

Marian Masoliver on Documenting the “PEP Effect”



Marian Masoliver is a filmmaker who, along with Simon Edwards, has been traveling to document the effect that the [Peace Education Program](#) is having on diverse groups of people. In this blog she shares thoughts on the experience.

It all started when we went to Ecuador last year. Simon Edwards co-directed with Rain Rucker a film called [Peace is Inevitable](#), which is about gang members in Ecuador who heard [Prem Rawat's](#) message and how it helped inspire them turn from crime to peace.

I was the interviewer, and it was so inspiring that we went back this year. This time we were there for three months, working with the gang members, helping them in their peace advocacy efforts. They are working on forming a cultural association to help them reach more people. While we were there, they were producing a radio program, "Reacciona," which is broadcast throughout the nation on RPE, Radio Publica Ecuador.

The program is inspired by Prem's [message of peace](#). We helped them re-enact some stories that he tells in his international talks. Our wealth of professional experience in training actors and directing shows for theater and film was put to great use in this project.

While in Ecuador, we also worked with TPRF to document the effect PEP is having on other people. So we shot footage of a PEP for elderly people at Mitad del Mundo in Quito.

And then we thought, "What about documenting the PEP effect in the education system?" So we traveled to the Canary Islands of Spain and documented the PEP at the University la Laguna in Tenerife.

We were also very happy to be invited to the recent event in London at the British Film Institute where there was a screening of the [Inside Peace](#) film. Again we interviewed people who had participated in PEP.



So, yes, this past year I have talked with a lot of people from diverse backgrounds who have been

through the PEP curriculum. I've been very impressed because when you interview people, they often speak openly from a place that is quite private and intimate because they're talking about deep issues like personal peace and new understanding about their lives.

It is fascinating to witness the PEP effect. What I've seen after interviewing more than 60 people over the last two years is that people are very touched by the program. It doesn't matter if they are elderly people or gang members, university teachers or students, professionals, business people or prisoners—they get touched.

PEP makes them think. When they go through the 10 workshops, people reflect and think. It is kind of like a reset for them. They say to themselves: "What do I want in my life? Am I focusing on what I really want? What is important for me?" You talk with people of all ages, and it becomes apparent that they are discovering new possibilities for themselves.

I recently interviewed someone from Sierra Leone who fled from the conflicts there—a blind gentleman now living in the U.K. where he participated in PEP. He was very moved by the course. He is from an intense conflict zone, and it was amazing to see that no matter how tough peoples' situations may be, PEP can help them find their own inner strengths.



The Prem Rawat Foundation is working on editing all our video footage to show this PEP effect. I'm very excited for people to see it.

For me, this work is very inspiring. The more I do, the more I want to do. The more I talk to people, the more I want to help. I am being proactive with my biggest resource—my time.

Sometimes it is not easy to conduct interviews where there are cultural differences. But it is rewarding despite all the barriers or the times you have to work a little bit more than you would like. I feel something alive and joyful inside; I feel so full of energy that all the setbacks don't really matter. When I weigh it up on the scale, the challenges are really nothing.