



Josh Reid

Lights... Camera... Action!

JOSH REID made a short film for a church conference that is now being broadcast in other nations. He spoke to AMANDA KAMI on making movies and making a difference.

Creativity and the community are two of the major passions of Illawarra filmmaker, Josh Reid.

"We need to get out of the pews and into the community," he said. "Don't get me wrong, I'm heavily involved in my home church and I love it – but as Christians we need to be about more than just the Sunday service."

Josh believes commitment to the community is essential for every Christian. "Many still live as though only their pastors can lead people to Christ at a Sunday service," he said. "Do people need to be in a church to get saved? Or is the church there to go into the community?"

Brimming with passion, Josh continued to share his heart for the community and the creative communication of the Gospel. He is actively involved in the media and creative arts teams at Wollongong Lighthouse Church, yet also finds time to lead a community action team.

"Basically we are about showing God's love through deeds," he said. "We are committed to thinking up creative ways for people to volunteer in the community. We even have volunteers committing up to 30 hours a week – and they aren't even Christians!"

Insight

Making movies gives expression to what's in his heart. Josh's short film, 'Insight', was originally created for Wollongong Lighthouse Church's Insight Conference last year, and has since attracted international attention from Shine TV in New Zealand, U Channel in Jakarta, Indonesia and UCB in the UK. The short film has also aired on the Australian Christian Channel which broadcasts both nationally and internationally.

"The aim of the Insight conference is to educate and raise up delegates to do things outside the Sunday service," he said. Delegates were deeply moved by the film when it was screened at the conference last year.

The seven minute film features two main characters – a corporate businessman and a homeless man – and creatively documents the daily experiences of both. It accents the monotony of their brief daily encounters with one another, and across a short creative journey, the viewer becomes privy to the change within the businessman. Suddenly he softens from his judgmental arrogance and shows grace toward his homeless counterpart. The film is deliberately confronting and causes viewers to question their personal viewpoints.

"It could happen to any of us if we take our eyes off the Lord," Josh said. "Who's to say our lives can't go that way? If we succumb in one area and then another and another, ultimately we can find ourselves asking, 'How did I get here?'"

"My hope was that the film would cause people to question their own lives and perceptions."

Creatively communicating Christ

With a background in drama and his passion for the community Josh's transition into filmmaking was natural. Since making 'Insight', he has already completed two other short films with the help of his young family, church friends and cast and crew.

"I want to make films with a message," Josh said. "Preaching is powerful and needed, but there are other ways of communicating the Gospel."

"The thing about films is that something often stays with a viewer. And if they enjoyed the experience they tell others about it. Films also cause people to question issues and things about their own lives. If done well, films can be a powerful tool to aid the Church."

Josh also said he would love to see Christian talent shaping the film industry.

"Traditionally a lot of Christian films have been quite cheesy but I want to see Christians developing quality blockbuster films." He explains, "I would love for people to say, 'Josh Reid is a great director and did you know he is a Christian?', rather than, 'Josh Reid is a great Christian director'."

"I don't think we need to 'preach' all the time. We should evangelise in a relaxed, natural way that says, 'Yes, of course I'm a Christian, why aren't you?'"

For further information on Josh Reid's films, visit [www.earlstreet.com.au](http://www.earlstreet.com.au)

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Scenes from the Insight film