

Shaun Micallef's Stairway To Heaven

SBS One, 7.30pm

As a young man, *Mad As Hell's* Shaun Micallef considered joining the priesthood. And while the Catholic church's loss (can you imagine the sermons!), has been TV's gain, Micallef has since wondered if he missed out on an opportunity to find the answers to the big questions in life. What to do? Travel to India, of course, where 900 million Hindus can't be wrong. He wants to meet people who are very certain about their faith and in doing so dips a toe into the Ganges, meets the King of Puri and looks to "find a guru to find me". In lesser hands, this type of

spritual quest could easily turn into self-indulgent fluff. Heck, even the Beatles succumbed to a little too much introspection when they hit Rishikesh in 1968. Micallef, however, is a deft hand at self-deprecation and his quest to discover if there is "greater purpose than being a semi-professional Australian TV personality" makes for a funny and watchable journey. A thoroughly thoughtful antidote to Christmas craziness and consumption.

Louise Rugendyke