

REVIEW BY JAMES MADDEN

Australian cultural icon Paul Kelly's life has been brought to the screen in the form of a documentary by Ian Darling. Not holding to the standard form of a linear biographical narrative, *Stories of Me* interestingly weaves back and forth through tales of Kelly's upbringing, rise to success, writer's block, activism, family struggles and drug addictions.

Nothing too astounding or groundbreaking occurs in the documentary, with a plethora of archival footage, engaging interviews, lively and energetic performances, and wise words from the man himself. Darling allows a glance behind the legend of Kelly, while still leaving enough aside for the man with the guitar and harmonica to remain enigmatic.

*Stories of Me* also stands as a teaching device to students who may be studying Kelly in the secondary school curriculum. The film may not have been developed as an educational aid, but continual youthful imagery lends support to the claim. Many shots of Kelly appear at summer festivals in front of crowds of teenage and twenty-something Australians, casting an image of Kelly as a quintessential Australian experience. Of course Kelly reeks of Australianness, but it was surprising a wider demographic wasn't shown enjoying the music.

Paul Kelly: *Stories of Me* is in cinemas now.