SERVANT OR SLAVE
SCREENING KIT
RESOURCES TO SUPPORT FILM SCREENINGS
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SERVANT OR SLAVE SCREENING KIT

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**SYNOPSIS**

*Servant or Slave* is an emotional and confronting insight into the history and legacy of the domestic servitude enforced upon Aboriginal girls in Australia.

The film follows the lives of five Aboriginal women who were stolen from their families and trained to be domestic servants. With the government exercising complete control over their wages, many thousands of Aboriginal girls and boys were effectively condemned to a treadmill of abuse, from which there was little hope of escape.

In bringing to light the heartbreaking experiences of Rita, Violet, Adelaide, Valerie and Rita, *Servant or Slave* celebrates their fortitude in pursuing justice for the crimes committed against them. Theirs is a David and Goliath battle, waged not only for personal healing, but to shed light on a barely acknowledged part of modern Australia’s history whose consequences are still felt today.

**CREDITS**

**Production Company**
No Coincidence Media

**Writers**
Mitchell Stanley
Hetti Perkins

**Director**
Steven McGregor

**Producer**
Mitchell Stanley

**Co-producer**
Hetti Perkins

**Executive Producer**
Michaela Perske

**Editor**
Elliott Magen

**Cinematographer**
Simon Chapman

**Music**
George Papanicolaou
Hosting a screening of Servant or Slave is an opportunity to acknowledge, understand and have a supported conversation about a part of Australian modern history that many people are not aware of - the history of slavery and stolen wages in Australia.

True reconciliation begins through acknowledging, understanding and addressing past wrongs against Indigenous Australians. It is essential, in order to heal some very deep wounds in our society and move forward as a nation. Your screening of Servant or Slave is an important step towards this aim.

Servant or Slave explores modern slavery right here in Australia. It addresses how Indigenous people have been enslaved and continue to fight for reparation and compensation for stolen wages and the human rights abuses committed against them from the late 1800s right up until the 1970s. Albeit, our history books admit that Australia has a history of indentured servitude, like the heroes in this film who tell their stories of abuse there are thousands of Indigenous people still alive today who suffered this injustice yet have to date received no acknowledgement, reparations or compensation for stolen wages.

Human rights, social justice, Indigenous and Australian history are themes that are explored throughout the film. Dr Ros Kidd, Fiona Skyring and Larissa Behrendt lend their expertise as interviewees in the documentary, exploring how the Australian Federal and State Governments have yet to acknowledge and accept that it wasn’t indentured servitude but slavery.

The stolen wages that were withheld by government trusts were spent on city infrastructure and roadways, with a reparation offer of $2000 for a lifetime of labour for those that were indentured. Thus, if not paid for the time of picking cotton, farming the land, managing the stock and cattle, rearing the master’s children whilst cleaning and maintaining the household, the lifetime of indentured servitude in accordance with Australian history deserves to be challenged.
HOW TO HOST A SCREENING

Here are some tips to help make your screening of *Servant or Slave* a success.

**PLANNING THE EVENT**
- Find a space: screenings can be held anywhere where there is a digital projector and speakers. Best-case scenario is a cinema, but community spaces, school halls or boardrooms can work too.
- Give yourself about six weeks to plan the event.
- Get a team together to help with publicity, catering and technical logistics.
- Are you raising money for a charity? If so, try and get a good deal from the venue - they may even give you the space for free.
- Set up an online ticketing system. Here are a few suggestions:
  - eventbrite.com.au
  - floktu.com
  - trybooking.com
- Make sure the invite sets out the running order of the event.
- The film runs for 58 minutes.

**PUBLICITY**
- Start publicising your event as soon as possible.
- Set up a Facebook event page (make sure it has the RSVP or ticketing link) and include the trailer.
- Tweet using the hashtag #ServantOrSlave and include the trailer.
- Distribute marketing materials – send an email, put up posters in strategic areas.
- Write a press release and let your local newspaper and radio station know. Follow up with a phone call.

**TECHNICAL CHECKLIST**
- Get access to a good digital projector.
- Do a sound and vision check (also called a ‘tech’ check) as soon as you receive the DVD or online link to *Servant or Slave*.
- Check that the aspect ratio for the projector is set correctly (the picture shouldn’t look too wide or too tall).
- Check that the colours are as they should be (the picture should not look too dark or light, or too blue, green or red).
- Check that the room where you are screening the film is dark.
- Sit in different seats in the audience area at your tech check – try the back row and the sides to test whether everyone can see and hear the film.
- If you don’t have time to play the whole film at the tech check, play the film at a few random scenes (beginning, middle and end). Can you understand the words and hear the music? Is the sound coming out of all speakers?
SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY OR CORPORATE SCREENING EVENTS

- Hosting a screening of Servant or Slave in your community or workplace is an opportunity to acknowledge, understand and have an important conversation about the history of slavery and stolen wages in Australia.
- Make sure you have a skilled and informed facilitator to lead any post-screening discussion.
- If your workplace has a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) you can also use the screening as an opportunity to raise awareness and support for your RAP.
- You could use your screening event to fundraise for a local Indigenous organisation.
- If you’re hosting a fundraiser for an organisation, make sure to let them know about your screening so they can help spread the word.
- You can host an event any time that suits your calendar. However, you might consider aligning your event with a significant date such as during National Reconciliation Week which occurs from 27 May and 3 June each year or NAIDOC Week, held each July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Consider partnering with a local Indigenous organisation or council to host your screening.

RECRUITING A SKILLED FACILITATOR

Key characteristics of a good facilitator should include:
- Good listening skills.
- Ability to acknowledge the diverse experiences of people in the room.
- Ability to manage sensitive information.
- Ability to interrupt and re-focus discussion if conversations go off topic.
- Ideally they should be provided with an opportunity to view the film prior to the screening and background information on the issue they will speak to after the screening.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PANEL MEMBERS

- Panel members should have expertise in the issues raised in the film. Choose someone who is skilled at sensitively talking about the material in the film. Consider inviting an Indigenous community leader in the first instance.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PANEL DISCUSSIONS

- Use the Servant or Slave discussion questions as a starting point for the panel and encourage audience questions as well.
- Make the panel discussion at least half an hour long to allow for audience participation.
# Screening Timeline

## Six Weeks Out
- Get in touch to buy a screening license for the film
- Set time and date for your screening
- Decide on a venue and book it
- Pull together an invitation list
- Design marketing materials or adapt from templates in the screening kit you’ve received from us.
- Get an event team together
- If you’re planning on having a Q&A book speakers and a moderator.
- Decide if you are going to provide catering.

## Five Weeks Out
- Set up online ticketing system to collect RSVPs or purchase tickets.
- Send out invites and let people know if the event will be catered or not
- Set up a Facebook event page and make sure to include a ticketing link
- Start sharing your event on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

## Four Weeks Out
- Visit the venue and do a technical check. Test the DVD or digital file (see technical checklist)
- If you’re hosting a Q&A, do you need a microphone for your speakers and for audience questions?

## Three Weeks Out
- Distribute and put up flyers and posters
- Write a press release and send it to local media
- Keep sharing your event on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

## Two Weeks Out
- Follow up local news and radio by phone - media receive many press releases a day so it’s always worthwhile following up with a phone call.

## One Week Out
- Send out an email/Facebook reminder of your event one week and one day before
- Follow up with local media

## Screening Day
- Set Up
- Final tech checks (make sure everything still works!)
- Once everyone arrives, welcome your guests with a Welcome To Country and then introduce the film
- Project the take action slide on screen as soon as the film finishes

## The Day After
- Thank the audience and your event team in person and on social media
- Send out an email/Facebook message to let everyone know how much you raised (if you hosted a fundraiser) and the outcomes of your screening.
PROMOTING YOUR EVENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media makes it easy to let your community know about your screening.

CREATE A FACEBOOK EVENT

STEP 1
On the left side of your Facebook page, click ‘Events’.

STEP 2
Click ‘Create an Event’ and fill out the form details. Include a link to the trailer and always include your ticketing website URL so people can RSVP or purchase tickets.

STEP 3
Click ‘Create’ and you’re done. You’re ready to invite your Facebook friends to the screening.

EXAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS: FACEBOOK

Come and see @ServantOrSlave, a powerful documentary that sheds light on a barely acknowledged part of modern Australia’s history whose consequences are still felt today. Screening one night only. [insert venue, date and time or add ticketing website URL]
[insert venue, date and time or add ticketing website URL]

Come and see #ServantOrSlave and be part of the conversation. Screening one night only. [insert venue, date and time or add ticketing website URL]

I’m excited to host a screening of @ServantOrSlave at [insert venue and time]. Come and watch this powerful film and let’s contribute to the creation of a just, equal and reconciled Australia. Free snacks provided. Get tickets here [add ticketing website URL]

EXAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS: TWITTER

Come see a powerful and film about what’s been missing from our history books. #ServantOrSlave screening one night only [add your ticketing website URL]

I’m hosting a screening of #ServantOrSlave at [insert venue and time]. Free snacks provided. Tickets here [add your ticketing website URL]

Let’s create a new understanding of our history and create justice for Indigenous Australians. Come see the film #ServantOrSlave Tickets here [add your ticketing website URL]
SENDING AN EMAIL TO YOUR NETWORKS

(NB: If doing a group invite, for privacy reasons address the email to yourself and be sure to BCC the email address list)

Subject: Invitation to a screening of Servant or Slave

Dear [insert name]

Servant or Slave by filmmaker Steven McGregor is an emotional and confronting insight into the history and legacy of the domestic servitude enforced upon Aboriginal girls in Australia, told through the stories of five women.

We invite you to a special screening of the film at [insert place] on [insert date].

The screening will be followed by a discussion with [insert speakers name if you have one].

Many thousands of girls were stolen as young children from their parents and placed in institutions, to be trained as servants who could be assimilated into mainstream Australian society.

In bringing to light the heartbreaking experiences of Rita, Violet, Adelaide, Valerie and Rita, Servant or Slave celebrates their fortitude in pursuing justice for the crimes committed against them. Theirs is a David and Goliath battle, waged not only for personal healing, but to shed light on a barely acknowledged part of modern Australia’s history whose consequences are still felt today.

Come and watch this powerful film and let’s contribute to the creation of a just, equal and reconciled Australia.

You can RSVP/purchase tickets here [insert ticketing web link to RSVP or purchase tickets or email address – be sure to let people know if any of your ticket sales are being used to fundraise for a cause]

Check out the film trailer here (hyperlink the trailer if possible).

For any questions please contact the event organisers at [insert email address].

We hope to see you at the screening.

[insert name of individual or organisation]
DISCUSSION GUIDE
These questions can be used as a starting point for a facilitated discussion in a small or large group setting.

We urge you to use this discussion guide to generate positive and meaningful dialogue about the film and the issues it explores.

DO YOUR RESEARCH FIRST
Do some research before you begin to help you prepare for a group discussion.

Servant or Slave may raise themes that could be sensitive to audience members, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. If possible, invite a local Indigenous leader to participate in the discussion.

At the very least, talk to an Indigenous person to get their perspective to ensure you set up a respectful and meaningful dialogue.

For more information you can also explore the Servant or Slave website.

GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Q. How did you feel as you watched the film Servant or Slave?

Q. What were your first reactions?

Q. What does the documentary tell us about the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the face of injustice and abuse?

Engaging this next question may be difficult for people with experiences of being removed or separated from family. We recommend you consider this prior to deciding whether or not to include this discussion question.

Q. What does the word ‘family’ mean to you? How do you think you would feel being removed from your family, knowing you may never see them again?

In the documentary, Dr Fiona Skyring articulates, “I don’t think you can actually separate the Stolen Generations from the Stolen Wages story; they’re completely entwined.”

6. What is the relationship between Stolen Generations and Stolen Wages?

Dr Skyring says in the film, “Aboriginal wages were misappropriated by governments to cover their own liabilities, including the cost of moving people to missions and reserves, and the forcible removal of children. In essence, Aboriginal people unwittingly funded their own disenfranchisement.”

Q. How much do you think the loss of wages has contributed to ongoing contemporary challenges or issues faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia?

Q. What are your hopes for the future of Australia, particularly with regard to the relationship between non-Indigenous Australians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?

Q. Why is a holistic understanding of the past necessary for understanding, and positively shaping, the present and the future? Why is truth-telling and historical acceptance important to reconciliation in Australia?