



## **“SALT”**

By Michael Angus and Murray Fredericks

Tuesday, Aug. 17, 2010, on PBS (Check local listings)

### **Filmmaker’s Statement**

Photographer Murray Fredericks has been camping alone on the salt flats of Lake Eyre in Australia for up to five weeks at a time every year for the past six years.

**SALT** is the name of the ongoing photographic series that these journeys to Lake Eyre have produced over that time. This series of photographs “seeks to make representations of vast space and emptiness . . . allowing imagery to convey ‘essence’ over ‘place,’” Murray says.

Three years ago, Murray took a video camera with him to record his working methodology on one of these remarkable expeditions. Upon his return, he showed me the footage he’d captured. I had never seen anything like it and was amazed that Murray had been able to film it all by himself.

I felt that any documentary should be an extension of the processes and the goals of the **SALT** photographic series rather than a literal documentation of Murray’s work. The concept for the documentary evolved over a number of subsequent expeditions to the lake. In addition to his usual camera gear and camping supplies, Murray would take with him a small high-definition video camera and sound gear to record his experiences in the surreal landscape through all manner of conditions.

After each trip, I would review the footage and set new tasks for filming on the next outing. Integral to the process was Murray recording his own thoughts and feelings and his satellite-phone conversations with his wife, Franca, back home in Sydney. I felt it was essential that the project be an honest and human portrayal of the artist. My aim was to create within the film itself enough space for viewers to imagine and feel something of the artist’s experience for themselves.

Visually, this documentary rests on Murray’s beautiful cinematic compositions. The video footage conveys the feeling of still images that move. The results are clear, intimate and true — with a sense of space and time in the action of the scene. From apocalyptic red Martian-like landscapes to the surreal hypnotic beauty of a limitless sky reflected on the lake’s surface, these surroundings convey a simple and emotional story as Murray goes about his daily routine with discipline and attention.

This style, coupled with the naturally occurring environmental changes of the clouds, sky, earth, wind and stars, creates a context for a man to co-exist within the framework of an evolving bigger picture.

One man, alone on the surface of the earth, in the middle of the universe.

— **Michael Angus, Director/Producer**