



Rosemary's Way

**A more welcoming Australia?
If anyone can do it, she can.
Laughter is her secret weapon!**

MEDIA KIT

Bower Bird Films Pty Limited
Racing Pulse Productions Pty Ltd

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Rosemary's Way

LOGLINE

Charismatic changemaker, Rosemary Kariuki, is on a mission to empower migrant women, enticing them out of cultural silos, exposing them to new ideas, experiences and the wider Australian society - her means are anything but orthodox and laughter is her secret weapon.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Rosemary's Way celebrates the remarkable Rosemary Kariuki and one of the groups of vulnerable migrant women of suburban Sydney whose lives she helps transform from isolation to connection.

Rosemary is our vibrant host over the course of a year, as we witness her reaching out to isolated migrant women from cultures as diverse as Iraq, the Congo and Peru. Rosemary is our ebullient facilitator; but the key characters are the migrant women who are drawn into her wake, and the Aussie women who agree to host them in their communities.

We are moved and inspired by the stories of the women as Rosemary coaxes them to participate in new adventures and share insights into other cultures and makes them aware of their full rights as women now in Australia. We join in the women's wonder at the beauty of the Australian bush, where they gather under the trees to be Welcomed to Country by an Indigenous elder.

And we witness their gradual transformation, as they find their voices and confidence in this new country that is now their home.

FULL SYNOPSIS

Rosemary's Way tells the remarkable story of ROSEMARY KARIUKI who coaxes isolated migrant women out of their suburban ghettos and brings them together for new experiences, new ideas and the opportunity to better participate in Australian life. Rosemary is the central character, our effervescent host and guide. Her means are anything but orthodox and laughter is her secret weapon.

The other key characters are migrant women Rosemary draws into her wake. SUFIA is from Bangladesh, a victim of domestic violence, who has not been able to leave her home alone for 14 years, until she meets Rosemary. PASCA, from Congo, is a single mum with a disability, bringing up three young boys. She has lived in Auburn for ten years and never met an Aussie! ANUSHKA is from India, a brilliant young woman with a PhD and a former Lecturer in Law at Delhi University, but forbidden by her husband to use the internet in Australia.

The film focuses in on Sufia, Pasca and Anushka, to reveal their deeper stories, the struggles and challenges they are facing in the present as they try to settle into Australia. And gradually through the impact of their engagement with Rosemary, we see them growing in confidence, moving out from the margins into fuller participation in Australian society.

The film follows Rosemary over the course of a year, working at her day job as a cultural liaison officer with the Parramatta police force; and then on nights and weekends doing her own cultural exchange projects. Twice a year she invites 25 vulnerable migrant women from diverse ethnic groups, to come with on a trip into rural NSW.

Some of the women, including Sufia, Pasca and Anushka have never been to the mountains or sea or experienced the profound beauty of the Australian landscape. It is Rosemary's life's mission to help these women emerge from their shells. Rosemary organizes local Australians to become host families for the three-day stay, and they all come together in a range of wonderful activities.

Living with the Australian families is a highlight of the program. For the 'new Australians' being welcomed into the homes of local 'old Australians', getting to know them, sleeping under the same roof, means so much. It helps create a sense of 'belonging'.



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ROSEMARY KARIUKI

Rosemary's arrival in Australia was in 1999 from Kenya, with no assets and no family, running away from the tribal clashes in her country. She has now made many friends and volunteered her own time to support the community especially women and youth. She's known as 'Big Mama Rosemary' in the western suburbs of Sydney. This is where I work tirelessly for the CALD community both as a Multicultural Community Liaison Officer for NSW Police and in my numerous volunteer projects that support the CALD women.

For fifteen years, she has been with the NSW Police Force. She loves her job because she 'loves people'. In particular, she loves seeing people happy by moving forward from their fears to standing tall with confidence. Rosemary is a founding member of the African Women Group (AWG-NSW), a volunteer organisation which advocates for African Women and to break down the social isolation many African Women experience in this country.

She has been acknowledged with many awards including the Parramatta Citizen of the Year, Woman of the Year from Western Sydney Uni, African Walk of Fame, Living Legend Award 2012 from Celebration of African Australian Including (100 most Influential Africans in Australia). She says she "is very proud to be an Australian."

Two years ago, Rosemary featured in *The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe* documentary where she was one of the four women who told about their journey of forgiveness and resilience and how they have moved forward.

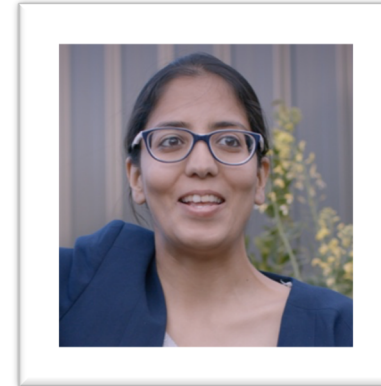
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SUFIA is originally from Bangladesh, and was educated there, gaining a Master's Degree in Science. She came out to Australia for an arranged marriage. Unfortunately the marriage did not work out, and she was trapped in an abusive relationship for 14 years. After much pain and personal struggle Sufia slowly put her life back together. She has brought up two beautiful boys who are now at university, and has done further study here herself. She has benefited a great deal from Rosemary's programs and support. Sufia is now working as a volunteer with the Bangladeshi Women's Association and with Metro Assist in Bankstown.

PASCA was born into a big and strong family in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At the age of 7 she got polio, which left her with a disability in both legs. However her parents did not abandon her, and they sent her to school with the other children in the family. She graduated with a Certificate in Dressmaking, which allowed her to work as a teacher. During the war she was separated from her family, and eventually made her way on her own to Uganda where she applied for Asylum from the UNHCR. In May 2007 she was blessed with a visa to Australia, where she started a new life, learning English, culture and studying for a new career. She has 3 beautiful boys that she is raising on her own; and is looking for a job.

ANUSHKA has a PhD in law from India. She has over five years of legal research experience specialising in commercial law. Before coming to Australia, she was an Assistant Professor with Faculty of Law, University of Delhi, India. Currently, she is pursuing her studies and is also a steering Committee member of Indian Women Empower (IWE). IWE was established by the Community Migrant Resource Centre, seeking to provide employment pathways and domestic violence services to vulnerable women from an Indian background.

MARIA feels lucky to live and work with her husband Gerhard, on a beautiful Wagyu beef farm on the South Coast of NSW. She was an English, History and Religion teacher in the past. Her children and grandchildren, along with meditation and yoga practice, keep her sane! She loves people and their stories and is ever-grateful to her German/Polish parents, who fled Europe after WW11 and taught her hospitality towards, and acceptance of, all people. Maria finds deep spiritual connection in Nature, human nature and in the power of ritual. She believes she is a catholic in the true sense of the word – all-embracing, universal, whole.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Exploring the lives of Refugees and Migrants in Australia today and how we, as the host country, deal with them has been my driving artistic passion for the last 12 years. My last film, ***The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe***, is a shining example of this. For I believe that the way in which we treat the most vulnerable members of our society, is a true measure of how civilized we are.

In Australia, we are constantly talking about the success of our Multicultural policy; and indeed, there is much to be proud of but there is also much that needs to be improved!

Rosemary's Way focuses on the lives of refugee/migrant women in Australia today. It gives voice to those on the margins, voices we are barely aware of in mainstream Australia. These women from Africa, Middle East and the Indian sub-continent are some of the most isolated individuals in our country. The film provides a unique intimate window into their lives today in Australia and offers up some surprising insights and unexpected revelations.

The question that got me started on this film, was wanting to know if our migrants from diverse ethnic groups actually mixed with each other? Or did they remain in their separate silos – fearful of the 'other' and clinging to the values from their home country. And if so, how do we create a cohesive multicultural society, with shared values and tolerance for diversity. Not just Australia, but many countries are facing these issues as we grapple with complex challenges of mass migration and large numbers of refugees around the world.

Many of us feel impotent to personally make a difference in the face of intolerance, and a lack of compassion around us. But Rosemary is a shining, inspirational example!

Rosemary's Way shows us what we can do as an individual, to make a positive difference to our communities, with few resources – but with a big heart and huge determination.

It is a rare gift to have such a bright, ebullient, and positive personality as Rosemary as a lead character, to guide us into the world of migrant women. I am incredibly grateful, as it has enabled me to make a film that is light and buoyant in its tone, despite the seriousness and importance of the issues.

Indeed, ***Rosemary's Way*** is a warm uplifting film, poignant and tender; full of laughter and joy.

If one committed, inspiring woman, Rosemary Kariuki, can do so much to make a significant difference in the lives of migrants, what can we all do together?

Ros Horin
Director

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

I love my life making documentaries – directing and producing now for 48 years. My preference is to work on films which inspire, provoke and tell stories that can change people's minds and galvanise them into action.

When you agree to produce a documentary, you need to love the idea and have a feel for the director's vision. After all, you are committing to a project that could take sometimes 2, 3, 5 or more years.

When Ros Horin approached me to work with her on **Rosemary's Way**, I had already seen her excellent first film, *The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe*, and was keen to know more about Rosemary who appears in that film.

I like very much Ros's curiosity about how multiculturalism works in Australia and her passion for making life much better for migrants and refugees. Ros is continually exploring what changes are possible. In **Rosemary's Way** she wanted to address some very tough issues which triggered my interest as well.

When I learnt more about Rosemary Kariuki and saw footage of her work outside her day job, it cemented my decision. Rosemary's care, determination, enthusiasm and humour are profound. How could one person do so much and have such an effect on so many people? Rosemary loves what she does. She notices the pain of people who are so easily overlooked. She takes the migrant women with her on a journey that values each person, and she won't take 'No!' for an answer.

I have a lifetime of believing that storytelling counts and it can rock the foundations. It's a privilege to be involved in this film about Rosemary and the women whose lives she transforms. I'm looking forward to the effect that **Rosemary's Way** will have in the wider community.

It's been quite a ride throughout, and hugely satisfying to see the tireless Rosemary doing all she does and the transformations in the women's lives that take place as we watch.

Migrant and refugee women face many challenges and isolation is a big one, for it cuts them off from other possibilities. With the lockdown that the whole population has been going through because of CoVid19, it seems that **Rosemary's Way** is taking on an added dimension. Many more people may now have a greater understanding of what being forced into isolation means.

During the edit, after a feedback screening, one of the viewers stood up and said, "Tomorrow, I am going to knock at the door of my neighbour up the street who's from Eritrea and invite her over for a cup of tea." I loved hearing that. It was an early indication of the incredible difference this film could make.

Pat Fiske
Producer



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CREATIVE TEAM

Director/Writer	Ros Horin
Producer	Pat Fiske
Executive Producer	Joseph Skrzynski
Co-Producer	Ros Horin
Editor	Andrew Arestides
Cinematographers	Kathryn Milliss Carolyn Constantine
Sound Recordist	Leo Sullivan
Composer	David Lewis
Colourist/Online/Grade	Roen Davis, Central Business Digital
Sound Designers/ Re-Recording Mixers Sound Supervisor Sound Production Manager	Luke Mynott Weronika Razna Wes Chew Charlotte Perry, Unison Sound
Additional Editing/ Technical help	Walter McIntosh
Impact Producer	Jackie Turnure
Website Designer	Morgan Richards, The Design Embassy
Publicist	Hannah Watkins Publicity
Trailer	Walter Bienz, The Solid State

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ROS HORIN

Writer/Director/Co-Producer



Ros Horin, Director/ Producer/ Dramaturg, - has made a significant contribution to Australian Theatre. As the Artistic Director of the Griffin Theatre Company at the Stables for 12 years, Ros directed around 30 world premiere productions, many of them becoming Australian classics; for example, Andrew Bovell's *Speaking in Tongues* which was adapted into the film *Lantana*. She established the company's national reputation as the home of high quality, bold contemporary Australian theatre.

Prior to Griffin, Ros established *Playworks*, the Women Writers' Workshop, to support female playwrights. She directed productions at the STC, MTC, Belvoir and Malthouse Theatres. Ros was a lecturer in Acting and Director at NIDA for many years, and taught Acting at the VCA.

The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe, her first film, premiered at the Sydney Film Festival in 2016, followed by Melbourne International Film Festival, (top 5 audience favourites) at both festivals. It has screened on SBS television and NITV, had a theatrical release in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and screened at 18 International Film Festivals. It has been dubbed /translated into five languages, and had over fifty community screenings in Australia. She has just completed her second film, *Rosemary's Way* as director/writer and co-producer.

PAT FISKE

Producer

Pat Fiske is an experienced director and producer. She is recognised as a prominent member of Australia's independent filmmaking community.

In 2001 she was awarded the prestigious Stanley Hawes Award for her outstanding contribution to the documentary industry in Australia at Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC). Pat was Co-Head of the Documentary Department at the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS) from 2002-2008 and worked as the Documentary Consultant at SBS Independent for eighteen months in 2000-2001.

Some of the films she has directed and/or produced are the award-winning documentaries: *Rocking the Foundations, a history of the NSW Builders Laborers Federation and the Green Bans*; *Woolloomooloo*; *For All the World to See, a portrait of Professor Fred Hollows*; *'Doc', a portrait of Herbert Vere Evatt*; *Australia Daze*; *Following the Fence Line*; *Leaping off the Edge*; *An Artist in Eden* and *Night Patrol*.

She has produced *Business Behind Bars*, *Selling Sickness*, *River of No Return*, *Scarlet Road*, *Love Marriage in Kabul*, *Oyster* and most recently, *Rosemary's Way*. Pat was Supervising Producer for the National Indigenous Documentary Fund 5-part series, *Call to Country* and is in post-production as producer on *When the Camera Stopped Rolling*.



JOSEPH SKRZYNSKI Executive Producer



Joseph Skrzyński has had a long involvement with production financing, policy and organizations in the Film and Television industry.

He has served as the CEO of the Australian Film Commission (now Screen Australia), Chaired the Australian Film Television and Radio School, the Broadcast Council, and SBS Television and Radio, as well as other arts organizations including chair of The Sydney Opera House Trust

His film production financing involvement includes amongst others the early films of Gillian Armstrong (*My Brilliant Career*, *High Tide*) George Miller (*Violence in the Cinema*), Neil Armfield (*Edens Lost*) and more recently funding assistance with documentaries including *The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe*, *Constance on the Edge*, and *Richard Leplastrier-Framing the View*.

He has been made an Officer in the Australian Honours system for amongst other things services to the arts and Film sectors.

ANDREW ARESTIDES

Editor

Andrew Arestides – multi-award-winning documentary editor with 30 years experience.

Films include: *Afghanistan - Australia's War*, Dir: Victoria Midwinter Pitt; *Wedding in Ramallah*, Dir: Sherine Salama, Winner AFI Award for Best Documentary; *My Asian Heart*, Dir: David Bradbury, Best editing ASE Award 2010; *Fairweather Man*, Dir: Aviva Zeigler; *The Crater*, Dir: David Bradbury; *Constructing Australia – The Bridge*, Dir: Simon Nasht, Winner Logie Best Doc, 1999; *The Cars that Ate China*, Dir: Stefan Moore, Finalist 2008 Dendy Awards; *The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe*, Dir: Ros Horin; *Monsieur Mayonnaise*, Dir: Trevor Graham and most recently, *Rosemary's Way*, Dir: Ros Horin and Chef Antonio's *Recipes for Revolution*, Dir: Trevor Graham.





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DOCUMENTARY AUSTRALIA
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AUSTRALIAN DOCUMENTARY

**SYDNEY FILM
FESTIVAL**

2020



CONTACT

ROSEMARY'S WAY is produced by Bower Bird Films with Racing Pulse Productions.

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Running time | 78 minutes **Exhibition formats** | DCP, H264, H265, MXF OP1A, Blu-Ray, DVD

Aspect ratio | 16:9 **Sound** | 5.1 **Shooting format** | 4K **Colour**

Original language | English / English Subtitles **Year of production** | 2020

World premiere | Sydney Film Festival: Virtual Edition and Awards 2020

