



# Indian Panorama Projects

Non Feature Films



## INDIAN PANORAMA PROJECTS

### Non Feature Films

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English

### Project Details

Non Feature  
Video

Duration  
15 min

Language  
English

Producer  
Studio Zephyr

Andeva Enclave,  
Rajgarh Road,  
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## A FRIEND TURNED FOE

### Synopsis

Human population world wide is expanding and the natural habitats of animals are shrinking incessantly. Man-animal conflicts in areas on the fringes of forest often turn into a war-like situation. Animals often destroy crops, property and at times take away human lives too. Human casualties in man and animal conflicts have increased in recent times. Degradation of forest land due to human interference is the root cause of human versus wild life conflict. Due to overgrowing human population, which results in pressure on the forest land mass, the elephant habitat has changed considerably. Day by day the territory of the elephants is being squeezed into small to smaller areas, township development in proximity to forests and the construction of roads cutting across elephant corridors, disturb the wild herbivore.

A long-standing relationship between man and elephant has epitomized the cultural and heritage of India. Now, the conflict between man and elephant will continue to grow if we don't take adequate measures. There will be loss on both sides. It is sad that the degradation of wildlife habitat has forced elephants to raid villages and a symbolic friend from the past years of human civilization has turned into a foe now.

### Director's Statement

The film is about the man-elephant conflict that arises time and again, following mass deforestation and continuous unabated diminishing of animal habitats. The wildlife that has been depicted here are elephants that have been forced to encroach on human territory. The conflict arises thereafter and both man and elephant turn violent. Here I am trying to build up a concept, as to who it is to be blamed for such differences since both man and elephant were once living in a friendly atmosphere and elephants specially were of greater help to mankind. A wild giant creature when turning violent can be so devastating is depicted in the story. In retaliation man has shown no mercy. In the film I have tried to build up awareness amongst the people, who live in the fringe areas to understand their behavior and give them an area of their own, so that such conflicts do not arise again.

### Director/Producer's Profile

In the world of wildlife films, particularly in Assam, Gautam Saikia is well known. He studied electronic engineering but opted for photography and filmmaking instead. As an independent film maker he produced, cinematographed, edited and directed video films on wildlife like *Elephant Festival*, *Animal Welfare in Kaziranga* and *The Jaws of Death*, which was adjudged the best film in the Documentary Film Festival held at Shillong in 2005.



Gautam Saikia  
Director

Hindi

Project Details

Feature  
35 mm

Duration  
60 min

Language  
Hindi

Producer  
Films Division

4, Dr. G.D. Deshmukh Marg,  
Mumbai 400 026

## ANTARDHWANI THE INNER SOUND

### Synopsis

Antardhwani is a soulful journey into the musical realm of santoor maestro Shiv Kumar Sharma. It tries to capture not only the genius that is the musician and composer but also the kind human and understanding guru in him. We see the maestro himself talking about different aspects of his music and the santoor, a folk instrument that has been raised to its classical status by Panditji. Music knows no barriers, he says, and goes on to talk about world music, cross border musicians, fusion; with open-mindedness he analyzes the present musical scenario, in India and the world over.

Shiv Kumar's incredible contribution to the world of music is traced through interviews with his friends and colleagues such as Jasraj, Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Zakir Husain and Yash Chopra, while the maestro himself talks of his father-guru, Uma Dutt Sharma, with reverence.

### Director's Statement

Antardhwani is a musical reminiscence with Panditji talking about his childhood, his father Pandit Uma Dutt Sharma who was also his guru, the santoor and his efforts to reach it the level that it is now, his music and his life. Close friends talk with fondness and reverence at once. The film is an attempt to show gratitude to this living legend for his incredible contribution to the world of music.

### Director Profile

Jabbar Patel, a pediatrician by education, runs a polyclinic near Pune with his gynecologist wife. Inspired by the richness of Marathi literature, he stepped into theatre and made a name for himself as a director of refinement and perception. His most famous play, Vijay Tendulkar's *Ghashiram Kotwal*, travelled across the world. He has directed several highly regarded documentary and feature films including *Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar*. They have been feted with many awards, National and international.

### Producer's Profile

Films Division (FD), ranked among the oldest and largest documentary producer in the world, is on the threshold of celebrating its 60th anniversary. Acclaimed as the 'Visual Encyclopedia on India', FD has, over the past 50 years, documented records of Indian history on celluloid.

FD holds 8000 titles of documentaries, short films and animation films in its archives. These films range from events of socio-cultural importance to political events. It has won over 1500 national and international awards. It also holds the Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentary, Short & Animation Films (MIFF), a biennial event showcasing the best films in different categories.



Jabbar Patel  
Director

Hindi

### Project Details

Non Feature

Duration

29 min

Language

Hindi

Producer

Public Service Broadcasting  
Trust (PSBT)

A/86, Nizamuddin (E)

New Delhi "C 110 013

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# APNA ALOO BAZAAR BECHA



Pankaj H. Gupta  
Director

## Synopsis

Few mountain communities, however remote, remain untouched by globalization. Jardhar gaon, a typical village of middle Himalaya in the Indian province of Garhwal, led an isolated, egalitarian existence until just 30 years ago, living off an agro-pastoral system that sustained human life and the environment for over six centuries. Today, it is in the middle of a rapid social and environmental transformation. This short documentary, based entirely on local perspectives, reflects on this process of change what triggers the shift to modernization and what impact it has on the personal, social and environmental spaces.

## Director's Statement

I had first gone to Jardhar gaon in the Himalayan region of Garhwal in 2001, when it was still a somewhat isolated village. I stayed there for just a day, a day I remember very well: it was the end of September, and the valley was buzzing with harvest activities. The air was fragrant, the people charming and the rustic sights reminded me of the rural landscapes of Constable, the British painter. I immediately wanted to capture the whole experience of an idyllic rural community onto film. It was also the first time I met Bachni Devi, who was to become the main character in the film nearly seven years later. In seven years, the rustic idyll had begun to disappear: the unique ecology of the region was disrupted, families broken, and the fragrant air polluted with pesticides. Even the people's movement that Jardhargaon was famous for, Beej Bachao Andolan (Save the Seeds Movement), had lost its sheen. And Bachni Devi, now 72 and a widow, was a bitter, lonely person, rather than the strong and effervescent head of a household that she was. So the film became a film about a lost world "C of community living and sharing -- and about the new world of 'market engagement'.

## Director Profile

Pankaj H. Gupta divides his time between filmmaking and sustainability research. He has been associated with a number of factual TV series, independent documentaries and development programs during his career spanning two decades. His current areas of interest are mountain ecologies and low income urban communities in India. A Commonwealth scholar with a Masters in Sustainable Development from Staffordshire University, he has published a number of papers in academic and popular journals. At the moment, he is working on a research project that investigates the viability of enterprise based conservation as a Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Environment & Development, Bangalore.

## Producer's Profile

Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT) is a not-for-profit trust that represents the confluence of energies to foster a shared public culture of broadcasting that is exciting, socially responsive and representative of democratic values. It works to support the agendas of public broadcasting through advocacy work but most significantly through the production and distribution of 52 independent documentary films a year. Its objective is to mainstream independent documentaries and their content through its film production and media advocacy mandate.

PSBT works in close partnership with the national broadcaster and is supported by organizations such as UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, the MacArthur Foundation and EU Ford Foundation, etc. The Board of Trustees includes some of the most distinguished people from the field: Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal, Kiran Karnik, Sharmila Tagore, Aruna Vasudev, Sunita Narain and Rajiv Mehrotra.

It works with independent filmmakers in order to create powerful and insightful documentaries that push the boundaries to engage with vital issues. The PSBT's body of work spans a whole range of issues and themes such as Freedom, Diversity, Gender, Environment, Conflict, HIV/AIDS, Democracy, Sexuality, Literature, Arts and Crafts and Culture, among others.

Bengali

**Project Details**

Non Feature  
Video/Colour

Duration  
79 min

Language  
Bengali

Producer  
Amitabh Chakraborty  
BE-232Sector-1  
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## BISHAR BLUES

### Synopsis

This film on the fakirs of Bengal examines their music and the deep spirituality in their way of living that reconciles radical syncretism. Practiced largely by the poor and lower caste Muslims, its history in Bengal is replete with examples of assimilation of religions. The music has strains of Buddhist, Tantric and Vaishnavite notes and practices. The film shows a multicultural face of Islam largely unknown to the world.

### Director / Producer's Profile

It was his fascination with the fakirs/mendicants of West Bengal that led Amitabh Chakravarty to make Bishar Blues. The fakirs stand completely against institutionalized religion. Instead, they locate divinity in human beings. Chakravarty traversed through Birbhum, Murshidabad, Nadia and Burdwan in West Bengal and interacted with scores of fakirs for three years to make the film.



Amitabh Chakravarty  
Director

Hindi

### Project Details

Duration  
73min

Language  
Hindi

Producer  
Rajesh Jala

The Elephants

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## CHILDREN OF THE PYRE



Rajesh Jala  
Director

### Synopsis

Varanasi, for many a synonym of India, owes a large part of its fame to Manikarnika, the busiest cremation ground in India. Over 150 bodies are consigned to flames here everyday, with the guarantee of instant moksha or liberation from the cycle of births and rebirths. Understandably, death is big business here - involving all kinds of professionals - big and small. Amidst grieving relatives, profit hungry shopkeepers and sombre cremators can be spotted groups of frolicking children who have turned this graveyard into their playground and a source of their livelihood.

*Children of the Pyre* is a compelling real-life, self-narrative of seven such extraordinary children who make their living out of the dead. They collect, snatch or steal used coffin shrouds and sell them for petty amounts in order to ensure their own and their family's survival.

The film is a terrible saga of exploitation that celebrates the victory of innocence over the most harrowing realities of life. It's a torturous journey through seared bodies, callous minds and dead consciences that constitute the human reality of the ghats at Varanasi.

### Director's Statement

Manikarnika, in Varanasi is India's busiest, most sacred and ancient cremation ground. Each dead body is draped with colorful shrouds. Six kids: Kapil, Sunil, Manish, Ashish, Yogi and Gagan; belonging to the Dom (untouchable) community are constantly on the hunt to snatch these shrouds and sell them. These shrouds get recycled and the kids get a meagre sum, just about sufficient to buy their food. Another boy, Ravi, aged fourteen, is probably the youngest cremator at Manikarnika. Between nine and 14 years of age, he claims to have cremated a thousand dead bodies!

This film is a disturbing journey through the tattered childhood of these seven extraordinary children. Initially, I was extremely perturbed at Manikarnika. But the courage of these kids encouraged and inspired me to fight the fears which had intruded my mind - the fear of being surrounded by charred dead bodies! I hope to generate awareness at a global level to bring back the lost childhood of not only these seven kids but for the millions of miserable children who never get an opportunity to go to school. Films don't bring revolution. But they change or influence perception. And firm perception to fight for justice and humanity is the solid foundation for revolution.

### Director's Profile

Born in Kashmir in 1969, director, producer and cinematographer Rajesh S Jala has been making documentaries for the last 11 years. It has been an enlightening journey through human emotions, social concerns and inner conflicts. He has directed more than 10 documentaries and television serials for Indian and international channels. *Floating Lamp of the Shadow Valley* (2006) was nominated to the Amsterdam Film Festival, Palm Spring Festival in US, Raindance Festival, London, and featured on BBC World, The Independent, London and The Power of Culture, Netherlands.

Hindi

### Project Details

Duration  
22 min

Language  
Hindi

## DHIN TAK DHA



Shraddha Pasi  
Director

### Synopsis

Gopal, a garage mechanic, accidentally meets a group of artistes who perform in different villages. He is fascinated by this new life, but sooner he realizes that life is not easy for these artistes. In his own way he tries to help them through their crisis. But this helps turns into a mistake. Chief, the head of the group, doesn't forgive him for this. Feeling guilty he leaves the group and returns to his garage only to meet them again 'accidentally'.

### Director's Statement

The film talks about the condition of folk art in India and the hardships that a person has to go through to keep the art alive. I was deeply affected by the thought, that here is a group of people, who only know their form of art and nothing else. This art is their life, their bread and butter. They live so that they can perform. And today the same art is diminishing, thanks to all kind of media coming in our lives to entertain us.

So where do they go from here, we have to save folk art because it is our culture. But people don't want to see it because it is not popular. The film is an attempt to bring out the current situation of the folk art in India. The title *Dhin Tak Dha* are the musical notes used in the folk art of India.

### Director Profile

Born in Ahmednagar, a small town near Pune, Shraddha Pasi completed her graduation in Mass Communication from Delhi University and then joined the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune in 2004. She was a part of an exchange program, Polar meet Solar. *The Chase*, a short film made by her, in the exchange program won the Award of the Best Student Film at the Kenya International Film Festival in 2007. The Film *Dhin Tak Dha* has featured in the 7th Asian Film Festival and International Film Festival of India, Goa.

English

### Project Details

Duration  
23 min

Language  
English

Producer  
Aka Communication  
Power Centre  
Mokokchung,  
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## DISTANT RUMBLINGS



Bani Prakash Das  
Director

### Synopsis

North East India, nestled in the Eastern Himalayas is a pristine land mass, rarely explored. However, she had to witness one of the most dramatic international events taking place on her soil. In 1942, during World War II, the Japanese began their march towards India. The offensive was fully unfolded along the Indian frontier. North East India became the ultimate battle ground where staunchest stand of the Allied Forces stopped the Japanese march towards Delhi. The most destructive war in human history had left its indelible mark on the land mass and over 60 years later the same place was revisited on a fact-finding mission.

The primary objective was to find war wreckage lying in the jungles of the North East India. Strikingly, along with war debris, mental wreckage in the form of lingering melancholy was found. In spite of a blood- stained history, man is yet to acknowledge the counterproductive nature of violence. This film emphasizes the significance of learning from our past blunders and pledge for a peaceful world on humanitarian grounds.

### Director's Statement

While I was traveling along with my crew through a remote village on the Indo-Myanmar border area of Nagaland, with an eye for making a documentary on Border Trade, I stumbled upon a rare sight-- the wheel of an aircraft hung on a tree. From village headman I came to know that this belonged to a fighter aircraft destroyed in World War II. From here begins the journey towards Distant Rumbings. This was a fact- finding mission in which the attempt was to contribute information on a lesser known episode of the World War II, to a broader discussions of the war. The mission led us to emotionally charged lives and places of North East India. The task was quite difficult as the terrain and the people were in the same state as they were during the War. Documents that spoke of this forgotten episode were also scarce. Yet with the help of defense libraries and the local people, I and my crew went on to make a historically significant documentary that is an important add-on file to the history of mankind's most horrible war. We uncovered a number of war wreckage in the form of hand grenades, rifles, personal effects and even aircrafts from the thick jungle of the area. But the most important of all discoveries was the still aching selves of the civilian victims of the war.

### Director Profile

Bani Prakash Das has been associated with the film industry since the mid-90s. From the dawn lit mountains - *the Nishi*, a documentary produced by him entered in the 5th Mumbai International Film Festival, 1998. Earlier, he also worked as production controller of a feature film titled *I killed him, Sir*. He has produced and directed several documentary films, docu-features and magazines for Doodardshan.

# DIVIDED COLOUR OF NATION



Umesh Aggarwal  
Director

## Synopsis

Caste based Reservation: This issue seems to be dividing India more than ever before. One of the biggest challenges the country faces today is to create an equitable society. For, 76 % of the Indian population falls under the categories of OBC, SC, ST. Only 12% of the population is Upper Caste. Muslims and others make up another 12%. The data suggests that 12% has ruled over 76% for centuries. Now, when the majority wants to obliterate the injustice committed for centuries, the solutions are not easy to find. Reservation for the backward is currently the most contentious issue. Educated young people in urban India are out on the streets, up in arms, against any policy that reserves seats in educational institutes on the basis of castes. Through this miasma of Caste Based Reservation, the film also looks at the education system in India.

## Director Profile

After graduating in Political Science, Umesh Aggarwal completed his masters in journalism. Since 1994 he has been making television programmes and documentaries. Besides biographical films on three Prime Ministers of India, he has directed *Mother*, a film on Mother Teresa. *The Whistle Blowers* (2005) won a National award. Kiran, on Doordarshan, won ITA award and has been adapted into a book by Penguin publishers. He is currently making a film for National Geographic.

## English

### Project Details

Feature  
Video

Duration  
30 min

Language  
English

Producer  
Public Service

Broadcasting Trust (PSBT)

A/86, Nizamuddin (E)

New Delhi - 110 013

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# FOUR WOMEN AND A ROOM



Ambarien  
Director

## Synopsis

Late into pregnancy, Mili is confounded with a range of unknown emotions. Having gone through endless rituals of matchmaking, Latika is wondering about her desire to be a biological mother. The dreamscape of the filmmaker throws up images and associations of a hospital visited sometime back and reminds her of meeting Kalpana, a fictitious character who might have undergone a sex selective abortion. Combining techniques of documentary and fiction, *Four Women and a Room* unfolds through the metaphor of the labour room and the conscious and subconscious resonances it has in the lives of its four protagonists. In the process of doing so, the film raises crucial questions about debates around sex selective abortions, marriage and motherhood within South Asian contexts while making a strong case for the agency of women.

## Director's Statement

As a woman filmmaker, exploring the interiority of the worlds of my women protagonists is central to my work. *Four Women and a Room* explores motherhood and the notion of choice built into contemporary reproductive technologies from the point of view of women. It started off as a film on the falling child sex ratios and I traveled to the worst affected districts in north India. The farther I traveled outside, the stronger the desire to look inside grew. It seemed easier to point the camera at some unknown woman living in a distant part of rural India and project her as a victim of forced sex selective abortion. It was far more difficult to etch out the complicated web of desires, choices and notions of agency that contemporary Indian women battle with where deep patriarchal histories co-exist with claims to an apparent liberalism.

## Director Profile

Ambarien has a degree in Mass Communication from The Anwar Jamal Kidwai Mass Communication Research Centre. She has assisted on features and documentaries and worked in films like *Silent Waters* (The Golden Leopard, Locarno, 2002) and *The City Beautiful*. She has been a recipient of EU-India Documentary Film Fellowship Programme, 2004. Her first independent documentary titled *Elsewhere* (produced under the fellowship) won the Best Documentary Award at the O110 International Digital Film Festival Award, Mumbai in 2005. *Four Women and a Room* is her second film and has been supported by The Public Service Broadcasting Trust, New Delhi, 2008. She has directed-edited many short films on education, women's rights and health. Her films have won international acclaim and have been shown at The Berlin International Film Festival, The British Institute Film Festival and the BBC Community Channel apart from others. Currently, she teaches Video at the AJK Mass Communication Research Centre.



K R Manoj  
Director

## Malayalam

### Project Details

Non Feature  
DV Cam

Duration  
40 min

Language  
Malayalam

Producer  
Udbhava

TC 9/210(2), OA Street,  
Jawahar Nagar, Kowdiar  
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Kerala, India

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# 16 MM: MEMORIES, MOVEMENT AND A MACHINE

## Synopsis

Memories of the 70s bring with it memories about cinema. Those days, considered to be the highpoint of New Wave or Art Film and the film society movement in Kerala, one felt a sort of frisson nouveau in the air, a feeling of being at a turning point, as if something were about to happen.

The film society movement introduced world cinema to the public on a scale that was unimaginable and impossible earlier. It worked in the fissure between contemporary Malayalam cinema and world cinema, opened up a new world before cineastes and helped create a new sensibility. The concerns, techniques and imagery both, were worlds apart for neophytes.

16mm tries to trace the trajectory of the film society movement in Kerala and its relationship with a machine - the 16mm film projector. Now abandoned as an obsolete technology, 16mm projection was the soul and source of the movement at that time, and it still burns on in the mind of a generation of cineastes. A journey through images that try to capture the enigma of the cultural interface produced by film society movement.

## Director's Statement

What differentiates history from memory? Once you are not ready to accept the binary of 'objective' history and 'subjective' memory, the definitions and dialogues suddenly become ambiguous and the contours blur. I would rather consider it as a crisis embedded within the process of experiencing/filming history. Despite this risk factor, my project remains historical, where the crisis has been intimately tied up with cinema and the problems that the cinematic apparatus poses for me as spectator and as a filmmaker.

My personal experience at different levels for the past two decades with the film society movement in Kerala - as a cineaste, film student, pamphlet maker, publication editor, organizer and film maker-- has inspired me to document the experience. I have witnessed the swift shift of time, technology and people surrounding the movement. I remember dilapidated halls with ruined thatched roofs where light and darkness make their own parallel stories in the midst of screenings. I have seen what television has done to the collective memory and viewing history. The technological shift from celluloid to digital is a tactile memory for me where the smooth DVDs replace tattered prints. In a sense the documentary, for me, is an attempt to think myself and make people think about the (hi)story of the visuals and sounds that surround us.

Urdu

### Project Details

Feature  
Video

Duration  
6 min

Language  
Urdu

Producer

M/s. Minesis

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## PARWAAZ

### Synopsis

Parwaaz is based on an Urdu poem by Abha Iyengar, who has written the screenplay and also appears in the film to recite the poem about a poet's need for self-expression and self-realization. The poet is waiting for a new life. She hears the call of a distant shore. As she waits to be ferried across time and space, her thoughts race back to her childhood and her dreams as a young woman. Then her funeral pyre is lit, and her journey continues with the promise of a new freedom. Abha Iyengar, an internationally published freelance writer and poet, is also a social activist who is against all forms of aggression and injustice.

### Director's Profile

Biju Viswanath has made both, feature films and documentaries. *Deja Vu*(English) was his first international feature film. His films have won international awards. They have been screened at festivals in Pusan, Locarno, Berlin, Los Angeles, New York, New Jersey, Florence, Mexico, Cairo, Manila, Zanzibar, and in Indian Panorama.



Biju Viswanath  
Director

Hindi

### Project Details

Duration  
55 min

Language  
Hindi

## REMEMBERING BIMAL ROY



Joy Bimal Roy  
Director

### Synopsis

Bimal Roy came from Kolkata to direct a film for Bombay Talkies titled *Maa*. He brought with him five members of his crew, Hrishikesh Mukherjee, Asit Sen, Nabendu Ghosh, Pal Mahendra and Nazir Hussain. These individuals became like members of his family, living under the same roof through the first difficult years of struggle in Bombay. An important part of his legacy was his ability to recognize and nurture talent, inspiring a band of devoted followers, who went on to make films with an unmistakable stamp: be it Hrishikesh Mukherjee or Gulzar.

The first film he produced and directed under his own banner - Bimal Roy Productions - won the Grand Prix at Cannes in 1954, the award which is now known as the Palme d'Or. It was a film called *Do Bigha Zamin*, which even today is considered a classic, surviving the test of time, and inspiring a new generation of filmmakers like Ashutosh Gowariker (*Lagaan*). Two of his other films *Sujata* and *Biraj Bahu* were official entries to the Cannes Festival. He has won 11 Filmfare awards, the President's Award, as well as international awards at the Karlovy Vary festival in former Czechoslovakia, and many others.

Bimal Roy's son Joy has made a 55-minute film *Remembering Bimal Roy*, documenting his life through a series of interviews with legends who worked with him such as Dilip Kumar, Vyjayanthimala, Kamini Kaushal, Dharmendra, Sulochana and Gulzar, as well as admirers such as Javed Akhtar and Ashutosh Gowariker, and family including his wife Manobina and daughter Aparajita. It also features clips from his films, the earliest one being from PC Barua's *Devdas* starring KL Saigal, Bimal Roy's first film as a cameraman, dating back 62 years to 1935.

### Director's Statement

My father died when I was ten years old. Unlike most other fathers, he hardly spent any time at home, because he was completely wedded to his work. Cinema was his life.

I got to know him after his untimely death in 1966 mainly through his films. For me they are pure magic...haunting, evocative and timeless, and yet simple and easy to understand. This documentary is my personal search for my father as a man. By meeting people who knew him I hoped to get to know him better...and I did.

I discovered that the man was like his films. His life mirrored the purity of his films like a clear reflection in his beloved river Padma in Bangladesh. This film became a journey within and without for me, and helped me understand why my father was so driven and how he achieved immortality in a short lifespan of 54 years.

I owe everything to my parents...my sensibilities, my beliefs, and my lifestyle. This is my way of saying thank you for giving me such a good life.

## Director's Profile

Joy Bimal Roy worked as assistant to Shyam Benegal on three features - *Mandi*, *Trikal* and *Susman*, and several shorts and documentaries. He made a short film on mentally handicapped children of Sadhana School, Mumbai which was selected for the International Video Festival, Trivandrum, 1995. His other interests include fashion design (finalist in Yves St. Laurent/Times of India Contest, 1989), music and art.

## English

### Project Details

Duration  
27 min

Language  
English / Manipuri

Producer  
Pakhee Films  
Kongba Kshetri Leikai  
East - 1 Impal  
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# RATAN THIYAM THE MAN OF THEATRE



Nirmala Chanu  
Director



Oken Amakcham  
Director

## Synopsis

Ratan Thiyam, founder-director of the Chorus Repertory Theatre (CRT) is a renowned Manipur poet, a playwright, choreographer, painter and musician. Formerly Director of the National School of Drama, New Delhi, Thiyam returned to his CRT for creative pursuits. Being equally adept at classical, folk methods, to its interpretation and supervise it from a modern perspective. At the Repertory Thiyam coaches his dedicated team through a regimen comprising strenuous physical exercises including martial arts, dance, music, absolute breath control and flawless dialogue delivery.

Thiyam established Chorus Repertory Theatre in 1976 at Imphal in the small hill state of Manipur in north-eastern India. It specializes in the application of traditional and classified elements to modern Indian theatre. Manipur as a region has numerous traditions of dance, drama and music along with innumerable rituals as living traditions. In presenting new plays the Repertory very creatively juxtaposes these rich Manipuri traditions with modern techniques to give a unique dimension of contemporary Indian theatre.

Thiyam and his Repertory have won several awards including the Fringe Award at Edinburgh Festival, Indo-Greece Friendship Award, Diploma of Cervanto International Festival, Mexico and others.

## Director's Statement

This documentary film is aimed at sending a message of peace to the people inhabiting a land torn by social unrest and turmoil. Along with the undertaking research on the inner significance of the plays, one of the main aims and objectives of my research is the documentation of some of Thiyam's new plays with a message for global peace. Amongst the ethnic groups inhabiting the north-eastern region of India beside the Himalayan ranges, mention may be made of the Manipuris who have now been facing a complex social predicament. The present social turmoil not only disturbs their normal life but cause the death of many innocent people. Our cultural life is also threatened. I firmly believe this film would go a long way towards the restoration of peace.

For this film, I contacted Ratan Thiyam and got his approval. Some of the comments he made were connected with his peace-based play *Hey Nungshibi Prithibi*. It took a long time--seven years--for him to complete his no-war mission. Sitting silent in a safe corner Ratan Thiyam observes the happenings all around; he feels the wounds (woes) felt by Mother Earth. This has been the foundation of his new play *Hey Nungshibi Prithibi*.

## Director's Profile

Oken Amakcham is an Arts graduate from Manipur University and Sangeet Visharad from Bhatkhande Sangeet Vidyapith, Lucknow. His films have featured in Indian Panorama and won National Awards. He is currently on the Board of Directors of Manipur Film Development Corporation, besides being associated with Juvenile Theatre, Manipur.

Nirmala Chanu, a gold medal winner in state and national level theatre festivals, makes her directorial debut with Ratan Thiyam: The Man of Theatre. She has earlier been associate director of the Manipuri feature film, Amamba Lambi (2008); and the Auto Rickshaw Driver, a Doordarshan serial. She is a regular artiste of the Juvenile Theatre, Manipur.

# REHANA A QUEST FOR FREEDOM



Priyanka Mukherjee  
Director



Gargi Sen  
Director

## Synopsis

This film presents the life and work of Rehana Adib, a woman from a minority community, a mother of six, a challenger of traditions, a crusader for social change. The intimate foray tries to understand the genesis of a leader. Every story we tell is as much about 'us' as about 'them.' As women in our everyday lives we are forever looking for role models: women who have encountered challenges of life, gender, tradition, economics, religion, culture and found ways to negotiate those with grace, courage, conviction and perseverance. Such women inspire us and give us hope. This inspiration and hope allows us to have faith in ourselves, in life and in the endless struggles all women go through.

And yet a story like that of Rehana Adib's also humbles us. We find ourselves and our every day struggles pale in comparison to what she has encountered and triumphed against. In a society which is largely discriminatory towards women, that disregards and undermines any efforts made by women, that negates and makes her invisible, that is more often than not treats her with hostility, suspicion and violence, in such a society the voice of women is mostly silenced. And when in this precise society a voice of reason and courage is heard, a voice that is asking not just for her personal rights but the right of all women from the community, this voice becomes the clarion call for change.

## Director's Statement

As directors we were interested to follow this voice that became the clarion call for all. We wanted to see and know the person behind the voice, the woman behind the leader, the mother behind the activist. We were interested to know her genesis, her triumphs, as well as her anxieties and challenges. We were as much interested in her public life as her private. We wanted to know her dreams and her fears. We wanted to know of her success and her failures. We were interested in the visible and strong side of this woman but we also wanted to touch the vulnerable side. For we felt that this story, the story of Rehana Adib would be of consequence to all women. And what better tool than the camera to tell her story with?

So the film emerged. We knew Rehana Adib and were familiar with her work. But we were not sure if we can reach the plane of intimacy which will allow us to touch the human being behind the leader. An intimacy and trust between the director, camera and subject that will allow the personal to emerge in the public domain and yet allow neither the overshadow the other, and instead use the two together to construct a complete human being, a woman, a leader and a mother. Whether we were able to construct a complete portrait or not is for the viewers to say, but on our part that is what set out to do.

## Director's Profile

Gargi Sen studied design at the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad and later completed her Masters in Mass Communication from the Leicester University. In the mid-80s she began to work with media with marginalized communities and took to making documentaries on social issues while showing films to a cross-section of the society. She is one of the founders of Magic Lantern Foundation and teaches film and communication.

This is Priyanka Mukherjee's directorial debut. She is working with Magic Lantern Foundation, a NGO based in Delhi, India. She has worked earlier on documentaries, as an assistant director to well known filmmakers, on subjects ranging from social issues to Indian classical art. Prior to that her experience lies also as an assistant producer for international news affairs programme. She has a Masters degree in Political Science from Delhi University. She has also studied Mass Communication, and attended workshops on film appreciation and environment in Delhi, India.

## Producer's Profile

Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT) is a not-for-profit trust that represents the confluence of energies to foster a shared public culture of broadcasting that is exciting, socially responsive and representative of democratic values. It works to support the agendas of public broadcasting through advocacy work but most significantly through the production and distribution of 52 independent documentary films a year. Its objective is to mainstream independent documentaries and their content through its film production and media advocacy mandate.

PSBT works in close partnership with the national broadcaster and is supported by organizations such as UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, the MacArthur Foundation and EU Ford Foundation, etc. The Board of Trustees includes some of the most distinguished people from the field: Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal, Kiran Karnik, Sharmila Tagore, Aruna Vasudev, Sunita Narain and Rajiv Mehrotra.

It works with independent filmmakers in order to create powerful and insightful documentaries that push the boundaries to engage with vital issues. The PSBT's body of work spans a whole range of issues and themes such as Freedom, Diversity, Gender, Environment, Conflict, HIV/AIDS, Democracy, Sexuality, Literature, Arts and Crafts and Culture, among others.

## THE JOURNALIST AND THE JIHADI- THE MURDER OF DANIEL PEARL



Ramesh Sharma  
Director

### Synopsis

This feature documentary tracks the parallel lives of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl and the Jihadi, Omar Sheikh. Two highly educated individuals from privileged backgrounds, they saw the world differently but with similar passion and commitment. One is a humanist who spent most of his career reporting from the Islamic world on a quest to promote cross-cultural understanding. The other is a militant who chose a deeply violent path to express his views. Their paths crossed in Karachi, Pakistan post 9/11 -- with tragic consequences.

### Director's Statement

The main point made by the film is that this is a tragedy of our times that probably cannot be averted, but out of which improbably positive outcomes can emerge. Despite the suffering caused to his parents and his wife, Daniel Pearl's murder has not had the effect that the terrorists hoped for. Instead of vengeance they want greater understanding with the Islamic world.

The story of these two men is also about how inexorably large global events impact on the lives of ordinary persons--sometimes with tragic consequences

As filmmakers, we were immediately drawn to this subject. It had all the ingredients of a compelling narrative. We were convinced that Daniel Pearl was an extra ordinary journalist and an inspirational human being who paid with his life for his beliefs - that he was not just in the wrong place at the wrong time (there were over 2000 journalists in Pakistan post 9/11.) That Omar Sheikh was no ordinary jihadi and that if we managed to capture their stories with truthfulness-it would be a film the world would want to see.

### Director's Profile

Ramesh Sharma, Chairman and Managing Director of Moving Picture Company (India) Ltd. is a well-known award- winning feature film and television producer/director, whose films have won numerous awards in the Indian National and International film festivals. His very first film Rumtek (on a Tibetan Buddhist Monastery) won the National award for the Best Short Film in India, this film was awarded a special jury prize at the Commonwealth Film and Television Festival held in Cyprus. He has won three National Awards in India.

His feature film New Delhi Times, was critically acclaimed and won four awards at the National Film Festival and has been shown all over the world and won awards.

His list of credits includes the critically acclaimed 10-part series *The Making Of A Nation*, another 10-part series for India Today- 25 Incredible Years, 52 minute documentaries on the *Mahakumbh Mela* (2002), *Afghanistan- The Taliban Years and Beyond* and *Jihad- The Sword of Islam* (2005) which

has been telecast in over 20 countries worldwide.

He produced and co-directed the 78-minute feature documentary *The Journalist and The Jihadi-The Murder of Daniel Pearl*. This co-production with HBO was nominated for two prestigious Emmy awards in the USA in 2007.

## Producer's Profile

Ahmed Jamal has an MA in filmmaking from the London International Film school and has worked as an independent producer/ director for the last 15 years.

Ahmed Jamal has made dramas, documentaries and commercials for First Take Limited, an independent production company, and has produced programs for both the BBC and Channel 4 and other European broadcasters. He has made some of the most thought provoking and ground-breaking documentaries shown on British Television such as *Dead Man Talking; The Bounty Hunter; the Dancing Girls of Lahore; Iran. The Other Story and The Fundamental Question*. His films have won several international awards including the Golden Gate Award for *Who Will Cast The First Stone* at the 33rd San Francisco Film Festival.

English

### Project Details

Duration  
35 min

Language  
English

### Producer

Films Division

24, Dr. G.D. Deshmukh Marg  
Mumbai - 400 026

# THE LAND OF RUPSHUPAS



Awadesh Kumar  
Director

## Synopsis

*The Land of Rupshupas* is an ethnographic film about Rupshupas and their 'Livestock of Gods,' a rapidly dwindling, nomadic community that inhabits the isolated, intensely cold desert mountain region of Rupshu Valley in Ladakh.

## Director's Profile

Awadesh Kumar Sidhpuri joined Hindi film industry in 1972 as an assistant cameraman. He worked with eminent directors of photography such as N V Srinivas, Jal Mistry, Anwar Siraj and Chaman K Bajoo.

Among the films he worked in are *Shagird*, *Sharmilee*, *Teesri Manzil*, *Amar Akbar Antony*, *Heer Ranjha*, *Victoria No 203*. From 1977 to 1976 he was an assistant cameraman with Films Division. Subsequently he has been newsreel officer, chief video cameraman, TV cameraman with Doordarshan and finally chief cameraman, Films Division.

His news magazine *A Celestial Tryst* (1996) won the National Award for Best Science Film; *In Search of Excellence* (1997) won in the Sports category; *Agony of Udaipur Lakes* (1999) and *Mussoorie - Towards Destruction* (2002), and *Holy Ganga* (2003) in the Environment category.

## Producer's Profile

Films Division (FD), ranked among the oldest and largest documentary producer in the world, is on the threshold of celebrating its 60th anniversary. Acclaimed as the 'Visual Encyclopedia on India', FD has, over the past 50 years, documented records of Indian history on celluloid.

FD holds 8000 titles of documentaries, short films and animation films in its archives. These films range from events of socio-cultural importance to political events. It has won over 1500 national and international awards. It also holds the Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentary, Short & Animation Films (MIFF), a biennial event showcasing the best films in different categories.

## Bengali

### Project Details

Duration  
31 min

Language  
Bengali

Producer  
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# THE SHOP THAT SOLD EVERYTHING



Abhyuday Khaitan  
Director

### Synopsis

A period of transition in India. A shopkeeper tries to hold out against 'Big Business'. The relationship between the shopkeeper and his customer - a little boy Kartik. Memories of this relationship intrude when, as an adult, Kartik experiences displacement and transition of his own.

### Director's Statement

*The Shop That Sold Everything* started as a memory. It was a common nostalgia - shared by the writer, Ashavari Majumdar and me - of a world that we had experienced in the Calcutta of our childhood, a simpler world. Ashavari was talking of the shop in her neighbourhood, and the old shopkeeper uncle. It all came back, the sweet Charlie Chaplin cigarettes, the marbles, the rubber balls, and paper fans. And we immediately decided that this is an image that we would want to recreate.

As the rest of the crew joined in, Ashavari and I realized that this wasn't just our memory. Each and every member of the crew shared the experience of going to a similar shop close to their home. And their homes were all over the place - Chennai, Hyderabad, Bihar, Kerala, etc.

These shops and their old, kind 'shop-uncles' are still visible. But soon they will disappear. Hopefully, the film will serve a purpose then.

### Director / Producer's Profile

Abhyuday Khaitan was born in Kolkata and now works out of New Delhi. His first directorial venture, *Untitled*, was shot on a 'broken' Hi 8 camera. It won him critical acclaim and was invited as part of a New Indian Cinema package by the prestigious Cine Nova in Brussels, Belgium.

He went on to study cinematography at the LV Prasad Film and TV academy. There he directed a five shot exercise, a lyrical film based on his experience of the painful process of an endoscopy. The film was widely appreciated and was selected for screening at the European Media Arts Festival in Germany. This experience pushed him towards direction. And even while he was enrolled in the stream of cinematography, he kept on directing his own films.

He has worked as an independent photographer and also produced and directed films for NGOs and corporates. He has collaborated with Ashavari Majumdar to create multi media work comprising photographs, paintings and video-installations. He is also a Hindi poet.

## English

### Project Details

#### Contact

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# PUTTI

## Synopsis

The film opens with Putti and her blind grandmother walking along the drought-struck land. Putti is trying to find everything possible about rain from her grandmother, who is eagerly answering all of Putti's innocent questions. Their conversation is interrupted by the sound of Billa's cart. Billa pokes fun at granny's forecast of rain for the village, the granny retorts and curses Billa and his business of selling water. Meanwhile, Billa's son gives Putti a little water to quench her thirst. The granny's angry comeback fails to sting Billa, who rides away with his cart filling the emptiness of the famine land with his laughter.

As they are passing by the hair merchant's store, the barber makes an offer for Putti's hair. He promises her the price of gold. Putti makes it clear to the merchant that her hair is being treasured for her marriage. The granny expresses her annoyance towards the barber for not minding his business.

Putti wakes to the sound of her grandmother's cries for water in the middle of the night. She is unable to find a single drop of water in the house she pleads her granny to hang on and sets off to get water.

The next day, Putti tells her grandmother that she is going out to her friend's place but instead lands up at the hair merchant's doorstep and lets him chop off her hair. As promised the barber applies sandal paste on her head and gives her the coin pouch.

Putti immediately goes to the water store and buys water. She is sobbing all the way home whilst the passing villagers mock her. She runs faster unable to take the humiliation and ends up falling, the pot slips out of her hand and the water seeps away into the cracked land.

Putti is sitting in one far corner of the kitchen sobbing away whilst the grand mother walks towards the window...and it is raining.

## Director's Profile

Jacob Varghese worked in seven Indian features as associate director. His first film as director was a short titled *Andhiyum*, a fictional story about a hangman's life premiered at the Montreal Film Festival (2006), and since then has traveled around the world to different film festivals including Denmark Film Festival, Indian Panorama (IFFI Goa) and IFFK (International Film Festival of Kerala). The film recently won the Indian National award for Best Film in the short film (non-feature) category. His second film, *Putti*, a 15-minute film about a seven-year-old girl who has never seen rain in her life, is doing the rounds of film festivals. He is currently finishing a feature film, a road film about a boy's search for his lost love, and scripting a feature film story and screenplay titled *Mylari my friend*.



Jacob Varghese  
Director

English

### Project Details

Duration  
15 min

Language  
Silent

Producer

Film & Television Institute of  
India  
Law College Road  
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T +91 20 2543 1010

## THREE OF US



Umesh V. Kulkarni  
Director

### Synopsis

Forty-year old Yogendra is confined to his metal cot as he is severely disabled. His ageing parents love him to eternity but are afraid of what would happen to him after they are gone. Together they play the game of existence in a single room where they live. Three of Us is the touching tale of the indomitable spirit of the Thakar family who play themselves in this beautiful film.

### Director's Statement

The film was an effort to create a feeling, which I have for the Thakar family for all these years. I tried to reduce drama as much as possible, decided not to use dialogues. And create a sense of timelessness

### Director's Profile

Umesh Vinayak Kulkarni finished his direction course from FTII, Pune. He was selected for a summer university workshop in LA Femis, Paris, in 2000. Before joining FTII, he assisted Sumitra Bhavde and Sunil Sukthankar for two feature films and several documentaries. In 2005 he made *Girni* (The Grinding Machine), which traveled widely and won many National and international awards. Valu was his debut feature. His films are made with a passionate restraint where the director humbly watches the characters and follows the trail of their story without creating ripples. His films are deeply rooted in his culture, yet have universal essence and present-day world vision.

### Producer's Profile

Established in the year 1960 on the erstwhile Prabhat Studio premises at Pune and thereby inheriting a rich legacy in quality cinema, the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) has truly lived up to its avowed objective in the field of imparting training in film making and television programme production. Today the FTII is considered as a centre of excellence not only in India but also in Asia and Europe. Films made by the students of the Institute are entered in festivals both in India and abroad. Many of them have won National and international awards. The alumni of the FTII have penetrated all corners of the Indian Film and Television industry and have excelled in all its fields. The FTII is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of the Government of India.

## VELLAPOKKATHIL (IN DELUGE)

### Synopsis

Based on a short story *Vellapokathil*, penned by the renowned Jnanapeet winner Thakazhi Shivasankara Pillai, *In Deluge* contrasts the beast in human as against the humane beast. The story revolves around the 1928 flood, the vastest ever known, where Chennan's pet dog is left astray on a roof top bereft of refuge. He heroically serves his master till his end, but Chennan fails to even recognize his pet when found lying dead.

### Director's Statement

The flood that hit Kerala during 1928 was unprecedented and devastating. The actual events and experiences moved Thakazhi Siva Sankara Pillai to pen this story. This short film based on the above story brings out the beast in human being is set amidst the backdrop of Kuttanad.

The same story repeated before me when I saw the footage of the aftermath of a recent hurricane in America. What stood apart as a stark reality, unblemished by time and location, was the human character, ungratefulness ingrained in its very nature.

### Director's Profile

Even after winning several National and international awards Jayaraj remains a nonconformist as far as his films are concerned. Instead of sticking to a particular genre as a stamp of his individuality, he makes both commercial and extremely thought-provoking films.

He won the National Award for Best Director (*Karunam* and *Kaliyattam*), and for National Integration (*Daivanammathil*). *Deshadanam*, *Kudumbasametham*, *Kaliyattam* and *Karunam* have won him the State Award in different categories. His nine-film series, *Navarasa*, won him National awards for Santham. *Adbhutam*, the fourth in the series, was shot in a record time of two and a half hours, winning him a place in The Limca Book of World Records.



Jayaraj  
Director

## Bengali

### Project Details

Duration  
56 min

Language  
Bengali

Producer  
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Television Institute  
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# YEARN TO LEARN MADRASAH EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL



Abdul Rajjak  
Director

### Synopsis

Madrasahs have figured in the media as well as in the minds of the public ever since the emergence of Islamic terrorism arising from avowedly fundamentalist Islamic groups. India has been necessarily drawn into the public discourse, partly given the international spread of a historically engendered form of Islam, in Deoband, UP, and partly by the Islamist backlash against the polarizing Hindutva movement in India.

West Bengal, as a state bordering on Bangladesh, has been acutely conscious of the infiltration of fundamentalist Islamists. At the same time, Madrasahs have played a positive role in providing affordable learning to large numbers of those who would otherwise receive no education at all. West Bengal also has the longest running program of induction of modern learning into Madrasah curricula, and upgradation of its curricula and status.

But most of us, people from mainstream education system, do not know about the Madrasah education system, its syllabi, its history and the feelings of the community. This cinematic document tries to explore the Madrasah Education System in West Bengal as a whole. The over-all structure of the education system, viewpoint of its students of various ages, teachers, ex-teachers and intellectuals of the community. The film tries to capture the positive and the negative aspects from the perspective of how much has been achieved and how much remains to be realized.

### Director's Profile

After his graduation Abdul Rajjak joined FTII in Pune and graduated in 1993. Since then he has been working as sound designer and recordist, with several National Award- winning directors such as Ashoke Viswanathan, Chidanand Dasgupta and Ananya Chatterjee. He has also worked on documentaries by Supriyo Sen. *Yearn to Learn* marks his directorial debut. He is currently attached to the Department of Sound at the Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute, Kolkata.

### Producer's Profile

The Government of India established the Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute in 1995 as an autonomous academic institution under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Located at Kolkata and named after the legendary film maestro Satyajit Ray, the Institute, the second of its kind in the country, is a National Centre offering post-graduate diploma courses in Film and Television. Besides offering regular full-time courses, the Institute has plans to undertake project development, funding and production of fiction and non-fiction films. In addition, research work on film and television related issues are in the offing.

