



**Directed by:** Franco Di Chiera

**Written and Researched by:** Barbara Bernardini, Greg Colgan, Franco Di Chiera

**Producers:** Marco Visalberghi, Andrew Ogilvie and Andrea Quesnelle

**Executive Producers:** Andrew Ogilvie and Marco Visalberghi



**Electric Pictures**  
33 Canning Highway  
East Fremantle, WA 6158  
Tel: +61 8 9339 1133  
Fax: +61 8 9339 1183  
admin@electricpictures.com.au



**DocLab Srl**  
Viale Mazzini  
73, 00195 Roma  
Tel: +39 06 3751 8267  
Fax: +39 06 3751 7731

## SKIN DEEP

1 x 52 minute Documentary

### SYNOPSIS

#### Log Line

The science of human skin colour.

#### One Sentence

Scientist Nina Jablonski's global journey to reveal the secrets of human skin colour.



#### Short Synopsis

For hundreds of years, human skin colour has been used as a marker of race. Now, science is uncovering the intricate relationship between skin colour and environment. When our ancient ancestors in Equatorial Africa lost their body hair and ventured out into the open savannah, their skin had to become dark to resist strong UV radiation. Perfectly adapted to the environment, the black skin of Africans is one of Nature's greatest achievements for the survival of the human species.

This may not sound new, but in 2000, Penn State University anthropologist Nina Jablonski proposed a startling new explanation as to why human skin has so many colours. Her study suggested that pigmentation did not evolve to prevent skin cancer, but primarily to help the human body maintain the right balance of two crucial vitamins essential for reproduction and body development. As a result, skin colour developed as a perfect compromise: allowing enough sunlight to stimulate the production of Vitamin D, but screening the body from harmful rays that destroy folic acid – a vitamin necessary for reproductive success,

Focusing on ground-breaking research and personal accounts of scientists around the world, this documentary reveals that the evolution of skin colour is solely an adaptation to the environment. It drives home a powerful message: judging people on the basis of colour is not only morally unacceptable, it is scientifically wrong.

## One Page Synopsis

We live in a world of 'black' and 'white'. For hundreds of years, human skin colour has been used as a marker of race. Now, science is uncovering the intricate relationship between skin colour and environment to reveal its crucial role in survival and reproduction.



Skin colour tells a fascinating biological tale. When our ancient ancestors in Equatorial Africa lost their body hair and ventured out into the open savannah, their skin had to become dark to resist strong UV radiation. Perfectly adapted to the environment, the black skin of Africans is one of Nature's greatest achievements for the survival of the human species.

This may not sound new, but in 2000, Penn State University anthropologist Nina Jablonski proposed a startling new explanation as to why human skin has so many colours. Her study suggested that pigmentation did not evolve to prevent skin cancer, but primarily to help the human body maintain the right balance of two crucial vitamins essential for reproduction and body development. One is Vitamin D, produced by skin reacting to sunlight. On the other hand, folic acid - a B vitamin that our bodies need to produce DNA and develop the neural system - can be destroyed by the sun's UV rays. As a result, skin colour developed as a perfect compromise: allowing enough sunlight to stimulate the production of Vitamin D, but screening the body from harmful rays that destroy folic acid.

Skin colour is therefore more than just a suntan or a feature of ethnic origin - it is essential for survival and reproduction. Such findings pave the way for a long overdue reassessment of how we view skin colour.

Today's globalised world provides us with a further opportunity to look at skin colour from a new perspective. Skin colour has evolved in response to local environments over thousands – even millions - of years. But now, more than ever, people are moving around the globe to live in distant lands - and their skin pigmentation is not always suited to their new environments. In the past, this would've had serious implications for their ability to live healthy lives and have healthy offspring. But vitamin supplements, protection creams against high UV, and appropriate clothing make it possible to live with mismatches between skin colour and the environment.

Focusing on ground-breaking research and personal accounts of scientists around the world, this documentary powerfully reveals that the evolution of skin colour is solely an adaptation to the environment. It shows that judging people on the basis of colour is not only morally unacceptable, but scientifically wrong. Ultimately, the film buries theories about race and racism and celebrates humanity's extraordinary diversity.

## ABOUT THE MAKING OF SKIN DEEP

***“Skin Deep” is a co-production between  
Electric Pictures (Australia) and DocLab (Italy).***

*Produced in association with  
**SBS Television, Arte France, WDR (Germany) RAI (Italy) and UR (Sweden)**  
With the support of the **Media Plus Programme of the European Community**  
Produced with the assistance of **ScreenWest and Lottery West**  
Principal Investor **Screen Australia***

A film about skin colour is more than just a film about “skin colour”. It’s about evolution, the environment, early human migration, geography and genetic ancestry. But more importantly, it’s about the implications of all these things on health and society. It’s a huge story – an epic one – and it’s difficult to imagine how it could be told within the confines of a 52 minute documentary. But



film makers are a resourceful and creative bunch and a combination of a strong vision and passion for a subject, not to mention persistence and a penchant for travel and adventure, invariably makes extraordinary things happen. Featuring amazing characters, stunning locations, great visuals and mind-blowing research, this film brings to the screen an irresistible cocktail of scientific revelations which ultimately unlock the mystery of human skin colour for the very first time.

Shot in Italy, Kenya, Spain, Sweden, Scotland, United States, Brazil and Australia, the film follows the story of Nina Jablonski, Professor of Anthropology at Penn State University and her scientific journey into human skin colour. The film documents the revelations which led her to investigate the relationship between skin colour, UV and reproduction. It was a massive jigsaw puzzle involving an array of brilliant international scientists, many of whom had been working in relative isolation. But Jablonski’s scientific overview found some amazing links, corroborating her findings from over two decades of research.

Based on an original idea by Italian scientist and writer Barbara Bernadini, the film was jointly developed and produced by Electric Pictures and DocLab in Australia. A co-production between Australia, Italy and France. Director and Co-writer Franco Di Chiera was in Rome working on another a project when he received a call from Producer Andrew Ogilvie in Perth to ask if he might be interested. Di Chiera, who has a long track record in cultural representation on the screen, had previously worked with Ogilvie on the successful theatrical documentary “The Joys of the

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Women", the SBS ratings hit "No Milk, No Honey" and Australian Film Institute Awards Winner "Under The Skin". It was a case of serendipity when Di Chiera looked up Italian Producer Marco Visalberghi to discover his office was only a few minutes walk from where he was staying in Rome. Soon after, he met with Visalberghi and Bernadini, developing an immediate relationship and agreeing to work together.

Di Chiera returned to Australia and was brought on board to write a shooting script based on Bernadini's original proposal, which had also been co-written by Greg Colgan, Electric Pictures Head of Development. Given Jablonski's commitments, principal photography had to commence within three months or the team would have to wait a year for her next available time.

The production commenced when the crew met Jablonski in Rome to film her at the National Geographic Society before following her on a field trip to Rift Valley in Kenya, widely regarded as the cradle of human kind. They also filmed her at Penn State University with collaborator and husband, geographer George Chaplin. Their research into UV and patterns of skin colour around the globe was a world first, showing a remarkable 90% correlation between the level of UVA, in particular, and the degree of skin pigmentation.

## Writer / Director Franco Di Chiera says:

*"I was raised a Catholic, so I wanted to explore the research on the evolution of skin colour and see how compelling it really was. But I was also interested because there had been such great misunderstandings about skin colour."*

*"What shocked me was the idea that lighter skinned people were mutants of the dark skinned people. Genetic research now makes that clear. It's astonishing. I'm sure many people will be surprised by that"*



*"It's easy to assume that dark skin evolved primarily to protect the body against skin cancer. But to find out it is really about ensuring reproductive success in high UV environments was an absolute revelation. Indeed, evolution has to work on the basis of propagating the species and the fact is that most sufferers have had children before they die of skin cancer."*

*"Jablonski's scientific quest has been such an enormous jigsaw puzzle. To finally get to the end of the film and review all the evidence, makes one realise that everything actually does make sense. That when dark skinned humans migrated out of Africa to Europe, they mutated their genes and selected for people with lighter skin in order to survive in a low UV environment"*.

*"The whole point of Jablonski's research and that of other scientists is to illuminate the logical and scientific fallacies behind our current understanding of skin colour. It's this kind of misinformation and prejudice that I hope this documentary will help redress."*

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## **Australian Executive Producer Andrew Ogilvie says:**

“This film is important because it not only brings to the screen the fascinating story of the science of skin colour, it also provides a logical explanation as to why the classification of people by their skin colour is so wrong. It wasn't until we started working on this project that I understood how bad science has contributed to the problem of racism. Moreover, that racism based on skin colour is a relatively new concept in human history”.

“There are important health messages in this film too. Watch it and you will learn not just about the role that skin colour plays in protecting skin from being damaged by the sun, but also the vital role that it plays in ensuring optimal conditions for healthy reproduction and, effectively, the survival of the human species”.

“The film is a co-production between Electric Pictures in Australia and Doclab in Italy. It's been fantastic to work with co-executive producer Marco Visalberghi. He is one of Europe's great science producers and I have enjoyed sharing his passion for this project. It's also terrific to have had the backing of broadcasters in Australia and Europe for such an important subject. Their collective support has enabled us to tell a truly global story with locations in four continents: Australia, Africa, Europe and North America.”

“I expect it will be watched by many millions of viewers worldwide. I really hope it contributes to our understanding of the science of skin colour and that it helps to debunk many of the myths which have done so much harm to human relations over the last few hundred years”.

## **Italian Executive Producer Marco Visalberghi:**

“ I've always been very passionate about science, especially about the history of evolution. I've directed and produced many documentaries on animal behavior with the conviction that each type of adaptation contains elements that are of great interest that contribute towards understanding humans and their actions.”

“ When Barbara Bernardini arrived in my office with the idea of making a documentary on the colour of skin, it took her matter of seconds to convince me. I've been involved in scientific study and more specifically in natural sciences for 30 years. But this time it was not only these passions that persuaded me to go ahead with it, but also the conviction that it really is a Copernicus like revolution. No other scientific research explains in a better way, the link between the progress of science and: the society that tells it, and this society's dominant culture and it's convenient prejudices. In short, scientific research that leans towards the most convenient path, avoiding borderline areas of racial tension. It's no coincidence that in order to rewrite the chapter on the evolution of the colour of skin it took a female scientist, with enough courage and pride to not let anything stop her on her mission. I believe that this is a story that will contribute to the undoing of many myths and will create a basis for a more civil cohabitation between the different peoples of our planet.”

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



I've been working in the area of cultural representation on the screen for some 25 years through my work in both drama and documentary. So, to be offered this story was a real joy – to find internationally recognised scientists that have come to the same conclusions about misguided assumptions concerning “race” and “skin colour” as I've done through film was incredibly sobering. The message is unequivocal: judging or classifying people by their skin colour is an absolute fallacy.

It was a shock to learn that such racist notions are fairly recent – they only developed around the time of the commercial slave trade in the 1500's and the advent of modern science in the 1700's. Up until then, differences in skin colour played little or no role

in the world. So, people today have lived with quite a legacy when we think about apartheid in the US and Africa and continuing racial frictions. Here has been a great waste of life and suffering because of racist attitudes. If only people knew back then what we now know through science, so much human conflict could've been avoided. On the bright side, we now have this incredible body of scientific research which buries once and for all, stereotyped notions of race.

To work with anthropologist Nina Jablonski was one of the highlights of my career as a filmmaker. She was not only brilliant on-screen talent and a wonderful human being but more importantly, her lifetime pursuit to understand the secrets of the human rainbow based on a hunch, is the kind of story filmmakers like myself dream about. It was an honour to bring this extraordinary quest to the screen. Add to that locations in East Africa and Rio and meeting people of different skin colours around the world and the dream is complete.

I feel very lucky to have had such an exciting and rewarding collaboration with the writers, producers, principal creatives and production team. Hopefully, what we've made will entertain and enlighten audiences and give these remarkable scientific discoveries the public platform they deserve.

***Franco Di Chiera can be contacted on 0414552197 or internationally +61414 552 197***

## FACTS ABOUT SKIN



- Two thirds of Australians develop a skin cancer during their lives and conservatively, an estimated 1,700 die every year.
- Research suggests that all modern humans stem from a single group who migrated from Africa 50-60,000 years ago and spread throughout Europe and Asia; colonising the planet in the space of about 30,000 years.
- Black Africans have in the order of ten times less skin cancer than white people living at the same latitude and with similar levels of sun exposure.
- A major association has been found between diets that are rich in folate and the development of healthy embryos and sperm. When our bodies are exposed to prolonged or intense UV radiation the folate's molecular structure is damaged and becomes inactive. It's clear: Black skin evolved to protect folate levels in high UV environments and in turn, ensure reproductive success.
- Scientists believe it was only when humans started to lose their body hair that permanent dark skin evolved.
- How does tanning occur? - When people go out in the sun, cells in the skin called melanocytes respond by making protective black-brown melanin. As the concentrations increase, the pigment becomes more visible. It's this process that causes tanning.
- There are two types of pigments, eumelanin which is brown or black and pheomelanin which is red or yellow.
- Scientists have identified at least three other human species which have disappeared: they include Neanderthals in Europe, Erectus in Asia and Flores in Indonesia.
- During the last Ice age, Australia and New Guinea were joined by a land bridge and were only separated from Eurasia by narrow straits of water. This land bridge submerged about 8,000 years ago isolating the Australian continent and its inhabitants.
- Albinism is an almost total lack of melanin, caused by a major DNA mutation. For every pregnancy from parents carrying the mutation, there's a 25% chance of having a baby with Albinism. With no natural defence against the sun's rays, people with Albinism run a 1000 fold risk of developing skin cancer compared to those with dark skin.



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- *From about 50,000 years ago, people migrated from Equatorial areas with abundant sunlight to latitudes where the Sun was less intense. These changed environmental conditions led to the evolution of light coloured skin in our human ancestors.. When UV levels are lower, it becomes more important to have less pigmentation in the skin, so that sufficient UV penetrates the skin for the body to produce the levels of vitamin D it needs.*
- *Our dark ancestors could not have survived in a Northern-European or North-American climate because their skin is so effective as a sunscreen it would have prevented them from making sufficient vitamin D. As a result, they would have experienced a range of health complications, including growth retardation, bone malformation, increased difficulty with child-birthing, muscle-weakness and increased risk of infectious disease.*
- *Vitamin D deficiency is one of the most common medical conditions in the world. And people of colour living far from the equator are at much higher risk. A Boston study showed that up to 84% of African-American men and women over the age of 65 were vitamin D deficient at the end of the summer.*
- *While the exact number of human genes is still unknown, current estimates suggest there are around 25,000. Of these, more than 100 are known to be involved in pigment production.*



## BIOGRAPHIES OF PARTICIPANTS

### NINA JABLONSKI

**Professor and Head of Anthropology, Penn State University**



Nina G. Jablonski is Head and Professor of Anthropology at The Pennsylvania State University. She is a biological anthropologist and paleobiologist who studies the evolution of adaptations to the environment in nonhuman and human primates. In her paleontological and comparative anatomical research, she has worked to shed light on the nature of “successful” and “unsuccessful” anatomical and

physiological adaptations to the environment through time, especially in the Old World primates.

Her research comprises descriptive and functional studies of living and fossil primates and theoretical studies of aspects of primate and human not preserved in the fossil record. Many of these studies have involved long-term collaborations with scientists in east and south Asia, and in eastern Africa. In the last 15 years, she has been increasingly absorbed in studies of “unseen” aspects of human evolution, most notably, the evolution of human skin and skin colour, and the evolution of human communication. Jablonski is a Joint Editor of the Cambridge Series in Biological and Evolutionary Anthropology and an Associate Editor of *Folia Primatologica*. She is a Member of the American Philosophical Society, a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a Fellow of the California Academy of Sciences, and a member of the Advisory Council for the Social, Behavioural, and Economic Sciences of the National Science Foundation. In April 2005, she was awarded one of first twelve Alphonse Fletcher, Sr. Fellowships (“Guggenheims for race”) for her research on the evolution of human skin pigmentation. In 2007, she was awarded the W.W. Howells Book Award of the American Anthropological Association for her book, *Skin: A Natural History* (University of California Press, 2006). In March 2010, she will receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa in recognition of her research on the evolution and social ramifications of human skin colour.

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## **DR CARLES LALUEZA-FOX, Barcelona Institute of Evolutionary Biology.**



Carles Lalueza-Fox was born in the Gothic quarter of Barcelona, Spain, in 1965. He obtained his PhD in Biology at the University of Barcelona in 1995. Afterwards, he spent one year in Cambridge and another year in Oxford as a postdoctoral researcher, working always in paleogenetics. He belongs to the Spanish Research Council (CSIC) and is currently a researcher at the Institute of Evolutionary Biology in Barcelona.

He has published many papers on paleogenetics, in high-impact scientific journals. Among his works there is the first complete extinct mitochondrial genome, the first complete extinct nuclear gene and the first functional paleogenetic study. He is best known for his works on Neandertals, and is currently collaborating with Professor Svante Pääbo in the Neandertal Genome Project.

Besides his research, he is interested in communicating science to society, and has published different popular science books on human evolution, human diversity and paleogenetics. He has been awarded four prizes for scientific literature, including those of the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT) and the Catalan Foundation for Research (FCRI). He was also awarded the City of Barcelona prize for scientific research in 2007.

## **DR MICHAEL HOLICK, Boston University School of Medicine.**



Michael F. Holick, Ph.D., M.D. is Professor of Medicine, Physiology and Biophysics; Director of the General Clinical Research Unit; and Director of the Bone Health Care Clinic and the Heliotherapy, Light, and Skin Research Center at Boston University Medical Center.

After earning a Ph.D. degree in biochemistry, a medical degree, and completing a research postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Dr. Holick completed a residency in medicine at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

Dr. Holick has made numerous contributions to the field of the biochemistry, physiology, metabolism, and photobiology of vitamin D for human nutrition. He determined the mechanism for how vitamin D is synthesized in the skin, demonstrated the effects of aging, obesity, latitude, seasonal change, sunscreen use, skin pigmentation, and clothing on this vital cutaneous process. Dr. Holick has established global recommendations advising sunlight exposure as an integral source of vitamin D. He has helped increase awareness in the pediatric and medical communities regarding vitamin D deficiency pandemic, and its role in causing not only metabolic bone disease, and osteoporosis in adults, but increasing risk of children and adults developing common deadly cancers; autoimmune diseases, including type 1 diabetes and multiple sclerosis; heart disease, type 2 diabetes, upper respiratory tract infections and dementia.

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**PROFESSOR KEITH CHENG**, Director, Experimental Pathology, Professor of Pathology, Penn State Hershey campus.



Keith Cheng is an internationally known scientist-physician whose research resides at the interface of genetics and pathology. He has been at Penn State College of Medicine since 1992, currently as Professor of Pathology and Director of Experimental Pathology, with joint appointments in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, and Pharmacology. He earned his BS in Biochemical Sciences from Harvard University in 1976,

MD from NYU in 1980, and PhD in molecular genetics at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and University of Washington in 1987. At Penn State, he has been a leader in genetics and genomics, developing the zebrafish as a model to study cancer. In the course of that work, he made the serendipitous discovery of *SLC24A5*, which appears to have played a key role in the evolution of light skin in people of European Ancestry. Due to this discovery and its association with race, this work was published as a *Science Magazine* cover article in December 2005, which attracted global media attention. One of Dr. Cheng's passions is to make the world a better place by sharing scientific perspectives and ways of thinking with the public. Accordingly, he wishes to contribute to the demystification of skin color and race, which he hopes will diminish racism. This skin color work, and his other accomplishments earned him the 2008 Penn State Faculty Scholar Medal for Outstanding Achievement in the Life and Health Sciences.

**PROFESSOR FIONA STANLEY AC**, Director Institute for Child Health Research WA



Fiona Stanley is a child health researcher and advocate for improving the health and well-being of children and families. Named Australian of the Year in 2003, Professor Stanley is the Director of the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Perth and Chair of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth. She is Professor in School of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Western Australia.

While she trained and worked as a medical doctor, her move into research was prompted by a desire to prevent -- rather than simply treat -- many of the recurring conditions that she saw in children, particularly from disadvantaged environments. Her research career has involved establishing a number of comprehensive data bases that track maternal and child health. This has enabled her and her Institute colleagues to look at the causes and prevention of birth defects and major neurological disorders particularly the cerebral palsies and neural tube defects -- research that resulted in a world-first campaign to encourage women to take the vitamin folate prior to pregnancy.

With a commitment to improving health as a means to improving social justice, her team has been unpacking many of the social and economic influences that impact so strongly on child health and development. Professor Stanley is passionate about improving the life chances of Aboriginal people and stands strongly for reconciliation.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF KEY PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

### Franco Di Chiera – Director/Writer



Franco di Chiera is one of Australia's most successful filmmakers. He wrote and directed seven episodes of the series **Seeing is Believing** (1985) and five half-hour documentaries for public broadcaster SBS for the Australian Mosaic series. These include: **Some People Think It's Funny** (1985), **The Maltese Gang** (1986) (featured in the network's 1988 Bicentennial Retrospective); **Talking to the Moon** (1986) a dramatised-documentary (nominated Best Documentary in the Penguin Awards); **Cuppies** (1986) featuring Vince Sorrenti, **Broken Silence** (1987) (winner of a Citation in the UN Media Peace Awards).

In 1988, Franco directed and produced on the landmark three-part documentary **A Change of Face**, part of SBS's official contribution to the Australian Bicentennial. The series challenged notions of Australian identity on the screen, generating the highest level of publicity ever for a program on SBS at the time. In 1990, he wrote, directed and produced the one-hour documentary **The Artist, The Peasant** (L'artista, il contadino) for Film Australia. The film was an award-winner at WORLDfest - Houston International Film Festival and screened on ABC-TV.

He directed the performance documentary **Gemellaggio** (1991) for SBS and made the acclaimed 58 minute music-documentary **The Joys of The Women** (Le gioie delle donne) in 1992 which had a successful national theatrical release in Australia and broadcast on ABC. It screened at Festival dei Popoli in Florence, SulmonaCinema, Sguardi Australiani in Genoa, Bilan du Film Ethnographique in Paris and the Italian Film Festival in Sydney. The film was nominated Best Documentary in the Australian Film Critics Circle Awards.

His other one-hour programs include: the historical documentary **No Milk, No Honey** (1997), nominated for seven WA Film and Video Awards and achieved SBS's highest rating for local documentary in 1997. His film **Hoover's Gold** (2005) had a hit theatrical season at Perth's Cinema Paradiso and was the highest rating documentary for SBS's Inside Australia timeslot.

He also directed and co-wrote the dramatised documentary **Pipe Dreams** (2006), part of ABC's flagship series **Constructing Australia**. It was one of the ABC's highest rating Australian documentaries for the year, rating 22, winning an ACS Award for Best Cinematography in a documentary and nominated for an Australian Composer's Guild Award. In 2007, he directed two episodes of the celebrity family history series **Who Do You Think You Are?** (2007). The series attracted the highest ratings ever for a local production in SBS history.

In 2008, Franco's film **The Fabulous Flag Sisters** doubled the Cult Channel's usual ratings when screened in Italy on the Sky Network's Fox Channels and broadcast on SBS in Australia. It was nominated for an Australian Editors Guild Award and won

## PRESS KIT

Best Documentary at the RomaFictionFest, Italy's premier television festival and screened at the prestigious Spoleto Arts Festival.

In the area of drama, his short film **Waiting 'Round Wynyard** (1982) screened at film festivals in Sydney and San Francisco and his film school graduation drama **La Scala, Lo Scalone** (Stairs and Staircases, 1984) screened at festivals in Sydney, Munich and Turin. His comedy **Bad News Bachelors** (1990) was invited to screen at Edinburgh Festival and was SBS's highest rating program for the week when broadcast in 1991.

He also produced the ground-breaking drama series **Under The Skin** (1994) which won an AFI Award for Best TV Miniseries/Telefeature (episode **Best Wishes** screened at Venice International Film Festival). He was SBS Executive Producer of the indigenous short dramas **From Sand to Celluloid** (1996), episode "**No way to Forget**" screened in Un Certain Regard at Cannes and SBS Executive on Rolf de Heer's feature film **The Quiet Room** which was selected for Competition at Cannes the same year. In 1996, Franco directed the miniseries mini-series **Three Forever** (executive producers Rolf de Heer and Domenico Procacci). Starring Bud Spencer It attracted 7 million viewers over two nights when screened in Italy on RAI Uno in 2000 in the 5.00-7pm timeslot and screened in other territories including Australia, Germany and France.

More recently, he directed and co-wrote the feature-length **Death of the Megabeasts** for National Geographic in the U.S. while 85 and 52 minute versions of the program were presold to France 5 and SBS respectively. Comprising of forensic science, dramatisation and 3D CGI animal animation the film was nominated Best Natural History Documentary in the Asian Television Awards, Nominated Best Visual Effects, Feature category, Australian Film Institute Awards, Best Director, Documentary category Gold Panda Awards, China, Finalist Best Science, Technology & Environment, Documentary, ATOM Awards, Finalist APRA/AGSC Screen Music Award, Documentary Section. On completion of **Skin Deep**, Franco will be directing his second feature length film, **Big Mamma's Boy** for Australian production company Valarc Films. He is also writer and director of the 2 x 100 minute drama, **In the Mouth of the Wolf** for Cristaldi Films in Italy.

## Barbara Bernardini, PhD – Co-Writer and Researcher



Barbara Bernardini is a science writer and former researcher in molecular medicine. She has a PhD in biology and biochemistry and has been a researcher of the Harvard Medical School in Boston, MA. She won a 'Young Investigators Science Communication Award' in 1999 by 'le Scienze' (Italian edition of Scientific American) and fully embarked upon her career in science writing for press and TV

in 2000, writing and directing hundreds of science stories and reports worldwide. As TV host, Barbara presented over one hundred episodes of TV documentaries about medicine and nature, meeting with world-renowned scientists in the process. Since 2007, she has been writing and directing the yearly science series **Superquark** produced by DocLab and broadcast in primetime on the major national channel RAI-1 in Italy. She's currently producing the 2010 edition. **Skin Deep** is the result of four years' research.

## Marco Visalberghi – Producer, DocLab



Marco Visalberghi has worked as a producer and director since 1969. Since 1980 he has collaborated with the RAI's flagship science magazine series **Superquark**. In 1988 he founded Paneikon Productions and worked as its Managing Director and Executive Producer. His vision led Paneikon into the International market of science and technology as well as nature and wildlife documentary filmmaking. In 1999 he founded DocLab Productions and acts as its Managing Director. His passion for his work leads him to constantly seek

the combination of technical innovation, creative talent and a good story for the audience.

DocLab tends to focus on science, history, culture and current affairs, more recently developing a number of feature-length documentary projects. Sound production experience, creative talent and a passion for new technology have earned it a reputation for quality and innovation in factual programming.

His aim was to bring the Italian documentary into the International market, and over the last years he has worked regularly with well-known broadcasters such as Discovery Channel, National Geographic, NOVA/WGBH, Nature-WNET, WDR in Germany, NHK in Japan as well as the Italian national networks RAI and Mediaset. Building on his past he has recently also worked with ZDF/Arte in Germany, the BBC and Channel 4 in the UK, France 3 and France 5 in France.

Marco Visalberghi has acted for several years as Vice President of the Italian Association of Independent Documentary Filmmakers (Doc/It). He is now particularly active in promoting the issue of "Fair Use" in documentary, an important battle for the preservation of liberty of expression in Independent documentaries (aFace).

## Andrew Ogilvie - Producer, Electric Pictures



Andrew Ogilvie has been working in the film industry for 25 years. He has a reputation as one of Australia's leading producers of documentaries in a variety of genre and formats that have attracted many awards in Australia and overseas.

Andrew's work includes: **Surviving Mumbai**, a docudrama which brings together candid and very personal accounts from the ordinary and extraordinary people who were caught up in the Mumbai terrorist attacks in 2008; **Addicted to Money**, a documentary which uncovers how the financial crisis came about, what it all means for us now, and what we can do to create a sustainable economy; **The Great Escape: The Reckoning**, a WWII docudrama about one of the greatest manhunts in the history of criminal investigation: to find former Gestapo officers who carried out Hitler's vengeful decree to murder 50 Allied airmen of history's Great Escape; **Skippy; Australia's First Superstar**, a documentary which discovers how it was possible to make 91 episodes of a series involving a crime fighting kangaroo that can tie knots, undo locks, post letters, attack poisonous snakes and more; **Cracking the Colour Code**, a 3 part series filmed around the world about how we view colours, how we make them, and the meaning they hold in our world; **The Hunt for HMAS Sydney**, following the historic find of the HMAS Sydney II, solving one of Australia's most tragic and enduring mysteries; **Gallipoli Submarine**, a one hour docudrama about the incredible true story of the WW1 Australian submarine AE2 during the Gallipoli campaign; **Bom Bali**, a groundbreaking docudrama feature about the 2002 Bali bombings; **Submariners**, a six part half hour series filmed on board one of Australia's controversial Collins Class Submarines; **The Winner's Guide to the Nobel Prize**, featuring Western Australia's two Nobel Laureates for medicine 2005; **The Black Road**, the harrowing story of Aceh's struggle for independence from Indonesia; **Superflu: Race Against a Killer**, about the potential impact of a full scale pandemic of the avian flu virus; **Hula Girls**, about how the image of the 'Hula Girl' has been used in literature, art and film over the centuries; **Tug of Love**, about parental child abduction; **Stories from a Children's Hospital**, set in the Princess Margaret Hospital in Perth, Western Australia; **Child Soldiers**, about children who are forced to become soldiers; **Playing the Game**, about the end of colonialism and the consequences of America's involvement in global politics after the end of WWII; **Winds of Change**, documenting stories of ordinary people during the 1999 Asian financial collapse and **The Human Race**, a survival race through the Australian outback involving an old Aboriginal man, a German survival expert and a young American ultra-marathon runner.

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## Andrea Quesnelle- Producer, Electric Pictures



In the last three years, Andrea Quesnelle has produced five documentaries and two children. With 15 years' experience in the television industry, Andrea has brought a wealth of expertise to Electric Pictures. She has produced several one-hour documentaries and line-produced two 13-episode documentary series, as well as associate producing and developing various other productions.

Originally from Canada, Andrea has been thrown into the deep end of Australian history, politics, science and pop-culture, co-producing **Addicted to Money**, a 3-part series about the financial crisis; **Surviving Mumbai**, a look at the horrific terrorist attacks that took place in November 2008; **The Great Escape – The Reckoning**, the story of the hunt for the Nazi murderers of the Great Escape airmen; **Skippy: Australia's First Superstar**, a light-hearted but revealing film about the iconic 1960s TV series; and **The Hunt for HMAS Sydney**, following the historic find of the HMAS Sydney II, solving one of Australia's most tragic and enduring mysteries.

Andrea has worked extensively on one-offs and series for a range of international broadcasters, and her work has taken her to Africa, America, Europe and Indonesia for numerous overseas shoots.

## David Fosdick – Editor



David began his editing career working as an assistant editor with the ABC in Melbourne in 1970. In 1980 he was employed as a staff editor by Film Centre Pty Ltd, an independent production company in Perth.

In 1985 he went freelance and has since edited many hours of programmes for both domestic and international broadcasters, including **Surviving Mumbai**, **Who Do You Think You Are?**, **Desperately Seeking Doctors**, **Stressbuster**, **The Winners Guide to the Nobel Prize**, **Playing the Game** and **Child Soldiers**. In his spare time David likes to defy the laws of gravity.

## Lawrie Silvestrin – Editor



Lawrie has worked as a drama and documentary picture and sound editor and post production supervisor for more than twenty five years. During that time he has been nominated for four AFI Awards and a Golden Reel Award - winning an AFI Award for Best Sound Editing.

His documentary credits include: **The Great Escape: The Reckoning**, **Skippy: Australia's First Superstar**, **Cracking the Colour Code** (Nominated for Best Editing), **Who Do You Think You Are?**, **The Black Road**– Editor and Co-Writer (Winner of Best Documentary and Best Film 2006 Mumbai International Film Festival, AFI Nomination Best Editing), **Give Me A Break**, **Submariners**, **Bom Bali**, **Stories from a Children's**

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**Hospital** – Editor and Co-Writer, **Snakebuster**, **Aussie Animal Rescue 2**, **Shipwreck Detectives 1&2**, **Selling Australia** - Editor and Co-Writer, **Playing the Game**, **Painting Country**, and **Paying for the Piper** (AFI Nomination Best Editing).

## Torstein Dyrting – Director of Photography



Torstein Dyrting ACS is a talented, award winning Cinematographer that has built an innovative, body of work in many film genres with many Directors. Torstein's career in the film industry spans more than 15 years with experience in drama, documentary and commercial cinematography.

Torstein's style brings a unique and artistic feel to his work creating powerful pictures for which he has received critical acclaim, including the coveted Australian Cinematographers Society Golden Tripod Award which Torstein has collected four times in recent years. In 2008 Torstein received the honour of becoming an accredited member of the Australian Cinematographers Society.

Some of his credits include: feature film "Blame", documentary "Spirit Stones", short films "Iron Bird" and "Rosie".

## PRODUCTION COMPANY PROFILES



### ELECTRIC PICTURES

Established in 1992, Electric Pictures is one of Australia's leading independent producers as a result of the production of award winning factual programs in a range of genre including: Science, History, Travel and Adventure, Arts, Human Interest and Current Affairs.

Over the years, Electric Pictures' productions have been financed with the assistance of many of the world's most respected broadcasters of factual programming, including: ABC (Australia), ARTE (France and Germany), AVRO (Netherlands), BBC (UK), Channel Four (UK), Discovery Channel (Worldwide), History Channel (UK), NHK (Japan), National Geographic (USA and Worldwide), PBS (USA), S4C (UK), SBS (Australia), Sky (UK), NDR (Germany), RTE (Ireland) and ZDF (Germany).

Contact: Andrew OGILVIE

Tel +61 8 9339 1133

Fax +61 8 9339 1183

[ao@electricpictures.com.au](mailto:ao@electricpictures.com.au)



**DOC LAB** is an independent production company based in Rome, Italy. It was founded in 1999 by producer-director Marco Visalberghi on the strength of his 20 years of experience making science and natural history documentaries for the

domestic and international markets. DocLab tends to focus on science, history, culture and current affairs, more recently developing a number of feature-length documentary projects. Sound production experience, creative talent and a passion for new technology have earned it a reputation for quality and innovation in factual programming.

DocLab works in partnership with La Compagnie des Taxi Brousse, Gedeon, Trasparences and Artline Films in France, Ma.Ja.De and Tangram-Christian Bauer Filmproduktion in Germany, and Cicada in the UK, co-producing documentaries with the main public and private Italian networks and a wide range of international broadcasters including Discovery, National Geographic, NOVA/WGBH, France 2, France 3, France 5, ZDF/arte, Spiegel TV, WDR, ORF, BBC4, YLE and NHK.

Managing Director, Marco Visalberghi, after his six years' commitment as Vice President of the Italian Association of Independent Documentary Filmmakers (Doc/It), is now promoting the cause of FAIR USE and the freedom of speech in audiovisual media in Italy.

## CONTRACTUAL KEY CREDITS

**Skin Deep** is a co-production between **Electric Pictures** (Australia) and **Doc Lab** (Italy).



Produced in association with **SBS, Arte France, UR Sweden, WDR Germany**



Developed with the support of the **MEDIA Programme of the European Community**



Produced with the assistance of **ScreenWest** and **Lotterywest**.



Principal Investor: **Screen Australia**



Directed By

FRANCO DI CHIERA

Written & Researched By

BARBARA BERNARDINI,  
GREG COLGAN,  
FRANCO DI CHIERA

Produced By

ANDREW OGILVIE,  
MARCO VISALBERGHI,  
ANDREA QUESNELLE

# PRESS KIT

Based on an original idea by	BARBARA BERNARDINI
Editors	DAVID FOSDICK, LAWRIE SILVESTRIN
Director of Photography	TORSTEIN DYRTING
Sound Recordist	LAURIE CHLANDA
Visual Effects	MIKE DUNN PHIMEDIA
Original Music	STEFANO LENTINI
Narrated By	JENNIFER VULETIC
Scientific Consultant	NINA JABLONSKI
Production Manager	ROSE GRANDILE
Production Co-ordinators	INGRID LONGLEY, ROBERTA BALLARNI, ARIANNA IACHETTI
Online Editor & Colourist	DEAN EDWARDS COLOURBOX VIDEO POST PRODUCTION
Sound Editor	BEN BEVERLEY
Sound Mix	RIC CURTIN CURTIN PRODUCTIONS
Subtitles produced by	SBS (AUSTRALIA)
French Co-Producer	LA COMPAGNIE DES TAXI BROUSSE MAURICE RIBIERE

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**DISTRIBUTION CONTACTS**

**ENGLISH INTERNATIONAL VERSION**

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**ABC Commercial**

700 Harris St, Ultimo, NSW 2007

Tel: 03 9524 2473

Karen Dacey, Manager Program Sales Worldwide

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**DVD & DOWNLOAD DISTRIBUTION:**

**EP INDEPENDENT**

33 Canning Highway,

East Fremantle WA

AUSTRALIA

Judith Cockburn-Campbell

Tel: +61 8 9339 1133