

Ancasterâ??s AndrÃ© van Heerden pens script for virtual reality film

Description

Jesus VR screens at Venice International Film Festival



Venice Film Festival attendees are donning thew virtual reality goggles for the advent of Jesus VR p

Posted by Larry Gleeson

By Debra Downey, Ancaster News

Script-writer AndrÃ© van Heerden admits even he â??got lostâ?• in the experience of viewing the first feature-length virtual reality film.

A 40-minute preview of *Jesus VR â?? The Story of Christ* screened last month at the 73rd Venice International Film Festival, and the Ancaster resident and his wife, Carolyn, had front-row seats.

â??Because itâ??s shown in virtual reality, itâ??s not really a big screen but more of an actual world that youâ??re suddenly immersed in. It was surreal,â?• said van Heerden. â??â?¦When youâ??re within that world and youâ??re able to turn and look wherever you want, you feel like youâ??re actually there.â?•

Virtual reality is a relatively new technology for film. The Venice theatre in which it was screened was equipped with 50 virtual reality headsets and individual seats that pivoted 360 degrees.

According to the show-business magazine Variety, if *Jesus VR â?? The Story of Christ* is a success, it could help shape the way virtual reality stories are produced and distributed. The film was shot entirely in Matera, Italy, and employed over a hundred crew members and hundreds of extras. It tells the story of Jesus Christ from his birth to his resurrection.

Van Heerden, who has worked in various aspects of film and video production for the past 15 years, said it took about a month to develop the scriptâ??s original draft, followed by another six weeks accommodating requests for extra scenes or additional parts to scenes.



Andre Van Heerden at the 73rd International Venice Film Festival. (Photo credit: Ancaster News)

â??Because the producers were looking for a faithful and accurate telling of Jesusâ?? story, a lot of my writing was research based,â?• said van Heerden. â??I wanted to make sure that I picked the most significant parts but also the moments that could be strung together to tell a complete story. Everything came back to Biblical scriptures and making sure that it lined up with them.â?•

Van Heerden also worked with technical advisor Father William Fulco to ensure the script was scripturally and theologically sound. Fulco was the technical advisor on the highly acclaimed movie *The Passion of the Christ*.

Jesus VR â?? The Story of Christ is slated to be released around Christmas on all major virtual reality platforms, including Google Cardboard, Samsung Gear, Oculus Rift, PlayStation VR and the HTC Vive.

(Source: http://www.hamiltonnews.com)

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