

NAIDOC Week 09

Tandanya - Film Screenings Synopsis

In a League of their Own

5th July @ 1pm

This series follows Australia's first all-black football team through their first season in the big league. After more than 30 years of running their own competition in a remote island community off the coast of Darwin, the Tiwi Bombers set out to prove that their fast intuitive style of football can beat the long established teams of the NTFL. We discover early that Australian Rules Football is like a religion on the islands where every child, male and female, learns the basic skills of the game before they learn to speak. With the best Tiwi players being drafted into the regional and national competitions, the islands have earned a reputation for supplying highly skilled, unorthodox players like Maurice and Dean Rioli and Michael Long.

From the outset there is opposition from the other clubs as their top Tiwi players are signed to the Bombers. It looks like a Tiwi dream team will come together to annihilate the established clubs. As the season starts the crowds go wild for the Bombers who've brought a spark of electricity into the game. After a long winning streak through the first half of the season the Bombers appear to be unbeatable. But there are unseen dangers lurking behind their apparent success. The young players' commitment to steer clear of drugs and alcohol is severely tested. Riding high on success they lose their resolve and attendance at training drops. Their winning streak comes to an end and they now struggle to maintain their place in the top four teams.

The club are now soul-searching for a solution. The tropical rains have begun and the dirt roads that connect the communities have turned to mud. Getting the team together to train is more difficult than ever. The players and their mentors look to the past and the strength of their tribal ancestors for inspiration. The team leaders focus the younger players on the idea that they have inherited this opportunity from the decades of struggle by their fathers and grandfathers to achieve a team of their own in the big league. The history of the islands includes the establishment of a mission home for half-cast children taken from their Aboriginal families on the mainland and brought up as orphans by the Catholic Church. Many members of the "stolen generations" have gone on to become some of the greatest players Australian Football has ever seen.

The team makes a last ditch effort to make it into the finals series. After losing their first finals game the entire history of Tiwi football comes down to one game. The pressure is unbearable, the weather couldn't be worse. Training is almost impossible.

The highly emotional climax to this journey is unavoidable. The cost of their inexperience and lack of discipline is crushing for the players and the club but the message for young and old in the Tiwi community is to get back up and fight another day. We leave the Bombers running on to the field for the first game of their second season with the shine of hope in their eyes once more.

Kanyini

7 - 9th July @ 10am

11th July @ 1pm

Kanyini is a Pitjantjatjara world meaning interconnectedness; to care for, to support, to nurture and protect. **Kanyini**, the film, contains great beauty and wisdom, and offers an accessible account of what has happened to Australia's First People since the arrival of the white man. Based on his own personal journey, Bob Randall, who lives beside Uluru in Central Australia, tells a story that is not only of one man and his people, but the story of the human race. Told without bitterness, Bob Randall weaves his story with depth, understanding and precision. It is a tale of Indigenous wisdom clashing against materialist notions of progress - inviting all Australians to work together to understand, acknowledge and redress the wrongs of the past. It is a film for every Australian.

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Liyarn Ngarn

7 - 9th & 12th July @ 1pm

Liyarn Ngarn, in the Yawuru language of the West Kimberly region, means 'coming together of the spirit'. It is a compelling documentary, aiming to assist with the process of true and lasting reconciliation. An often painful, yet inspiring journey of strength, **Liyarn Ngarn** is unique, powerful, and completely absorbing.

"Liyarn Ngarn had me riveted and moved me to tears, anger and shame. It's the most culturally significant film I've seen in years...Pete Postlethwaite, Archie Roach and Patrick Dodson are superb...it's an absolute 'must see' for ALL Australians." David Lightfoot, film producer.

Sacred Ground

7 - 9th July @ 2.30pm

Critically acclaimed as one of the year's most significant Aboriginal films - **Sacred Ground** tells the true story of an oppressed people fighting to hold onto the last remnants of their ancient heritage and culture.

Quenten Agius discovers his ancestor's ancient skeletal remains in the middle of a multi-million dollar housing development. This life changing moment forms the central story of his emotional journey. In the midst of a development boom, the film follows Quenten over 4 years as his heritage group struggle to save their ancestor's burial grounds and other ancient sites from destruction.

Aboriginal heritage - Australia's ancient heritage, is the heart, soul and spirit of this land. The ancient sites of the first people, their beliefs and traditions, are not being respected or protected. Their sites are living breathing museums in the sand. Much of their heritage has been destroyed, so what they have left is precious to them.

Sacred Ground is a universal story that exposes the shameful truth and injustices being perpetrated on Aboriginal heritage and culture, supported by government. When Quenten speaks we can see and feel his pain. There are many powerful and personal moments that connect us to his culture and enable us to begin to understand the importance of preserving his people's ancient heritage for future generations.

In the lucky country, 40,000 years of ancient heritage, culture and traditions are being swept away - it's a national disgrace. Quenten's mob are witnessing the desecration and destruction of the last remaining heritage and cultural sites on their traditional lands - sites that are vital to their Dreaming stories and cultural beliefs - stories and beliefs that have been handed down from generation to generation for thousands of years.

Never before documented scenes of ancient Aboriginal ceremonies, Dreaming stories and chanting in the Adjahdura language, are important elements of this significant and multi-layered international award-winning documentary.

5 years in the making, **Sacred Ground** is a deeply moving story. From the opening scenes to the thought provoking climax, it takes us into an Aboriginal world that is rarely seen or heard. Quenten and his mob have the guts to stand up, to speak out and express their views, to fight for what they believe in - **Sacred Ground** is their story.

Black Screen

10th July from 10am

Films tbc