the experience as I did in making it.



Kirk Robson

Kirk Robson graduated from Deakin University in 1999 after completing an Arts (drama)/Teaching double degree. Since then he has worked on a number of theatre and film projects. Currently he works as Artistic Director with The Torch Project, a community cultural development company that uses theatre as the vehicle to explore critical issues. Highlights include: Mechtron (1998), The Torch (1999, 2000, 2001 & 2002), The Bridge (2003) and Idol Quest (2004). Films include The Smooth Move (2002), The Dirt on Squirt (2003), and his first documentary The Turning of the Tide (2004). Kirk was a recipient of the Australia Council for the Arts' "Young and Emerging Artist Initiative" in 2002 through the Community Cultural Development Board. Kirk has a passion for exploring issues of culture and identity, and for using the arts to imagine a fairer, better world. He is the son of a Uniting Church minister, and is an Elder at the Church of All Nations in Carlton.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with all the generous participants on this project. Through scouring community noticeboards, phoning complete strangers, imagining relevant visual images and having long and winding discussions on camera, everyone I've spoken to has been excited by the idea of sharing their perspective on faith and contemporary spirituality. And this generosity and openness shows on film.

All of the people I interviewed express a deep reverence and concern for the natural world, whether this is expressed through buying organic food, observing the cycles of the moon, or using natural objects, like crystals, for meditation and healing.

Also clear is their desire to bring faith into their body – through dance, song, massage or fire-twirling, all of them connect with a fully grounded, physical sense of spirituality.

They are also clear on what life is about, and what it isn't. Their sense of what is sacred informs their choices. Important in this is balance. They see the environmental cost of corporate profit. They see many people overworked and empty. They see war, division and fear. And they seek a better way to live. They are young, and they express a powerful alternative.

Sudha Saini

Sudha has a long list of credits to her name including a Masters in Information Technology from Swinburne University. She has worked in the hospitality industry as the manager of a busy restaurant and as a teacher. For the past couple of years she has turned her hand to filmmaking and television broadcast and currently produces and presents a weekly Indian television program for Channel 31.

Working on this film has been a great experience for me. It has shown me the richness of other religions and of my own religion. During this project I have been exposed to new aspects of life and different facets of Hinduism of which I, myself, was not aware. And although this film has opened up new branches of Hinduism for me, I am still led back to my initial understanding; Unique but still the same, Hinduism is many religions in one, it is how we behave not what we believe or belong to.

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