



## **Marleena Forward**

Completed year 12 in 2003 having attended MRSS since playgroup.

We congratulate her on being recently awarded the Best Artistic Presentation prize and the Second Place overall prize at the AICCC Golden Lens Awards in Beijing, China, in April 2016 for her documentary film '*Glory for Me*'. *Glory for Me* explores the lives of two child acrobats from disadvantaged backgrounds, who train for 10-12 hours a day in the acrobatics program at the Shenyang International Arts School. The awards were presented in a ceremony at Beijing Normal University on 6 April.

Post MRSS Marleena travelled frequently in Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Passionate about travel, photography, writing and gardening, music (piano) and handstands, she regards travelling solo for ten months in Europe and the Middle East in her mid-twenties and having several travel articles published in national newspapers as a significant personal achievement.

Marleena first completed a diploma in Professional Writing & Editing (RMIT) in 2007 and worked as a book editor, freelance writer and editor. While travelling in Asia in 2013, and engaging more deeply in photography and editing video, she found filmmaking tied together many of her creative passions. In 2014-15 she completed a Masters in Film and Television (Documentary) at the VCA. Marleena is currently now in the process of establishing herself as a freelance filmmaker and cinematographer, working on anything from documentaries to weddings, not-for-profit and corporate films.

She says the strong emphasis on storytelling was a wonderful aspect of learning at MRSS fuelling creativity in and outside the classroom. Marleena feels lessons made the most impact when they were taught inside the framework of a story.

She also really valued the freedom to play that children were given, being allowed the time and space to let her imagination run wild. This early freedom taught her also the value of rest time, a resource, she feels, that is often overlooked in today's busy world.

Marleena regards her professional life so far as centering around storytelling in various forms — through words, photographs and moving images with the value placed on storytelling at MRSS no doubt contributing.

For her current work in cinematography, she is certain that the depth of visual arts training at MRSS helped to develop her aesthetic sensibilities.