



JACOB

written and directed by Dena Curtis

FESTIVAL PRESSKIT

BLACKFELLA FILMS

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PRODUCTION NOTES

Director		Dena Curtis		
Producer		Darren Dale		
Co Producer		Rhea Stephenson		
Production Company		Blackfella Films		
Genre		Drama		
Language		Warrumungu with English Subtitles		
Super 16mm	Dolby Digital	Colour	11:56min	16:9

ONELINER

Gina and Max's life is turned upside down when baby Jacob arrives.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Gina, a young Aboriginal mother finds herself in a predicament when her husband Max returns home and learns the truth about baby Jacob.

SYNOPSIS

Central Australia 1940, two Aboriginal couples George and Milly, and Max and Gina live on a small station in the middle of the outback. Whilst George and Max are away fencing Max receives news that Gina has given birth to their son Jacob.

Four Months later George and Max return home. Max is thrilled at the prospect of father meeting son for the first time, but the joyous occasion soon turns to disillusionment as he realises Jacob is not his child.

George and Milly realise what is about to unfold between Max and Gina but can't bring themselves to interfere in the young couple's business. Max feels the fool and is humiliated by the discovery. His disappointment and anger forces Gina to make a choice about her future and survival.

George and Milly resign to the background, but keep a close eye on Gina as she spirals into depression and is drawn closer to her fateful decision.

Its only when George realises Gina is falling deeper into despair, that he finally appeals to Max. When Max returns home to Gina and baby Jacob, he tries his best to reconcile himself with the situation, but ultimately his pride gets in his way and denies him the chance.

Gina reads Max's anger at himself as directed at her and she comes to the conclusion that the only way to keep her husband and to survive is to get rid of Jacob.

At the break of dawn Gina takes Jacob into the bush where nothing but the land itself can witness her desperate act. George watches Gina leave and knows something is wrong.

Trapped in her despair Gina places Jacob onto the ground as she carves out his tomb in the warm earth. She positions baby Jacob into his grave and begins returning the earth as his innocent cries call for help.

Suddenly from nowhere George pulls her away and rescues Jacob from his grave. He turns around and sees that Milly is right behind him and she has Gina in her arms.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

It's hard to know where to begin in explaining why I wanted to make a film like *Jacob*.

Even though elements of this film reflect part of my family history, this story affects many Indigenous men, women and their families in Central Australia. This is a reality that is very rarely explored and even less so from the perspective of Indigenous men.

When I was writing *Jacob*, I chose to represent this sensitive story from the point of view of the characters who were witness to these extraordinary times. I wanted to portray on screen their emotional journeys and responses to such a distressing and awkward situation which they were left to deal with.

The first time I heard the story of how my Grandfather saved my Uncle when he was a baby, left me with all these images and thoughts running through my head. This story represented for me the kind of man that my Grandfather was.

At the time of writing *Jacob*, there was a lot of negative media attention towards Aboriginal men and people made the assumption that because one man can't look after his family that all Indigenous men must be one and the same and I didn't agree with that. I wanted to show our men in a different light, black men that work hard, looked after their families and struggled to overcome hardship. I want the audience to see proud Indigenous men and the lives they once lived.

I also wanted to examine how a young woman might deal with her life experience and also reflect on how so many Indigenous women have been through post-natal depression and dealing with the choices and decisions that they have made in their life time.

But at the end of the day and with all the reasons for making this film, reflecting back to that time, I see that what those men and women did was not always about choice but rather about their survival.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Dena is an editor and filmmaker. In 2002 she attended Australian Film and Television and Radio School where she studied a graduate diploma in Television Editing on completion of this diploma she returned to Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association Productions and worked there for a number of years. Some of her editing credits include *Lore of Love* (NIDF Series 6), *Willaberta Jack* and *Cheeky Dog*, a documentary in which she also directed.

In 2008 Dena wrote/directed her second film *Hush* a five minute narrative film which won the audience award for Best Foreign Short Film at the 2008 Films de Femmes, Créteil France. *Jacob* is Dena's third film as writer/director.

CAST

Milly

Gina

Max

George

Bob

Jacob

NINGALI LAWFORD-WOLF

CONNIE AMOS

HEATH BERGERSEN

DAVID NGOOMBUJARRA

LeROY PARSONS

ALLIRA COULTHARD

CREW

Writer/Director

Producer

Co Producer

DOP

Production Designer

Composer

DENA CURTIS

DARREN DALE

RHEA STEPHENSON

MURRAY LUI

NELL HANSON

DAVID PAGE