

'The Peace Tree' by Mitra Sen

'The Peace Tree' is a dramatic video which shares the message of uniting our diverse communities through our rich and vibrant celebrations, thereby preventing the rise in conflict and promoting peace. It is entertaining, but also engagingly educational by dramatically exploring the thoughts of children from diverse cultures and faiths who are growing up in our multicultural land. Without bias or prejudice, our children share their voices of their vision of a country where every child can join hand in hand to celebrate all our vibrant festivals together and live in peace.

How it All Began...

On 14 March 2004, I spent the last hours of my father's birthday by his bedside trying to help him cope with his pain. I thought I would try to distract him by teaching him how to make an origami paper crane. However, in the last hour of his birthday, he left this world. He was never able to finish his paper crane, but he left it in my hands and this was his message to me. The origami paper crane is a symbol of peace and hope and my father had always dreamt of a day when we would have peace in our world. He had always expressed his sadness by all the divisions created by man and had prayed and hoped one day for a world where every human being could learn to love and respect each other.

My father left me with the paper crane in my hands and I know that was his way of letting me know that I must continue to work towards creating peace. I had already begun to make a new film about peace and two little girls, one Muslim and one Christian, who dream of celebrating each others' festivals, but I never had a symbol for the film. The paper crane became the perfect symbol and then I began to think of all the beautiful symbols from all our cultures and faiths and how wonderful it would be if they were all hung on one tree. And so the story unfolded...

The Peace Tree shares the voices of our children who enlighten their parents to the importance of having an open mind and sharing and celebrating diversity together. Through their struggles and their dreams, the children create a unique symbol – The Peace Tree - a tree that highlights the symbols from all our vibrant cultures and faiths on one tree reflecting the beauty of diversity in unity.

'The Peace Tree' trailer is available at:

<http://link.brightcove.com/services/link/bcpid15869177/bctid24465881>