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# Road to Peace...

First-time Director, **Leon Stuperich**, answers some questions about his recent release, *Road to Peace*. Leon was granted unprecedented access to the Dalai Lama during a visit to the UK, and thus a very insightful documentary into his life and work was born.

**Q.** How did it materialise that you could have access to the Dalai Lama for this film?

**A.** *Road to Peace* is the first film I have directed. We were speaking with the Dalai Lama's representatives in London about another film and what emerged was an invitation for me to put in a proposal to document the Dalai Lama's visit to the UK in the following year. Of course I jumped at the chance and quickly knew that what I wanted to portray was the nature of Dalai Lama, and his message that inspires hundreds of millions of people around the world.

**Q.** When did this happen?

**A.** Filming began in 2008 with the wonderful support of the Tibet Society in London. It took a further four years of editing, finding archive material etc, to finish the film. The real task was to ensure the film captured the true spirit of the man himself; the human side of the Dalai Lama. Not just the political side that is so often represented in the media, but the humanitarian and spiritual leader that attracts crowds of thousands of people to hear him speak. We are delighted with the final result and to see so many people deeply moved from watching the film.

**Q.** Tell us a little about the journey from filming to completion.

**A.** When making a film about a person, the only way to truly tell the message is to understand it on a deep, personal level. So making a film about the Dalai Lama was a

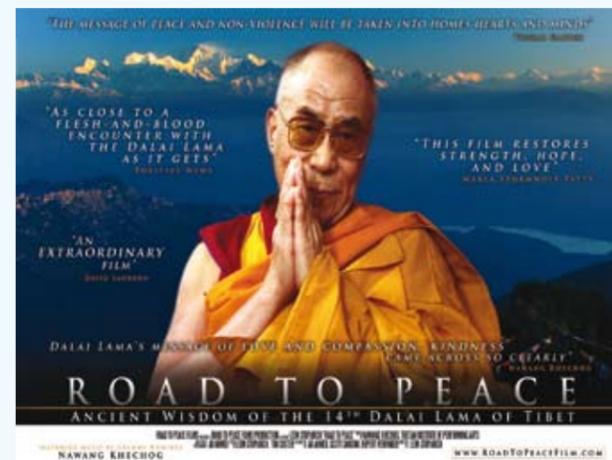
fascinating and deeply profound process. Not only to honour his message of Peace, Compassion and Universal Love, but also to represent the Dalai Lama in his true light. The film was screened dozens of times with test audiences and this was a crucial part of the creative process. It is the only way to know if the film is connecting with the heart of an audience. The film is an experience rather than just a movie. When we hold screenings we like to emphasise this with Buddhist chanting, live music and dialogue.

**Q.** What struck you most about the Dalai Lama whilst in his presence?

**A.** We were very lucky to have incredible intimate behind-the-scenes access to the Dalai Lama. The most remarkable thing to notice is how humble he is, whilst at the same time extremely self-confident. When he meets people, regardless of their status, he greets everybody in the same manner. Whether it's the Prime Minister or someone in a crowd on the street. But when he talks to you he pays you full attention, and for those few moments it feels as if there is nobody else but you and him. His gentle but powerful warmth and kindness exudes from him and he really does seem to mean what he says when he describes himself as a 'simple Buddhist Monk'.

**Q.** How did the experience impact you personally?

**A.** Every time I watch the film I understand a little bit more about the Dalai Lama and his message. The remarkable



thing is that it's not so much about his words, but the way he is in himself – it's how he is with the people he meets that is the most inspiring. So, he sets an example of how we can be more peaceful and compassionate in our lives, and he embodies the message he shares. I have absorbed a lot of the wisdom that he shared with us, and many of his sayings have become mantras for my own life. For me, the real impact comes from learning to be – to behave, in a more compassionate way.

**Q.** What do you feel is the message of this film?

**A.** Change starts within. Not just personal change, but if we want to change the world for the better then we must change ourselves first. As Gandhi famously said, "be the change you wish to see in the world". If you become more peaceful, then the world has already changed. But what we DO, is the most important factor. The Dalai Lama's message is a call to action, to get up and solve the problems we face in the world. So education is just as important as developing inner values.

**Q.** How can our readers get to watch *Road to Peace*?

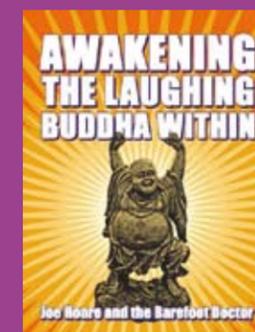
**A.** We are currently doing the rounds at the film festivals, recently winning the Audience Award for Best Feature Documentary at the Albuquerque Film and Media Experience (AFME) in New Mexico. We are also hosting screening events around the country and you can buy the DVD from our website.

For more information and to watch the trailer, visit: [www.roadtopeacefilm.com](http://www.roadtopeacefilm.com)

## Inspiring Books

**Awakening the Laughing Buddha Within**  
 by Joe Hoare & the Barefoot Doctor

This book has been described as a story, a manual and a guide to help you awaken your own Laughing Buddha within. Joe Hoare has been running courses in Laughter Yoga and NLS (Natural Laughter Skills) for over 30 years, whilst the Barefoot Doctor is a master of the Taoist martial arts and a doctor of Chinese medicine.

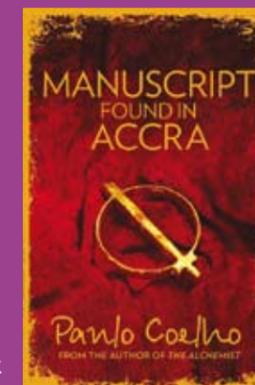


Through his own personal experiences and journey of self-development, Joe Hoare presents insights relating to laughter, known to Eastern philosophy for thousands of years. Within each section the Barefoot Doctor bestows practical exercises drawn from the ancient Taoist system of wellbeing – supporting you on your own 'Laughing Buddha' path. Celebrate the power of laughter as a key to the deep reserves of creativity and contentment within us all. This is a collaboration not to be missed!

**Manuscript Found in Accra**

by Paulo Coelho

Written in a similar style to Kahlil Gibran's *The Prophet* with a 'question/answer' structure, this book has received mixed reviews. The narrator claims to be transcribing a manuscript written in 1099 on the eve of the Crusaders' invasion of Jerusalem. It recounts the dialogue of a mysterious Greek man who counsels a group of men and women about their most pressing questions on beauty, love, courage and so forth. Wisdom jumps from the pages, but rather than read it cover to cover, maybe just dip in when the mood catches you.



**“When he talks to you he pays you full attention, and for those few moments it feels as if there is nobody else but you and him.”**