

# Blind filmmaker rewrites his script

## Gough goes own way to fulfil dream

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FILMMAKING may not seem an obvious career choice for a blind man but if there's one thing this blind man is committed to, it's shattering stereotypes.

"When I started out, no one wanted to know about a blind guy who wants to make films," said Gough, who grew up on the Gold Coast as David Gray before doing a Sting and becoming a one-name man.

"I had my scripts, I was ready to rock and roll, but as soon as producers found out about the eyesight, it was always no dice.

"There was a lot rejection and eventually I thought 'I want this so I'll just do it myself.'"

The result was Beernuts Productions, the company Gough founded a decade ago and it allowed him to become the first legally blind person to write, produce, edit, direct and star in a feature film.

*I Will Not Go Quietly* focused on a subject close to his heart – mental health and disability – and he has since gone on to write, produce and direct many other mainly comedy-based projects, the latest of which starred television personality Liz Cantor.

"Every sale I make goes straight back into the next film," the 35-year-old said of his website downloads. "I've been going 10 years and I'm not going to stop now."

The son of comedian Ugly Dave Gray, Gough's life



Visually impaired filmmaker Gough founded his own production company, Beernuts Productions, 10 years ago when no one else would give him a chance, and (left) Gough with his dad Ugly Dave Gray and mum Val just after his birth. Main picture: REGI VARGHESE

can get a sense of what I'm watching," he said.

"I did the first film on my own but now I've got a little crew I work with.

"When it comes to filming, I tell my cameraman how I want him to shoot it and always double check that the actors are giving me the facial expression I want.

"Then I edit by audio. I know how I want my films to sound and feel, and I've got a colleague who sits with me and guides me as far as making clean cuts and ensuring the pictures are nice and smooth.

"I love storytelling and the best media to tell a story is film."

It also allows him to show how far he's come – and how

### If I'm nose-to-screen, I can get a sense of what I'm watching

GOUGH

not every person with a disability gets the same chance.

"When I made *I Will Not Go Quietly*, statistics showed 70 per cent of the vision-impaired community was unemployed," he said.

"That's outrageous ... the mental health problems for people with disabilities are through the roof because they're just not given the same opportunities.

"I had a few years there with reasonably heavy depression but that's what happens when people aren't given opportunities. They get depressed."

Just as they smile when given a chance to shine.

"I've got a nice platform and a fan base starting to build," Gough said.

"I've got a ton of scripts ready to go and if I had the coin, I'd just be going nuts pumping them out."