

Director's Q & A

Q: What was the inspiration behind this documentary? And/or how did it come about?

A: The subjects in the documentary are my family- my uncle, auntie and cousin, so it is a film that is close to my heart. I have been aware of the story for several years, although I was unaware of the emotional rawness of their situation until I started shooting nearly three years ago. I was fascinated by why my uncle found it so difficult to accept his own son, who is gay, and how they relate to each other after 15 years of not talking to one another. I was interested in looking into the cultural and personal values attached to my uncle's beliefs and his decision not to speak to his son, and how it affected the family dynamics. This was the initial direction of my film. But after a recent unfortunate turn of fate, my uncle began speaking to his son again, and the film shifted into looking at the development of their re-ignited relationship and the possibilities of a reconciliation between father, son and the entire family. The film is essentially about a family's journey, with each member battling for a certain level of acceptance in dealing with their predicament and pushing their own boundaries of understanding. Initially, this documentary was made for my local short film festival "Enter the Dragon Film Festival" a couple of years ago, as a 15-minute short film, mainly covering their back story. It travelled to various festivals over the next few years. However, when the story began taking some drastic turns, I recommenced shooting.

Q: What do you like/find challenging about making documentaries? Did you encounter any particular challenges in making this documentary and, if so, how did you overcome them? Any lucky breaks, and if so, how did they come about and how did you embrace them?

A: Documentaries offer a lot more freedom and accessibility to stories. Every person has a fascinating story to tell and documentary allows for the most minimal resources to share those stories. The most challenging, but at the same time most advantageous aspect of this documentary, was the fact that the characters in the film are my family. It allowed for unbelievably honest responses to many challenging questions and confronting moments. It was quite an emotional journey for me, being a part of the family and not only witnessing but recording major developments within the story. It was a challenge separating the role of "family" and "filmmaker". I overcame this by being as objective as possible, especially in the edit. After three years of filming, I had to look at it as any other film I've worked on and just try to tell the most honest and interesting story. It is a very intimate documentary that takes a

very natural, observational approach to filming. I want the audience to feel like they're also part of the family and a part of the drama that is unfolding.

Q: How does the documentary relate to your past work, if at all? Was this film a natural next step or a radical departure from your previous work in film, TV etc?

A: While making this documentary, I worked a full time 9 – 5 job in distribution at Village Roadshow, where I worked for over four years. During this time, I also produced the NSW FTO-funded short drama "In the Middle", and other privately-funded short fiction and documentary projects. Previous to this, I studied Visual Production at Macquarie University.

Q: Apart from "it's a masterpiece" what would your ideal viewer response to the doco be!?

A: I'd like audiences to question their own position within their family, and really appreciate and cherish the sacred relationship they are a part of. Hopefully, people going through similar circumstances will see that with a little hope, things *can* change. I'd like audiences to realise that life is too short for hostility, especially within your own family. It shouldn't take a dying father to realise that life is indeed too brief not be talking to your own child. I'd like viewers to begin moving beyond their own prejudices if they possess them, and initiate tolerance or at least a 'thought' into the complexity and diverse perspectives of these situations. Generally, Eastern European attitudes on such matters have not been exposed to the wider community, so I'd like this film to also reach audiences who may be close-minded and tight-lipped about such issues. Straight *or* gay, I hope viewers empathise with both the story and the characters on a *human level*, and realise the importance of belonging, acceptance and family.

Q: What is your next project or what are you working on now?

A: I am working independently *and* collaborating on a number of projects at the moment. I am writing a few short dramas and developing a short animation. I'm also in post-production for a documentary that I have produced and also currently researching future documentary projects. I primarily love telling good stories and allowing audiences a brief escape into new worlds and unique ways of seeing and understanding them, whatever the medium.

Director: Tony Radevski

Biography: Tony Radevski attended Macquarie University and completed a Bachelor of Media in Visual Production. While studying, he worked on several short films and documentaries in a variety of production roles. He worked in theatrical and DVD distribution at Village Roadshow for over four years during the release of "The Matrix" and "The Lord of the Rings" trilogies. He produced the NSW FTO-funded short drama "In the Middle"; and has produced and directed various other privately-funded short film projects, including "But What About the Revolutionary George Pocket?" His films have screened nationally and internationally at festivals such as the Sydney Film Festival, Melbourne Fringe Festival, New York Gay and Lesbian Film Festival and Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, picking up awards and special commendations. He is currently in various stages of production with documentary, drama and animation projects.