



JOHN SAFRAN

John Safran is a writer and filmmaker, who seeks out true stories with big themes -religion, political extremism, love - and makes them personal and funny.

His storytelling has delivered a long list of iconic moments, as well as journalists scoops.

His latest book, **Puff Piece**, found the smoking gun proving Big Tobacco had infiltrated a senate inquiry into vaping and was shortlisted for the 2022 Prime Minister's Literary Awards (Penguin Random House, 2021).

His most recent documentary, part of the series **Who The Bloody Hell Are We?**, uncovered how Nazis in Australia in the 1940s tried to spread antisemitism (SBS, 2023).

In the same documentary, following steps found in ancient Jewish scripture, he built a mud creature that supposedly comes to life when prayed over, which protects the Jewish community, and delivered it to a Melbourne falafel shop that had been vandalised by antisemites.

This was just the latest in a decades-long CV, immersing himself in religious ritual, through shows like **John Safran vs God**, **Race Relations**, **Race Around The World** and **Music Jamboree**, including:

- Being covered in chicken's blood by witch doctors in Mozambique in an effort to remove a curse placed on the Socceroos in that country.
- Trying to join the Ku Klux Klan, arguing to the Grand Dragon, that even though he's Jewish, his skin is whiter than Hitler's.
- Nailed to a crucifix in the Philippines, along with local Catholics, in an annual Easter ceremony.
- Visiting voodoo priests in the Ivory Coast to place a curse on his ex-girlfriend.
- Drinking peyote in an Arizona desert, under the guidance of local indigenous people, hoping and failing to have mystical visions.
- Trying and failing (whipped actually) to be inducted in a Buddhist temple in Japan.
- Going back to his orthodox Jewish school to dance Footloose in protest for them never having a school dance with its sister school.
- Convincing an imam in the UK to place a fatwa on Rove McManus for bumping him as a guest on his talk show.
- Spending three days being exorcised by an American evangelical Christian, who believed all sorts of devils had entered him through all the religious rituals he'd taken part in.

His debut book **Murder in Mississippi** (Penguin Random House, 2013) found him 'befriending' the Black killer of a white supremacist, whom John had by chance met eleven months before his murder while filming **Race Relations**. It won the Ned Kelly Award for Best True Crime.

His follow-up book **Depends What You Mean By Extremist** (Penguin Random House, 2017) pre-empted the 'reboot' of the far-right, with John hanging with then-unknown local extremists and a local ISIS supporter who, while the book was being written, tried to flee overseas to fight for the terrorist group and was subsequently imprisoned.

John is currently working on his fourth book for Penguin Random House, to be released 2024.