

**“Moving and thought-provoking.”**

-Mike Wilber, NBC News

## **Synopsis:**

Hailed by some viewers as a "life-transformational film," *Flight from Death* uncovers fear of death as a possible root cause of much of our everyday behaviors. Through stunning visuals and insightful interviews, this multiple award-winning film ('Best Feature' NW Film Forum; 'Audience Award for Best Documentary' 2004 Malibu Film Festival; 'Audience Award for Best Documentary' 2004 Northern Lights Documentary Film Festival; 'Grand Prize: Best Documentary' 2004 Rhode Island International Film Festival; 'Best Documentary' 2003 Silver Lake Film Festival; 'Best Documentary' 2003 Ohio Independent Film Festival; and 'Audience Award for Best Documentary' 2003 Beverly Hills Film Festival) explores human beings' innate and subconscious fear of death and portrays the impacts of that fear on our behavior, specifically in regard to violence.

Woody Allen once said, "I'm not afraid to die. I just don't want to be there when it happens." This probing film explores the myriad ways human beings have devised to do just that. A culmination of many years of research and shooting in locations such as Egypt, Israel, Guyana, Mexico, Greece, and China, *Flight from Death* provides a definitive study of the ultimate question that each one of us must face. Guided by the narration of Gabriel Byrne, this film poses the big questions to an all-star cast of scholars, authors, philosophers, and researchers. In the end, this film provides the most comprehensive and mind-blowing investigation of humankind's relationship with death ever captured on video.

## **Contact:**

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<http://www.flightfromdeath.com> (official film site)

## **Film credits:**

Director & editor: Patrick Shen

Producers: Patrick Shen & Greg Bennick

Narrator: Gabriel Byrne

Writers: Greg Bennick & Patrick Shen

Associate producer: Andrew Heeney

Production coordinator: Joy O’Campo

Camera operators: Danny Becerra  
Andrew Heeney  
Patrick Shen  
Greg Bennick  
Tom Pecorelli  
Bill Robison

Original music by: Elijah Shepard  
Adam Watts  
Eric Sauppe

Additional music by: Low  
Sean Byrd  
Jenn Shepard  
Seth  
The John Wilkes Kissing Booth  
Didjworks  
Twine  
Keoki Trask  
Stryke

## **Crew Biographies:**

**Patrick Shen** (Co-producer, Director, Editor, Co-writer) is an award-winning producer and editor and has been involved in the television/video production business for almost 10 years. He began his work in the documentary field back in 1999 as a 2nd Unit Director & Art Director for the Emmy Award-nominated *We Served with Pride*, the story of Chinese Americans who served in WWII. This project gained the attention of the White House and led to a meeting with President Bill Clinton in the Oval Office. In November 2000, Patrick began his next documentary *Men Without a Country*, this time around as Director and Editor. Before venturing into documentary film, Patrick performed various roles (Director, Editor, Producer, Composer) in many marketing, corporate, and commercial projects for major corporations. In 2000, Patrick left his position at *E! Entertainment Television*, where he worked on many award-winning shows such as *Howard Stern* and *Talk Soup*, to pursue work in documentaries. *Flight from Death* is Patrick's first feature length film.

**Greg Bennick** (Co-producer, Co-writer) is a full-time motivational speaker and performer from Seattle, WA. He has worked both in front of and behind the camera in film, documentary and commercials since 1995, most recently as editor of an upcoming documentary on the early days of New York City's underground music scene. Greg is the co-founder of *The World Leaders Project*, a multi-year initiative to discuss issues related to the psychology of human violence face-to-face with world leaders, an initiative that led to a meeting with the President of Guyana as well as correspondence with other governments as well. Greg tours throughout the United States, speaking to corporate, college, and public audiences about maximizing life through personal empowerment.

**Andrew Heeney** (Associate Producer) has been involved in the television/film production field for over 8 years. In 1994, Andrew directed and produced *Velocity*, a live music video show based out of St. Louis. He then went on to do a variety of projects such as music videos (Director) and travel shows (Iceland, Germany, Russia) for PBS (Director of Photography). In 1996, Andrew began his employment at *E! Entertainment Television* in Los Angeles where he worked on award winning shows such as *E! True Hollywood Stories* and *Talk Soup*. Most recently, Andrew produced *Live at the Fillmore*, a nationally televised series that is a cross between VH1's *Behind the Music* and MTV's *The Real World*. Andrew is currently a freelance producer and is developing a documentary about the golden age of the video game industry.

## **Gabriel Byrne Biography**

Internationally known actor Gabriel Byrne has worked extensively in the worlds of film, literature and theatre. Gabriel Byrne is now starring in David Cronenberg's latest film, *Spider*, which also stars Ralph Fiennes and Miranda Richardson. *Spider* was an official selection at the 2002 Cannes Film Festival and is currently in limited release.

Born in Dublin, Ireland, as the first of six children, Gabriel discovered his passion for acting later in his life. His careers were as eclectic as the characters he has portrayed on the screen. Before becoming an actor, he worked as an archaeologist, a cook, a bullfighter and a Spanish schoolteacher. He began his acting career on stage with The Focus Theatre and the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, then later joined the Royal Court and the National Theatre in London. In 1981, he made his film debut as Lord Uther in John Boorman's classic King Arthur epic, "Excalibur."

He went on to star in many European films for such directors as Costa-Gavras, Michael Mann, Ken Russell, Ken Loach and Wim Wenders. But it was his 1989 American film debut in the Coen Brothers' acclaimed film, "Miller's Crossing", as gangster Tom Reagan, that drew attention to Gabriel Byrne as an actor in the US. Subsequent films included starring roles in "Cool World", with Brad Pitt; "Point of No Return", opposite Bridget Fonda; "Little Women" with Winona Ryder; and "Dead Man" with Johnny Depp and the role of the crooked ex-cop, Dean Keaton, in the neo-noir "The Usual Suspects", opposite Kevin Spacey.

In 1997-98, Gabriel's prolific acting career continued as he starred in "Polish Wedding", "Smilla's Sense of Snow" and "The End of Violence". Following this, Gabriel teamed up with Leonardo DiCaprio, Jeremy Irons, Gerard Depardieu and John Malkovich in the modern adaptation of Alexander Dumas' "The Man in the Iron Mask". 1999 proved to be a millennium year for Gabriel as he played a Jesuit priest in the supernatural thriller, "Stigmata", then went on to play Satan opposite Arnold Schwarzenegger in the apocalyptic film, "End of Days."

In addition to acting, Gabriel has also established himself as a producer and writer. Screenwriting credits include Miramax's "The Last of the High Kings" (he also produced) and the Gaelic language film, "Magic", which was directed by Aine O'Connor. As producer, his films include the Oscar-nominated "In the Name of the Father", "Into the West", "Mad About Mambo" (starring Keri Russell) and the National Geographic special, "When Ireland Starved", a documentary about the Irish famine of 1845.

Gabriel also authored a book of reminiscences about his childhood in Ireland, titled Pictures in My Head, (published in the US, 1998) which became a critically acclaimed bestseller in Ireland. Gabriel has two children, Romy and Jack.

## **Praise for Flight from Death:**

“Moving and thought-provoking.” --Mike Wilber, *NBC News*

“If you see it alone, you'll be thinking about it for days. If you see it with a friend, you'll be talking about it for weeks.” --Gerry Krochak, *Leader-Post*

“[*Flight from Death*] is a beautifully conceived documentary, sharp, accessible and timely. The skillful examination of violence in our world intended for a widespread audience, without diluting its power, is an excellent example of what can be done by artists driven to create, even in the obscenely constrained and costly world of American film.” --*Inside Front*

"[*Flight from Death*] is absolutely the best movie I have ever seen on the subject. Clearly as good as last year's *Bowling for Columbine*." --Maui Film Festival attendee

## **Awards & accolades:**

Best Feature - Northwest Film Forum 2004, Seattle WA  
Best Documentary - Northern Lights Documentary Film Festival, Audience Choice Award  
Best Documentary - 2004 Malibu Film Festival, Audience Choice Award  
Grand Prize Best Documentary - 2004 Rhode Island International Film Festival  
Best Documentary – 2003 Silver Lake Film Festival  
Best Documentary – 2003 Ohio Independent Film Festival  
Best Documentary – 2003 Beverly Hills Film Festival, Audience Choice Award  
Official Selection – 2003 Dubrovnik International Film Festival  
Official Selection – 2003 Maui Film Festival  
Official Selection – 2003 Calgary International Film Festival  
Official Selection – 2003 Silver Lake Film Festival  
Official Selection – 25th IFP Market  
Official Selection – Ohio Independent Film Festival  
Official Selection – Annapolis Film Festival  
Platinum Best of Show (Editing) – Feature Trailer / International Aurora Awards Competition  
Gold Award – Feature Trailer / International Aurora Awards Competition

## **Director's filmography:**

1999	We Served With Pride (PBS)	LA Unit Director / Art Director
2001	Men Without A Country (PBS in 2004)	Director / Editor
2002	Flight from Death	Co-producer / Director / Editor

## **Technical information:**

<b>Title:</b>	Flight from Death: The Quest for Immortality
<b>Running time:</b>	86 minutes
<b>Format:</b>	Digital video
<b>Exhibition format:</b>	Beta SP
<b>Release date:</b>	2005
<b>Production company:</b>	Transcendental Media
<b>Original language:</b>	English
<b>Producers:</b>	Patrick Shen & Greg Bennick
<b>Director/editor:</b>	Patrick Shen