
ABOUT GEORGE ELI

George Eli is an American Rom, who grew up in a traditional Romani family in the US. As a child he was taught that the Rom must remain separate from the outside world. Unfortunately, this belief also excluded George from attending any formal education. However, his deep Romani traditions taught George the ancient and mystical teaching of spiritual therapy. Today, George has been practicing his spiritual services with clients all over the tri-state area for over 10 years, and has been featured on NPR and WEBE-108 sharing his teachings in spiritualism and expertise on Roma culture.

Shortly after his children were born, George began to question his Romani upbringing. Despite facing ostracism in his community, George went on to teach himself how to read and write (which is looked down upon by the traditional community due to the fear of loss of culture, and unfair treatment of Roma youth), then set out to create an ambitious documentary entitled, *Searching for the 4th Nail*, which explores and questions many of the Romani traditions he grew up with. The film was well received by critics around the world, and was an official selection of the New York Gypsy Film Festival, featured at the Imagin India Festival, the Balkin Trafik Festival, Sweden's International Roma Film Festival and then went on to win the "Best Filmmaker Award" at the Connecticut Film Festival. The academic edition of the film can be found in many Universities, including the libraries of Stanford University, New York University, and The University of Pittsburg. George also served as producer for the highly successful documentary, *When The Road Bends: Tales of a Gypsy Caravan (2006)*, Starring Johnny Depp and directed by Jasmine Dellal. The film won an audience award at the Ghent International Film Festival as well as a feature selection at the Tribeca Film Festival. George Eli has also consulted on many entertainment projects and was hired to be casting producer for the FYI television series, "Arranged," which takes a look into the life of a modern Romani family and the arranged marriage process that is still a major part of the Rom culture to this day.

Several American Universities and NGO's took notice of George's unique perspective on both his culture and the way outsiders view the Romani people, and invited him to lecture on topics such as Romani culture and spiritualism across the country.

George, along with a team of respected colleagues at his grassroots production office envisioned the Romani Media Initiative, which raises funds through entertainment media projects in collaboration with 4th Nail Productions. Its purpose is to provide innovative solutions to the problems facing the Romani people, by strategically utilizing popular culture and entertainment media to foster positive change and preserve the cultural identity, focusing mainly on the relationship between the Rom and Europe. RMI believes the solution to this problem is an art movement that promotes positive Romani role models and a positive view of the Romani culture, which was the inspiration behind his latest novel, *The Last of the Magi: The Devouring*.
