

MEDIA RELEASE**For immediate release**

WWII student podcast honoured at Webby Awards

World War II podcast series, *Up from the Rubble*, which was developed by Simon Reich in partnership with fellow student and co producer Evan Howell, as part of his major project at SAE Creative Media Institute, has beaten over 14,000 podcasts to be voted runner-up in the student category, at the Webby Awards in New York. The series tells the story of Simon's father, Manfred Reich, a war survivor who was only 50 metres away from where Adolf Hitler shot himself in an underground bunker, before he migrated to Australia.

The Webby Awards are presented by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences and recognise excellence on the internet for the previous 12 months. Simon was delighted to see *Up from the Rubble* get down to the final five, and secure the runner-up award.

"I knew the podcast was strong, but it was very pleasing to see it ahead of established names like Stanford University, and Miami Ad School," he said.

"My father's story as a refugee has resonated with so many people, particularly given what's currently happening in Ukraine."

Simon graduated from SAE Melbourne in 2020, with a Bachelor of Audio degree. The four-part production he created as part of his final project for his degree tells the story of Manfred's journey as a war torn refugee who immigrated to Australia to find peace.

"The purpose of the podcast was to illustrate how migrants from war torn countries can be integrated successfully into new communities, and become positive reflections of their homelands at the same time," Simon said.

In *Up from the Rubble*, he also touches on his father's survival in Nazi Germany and one of the most pivotal moments in modern history.

"The film, *Valkyrie* with Tom Cruise, gives a good representation of the situation my father found himself in when he was only a young boy," Simon shared.



“There was a small rebel group within the German High Command that were plotting to assassinate Hitler. My grandmother was the live-in cleaning lady at one of the conspirators' houses and when the plot failed, my father and grandmother escaped to avoid being killed.

“When Hitler shot himself, my father was only 50 metres away in an underground bunker fearing for his life.”

In the podcast, Simon added that his father shared a traumatic experience when the Allies bombed their apartment block.

“They blew up the top storey and that caused all the subsequent storeys to collapse - leading to my father and grandmother fleeing down to the basement, where they were trapped for two days, as they dug themselves out with their hands.”

Towards the end of the podcast Simon added that his father has some wisdom for the leaders of today.

“After all the destruction and carnage my father saw in Berlin 1945, he thought there would never be another war. As my father rightly said and with what’s happening in Ukraine - society has learnt nothing.”

SAE General Manager, Dr Luke McMillan congratulated Simon on the success of the podcast and recognition from Webby.

“The Webby Awards are synonymous with recognising excellence. What Simon has achieved with his podcast, *Up from the Rubble* deserves notable praise,” Dr McMillan said.

“The war in Ukraine has rightly put a focus on the wellbeing of refugees. Through podcasts like Simon’s we can continue to learn from the past to guide our future.”

SAE Creative Media Institute understands creators like Simon, and provides students with the experience, skills, equipment and connections to succeed in the industry. Find out more at sae.edu.au.

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Imagery:



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