

HEALING

MIRACLES, MYSTERIES AND JOHN OF GOD

Press Materials

Healing: Miracles, Mysteries and John of God

A David Films production

Running time: 65 minutes; shooting format: HDCam

International DVD edition, ISBN 0-6154-9367-X

Format: NTSC DVD Video, widescreen, seven language track options, including English; Spanish; French; Portuguese; German; Italian; and Russian.

Winner

Best Humanitarian Film

Independent Spirit Award

Best Cinematography

Monaco International Film Festival 2008

Quotes

"It seems humanly impossible to resist the allure of this beautiful, raw and honest film." - Dr. med. Annemarie Keller

Capsule Synopsis

Witness the outstanding abilities of John of God, one of the most powerful and respected healers in the world today. This award-winning documentary takes you on physical and emotional journeys which reach beyond conventional medical understanding, and answers fundamental questions about life, faith and our interaction with the spiritual world.

About the Film

"Healing: Miracles, Mysteries and John of God" takes you on a journey to João Teixeira de Faria, also known as John of God, the miracle healer of Brazil. The film explores the extraordinary abilities of this internationally respected medium and shows João's incorporation by one of the many spirit beings who work through him to heal sick and disabled people from all over the world.

Since João first discovered his miraculous faculty more than 50 years ago, millions of people have visited him at the Casa de Dom Inácio Centre in the Brazilian village of Abadiânia. People who came with illnesses considered incurable, have received healing that mainstream medical opinion cannot explain.

The film takes an objective and unflinching look at the physical and emotional journeys undertaken by some of these people. It shows how spiritual energy can transcend conventional medical knowledge, and features remarkable sequences

showing João being used by the spirit entities as a channel to carry out their miraculous work.

Healing is a visually stunning work that challenges conventional perceptions of normality. Through unbiased reporting of the facts, including testimony from doctors, scientists and people who have been restored to health, it provides a unique insight into the achievements of a man who insists he is merely the instrument through which faith, compassion and benign spiritual forces are channeled to alleviate suffering.

Whatever your beliefs, Healing cannot fail to inspire, impress and intrigue. It will lead you towards an acceptance of the fact, supported by indisputable visual evidence, that in this quiet Brazilian village, something truly miraculous is happening for the benefit of mankind.

Director's Statement

When we set out to make this movie, I was intrigued and fascinated by the fact that someone like João Teixeira de Faria, also known as John of God, could use merely "energy" to heal so many people. Confronted with the severe, often terminal illnesses of John of God's patients, I was afraid the documentary would be filled with reels of intense suffering, blood and gore. Yet what we found were the silent and unobtrusive surgeries that took us on a totally different cinematic journey. Instead of a screen filled with shocking images, we looked on while these gentle, peaceful miracles took place through the hands of João and the Entities. This posed many questions I was determined to explore. And I found such marvelous and inspiring subjects to help us find answers and understanding. I found people who were holding keys that open spiritual doors.

João is a full trance-medium with the extraordinary capability to unite Entities in himself. Through his body, they undertake surgeries and cure patients with both physical and emotional conditions. The surgical interventions without anesthesia, pain, or infection are part of a highly developed spiritual action. It is this physical, metaphorical as well as spiritual work that became the core of the documentary.

I wanted to make a sensitive film that focuses on its subjects and allows them to talk freely. I explored many themes and met many inspiring people, and with this documentary wanted to show that the energy of life is responsible for far more than we can imagine...

Filmmaker's Notes

What did you experience making this film?

One of the most amazing experiences making HEALING was when I realized that the "entities" through which John of God heals people are actually present. I even noticed the individuality of these entities, which isn't all that surprising, considering they once were alive, and individual human beings just like all of us.

It felt good to see that the individuality of a human being won't go away after we die. At the Casa, I observed that the spiritual entities interact with "our world" at any time, and have an impact.

Making HEALING challenged my understanding of the concept of "miracle." Millions of people who come to John of God receive healing in one way or another, and many of these healings could be called a miracle, yet when they happen so frequently over more than five decades, "Miracle" just doesn't really describe what happens there. Even with all our scientific knowledge, we obviously still aren't able to understand and explain everything.

But I also learned that not everyone can be cured from everything. We all have to do some serious work and thinking, and understand our own mental mechanisms that make us sick.

How was it to experience actual surgeries?

To me it was surprising that physical surgeries, as opposed to spiritual interventions, didn't take place very often; but when they happened they were performed with unsterilized scalpels, and without anesthesia, but didn't cause pain and the wounds healed in no time. Only patients who specifically asked for physical surgeries received them, but even then, their healing process was far more spiritual.

Absolutely stunning to me was to see the impact of spiritual surgeries, those performed without any physical intervention: in ultrasound imaging, tissues of these patients did show signs of scraping and scooping, as well as sutures.

Did you personally have a healing experience?

Yes, I received healing while making the film. I'm a director of photography specializing in extreme sports. A few years ago, I produced a film about an athlete, Felix Baumgartner, who went across the British Channel with only one wing on his back. While shooting out in the open, in about 30,000 feet altitude (10km) and at minus 62 degree Fahrenheit (-52C), our air system failed and I was disconnected from oxygen for a few minutes and unconscious. Ever since that accident I had serious respiration problems, which went away while making the film.

Did the experience change your beliefs in any way?

I realized how much we are connected with the spiritual world. It really doesn't matter if we are aware of this, or not. The spiritual world does have an impact on our lives, both in positive and in negative ways.

How long were you in Brazil making this film?

I was lucky enough to observe the work of John of God for a total of nine weeks, during four separate trips. I also went once with John of God to the south of Brazil, at the Rio Grande, where he travels twice a year to examine natives who can't visit him in Abadiania. In Brazil, it is rather common for people to see a healer instead of a doctor, whom most cannot afford. John of God treats people free of charge.

Have you followed up with any of the "patients" from your film? Do you know how they're doing today?

I'm still in touch with most of the subjects in the film, and they are sustainably healthy.

What was your intention when you decided to make this film?

We realized there was a profound and interesting challenge here, and wanted to show, in a cinematic way, that there is evidence for the mutual relationship between the spiritual world, and the so called real world.

How did you create the historical preamble?

As patron saint of the Casa, the spirit of St. Ignatius de Loyola is influential, powerful and omnipresent, and I wanted to pay homage to this. Encapsulated in the imagery and music that opens and closes the film, we focused on a period in Ignatius' life where he left his wealth and earthly powers behind, including his weaponry symbolized by laying down his sword, to enter a life in God's name, starting the Jesuit order. We shot these sequences at the historical locations in Spain, including the Montserrat monastery. What also struck me as significant is that during his ministry Ignatius travelled extensively and performed miracles, but suffered persecution and physical abuse for his spiritual beliefs. Five centuries later, João Teixeira de Faria – John of God – underwent similar harassment and ill-treatment when he first began wandering from city to city to bring healing to the people.

Interview Subjects

João Teixeira de Faria
Dorothy W. Cooke
Dr. Henri Tjiong
Heather Cumming
Anjelika Kremer
Phoebe Australia
Richard Sheff, MD
Ron Pieris
Maree Duffy
Maria Crane
Toni Barnet
Dawn Gargan
Andrée Bonnet
Sarah Maria Müller
Zahra Mousawi
Primar Dr. med. Werner Erd

Filmmakers' Bios

DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY - David Unterberg

Director, producer and cinematographer David Unterberg is a sculptor and painter by training, but in 1990 discovered film making and found his true calling. David is known internationally for his breath-taking extreme sports documentaries and commercials, for which he won numerous awards, including Red Bull and Puma campaigns, and his films about high profile world champions, B.A.S.E. jumper Felix Baumgartner; wind surfer Björn Dunkerbeck; and sprinter Linford Cristie, among many others.

David is recognized the world over for his specialty, aerial cinematography, and, as pioneer and inventor, famous for continuously pushing the envelope in this discipline. He is also sought after for risk assessment and management in all matters of cinematography under the most extreme circumstances.

David's documentaries include exclusive portraits about artists, among others for Red Bull owner Dietrich Mateschitz's television channel Servus TV.

Extreme sports live side by side with art and spiritual subjects in David's career, informing each other, and feeding off his talent for composition, concentration, and great instincts for the Moment.

CO-DIRECTOR - Harald Wiesleitner

Harald Wiesleitner is an award-winning photographer and video artist whose work has been shown in galleries around the world including the Museum of Young Art in Vienna, and Synchronicity Fine Art and Video New York in New York City.

CO-PRODUCER - Andrea Wolffer

Andrea Wolffer is a fine artist who graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design. Her emotional art installations deal with history and the nature of personal memories. Andrea has worked with artists, photographers and designers around the world and brings her talents for creative thinking and organization to this film.

EDITOR - Matthias Weiss

Matthias Weiss comes from an architectural background and is working exclusively for David Unterberg in every aspect of filmmaking. He was deeply involved in all areas of the entire production, including the key task of editing the film.

MUSIC - Peter Valentin

Composer Peter Valentin's music underlines the spiritual atmosphere in HEALING, and echoes the presence of the Entities throughout the documentary. Peter's work ranges from theatrical events to scores for television and film.

Ulrike Valentin has partnered with Peter on a number of projects and her hauntingly-beautiful vocals are a perfect backdrop to the cinematography of this film.

ACTORS - Alexander Arthur Dietz and Horst Prem

Alexander Arthur Dietz and Horst Prem both come from fine-art backgrounds and through their moving portrayal of Saint Ignatius and a humble beggar, bring the historical part of this documentary to life.

Credits

Produced by	David Unterberg and Andrea Wolffer
Directed by	David Unterberg and Harald Wiesleitner
In Cooperation with	Matthias Weiss
Music composed by	Peter Valentin
Vocals performed by	Ulrike Valentin
Director of Photography	David Unterberg
Edited by	Matthias Weiss
Actors	Alexander Arthur Dietz and Horst Prem
Graphics	Leslie Mello and Andrea Wolffer
Graphics, Motion Graphics	Simon Faulhaber
Abadiânia Editor, Connector	Josef Schöffmann
Abadiânia Editor	Detlef von Storch
Text	Johannes Hammacher
Voice overs by	Andrew Golder Caroline Richards Mel Greenwald Dana Friedrich Katrín Fröhlich Petra Barthel Olaf Baden Grace Kelly Mendonca Carla Bessa Urbano Carvelli Katia Borrás Joél Valverde Morin Smole Arthur Galiandin Elettra De Salvo Gianfranco Licandro Anne Rojewski Jef Bayonne
Mentors	Heather Cumming Susanne Geyer Dr. med. Annemarie Keller Angelika Brand
Special Thanks	Montserrat Monastery Casa de Dom Inácio de Loyola Mr. Hamilton Martín Mosquera Abbi Samuels Reinfried Blaha Oliver Deutsch Silvia Erd-Fabritius Peter Wooldridge Bina Mistry 1A-Voiceovers, Katia Borrás Doña Carmen Barceló Doña Teresa Huarte Aizpún