

CHAIM MEHLMAN B.A. B.Ed.
Producer
HIGH KEY PRODUCTIONS



Contact details

Phone (03) 9532 7970

Fax (03) 9532 7980

Mobile 0419 31 31 33

e-mail: mehlman@alexia.net.au

Mehlman left teaching in 1976 to join the Education Department's video production unit, quickly rising to supervisor level.

In 1982, Mehlman founded High Key Productions, an audio-visual production house dedicated to producing videos and multi-image audio-visual presentations to **promote, educate and entertain**. 'These three elements are not separate, but form a powerful whole', Mehlman says. 'Find the human feelings behind a subject, and you have a strong technique for teaching and influencing people. The audio-visual media are inherently emotive.'

Over 20 years, High Key's varied client list has included

- BHP
- ICI Australia
- Telstra
- The Pratt Group
- Visy Recycling
- John Holland Properties
- Beecham Laboratories
- Datacraft
- The Victorian Arts Centre
- The Juilliard Corporation
- Finer Fork Lift Services
- Selangor Australia
- Westminster China
- The Pancake Parlour
- Pomeroy Pacific
- Atkinson Project Management
- East Coast Homes
- AMP Insurance

as well as a wide range of official and community bodies (see below).

High Key produced "*The Sixties*", a spectacular widescreen audio-visual nostalgia trip through that tempestuous decade. The show packed audiences into Melbourne's **Performing Arts Museum** seven days a week for 5 months. 'The most rewarding aspect was reading the visitors' book', Mehlman recalls. 'One hundred pages of rave reviews from audiences - in English, American, Japanese, German, French and Hebrew - is not bad for the ego. Actually, I couldn't read the Japanese ones', Mehlman admits, 'but I assume they were rave reviews'.

Also heartening was the community's reaction to "*Towards Scopus 2000*", produced for the 1987 Appeal of **Mount Scopus College**, the largest school in the southern hemisphere. This 10-projector widescreen audio-visual was an emotive look at the school's past and present. Shown on huge screens to large gatherings, it was acknowledged by the College as having yielded unprecedented fundraising success.

Mehlman considers fundraising projects *the* most challenging of all. 'To get people to dig into their pockets, you really have to appeal to their feelings', he observes. Mount

Scopus agrees, and High Key Productions has remained the College's official producer for major projects since 1987.

"Clean, Green, Mean" is a video promoting a new product in an established market. **Visy Recycling** had no market for most of its collected glass, so it developed a new ("sand"-) blasting medium from it. But the marketplace was resistant, thinking that glass was unsafe. This video quickly demonstrates the effectiveness and personal and environmental safety of the new product, using strong visual communication techniques. The product was promoted using only the video and a brochure. Visy reported huge response and conversion rates.

Mehlman co-wrote and directed **"The Wonder of Living"**, a series of 3 sex-education videos for the **Pregnancy Action Centre**, a church-funded counselling service which branched into education. **"Wonder of Living"** places human relationships firmly in the context of family, friends and society. This series called for a number of techniques and styles, from drama and humour with professional actors to documentary and instructional sequences with animated graphics. The result is a warm and engaging teaching aid which the client sold to over 2,500 state and private schools throughout Australia. Sales continued steadily years after release.

The series, with a total running time of 87 minutes, is of feature-film proportions. The entire project was managed and produced by High Key Productions with the aid of selected consultants.

"The Partners" is a dramatic look at insuring a business partnership against financial chaos when one partner dies. A companion TV commercial was produced and aired in order to promote the insurance concept.

Continuing its special relationship with the **Performing Arts Museum**, High Key produced **"Entertaining Melbourne"** -- a widescreen cascade of sounds and images of the performing arts in Melbourne since the city was founded 150 years before. Some of the recordings dated back to the 19th century. No other production house was approached for this major project. The show completed a successful season of 4 months.

High Key produced for the **Arthritis Foundation of Victoria** a series of widely-used programs showing arthritis sufferers how to deal with their problems. These covered emotional as well as "mechanical" aspects. Extensive use was made of arthritis sufferers who described their everyday lives and how they dealt with disabilities.

"Discovery", produced for **Beecham Research Laboratories**, was aimed at GPs and shown at the traditional pharmaceutical company's film nights. It aimed to influence doctors to prescribe brand names rather than generics. Doing this supports the companies who carry out research which develops new drugs. Doctors were shown that by supporting research they became partners in the discovery process. At the film nights, you could hear a hypodermic needle drop. We were told that doctors usually talk or go outside during the "commercial".

High Key has produced many audio-visual programs for the **Jewish Museum of Australia**, which since the Museum's opening in 1982 have become a vital and favourite part of exhibitions. Some of these presentations have helped win awards for the Museum.