

A HERO'S JOURNEY

(also known as **Where The Sun Rises**)

a documentary film

A journey of **discovery** of the extraordinary grace, courage and strength of spirit of the Timorese people.

A journey of **revelation** of the breathtaking landscapes and cultural richness of East Timor.

A journey into the **mind and soul** of a living hero.

A journey with **Xanana Gusmao**... of struggle, sacrifice, **FORGIVENESS**, and visions for the future.

XANANA GUSMAO is a living legend of our time. This poet-guerilla led the 24-year liberation war against Indonesian occupation of East Timor, 7 of those years from a prison in Jakarta. He has scaled every mountain in the country (barefoot!), survived the jungles, and fought alongside his compatriots. He has heard them call out his name as they fell in battle. Those voices continue to haunt him. He has emerged from the hardships of incarceration not bitter, but as the leading advocate of **forgiveness** and **reconciliation**. He is respected by his former persecutors, and loved by his former prison guards. Xanana Gusmao is globally recognised as an extraordinary man of peace, a freedom fighter, a visionary leader -- an inspiration. He is also a man of humility, gentleness of spirit, charisma and humour.



Jakarta International Film Festival 2006
Australian Cinematographers Society
DOCNZ (New Zealand) 2006
Asian Festival of 1st Films 2006
AFI Dallas Intl Film Festival 2007
Amnesty International Netherlands 2007
Bangkok International Film Festival 2007
....and others

Amnesty International **MOVIES THAT MATTER** Award
Gold Award cinematography
Best International Documentary finalist
Best Documentary Award nominee
In Competition
Official Selection
Official Selection

HISTORY NUTSHELL

The words “East Timor” conjure up images of riots and civil war. A poor and tiny nation, far away and removed from our own modern lives. In truth, this small country at the edge of Asia harbours exquisite physical and spiritual beauty. It is a small nation, but one that has moved the world.

April 1974 -- a left wing coup, the Revolucao do Cravos (Carnation Revolution) ousted the fascist government in Lisbon. This event sparked a rapid decolonization of Portugal's former territories. Portugal withdrew from East Timor in 1975 after over 400 years of colonial rule. Within months, neighbouring Indonesia invaded the former Portuguese colony and annexed it for 24 years. During this period, some one-quarter of East Timor's population was decimated. A small Timorese guerilla force, formed by Xanana Gusmao, waged a Resistance war against Indonesian occupation for some 2 decades.

The Asian Financial Crisis in 1998 led to the toppling of the political regime in Indonesia. Indonesian President Suharto relinquished his 3-decade hold on power, and the turn of history's tide opened a window of opportunity to East Timor.

In 1999, with the agreement of Indonesia, the United Nations supervised a popular consultation in which Timorese chose between full independence and special autonomy under Indonesian sovereignty. Timorese voted 78.5% in favour of independence.

Immediately following the referendum, violence involving pro-Indonesia militia (which included Timorese) against pro-independence elements resulted in extensive destruction and thousands of deaths throughout East Timor. The question of to whom should be assigned the responsibility and culpability for these tragic events, as well as how to deal with the perpetrators and instigators, remain an emotional hot topic, and the subject of intense debate and disagreement.

Timor Leste became the world's newest nation -- and Xanana Gusmao its first President -- in May, 2002.



THE UNIVERSALITY OF FORGIVENESS

This film highlights President Gusmao's deep and intimate understanding of, and belief in the power of forgiveness. Forgiveness crosses all cultural, geographic and ethnic boundaries. It is a universal struggle, a humanity issue. It speaks to all nations, every tribe, and each individual. There is no human being who does not struggle with forgiveness. It is our conviction that the message of **forgiveness will change lives and free peoples** everywhere.

Excerpt from film:

*"Forgiveness, to me, means **peace of mind**. If we can forgive, we liberate ourselves from all bad sentiments... of revenge... of self-flagellation. If we forgive, we stop a part of our life. We say no – now I am entering a new phase of my life. If not, I live everyday the sense that I am the worst victim in the world, and we are everyday trying to understand why... and we don't live in peace. We are always trying to be selfish – "Me...me... why not him, or them?" When we don't forgive, we don't free ourself from thinking only on ourselves. Forgiveness is the way to live in peace. Peace not with other people but firstly, with him- or herself."*

- **Xanana Gusmao**

SMALL IN SIZE, GIANT IN SPIRIT

Why should we care about a tale emerging from East Timor? It is such a peripheral and seemingly inconsequential little country with a population of barely 1 million. Why should we care about its stories?



It is because these stories tell of an extraordinary human spirit which is stronger than the physical body, more resilient than suffering, more generous than loss, and which is striving to **transcend hatred through forgiveness**. These amazing stories of courage and grace will inspire and remind us – no matter where we live on this planet and no matter what our circumstances – that the heart is a big place, that we are stronger and capable of more than we think, that we can expand our limits, that peace is a choice, and forgiveness is an option.

TREATMENT

Xanana Gusmao is the host and guide throughout this intimate journey. The film is **entirely narrated by the President** in the first person. We hear him speak in 4 languages: English, Portuguese, Indonesian and his native Tetun. He reveals his Timor, through his eyes and from his heart. As we travel the country, he is the conduit to various people with powerful personal stories, drawing other colourful characters into the rich and complex tapestry of the documentary, weaving their stories into his own:



Flavia de Jesus	Orphan girl who witnessed parents being murdered by militiamen when she was 7 years old. Her face bears a machete scar.
Sister Elsa	Nun who witnessed the massacre of hundreds on church grounds.
Meliana de Jesus	Woman living in a “widows’ village” where all the men were killed.
Mariano	A story without words. Gusmao reunites with the man who betrayed him into Indonesian hands and capture...
Antonio Miguel	Old man tortured and mutilated by fellow Timorese as well as Indonesian soldiers, but who speaks a heroic message of sacrifice, and calls for forgiveness and reconciliation.
Cipinang Prison	Gusmao returns to the Indonesian jail where he was a political prisoner for 7 years, and meets again his former prison guards...

During the journey, Gusmao shares his personal thoughts, philosophy, vision. He highlights the difficulties and complexities of building a new nation from ashes, and establishing a democratic system in Timor Leste. He focuses heavily on **forgiveness** and **reconciliation**.



FIRSTS

This ambitious production gains unprecedented access to Xanana Gusmao. First-ever documentary film fully narrated by a Head of State. The film crew with the Presidential entourage scoured the entire length and breadth of Timor Leste's rugged terrain exclusively for this documentary, sharing Gusmao's stories and unveiling the country's raw grandeur and fragile beauty to the world for the *very first time*. Film completed May 2006 after 1.5-year production. World premiere Sydney, June 2006.

THE JOURNEY

An arduous, breathtaking physical journey across East Timor's rugged terrain.
The journey of a poor teacher's son... a fisherman... into a reluctant fighter.
From guerilla leader to political prisoner to Head of State.
A journey through war to blood-earned freedom.
A journey from pain, loss and sacrifice... to forgiveness, reconciliation, true liberty and inner peace.

A Hero's Journey.

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ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Grace Phan

Award-winning television presenter and producer, Grace Phan, has anchored a wide spectrum of general news, current affairs, business and feature programmes during her seven years in television – first with CNBC, then subsequently on ABC Asia Pacific. In recognition of her talents, Grace was named **Best News Presenter** in the **2000 Asian Television Awards**. She was also a “Best News Anchor” finalist in the 2002 New York Festivals.

Prior to her move to journalism and TV, Grace spent six years in the financial industry where she specialized in emerging markets debt and derivatives. Her work with JP Morgan, ABN AMRO and Banque Paribas took her to the major financial centres of the world – Wall Street, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Singapore.

An avid art lover, Grace has produced and curated several modern sculpture exhibitions. She also confesses to being a nerd, and keeps abreast of the latest developments in modern physics and genomic science.

Her love of adventure has taken her under the sea -- to some of the best and most challenging dive sites in the world – and to the sky, where she flies a microlight. The depth and breadth of her interests have led her to travel extensively around the world, enabling her to tackle, with insight, a wide range of subjects and issues.

Grace was born in Singapore to Indonesian parents. She studied International Relations in Washington D.C. and Paris, and speaks English, French, Chinese, Indonesian and basic Japanese.

A HERO’S JOURNEY is Grace’s first documentary film.

