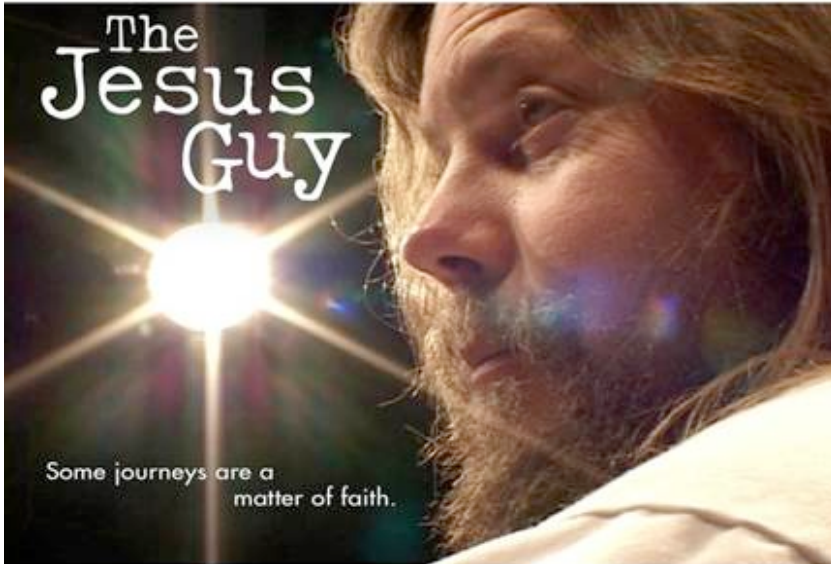


THE JESUS GUY

A Documentary By: Sean Tracey



I did not know what to expect exactly from this film, when it arrived. I had heard from various festivals that I should see it. That it was an extremely interesting film, especially in a country where “faith” is used often for political gain. Our writers Shawn and Leslie tried to see it at the Oxford Film Festival and didn’t quite make it on time.

I put it in my DVD player and sat back. A 60 minute documentary about a man who looks like Jesus.... Hmm... I thought, perhaps I am not the best person to watch and review this film. I have pre-conceived convictions and can I put them aside? Hmm... I decided to just start it and if I felt I should withdraw I would give it to one of my other writers..... 63 minutes later, I popped the DVD out.

The Jesus Guy, is an amazing little film that explores the meaning of faith and commitment. Sean Tracey, in his debut feature has captured an intriguing subject in “What’s Your Name”. “What’s Your Name” is a nomadic man who has renounced all worldly property, money and name. He has gone out into the world, in the way that an apostle of Jesus was supposed to. He is barefoot, has no winter clothing, and his only true possession is a robe, small blanket and the New Testament. He relies on God to provide food, shelter and anything he may need along his journey. A journey that has covered 13 countries and 47 states in the last 16 years.



The first half of the film shows the “prophet” side of “What’s Your Name”. Shows him talking to people, the elderly, infirm, children and anyone he could meet. I found myself strangely admiring this person who seemed to transcend human emotion, fear and needs. Then, the film became truly fascinating. Sean Tracey found the chink in the subjects finely tuned armor. His hidden humanity. His ego. His desire for attention and press. He seemed to want the attention for himself desperately. When he preached to a smaller than normal crowd, he comments on how disappointing the turn out was, to the people who came. He argued with cops about camera use if he was questioned for permits. He seemed to not be grateful to some of the people who helped him. He seemed distant from his family when he met them. He was just like anyone else. Struggling with his identity, or sometimes lack thereof. Yet still someone to admire for trying to do something he feels called to do. Someone to admire for trying to be better than his humanity allows. He may not be Jesus (which he never says he is!), but he is someone trying to make a difference, the best way he can.

The film is shot wonderfully. Sean Tracey in his first feature has proven that he is one to watch out for in the future. He took the difficult task of keeping up with a nomad, who tries to keep his personal self a deep secret, and found the humanity hidden away. It is a fascinating 63 minutes, that truly captures a unique individual.

Shane Morton