



Left to right: Deni Hines, Ursula Yovitch, Melinda Schneider and Wendy Mathews



Andreas Smetana and Ken Francis



Andreas Smetana filming Deni



Natalie Isaacs, Andreas Smetana, Deni Hines, Rachel Henderson, Ken Francis



Melinda Schneider, Deni Hines, Wendy Mathews and Ursula Yovitch

Photographer/director Andreas Smetana gets behind Anthem for 1 Million Women to create global change

When Photographer Andreas Smetana decided a couple of years ago to transition into Directing, and offer his clients both stills and motion, he quickly realised his strength was not only his technical skills as a photographer, but as a creative mind that could conceptualise projects, blending his energy as a picture maker and his innate understanding of how large campaigns can connect people on an individual and personal level.

ANDREAS SMETANA'S INVOLVEMENT with 1 Million Women started with a casual conversation over coffee that inspired his vision for a project that would bring together the combined passions of one million women to create global change that starts with small, everyday actions.

"I realised that Natalie [Isaacs], founder of 1 Million Women, needed something that everyone could actively identify with at an emotional level – so a song, an anthem for change. But not just any song – we chose "You're the Voice" because

it's instantly recognisable and the lyrics work so well with the overall campaign concept. All we had to do was turn it into an anthem for 1 Million Women." Andreas Smetana

But securing the rights to a song that was a global hit in the 1980's and turning it into an anthem for change presented challenges.

Says Smetana: "The key has been finding the right people to work with on this project, people open to collaboration and often wearing more than one hat to get the job done. I became the creative, the guy asking for favours, the politician and the sand bag carrier."

Producer Rachel Henderson worked closely with a cast of women and girls from all ages and backgrounds who all volunteered time for filming. She ensured the project maintained the momentum and vitality needed to capture the essence of Smetana's idea.

Smetana asked his friend composer and producer Ken Francis from The Passionfruit Collective to work with him on his vision. Thankfully he said yes.

Very early in the project Smetana and Francis brought the idea that the score needed to be re-imagined to play to the strengths of the song and the wonderful vocalists, whilst bringing it an earthier, warmer, more female energy than the original Farnham hit. Their aim was to create an anthem to power a grass-

roots movement and to carry the 1 Million Women message across cultural and generational lines.

In order for 1 Million Women to 'own' this new version of the song, the choice of vocals was vital – The selection of Deni Hines, with Melinda Schneider, Wendy Mathews, and Ursula Yovich as lead vocalists, backed up by Australian Institute of Music students gives the project an openness and accessibility that embraces the philosophy of 1 Million Women – of women from any walk of life stepping in to help everyone live lighter on the earth.

For Natalie Isaacs, founder of 1 Million Women, the potential impact of the video on her mission of building a movement of strong, inspirational women and girls acting on climate change through the way they live, was evident from the beginning. By placing her trust in Smetana's vision and the dream-team of talent and support he was able to pull together for the project, the video, like her campaign, is a strong voice for the changes needed for a better planet.

"Climate action and hope are the messages for the world right now and Andreas embraced this right through the creative process. He has captured joy and power, hope and inspiration, women and future generations and above all climate action in a stirring, emotional big

feet stomping anthem and I believe its simple message will inspire people all over the world," says Isaacs.

"You're The Voice" will be released across multiple social media channels at different times. The video aspect will appear to grow as different versions are uploaded and shared. With the aim of connecting individuals to the 1 Million Women community and watching as each voice, each action, joins in to create a wave of change.

Says Smetana: "I feel the fact that everyone has been so generous with their time, has given the project an extra dimension, an extra layer I just wasn't expecting at all. It's really amazing. I feel that this project has been my baby, and is something I'm now really proud to share. My hope is that this song explodes, grows wings, starts to fly and is really successful for 1 Million Women and therefore for the world.... they truly do amazing work. I bow my head to Natalie Isaac for the work she is doing and it was a true pleasure to be part of it. Hopefully we have done our job well and they have to call themselves '2 Million Women' shortly."

You're the Voice will be launched in time for the People's Climate March in November and in the lead up to COP21 in Paris as world leaders gather to forge a new global treaty on Climate Change.

www.youtube.com/user/TMWcampaign