

MEDIA RELEASE
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Australian Filmmaking Couple's 20 years of work is marked in Paris

Australian filmmakers Kevin Lucas and Anya Whitehead have been invited to Paris to present some special film screenings in recognition of a body of collaborative work spanning twenty years.

2006 marks an anniversary of filmmaking for the pair who have forged a unique creative relationship since 1986. Their collection of films is seen by the curators to be a significant contribution to World Cinema.

Lucas and Whitehead have been the creators of documentaries, features and short films focusing on music and arts under their company MusicArtsDance films. At the spine of this work is a trilogy of music-drama films produced over a space of 14 years, inspired by or based on historical material, that has marked Australia's contemporary history. The most well known of these - **One Night The Moon (2001)** directed by Rachel Perkins with music by Paul Kelly, Mairead Hannan and Kev Carmody, and co-written by Perkins and John Romeril - is already regarded as an Australian classic. **Black River (1992)** adapted and directed by Kevin Lucas from an opera by Andrew and Julianne Schultz stole headlines in Australia for its controversial subject of aboriginal deaths in police custody after it won the Grand Prix Opera Screen in Paris at the time. Also directed by Lucas and written by Lyndon Terracini, **The Widower (2004)**, based on the poems of Australia's only Poet Laureate Les Murray with music by Elena Kats-Chernin marked a turning point in style and was reviewed by Variety International when it screened in Toronto: *"This gorgeous, poetic, simple and elegant music-drama about familial grief expands cinema's language... its air of psychological insight is deft and haunting."*

Paris based film and arts curator Diana Drljacic says that *"It was the best discovery in cinema I made in the ten years. I followed all of their films during the '90's when I spent some time in Australia. Back then I constantly came across a kind of inhibition saying that there was little art or culture or even notable history, yet Lucas and Whitehead's work completely annihilated that statement. Every single one of their films shows a leap into the unknown. Each time they came up with something interesting, challenging and culturally necessary. Their films showed a thriving arts scene and they allowed themselves to be clever, intellectual and culturally passionate – and Paris needs to discover this body of work. I feel like I found a treasure in Australia and I wanted to bring it back and share this."*

The couple have worked with numerous artists and directors over the years including filmmaker Paul Cox, choreographer Stephen Page, the Bangarra Dance Theatre, composer Paul Grabowsky and the internationally renowned magical puppet French theatre artist Philippe Genty.

Lucas and Whitehead are currently working on two major projects. A UK-Australian co-produced feature film based on the life of Australian composer Peggy Glanville-Hicks which will commence shooting in Melbourne in December 2006, and an adaptation of "Story About Feeling" by Bill Neidjie (OAM), one of Australia's most important contemporary historical figures responsible for the World Heritage listed Kakadu National Park, to be co-directed by Djakapurra Munyarryun and Kevin Lucas.

The screenings will be presented at the L'Arlequin Cinema, St Placide, Paris commencing 28th March 2006.

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