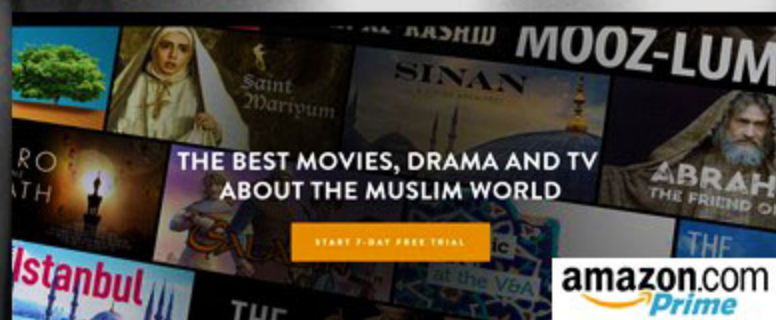


Problem

The post 2014 Lindt Café siege led to negative feelings towards Muslim communities.

Client



Client need

Client asked for a story based message through a film medium that could be profiled at festivals and on their streaming platforms to push a positive message.

Role

Project Lead and Executive Producer

Commitment

To ensure that the Client's desired message was captured through story via a short film medium.

To actively plan & lead all aspects of pre-production production and post production. Effectively this was a prototype and product rolled into one.



The Process

Finally placed on Amazon Prime for USA and UK

Initial small audience test did not meet standards required. Addition footage shot and re-edited. Re-tested with audience still not strong enough for client.

Re-structured narrative with additional elements and conducted a final test with wider audience. Resulted was 100% uptake and support for message

Production
• 2 days to cast
• 4 days to shoot

Post-production
• 3 days edit

Pre-production outcomes:
• Narrative finalised
• Finance allocated
• Crew chosen
• Cast



Interviews were conducted with various sectors of the Muslim community. Women who wore the traditional clothing and had experienced adverse comments in public were of specific importance.

From the Discovery phase what was discovered was that between extremists on both sides there were innocent people caught in the middle.

This would form the key element to create a central message and subtext and would support a narrative. Formulated a "How Might We" statement.

A core creative team of 3 was established, Writer, Producer and myself.

Outcomes were to create:
• Premise to be explored
• Budget
• Timing and scheduling



Discover

Conducted interviews with groups and relevant stakeholders. The age range encompassed from early teens to mature age.



Groups approached were

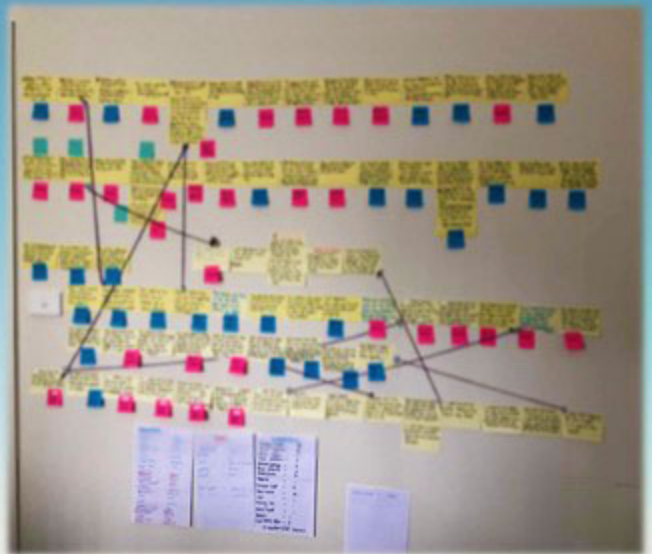
- Australian Muslim Youth
- Muslims in Sydney
- United Women's Muslims Association
- Building Identity and Resisting Radicalisation Sydney
- University Muslim Students' Association (SUMSA)

The common theme that emerged was being caught in the middle between two different types of thinking.



Define

Once all the research data was collected from Interviews a meeting was called with the relevant stakeholders and "How Might We" statements were formulated accordingly:



How might we use the core message to extend empathy and open up mindsets

How might we create a narrative that is not rhetoric but demonstrative of peace

How might we get the viewer to challenge their assumptions and question popular media

After several iterations and agile sessions a generic core message was formulated that would become the central message of the film and that would appropriately represent the people affected. That message was;

"Being caught in the middle is not a choice
it's a circumstance"

Design and Plan

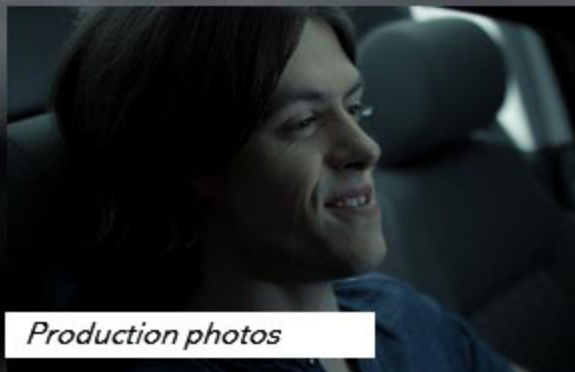
The core creative team developed a premise for the design of the narrative.



“A young boy and his mother have become the targets of a racially motivated bully, the young boy having seen how his own father has become radicalised has decided to take the matters into his own hands to protect his family.”



The team agreed that the story had to challenge perceptions and assumptions and create a surprise ending. We also realised that this may bring mixed results but it was strongly felt that this approach was needed to break through misdirected media perceptions. The budget was set and the schedule was: 2 days cast and crew selections, 4 days to produce and 3 days to complete all post production.



The Film was entitled 'GIFT'

هبة من الله

Gift

Implement

Pre-Production-Casting

This was spread over several weeks with meeting with various crew members. Two days was spent on obtaining main cast.



Production was spread over 2 weekends 4 days total but it was discovered that not enough coverage was collected a further 2 days of footage was taken.



Post production was commenced later than scheduled and the process took 4 days to complete



Test

Once the initial post production was completed the core team viewed the assembly and conducted a small audience test. The response was not encouraging as the message was not clear, so further shoot days were rescheduled and more footage captured at extra cost.

A second assembly was completed however the narrative did not strengthen the central message enough, so the project was shelved to see if time away could give better perspective. Upon return the core team of creatives had lost momentum and it was decided to go back to a fresh pallet and begin a very basic assembly. Once a rough assembly was completed it was realigned to the core message and then the music score was added. This uplifted the message to the right level and the final post production was then completed.



Result

A special viewing event was undertaken and it became a celebrated launch for the film. It is now in the final stages with the Client and will be streamed through Amazon Prime for the US and UK to begin by mid 2020.

