



## PRESS KIT

I N T E R N A T I O N A L   S A L E S

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**N E W   Z E A L A N D   F I L M**

## **PRODUCTION NOTES:**

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Writer/Director: Shahir Daud  
Producer(s): Shivali Gulab & Andrew Brettell  
Production Co: Parapraxis Ltd  
Date of Completion: 2010  
Duration: 15mins  
Shooting Format: RED 4k 2:1  
Delivery Format: HD Cam / Digital Beta

## **INTERNATIONAL SALES**

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## **TAGLINE**

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People change every day

## **ONE LINER**

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Fifteen year old Rory carries a backpack filled with homemade fireworks, a pocket knife and a polaroid camera, and before the end of the day, he will have used them all.

## **BRIEF SYNOPSIS**

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Fifteen year old Rory carries a backpack filled with homemade fireworks, a pocket knife and a polaroid camera. He's planned a surprise for Rebecca, but everything is destroyed when she finally reveals her motives for hanging out with him.

How far can Rory be pushed before he snaps?

## **FESTIVALS**

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2010 Montreal World Film Festival, Canada  
2010 44<sup>th</sup> Internationale Hofer Filmtage, Germany  
2010 Show Me Short Film Festival, New Zealand  
2010 International Short Film Festival Berlin - Interfilm, Germany  
2010 International Short Film Festival, Winterthur

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT:**

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Though Double Happy is based on true events, I wanted to create an entirely self contained story about the events of that day. From the get-go, I had a strong image of this young man exploding with violence against the least deserving person. I found the idea of misdirected rage endlessly fascinating, given that my experience of racism or any kind of extreme anger have often been characterised as being incredibly impersonal. At the same time, I was very hesitant to make a film about a 'victim' confronted by predatory teenagers. The more I thought about it, the more I realised that the character I really wanted to explore in detail was this strange kid, 'Rory'. For some reason, despite his outburst, he always struck me as a sensitive, creative and even romantic teenager who really only wanted to show his friend, Rebecca that there was more to him than she knew.

Double Happy was an uphill battle from day one. Unfortunately, I'd written a script that was quite specific about its location and the particular configuration of dairy, playground, school and even trees. And though we'd spent six months finding our cast, it would take a further six months to find a location that worked exactly as we needed it to. Eventually we found a fire station that had to be dressed as a school, a grass car park that had to become our playground and a take-a-way fish and chip shop that needed to become a dairy. At one stage we found ourselves purchasing about 2 tonnes of old playground equipment from a school and having to excavate it from concrete, transport it all the way across Wellington and install it as a fully functional playground outside the Stokes Valley Fire Department, much to the bemusement of the fire chief who kept asking "Why don't you just film it on a real playground?". After a day of back breaking installation, we were wondering the same thing.

Despite almost a year of pre-production, casting, set-building, and 6 weeks of rehearsals, the shoot was frantic, with an average of about 40 shots a day, and even peaking at 60. In amidst that chaos, I was incredibly lucky to have a dedicated and talented cast and crew who knew what I wanted to achieve, and did everything they could to make sure it happened.

## **DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

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I can't seem to remember most events in my life without pointing to a film I was obsessed with at the time. I grew up enthralled with Looney Tunes cartoons and

Michael Jackson's *Moonwalker*, learnt about sex from Arthur Sherman's *Zits*, moved to New Zealand from Fiji just in time to see *Back to the Future Part 2*, spent my teenage summer watching Spike Lee's *Do The Right Thing* over and over again, and first saw breasts in Pasoloni's *The Decameron*. At 12, I decided I wanted to be a lawyer because of Bob Clark's *From the Hip*, then at 15 decided I wanted to be a filmmaker because of James Cameron's *Terminator 2*. My first date was to a preview screening of Wes Anderson's *Rushmore* (I couldn't take my eyes from the screen much to her chagrin), and I made the unfortunate decision of taking another date to see Gasper Noe's *Irreversible* (thankfully despite this, she married me and became my producer).

Somewhere along the ways I managed to pry myself away from the screen long enough to become a director/editor and motion graphics/vfx designer. I've also earned a degree in English which becomes embarrassing when I write with bad grammar, a film degree which left me hungry for more, a degree in accountancy and commercial law which I've never put to any good use and a masters degree in scriptwriting which I'm hoping will one day pay off.

## **PRODUCER'S STATEMENT:**

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I first heard about the film when I met Shahir six years ago. Originally titled 'Rory' after the lead character's name, Shahir and I spent many-a-day discussing how we would could make the film happen and eventuating on a new title for the film 'Double Happy', indicative of the 'firework of the era'. I became formally involved in the film as a producer, alongside Andrew Brettell, in mid-2008 as we began casting for the film. I loved the script and found myself not unsurprised with the disastrous ending to Rory's carefully orchestrated day. The seemingly racist outpour, while a shock on screen, is reminiscent of my own experiences as a New Zealand born Indian growing up in the 1990's.

Finding our characters was a real highlight of the production for me and the point at which I realised we were on to something pretty special. The commitment of the young actors and their final performances are exceptional. Overall, it was a fantastic, somewhat epic project to work on, involving everything from building an entire playground on a functioning fire-station to setting a decrepit building alight on a hillside. I look forward to working with the outstanding cast and crew again in the near future.

With a PhD in Chemistry and a career as a research scientist, I never expected to be a producer. Ironically, the cast and crew were pretty surprised to hear that I was anything but! In hindsight, I see what the crucial characteristics in the two career

paths are and why it felt such a natural progression for me: passion & belief in what you are doing & the people you are working with, and an approach, while being systematic & well planned, is completely about making it work on the day.

## **CAST & CREW**

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### **CAST**

Rory | Riley Brophy  
Rebecca | Augusta Wills  
Des | Theo Taylor  
Danielle | Jamie Burns  
Lakshmi | Neha Bahtia  
and introducing | Jaidan Khushal

### **CREW**

Writer/Director | Shahir Daud  
Producer(s) | Shivali Gulab, Andrew Brettell  
Line Producer | Gabe Page  
Production Assistant | Dan Lynch  
1st AD | Jules Lovelock  
2nd AD | Morgan Stevenson  
2nd Unit 1st AD | Adrian Carswell  
Unit Manager | Ross Graydon  
Cast Chaperone/Casting Director | Abby Marment  
Director of Photography | Andrew Stroud  
Focus Puller | Andrew Chappelle  
Digital Imaging Technician | Raj Khushal  
Camera Assistant | Luke Frater  
2nd Unit DOP | Aline Tran  
2nd Unit Focus Puller | Nigel Nally  
Gaffers | Dave Anderson, Chris Murphy  
Lighting Assistants | Matt Henley, Mark Dunick, Sam Sheppard  
Key Grip | Murray Love  
Grip Assists | Brett Saunders  
2nd Unit Grip | Noor Razzak  
Sound Recordist | Joel Anscombe-Smith  
2nd Unit Sound Recordist | Nic McGowen, Ferand Peek  
Art Directors | Kate Logan, Josh Barraud  
Art Department Assists | Tara Meredith, Sally Ford  
Make Up | Catherine McGuire  
Wardrobe | Pip Stevenson  
VFX Supervisor | Phil McClaren

VFX | Ian Hutton, Doug "Biff" Falconer  
Stunt Supervisor | Ricky Dey  
Polaroid Consultant | Mel Phillips  
Stills Photographer | Gareth Moon  
Editor | Jeff Hurrell  
Composers | Brett Johanson, Shahir Daud, Darwin Go  
3D Animators | Lernwil Ang, Jeremy Raven, David Alve  
Colourist | Darwin Go  
Tracklay/Audio | Matt Lambourn  
Composer | Stephen Gallagher  
Graphic Design | Shahir Daud  
Featuring Music by The Ruby Suns



A partnership between  
Creative New Zealand and the  
New Zealand Film Commission

