

Artwork: Sister Sally Bradley RSM

Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia

Mercy Justice Conference
6 – 8 November 2009

Introducing our Entertainers

Marcia Howard and Amy Saunders

Marcia Howard and **Amy Saunders** are from South West Victoria, Gunditjmarra Country, where they both now live. Award winning Aria Artists, Marcia and Amy unite for the first time to perform for you at the Mercy Justice Conference.



[Marcia Howard](#)

[Marcia, My Space](#)

They are both women who have been great supporters in their own right, and as members of *Goanna* and *Tiddas*, of social justice issues. Their integrity and fighting spirit has not been diminished over the years. They invite you to share their journey, woven through story and song - drawn from the well of their experiences.



[Amy Saunders](#)

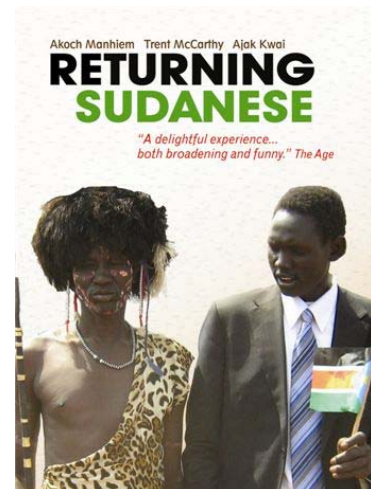
[Tarerer](#)

Returning Sudanese

Akoch Manhiem arrived in Australia as a Sudanese 'Lost Boy'. He's returning to his village for the first time in almost a decade. His bags are packed and his flag is in hand – but will he return Sudanese?

Also starring comedian Trent McCarthy and singer Ajak Kwai, *Returning Sudanese* premiered to sell-out crowds at the 2009 Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

"A delightful experience... both broadening and funny." *The Age*



Akoch Manhiem, Actor / Writer / Director

Akoch is currently studying international studies at RMIT University. He arrived in Australia in 2003 as a Sudanese refugee, one of the 'Lost Boys'. Since then, Akoch has provided leadership in his community as the founder and executive director of the Sudanese Lost Boys Association of Australia Inc. He has also initiated the Southern Sudan Volunteering Program and 'Appreciation Day'. Recently, Akoch was awarded Citizen of the Year by the City of Yarra, despite becoming an Australian citizen just three years ago! Akoch has also been awarded the Victorian Refugee Recognition Record, along with many other awards. Akoch made his comedy debut in last year's sell-out show, *Turning Sudanese*, however we suspect he's been entertaining people all his life.

Trent McCarthy, Actor / Writer / Director

Trent's previous shows include *Turning Sudanese* (2008), *Who is Abdul Smith?* (2008), and *Confessions of a Talkback Junkie* (2007). He also appeared in the quirky political satire, *Mo the Plumber* in this year's Comedy Festival, alongside Mohammed El-leissy. Trent is the founder and director of the Whitelion Bailout, an interactive theatrical event that has raised over \$980K in four years for programs supporting youth-at-risk. When not performing, Trent is a Darebin City Councillor, as well as an educator and consultant specialising in community and environmental leadership.

Ajak Kwai, Actor / Singer

Born and raised in a Dinka village in South Sudan, Ajak grew up in a musical family and began singing as a child. In 1992, due to religious and political persecution imposed by the current government of Sudan, Ajak was forced to leave her home, fleeing to Egypt. She spent the next eight years in exile in Cairo where she formed an all-female group with fellow refugees. Under the UN Humanitarian Aid program, Ajak migrated to Australia in 1999, and joined the small number of Southern Sudanese refugees in Tasmania. She soon became well-known for performing her songs and now lives in Victoria. Ajak has released two albums in her native Dinka language, Arabic and English – the most recent being *Come Together*.

Tim Purdie, Technician / Writer / Director

Since graduating from film school in 2005, Tim has worked as a freelance video producer, director and editor. In 2007 he started up his own business, Tee Pee Media specialising in affordable video production for non-profit and charitable organizations. In his spare time Tim writes, directs and produces his own short films and documentaries. He is currently in the early stages of pre-production for his first feature film. Tim was the technician (lighting & sound) for *Turning Sudanese* (2008) in last year's Comedy Festival.