

DFA

WEEKEND LEISURE

FRIDAY JULY 11 2008
SUNDAY JULY 13 2008

FLIGHT FROM DEATH



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WHAT if death was the sole motivator behind human behaviour? This is the question posed by the award-winning documentary *Flight from Death: The Quest for Immortality*, to be screened free of charge at the William Humphreys Art Gallery next week.

Called "life-transformational" by many viewers, this film investigates humankind's relationship with death. Narrated by Gabriel Byrne, it uncovers anxiety about death as a possible root cause of many of our behaviours on a psychological, spiritual and cultural level.

The film follows on the Pulitzer Prize winning book *Denial of Death* by Ernest Becker, a cultural anthropologist, who claimed that death anxiety is a primary motivator of human behaviour, specifically aggression and violence. These claims led to a team of researchers conducting more than 300 laboratory studies over 25 years, and the cameras follow this team across eight different countries to put together a thought-provoking, revelatory film.

The film is directed by Patrick Shen (pictured, left) and produced by Shen and Greg Bennick (right). Both will attend the screening.

The Whag screening of the film will take place next Saturday (July 19) at 7 pm.

Call Morgan Morgan on 076 456 2895 for more information.

Morals and mortality

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FOLLOWING on the success of the film *Flight from Death: The Quest for Immortality*, the Legacy Project was born.

The project aims to fuel students' thoughts on difficult questions: What would you do if you grew up next door to a concentration camp? What if your neighbour disappeared one day, never to return? What if you had grown up under apartheid, or with Aids, or in the midst of economic devastation? How would your life be different?

Dave Whitson, an American teacher who started an organisation called Road Scholars, joined forces with Greg Bennick, the co-producer of *Flight from Death*, to lead a group of American students on journeys to capture the world's dark past and hopeful future on film.

Last year saw the group visiting Poland to conduct interviews with Holocaust survivors, members of the SS Sonderkommando, politicians and other individuals.

The aim of the visit to Poland was to understand what happened in the concentration camps, to get a sense of Polish culture today, and to learn how people who have suffered immense trauma were able to overcome their past and live fulfilling happy lives.

This year, the Legacy Project chose South Africa as their destination of choice.

They will examine the recent xenophobic violence that rocked the country, the legacy left by apartheid, how the oppressed have become the oppressors, and also the future of South Africa. Focusing on the country's youth, they will examine the effects of poverty, Aids and racism, as well as the unwavering hope that is present among South Africa's young.

The team will visit Cape Town, Johannesburg, Soweto, Pretoria and Kimberley.