



by NFDC

Romance
SCREENWRITERS' LAB
2015





Welcome to Screenwriters' Lab 2015

Titli, The Lunchbox, Dum Laga Ke Haisha, Island City, Chauranga, The Good Road, Paltadacho Munis – the list of critically acclaimed and commercially successful films that began their journey in the Screenwriters' Lab is rather long. We are proud of our writers.

It is not a surprise that the Screenwriters' Lab – now in its 9th edition – is the most sought after lab by writers in India. This year, across three sections, we received over 450 applications for 18 places. More and more writers are realising the benefit of taking their script through the rigorous mentorship programme offered in the Screenwriters' Lab.

This year, we are excited about introducing a new lab dedicated to stories for children and young adults, a genre that has long been neglected in India. With the digital revolution, the potential for children's content is phenomenal.

Also for the first time, NFDC Labs has organized a pitching session where participants of all three Screenwriters' Labs will pitch their stories to a select audience of producers, studio heads and funders.

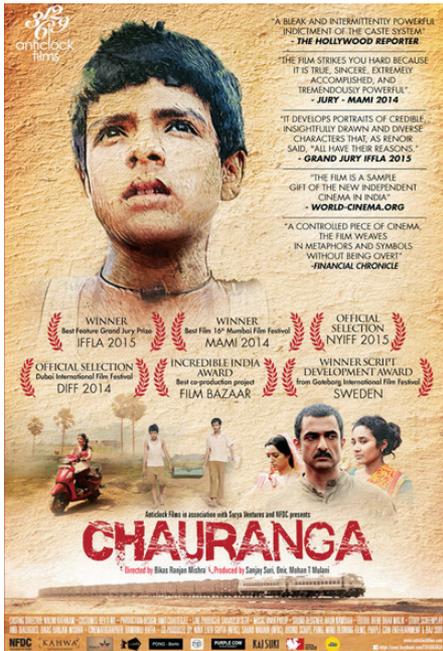
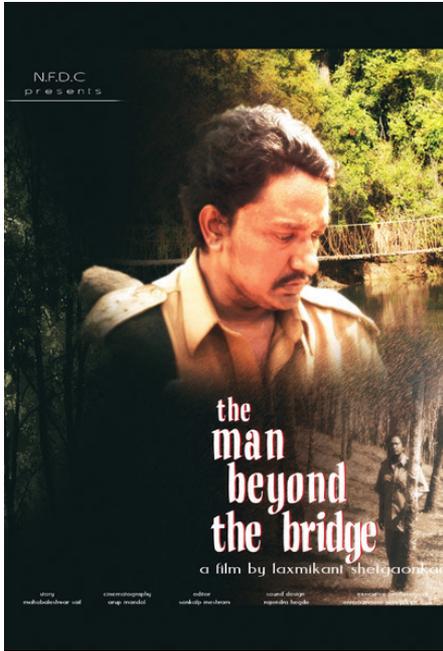
Welcome to the world of great stories.

NFDC Labs Team 2015

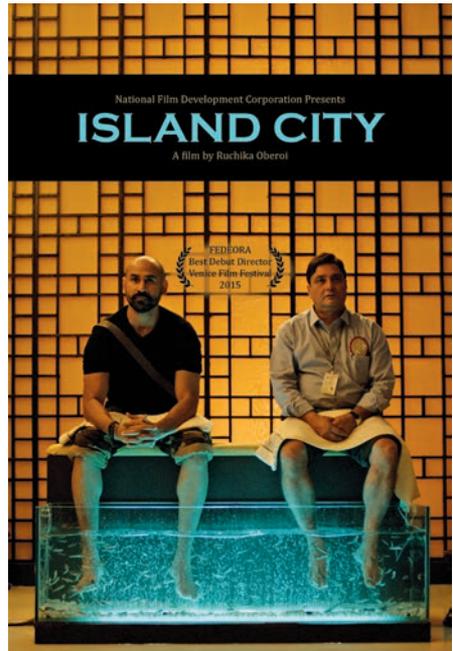
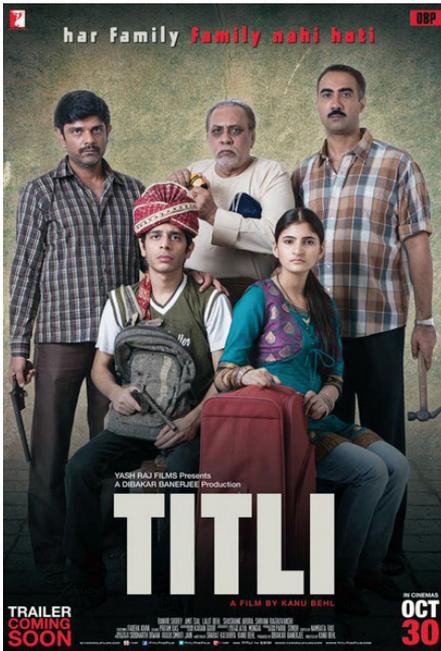


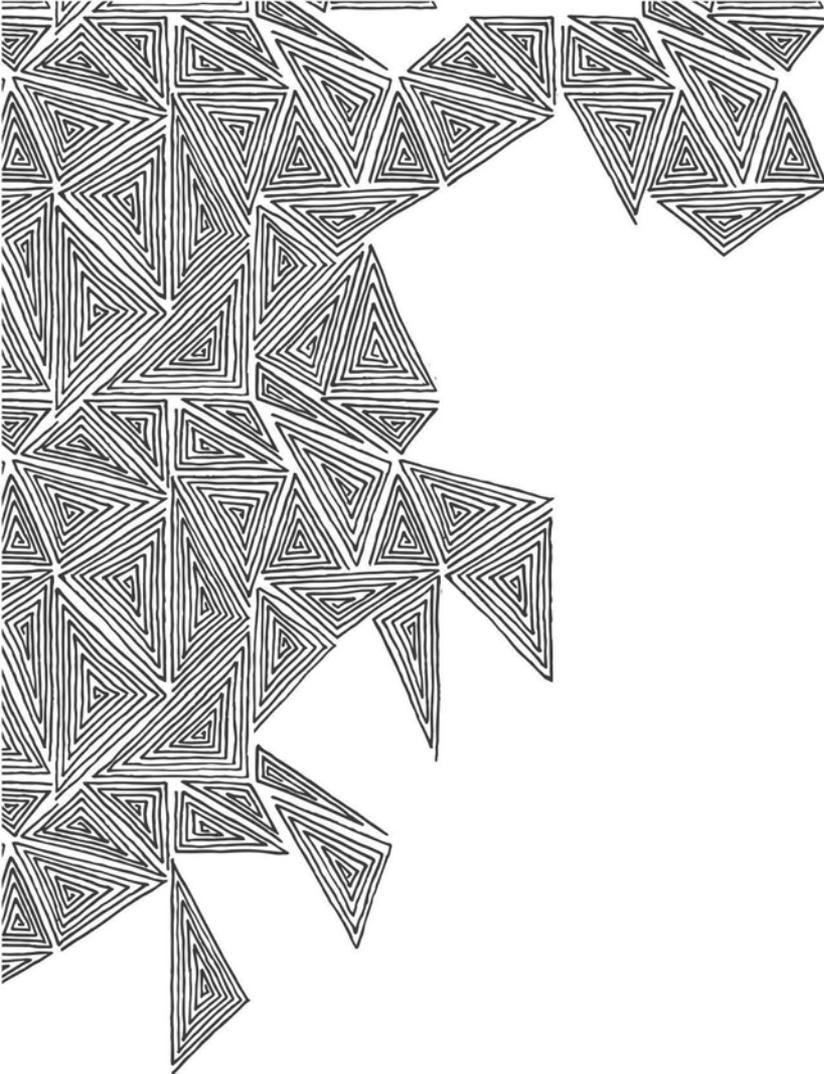
HIGHLIGHTS

Film Bazaar Screenwriters' Lab



HIGHLIGHTS
 Film Bazaar Screenwriters' Lab





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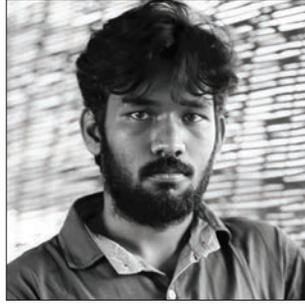


Fly Me to the Moon

Tamil

Vivek Raju

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Synopsis

Moonrise Apartments. One among the thousands of unspecial middle class apartments in the unspecial city of Chennai.

Two days prior to Diwali, the spell of ordinariness breaks. A foul smell in the corridors, thought to be a dead rat, leads to the discovery of two bloated corpses. Anand and Deepa Rangarajan, a married couple in their early thirties, have hanged themselves leaving behind a suicide note that reads:

“We’ve lived a happy life, now we choose to end it...”

Fly Me to the Moon follows the interconnected stories of love and longing as the residents of Moonrise Apartments start to question and reexamine their lives: a female journalist working on the Rangarajans’ story while drifting from her partner; a homosexual man who is stuck in a straight marriage of 16 years; his wife who is striving to keep her extramarital affair alive; a hapless patriarch losing his wife to an addiction of painkillers while trying to hold his disintegrating family together; a young graduate girl, the daughter of the dead Rangarajans’ maid, trying to escape poverty through a rich boyfriend; all fight for love against social restrictions and the lifetime of lies they have perpetuated all along.

Biography

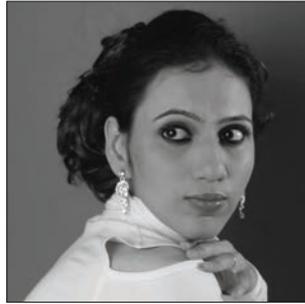
Vivek Raju is a writer-director who also works as cinematographer, editor, sound designer and vfx artist. His first film as a screenwriter, *Big Bad Wolf*, in Tamil, is in production. His recent experimental short film, *I Exist*, won the Best Film on Gender award at Woodpecker International Film Festival 2015, New Delhi.

Matsyagandha

Marathi

Pooja Gupta

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Synopsis

Matsyagandha, heiress to the underwater Matsya kingdom, cannot become a queen unless she marries. However, Matsyagandha wants to become the first unmarried ruler of her tribe and turns down the marriage proposal of Massendra, the commander's son. Upset by her decision, the leaders of the four allied kingdoms decide that she must travel the kingdoms on land and complete four tasks set by the leaders. On her journey, Matsyagandha meets Altai, a prince from the allied kingdom of Garuda and a bond develops between them.

Meanwhile, Massendra joins forces with Sheshnaag, a leader of another ally clan, the Naagas. Sheshnaag wants to take over all the five allied nations, including Matsyagandha's underwater kingdom. Upon realising Sheshnaag's plans, Matsyagandha abandons her tasks and returns to the sea. It is too late...

Inspired by the tribes and kingdoms of the Vedic Ages, this mythological fantasy follows the journey of a princess who sacrifices her dreams and her love to become the leader no one expected her to become.

Biography

Pooja Gupta is an alumna of Whistling Woods International Film School. She has written and directed commercial ads for clients like Pepsi. *Majhdhaar* (2015), a short film she shot and acted in, has been selected for MAMI this year. She has also written other short films: *Amore* (Pocket Films, 2014), *The Right Kind'ff Wrong* (2014) and *To Taste One's Own Medicine* (2010).

Pooja holds a Masters degree in Mass Communication from Pune University. *Matsyagandha* would be her first feature film.





Tatevik

Bengali

Samimitra Das

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Synopsis

2014, Kolkata. When Samir, an architect, arrives in the city to restore a heritage Armenian building, he forms an acquaintance with Tatevik, an elderly Armenian lady who teaches music. Soon, Tatevik reveals the story of her life to Samir ...

1968, Calcutta. In a city torn with political strife, Tatevik, a young college-girl, met Saikat, a Bengali photojournalist, at a friend's wedding. They fell in love, much to the disapproval of her family.

When Saikat exposed an influential businessman's torrid affair with Anwari — a nautch girl who also happened to be Tatevik's friend — a rift formed between the lovers. Saikat, however, redeemed himself and won back Tatevik's trust. But their romance was short-lived. Hounded by the orthodox Armenian community's mounting pressure, Tatevik was deported back. It is only years later that she returned to the city of her old love.

... Samir realizes that Saikat, the man Tatevik came back for, is his own grandfather who now lives in an old-age home. He arranges to make the old lovers meet, without letting either of them know.



Biography

Samimitra Das is an alumnus of the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute with a specialization in Direction and Screenplay Writing. He has been working in Mumbai as an Assistant Director on feature films such as *Lootera* and *Commando* and has also worked as an Associate Director for a Bengali feature called *Bunohaansh*. Samimitra's short films, *Between the Rains* and *Yari Road* along with his documentary, *My Armenian Neighbourhood* have been shown in festivals in India and abroad. He is currently freelancing in advertising and video art installations. *Tatevik* would be his first feature film.

The Ballad of Chitrangada

Manipuri, English, Bengali, Hindi

Abhyuday Khaitan

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Synopsis

A film with three interpretations of the story of Chitrangada, a Manipuri princess from Mahabharata who transforms herself from a boyish warrior to a beautiful woman to win the love of Arjuna.

Speech — Theeba, a Manipuri insurgent, returns home to hide from the army. Her sister Velinda has been rehearsing for the school play *Chitrangada*. Aided by Lokendra, her dance teacher, Velinda gives Theeba a makeover to help her evade the army. When Theeba steps out, Verma, an army officer, follows her and talks to her across a wall.

Body — In Delhi, Lokendra, a poor dance-teacher from the Northeast, has a passionate affair with Shailja, an affluent lawyer. When Shailja accuses him of stealing, Lokendra's world shatters. He quits dance for a better-paying job. When he meets Shailja again, she is in an abusive relationship. In trying to save her, Lokendra gets beaten to death by a mob.

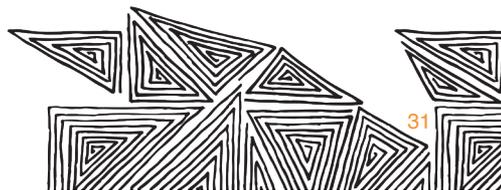
Mind — Ashwin is the new principal of Velinda's school. When he bans music and dance classes, it leads to students protesting. Velinda spearheads the protests and forces Ashwin to watch *Chitrangada*, a dance-drama choreographed by Lokendra, who Ashwin saw being beaten to death in Delhi.

Biography

Abhyuday is a filmmaker based in Kolkata. His experimental shorts have been screened at Cine Nova and European Media Arts Festival among others. His short film, *The Shop That Sold Everything*, won the Gold Award for Best Short Fiction at the IDPA Awards, Mumbai. Selected for the Indian Panorama, the short premiered at IFFI, Goa in 2008.

As a DOP, he has worked on independent films like *The Luckiest Girl on the Lower East Side* (USA), and *Guru* (Hungary/India) directed by Tamas Toth. In cinematography, he has also assisted on features films in India, including Vishal Bhardwaj's *Saat Khoon Maaf*.

Abhyuday was selected for the Berlinale Talent Campus in 2009. He has also collaborated on cross-media projects with artists and dancers.





The List

Hindi

Varun Oberoi

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Synopsis

At 23, Sneha, a working professional, has a list of all the qualities an ideal man should have. Her parents find her many matches, but she is quick to reject them. This continues until the day a unique proposal arrives from Sidharth, who wants to marry a girl without meeting, talking or even seeing her until the day of the wedding! Surprised and intrigued, Sneha decides to take a blind plunge and leave everything else to fate.

At the wedding, Sidharth seems to check a lot of boxes on the list. It is only when they arrive in Thailand for their honeymoon, that Sneha's list begins to completely fall apart. After a night of partying, Sneha finds three Thai women in her husband's room. Sidharth, on the other hand, finds that his wife is probably a murderess. Their two-day old marriage is already over. But before the two can officially part ways, they must escape from Thailand and its revenge-thirsty gangsters and furious cops. What follows is a series of illogical misunderstandings and life-threatening chases that push Sneha and Sidharth into taking the biggest test of their marriage that hasn't even begun.

Biography

An engineer by education and a businessman by profession, Varun Oberoi is a self-taught writer. His passion for writing started with an out-of-the-blue attempt to write a TV show. Since then, Varun has learnt that to tell a story, it is more important to know what *not* to do over knowing what to do.

Slow and consistent, Varun has continued to write over the past four years. Although he has never taken up screenwriting professionally, Varun has completed three full-length feature scripts working during weekends and in his spare time.

The List would be his first feature.

You've Been Pinged

Hindi

Smita Kapoor Das

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Synopsis

To the outside world, Ria's marriage to Sunny – her college-sweetheart – is the kind of picture-perfect love story that novels are written about.

But when an adult dating website gets hacked, with Ria's and Sunny's names on the list of cheaters, the cracks in the couple's relationship are exposed.

Numbed by the expose, Ria and Sunny find themselves in a unique situation, with no pre-defined response or explanation. As they reconsider all the choices they have made till the point of breakdown, the story shifts back and forth in time following their love story.

Forced to confront the ugly truth about their relationship, Ria and Sunny struggle to answer a bigger question: do two imperfect people unwilling to give up on each other make a perfect marriage?

Biography

Smita's journey in the entertainment industry began 14 years ago. Her first short film *Kaash* (If Only...) as writer and director was selected for the Karachi International Film Festival. Smita has also written and directed fiction and nonfiction shows for television and has penned dialogues for a Hindi feature film.

From assisting on features and commercial films to writing and handling post-production for television shows, Smita most enjoys the thrill of crafting a story and imagining it to life. With a desire to tell stories that are inspiring and entertaining, she hopes to evolve into the person her dog believes she is.



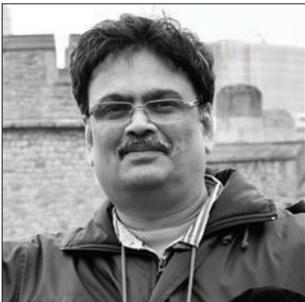
Mentors

Screenwriters' Lab - Romance



Habib Faisal

Habib Faisal is a screenwriter and director based out of Mumbai. He is best known for his films *Ishaqzaade* and *Do Dooni Chaar*, both of which he has written and directed. He has also written the screenplay and dialogues for the sleeper hit *Band Baaja Baaraat* (2010) and Maneesh Sharma's second feature, *Ladies vs. Ricky Bahl*. His most recent film, titled *Daawat-e-Ishq*, stars Aditya Roy Kapoor and Parineeti Chopra. An alumnus of Jamia Millia Islamia, Habib has directed the television series *Lavanya* and has also worked as a cameraperson with NDTV in New Delhi.



Girish Joshi

Girish Joshi started his career working as a Sound Engineer at an experimental theatre group called Maharashtra Cultural Centre. His award-winning play *Babhulban* marked his entry to the world of theatre and won him a State Award in 1992. Girish has worked as a writer, director and set designer in plays like *Lovebirds*, *Abholi*, *Abhinetri* and *Katkon Trikon*, among many others. Girish has written for critically acclaimed serials such as *Bhumika*, *Abhalmaya* and *Bandhan*. His first screenplay, *Kadachit* released in 2008. Girish has also written screenplays for award winning films like *Dhobipachaad*, *Raanbhoor* and *Kakspارش*. He has also won numerous awards for his work and contribution to Marathi cinema. At present, Girish is a visiting faculty at premier film and media schools in India. Invited by the German Consulate to study contemporary German theatre, Girish directed an Indo-German project, *Im Stillen*. Currently, he is a member of the newly incepted Maharashtra Film Fund.



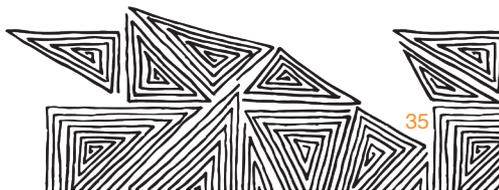
Sharat Katariya

Sharat Katariya's screenwriting and directorial debut, *10 ml Love*, was an adaptation of the Shakespearean play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has also written the dialogues for Rajat Kapoor's *Bheja Fry* and the screenplay for its sequel, *Bheja Fry 2*. Sharat's most recent film, *Dum Laga Ke Haisha*, was a critical and commercial success, opening to rave reviews for the way it upturned conventional mores of love and romance. He has also cowritten *Tittli*, which went on to premiere at Un certain Regard, Cannes 2014.



Aamir Bashir

Aamir Bashir is an actor, writer and director. His first feature film as director, *Harud (Autumn)*, produced by Chasing Tales, received critical acclaim at festivals around the world and won the prestigious National Film Award in 2013. It received support from the Hubert Bal's Fund Rotterdam for Post Production and also won the Don Quixote award at the Fribourg Film Festival. Aamir is currently developing his second feature film *Winter*, which was part of the NFDC Screenwriters' Lab 2014.





सत्यमेव जयते

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