

Finding Inspiration

Everyone has a passion in life. For some it is a hobby. Others maybe family. But whatever it is, most have to learn to balance their passion with what may seem like the mundane world of everyday life. In the movie *Mr. Holland's Opus*, one man struggles to do just that and along the way finds that his passion in life may have changed.

Richard Dreyfuss portrays Glenn Holland, a would-be composer who accepts a "day job" teaching music appreciation to high school students. During the course of his 40 year career, he finds that he has the power to instill passion in others. A clarinetist lacking confidence and an academically challenged athlete who HAS to take his course to fulfill his graduation requirements are just two of the students he encounters. My favorite student is the young promising singer who he encourages to follow her dream. Glenn not only inspires musically but in all aspects of life.

However, Mr. Holland's personal life is often filled with turmoil. He spends a lifetime searching for the inspiration to compose his one great piece of music. He struggles to find a balance between work and family. His musical passion and his family life are put to the ultimate test when his young son, Cole loses his hearing. A brilliant scene shows Mr. Holland attempting to bridge the rift with his son by performing a personal rendition of John Lennon's "Beautiful Boy."

Some intriguing historical flashbacks are used to show the passage of time. This creates the illusion that the audience is watching a movie based upon the events of a real person. The Vietnam War is seen through flashbacks and creates drama in Mr. Holland's life.

Mr. Holland's Opus is a remarkable movie for anyone who has inspired or been inspired. It is sentimental without being

sappy.