

AN EXPERIENCE BY VAN PHAN



UPSTANDER

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?





SYNOPSIS

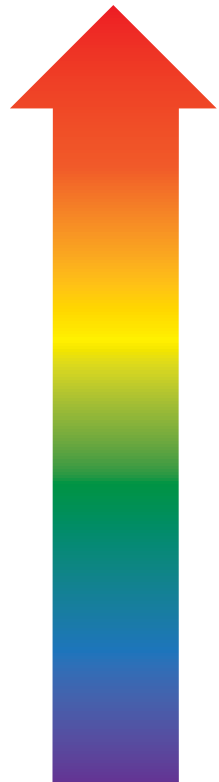
“Upstander” is a 360 animated experience about bullying, and how we can make a difference. “Upstander” uses scale, time, and space to immerse the audience in the story that defies reality and challenges the participant to think and change. How can we be part of the solution and not be part of the problem? Upstander, in partnership with The Diana-Award and Oculus VR for Good, is aimed at reducing bullying in schools by raising awareness.

The experience uses scale, time, and space to push the boundaries of the story through the use of animation and challenges the participant to think, change, and take action.

“Upstander” touches on the trauma caused by social, verbal, physical, and cyberbullying. How can we be part of the solution and not the problem?



Using the feedback from the Creator's lab, I rework the story and made significant changes in the story. We shifted the story from the perspective of the bullied to the bystander. I also changed the set from an outdoor playground to an indoor basketball court as having an indoor space would make it easier to direct the participant's attention. I learned how important it was to be very open at the early stage of development as this is the best time to experiment and make changes. Upstander when you through multiple possible names: Be the one, #You too, Carry on, and Pivot. Eventually, we settle on Upstander as it fits the made theme of the Story.



IDEATION

Upstander is a case study that shows the potential of 360 and how the creator can leverage the medium to push the boundaries of storytelling. The original idea for "Upstander" was conceived at the Oculus creators lab 3.0 summit. I was paired up with Alex Holmes from the Diana Award, and we brainstorm ideas. We also meet with the advisor from the Creator's lab 3.0 summit to get their thoughts and advice. About one month after the Creator's Lab summit, I submitted my initial proposal, and it got rejected.

The journey of creating Upstander has been transformative for me as I have discovered the potential of the new medium and believe in its potential as an empathy machine to make people feel and think more. As it was created in VR I wanted to structure the experience so it took advantage of the medium and push boundaries visually and also through introducing certain narrative components special to VR such as the participant's body movement. For my next project, I want to leverage what I learned and add interactivity, as this will not only increase empathy but will create a sense of agency for the participant, making them feel more, thinking more, and possibly take action.

For more information click [here](#)



CREATOR

Van Phan is an award-winning filmmaker, designer, animator, and educator, who has worked on projects which went on to win the best of the show at the Venice film festival, and SIGGRAPH. As a refugee escaping from Vietnam, Van's childhood dream job was to become a comic book artist; however, his parents wanted him to pursue a more stable career, so off he went to UCLA. Upon graduating with cum laude honors in Psychology and Business, he worked for Ernst and Young.

As Van was crunching numbers as an accountant, he yearned to doodle instead. Fortunately, a chance screening of the SIGGRAPH Electronic Theater changed his life. After seeing an incredible computer-animated short created, Van inspired and transformed had an aha moment. He realized that he could use emerging technology to tell his own stories.

Twenty years later, he is still passionate about using emerging technology, animation, and psychology to create WOW moments for social impact. He will premiere his 360 experience Upstander made in partnership with Oculus VR for good and The Diana Award at Tribeca 2020.

Van also finds purpose as an educator to help the next generation of storytellers create their own WOW moments. He teaches at various colleges in the San Francisco Bay area. Currently, he is working on interactive XR experiences that will further push the boundaries to story, technology, animation, and psychology.



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POWERED BY **AMD**
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GAME ENGINE: **UNREAL GAME ENGINE**

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