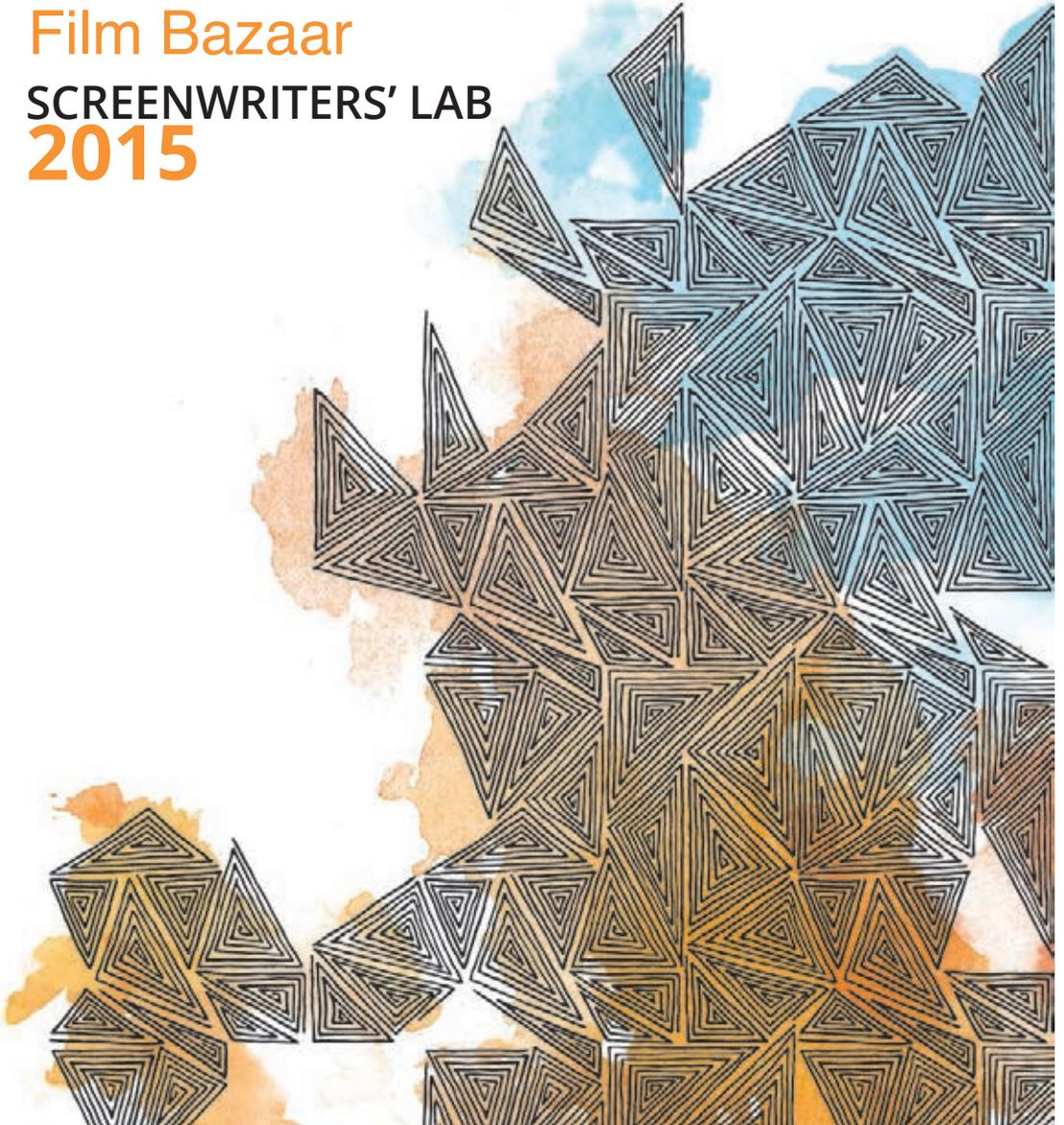




by NFDC

Film Bazaar  
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.

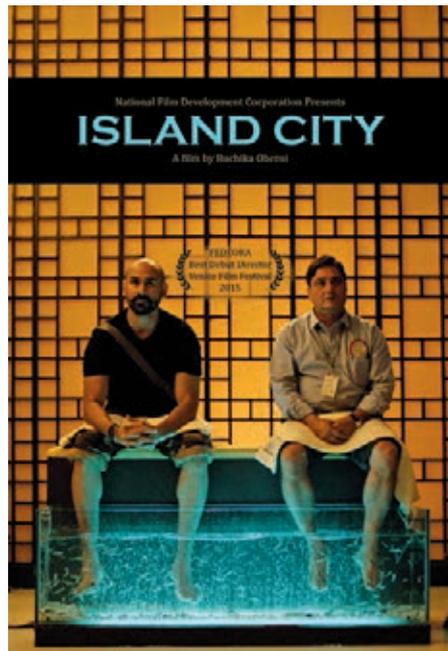
Welcome to the world of great stories.

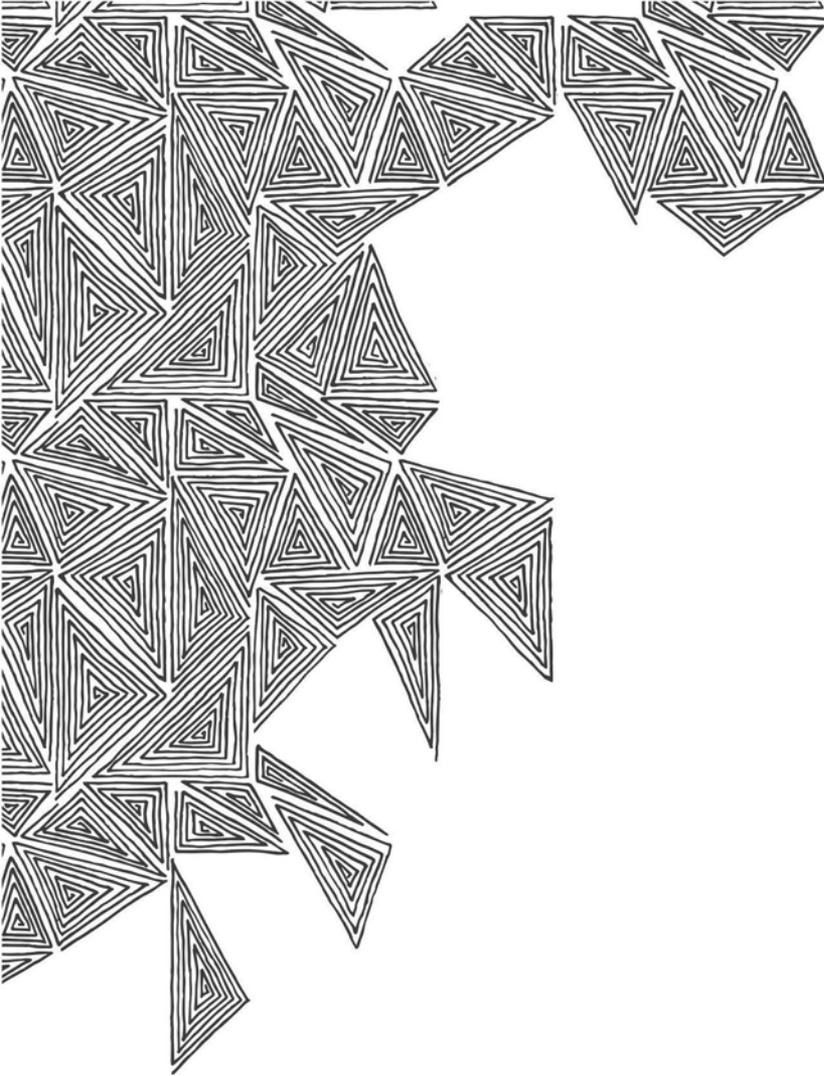
NFDC Labs Team 2015





HIGHLIGHTS  
Film Bazaar Screenwriters' Lab





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## SCREENWRITERS' LAB (Film Bazaar - Sarajevo)

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# Bombay Rose

Hindi

## Gitanjali Rao

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### Synopsis

Bombay, 2005. Kamala, a 21-year-old migrant from Madhya Pradesh, lives in a hut on the pavement of Juhu beach, weaving jasmine garlands to feed a paralyzed grandfather and educate a 12-year-old sister.

Salim, a migrant from Kashmir, lives and sells flowers across the same street. Salim loves Kamala. And Bollywood. He declares his love by gifting her a red rose.

Kamala accepts the rose. All would have been Bollywood perfect, until Salim finds out that Kamala works in a dance bar at night, to make ends meet.

15th August 2005. Bombay Police Act. The Govt. orders a closure of dance bars, which renders thousands of uneducated, unskilled migrant women like Kamala helpless, overnight. Kamala's only option is to enter prostitution to fend for her family. She must choose between them and her new found love.

*Bombay Rose* is an animated film painted frame by frame, telling the story of love through a red rose: the love of an old woman who grows that red rose; the love of the dead man on whose grave that rose lies; the love of Salim, who steals that rose for Kamala; the love of the living, the dead, and everyone else in between. The love of Bombay.



### Biography

Gitanjali Rao is best known for the short animation film *Printed Rainbow* which was the winner of three prizes for the best short film in Cannes Critic's Week, 2006. The film won 25 international awards and was short-listed for the Academy Awards in 2008. Gitanjali has also independently produced, directed and animated two other award winning short films, *Orange* in 2002 and *TrueLoveStory* in 2014. *TrueLoveStory* premiered in Cannes Critic's Week, 2014 and won three awards in other festivals. Along with being an Animation Film Director for shorts, features, commercials, TV and internet animation, Gitanjali also illustrates books and graphic novels.

She also teaches at IDC, IIT, Bombay and conducts animation workshops.

Gitanjali has been a jury member at many festivals including the Cannes Critic's Week in 2011.

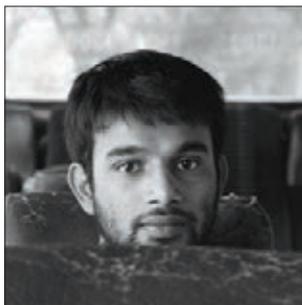
*Bombay Rose* is also presented at the Co-Production Market at Film Bazaar.

# City of Light

Hindi

## Shubhashish Bhutiani

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## Synopsis

When the corpse of a Students' Union President from a renowned University washes up on the banks of the holy city of Varanasi, Mangu, a low ranking policeman, takes it upon himself to solve the crime to move up the ranks – both professionally and socially.

With the help of Asha, the victim's sister, Mangu embarks on a journey to uncover the truth that lies somewhere between students' union politics, NGOs and centuries-old holy rituals.

Mangu is faced with corruption in the city and complacency in his own department. As he battles these, Mangu is confronted with the reality that in this holy town, morality is nothing but a mere facade.

His only choice is to either fight the tide and crack the case or let himself get swallowed up.

## Biography

Shubhashish Bhutiani's short film *Kush*, premiered at the 70th Venice International Film Festival and won the Orizzonti Prize for Best Short Film. It was also shortlisted for Best Live Action Short Film at the Academy Awards, 2014. The film is still travelling the international festival circuit.

Shubhashish grew up in a small Himalayan town in India where he attended Woodstock School. After being intensely involved in the theatre programme in his town, he transitioned from acting to writing and directing. To hone his skills further, he went on to attend a filmmaking programme at the School of Visual Arts, New York .





# Dastaan-e-Awaargi

Hindi

## Ankit Kothari

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## Synopsis

Set in the 1990s, *Dastaan-e-Awaargi* is the story of Baka, an overweight 17-year-old who lives in the small town of Sankheda in Gujarat.

Teenage life for Baka is tough. Along with battling his weight and hurriedly trying to achieve manhood, Baka is also smitten by Bhavsar, a beautiful girl who seems entirely out of his reach. What's worse, a local goon, Sunderbala is also vying for her.

Intimidated by the bearded Sunderbala's smoking-drinking-scooter-riding 'manliness', Baka devises an elaborate plan to win Bhavsar over. As he sets out on this journey to become a 'real man', his friendship with Bhavsar grows over music and greasy street food.

Along the way, Baka also finds a mentor – a strict, middle-aged Karate teacher – who helps Baka with sharp-tongued wisdom. Life takes a turn for the better and Baka finally gathers the courage to profess his love to the girl of his dreams.

Bhavsar, however, turns him down. Assuming the reason for this is Sunderbala, Baka feels hard done. In the meanwhile, news breaks that Bhavsar has eloped with the Karate Sir. Baka's world turns inside-out and he realises that his quest for manhood has only just begun.

## Biography

Ankit Kothari is a Mumbai-based filmmaker from Baroda. After graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts, he worked as an Art Director at Ogilvy, Marching Ants and Contract Advertising, spearheading the branding and design for several Indian and international clients.

In 2009, Ankit went on to work as the Script Supervisor for Dibakar Banerjee's *Love Sex Aur Dhokha* and as an Assistant Director in *Shanghai*. He recently completed his stint as the Chief Assistant Director on Recyclewala Films' epic period fantasy film *Tumbad*, which is currently in post-production.

With *Dastaan-e-Awaargi*, his first feature, Ankit plans to expand his horizons further as a storyteller.

# Mango's Tale

Hindi

## Sidharth Gupt

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## Synopsis

Mango – a thirty-year-old man leading an orderly, ascetic and celibate life – teaches biology in a primary school. Raised by his father to be an ideal man, Mango is full of peculiarities. At school, he is often the butt of jokes amongst students and teachers but he disregards them as degenerates – mere insects who will eat, sleep, copulate and perish.

One fine day, it dawns on Mango that he must uplift the pitiful, clueless souls around him to a higher level of existence. He introduces new rules and regulations in the school to instil higher morals in the students. By doing so, Mango feels he can finally become the ideal man his father always wanted him to be. But just as he gets the ball rolling, cupid strikes him square in the chest. Mango is torn between the surge of passion within him and his deep rooted moral rigidity. For him, the choice is to either go down in history as a towering symbol of righteousness and morality or succumb to petty human emotion and perish in anonymity.

*Mango's Tale* is a satirical take on the rigidity of moral conditioning and its conflict with the individual's desire in contemporary India. The story-telling borrows fantastical elements from Indian mythology and uses them to magnify reality.

## Biography

Sidharth is an independent filmmaker based in Mumbai. After spending seven years in Delhi working on various theatre projects as an actor and workshop director, he moved to Mumbai in 2007 to pursue his love for cinema more seriously. He has worked as an Assistant Director in films like *Dasvidaniya*, *Gangs of Wasseypur*, and *Khoobsorat*, as well as the MTV show *Traffic* where he worked as an Associate Director. Sidharth has also directed short films like *Saloni*, *The Epilogue*, produced by Anurag Kashyap and *Rupali*, produced by Humaramovies. Sidharth continues to write and collaborate with other filmmakers. *Mango's Tale* would be his first feature film.





# Sun Goes Round the Earth

Bengali, Hindi

Arijit Biswas

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## Synopsis

*Sun Goes Round the Earth* is a drama on belief and convictions.

Chirantan, a famous film star in Kolkata, is fast losing interest in acting. Once an activist, he wants to go back to the Party and become a leader. One night, he meets T. C. Paul who has been trying to “prove” that the sun goes around the earth for the last 30 years. In Paul, Chirantan sees a hero who has not deserted his beliefs. The actor decides to fund Sanjib, a filmmaker, to tell the story of Paul.

As Sanjib starts working on the story, his cynicism gives way to respect for Paul’s grit. Chirantan finds his own image get tarnished for supporting a ‘madman’. He denounces Paul and forces him to admit that he was wrong all along.

Asked by the Party, Chirantan now goes to front a workers’ strike. Sanjib accompanies him with a camera. At the rally, Chirantan is touted as a hero but when the police arrive, he flees, leaving the workers behind. Sanjib films the whole episode. On the way back, they find Paul again. He is back to distributing pamphlets about the “truth”.

Later, Chirantan offers Sanjib a film in lieu of the footage of his cowardice. Sanjib declines the offer. Paul has taught him to fight for the truth.

## Biography

Arijit has been writing for theatre, TV and films for over a decade. He has co-written two Hindi features – *Agent Vinod* (2012) and *Badlapur* (2015) – and is currently working on the third. *Badlapur* has been acclaimed for its screenplay and character development. He has also written and directed an independent Bengali film which is in the final stages of post-production.

Arijit is also scripting two regional films that are scheduled to start shooting soon. Also to his credit is a Bengali play, currently running on the stages of Kolkata. When not writing or watching films, Arijit reads about military history and politics. He holds an MBA Degree from Xavier School of Management (XLRI) and is a senior HR leader at Tata Consultancy Services.

# The Return

Hindi, Urdu

## Asad Hussain

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## Synopsis

Minhaj, in his 50s, has spent his life working in Dubai. He is one of the millions of migrant workers in the Gulf state. The only time at home in India is during brief Eid vacations each year. His job in Dubai has adequately provided for his relatives, as well as for his son Sami's admission to a private engineering college in Delhi.

Minaj's world crumbles when he gets a phone call from his wife Najma, telling him that Sami has vanished. He is told that Sami was picked up by the police for questioning after a low-intensity blast rocked a Delhi market. Since then, there has been no trace of Sami.

Minhaj returns to Delhi to search for his vanished son, a boy he never watched turning into a young man. *The Return* follows his struggle for answers between the labyrinthine spaces of courts, police records, shifting media stories and the narrow streets of Delhi's ghettos. Floundering between indifference and hostility, Minhaj is forced to realize that he is a stranger to his own family. And that the homeland he had dreamt of returning to for so many years exists only in his memories.

## Biography

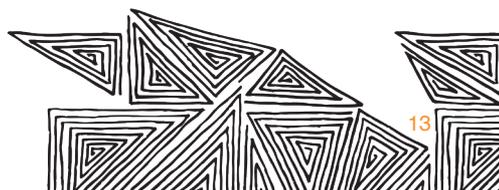
Asad Hussain co-wrote *Children of War*, and was on the writing team of *Bajranghi Bhaijaan*. He has also written extensively for television. Asad has also shot and edited *In Search of Aseemun*, a documentary film.

Since 2006, Asad has travelled frequently to Kabul, where he has worked with Afghan filmmakers and media professionals.

For the stage, he has translated plays by Moliere, Boris Vian, Samuel Beckett, Jean Paul Sartre, Victor Hugo and K. Madavane into Hindi. His original play, *Song of the Swan*, opened in India in April 2015.

Asad is a recipient of the prestigious MacDowell Fellowship and is a part of Writers Bloc – an international playwriting programme facilitated by the Royal Court Theatre, London.

Asad holds a Masters degree in Mass Communication from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.



## Mentors

### Screenwriters' Lab Film Bazaar - Sarajevo



Marcel Beaulieu

A scriptwriter from Quebec, Canada, Marcel Beaulieu has worked in the world of cinema for more than 35 years. He has written, co-written and collaborated on more than eighty works, mainly for the screen. He won the Quartz for the Best Swiss Feature for Séverine Cornamusaz's *Cœur Animal*, the Bayard d'Or for Best Screenplay for Francis Leclerc's *Looking for Alexander* and the Best Script for Belkacem Hadjadj's *Fahtma N'Soumer* at Fespaco Film Festival. His work has collectively won more than 200 national and international prizes, including the Golden Globe for Gérard Corbiau's *Farinelli*. He has conducted screenwriting workshops in various parts of the world ranging from Yaoundé, Algiers, Burkina Faso, Mali to Belgium, Switzerland, Congo Brazzaville, Beirut, Marrakesh and Brittany, where he has been a consultant since 2006.



Alfredo Covelli

Alfredo Covelli's oeuvre of work includes screenplays like *La scuola è finita* (School is Over) directed by Valerio Jalongo (Rome Film Festival 2010), *I Liceali* (2005), *I Liceali 2* (2006), *Piper, la serie* (TV series) and *Studio Illegale* (2013) directed by Umberto Carteni and produced by Warner Brothers Italia. He has also directed short and medium length films like the comedy, *Grandma Must Get Dry* (2011), and experimental short films, *Salmon*, *Missing Parts* and *Love Letter, Even If You Treat Me Bad* (2012), the documentary *Ring People* (2013) and the hybrid feature *With Real Stars Above My Head* (2014). Selected for more than 150 festivals in 30 countries and broadcasted in Italy and France, these works have won awards in several major international film festivals, including the Golden Gate Award at San Francisco International Film Festival. Alfredo also runs an independent production company, Meproducudasolo.



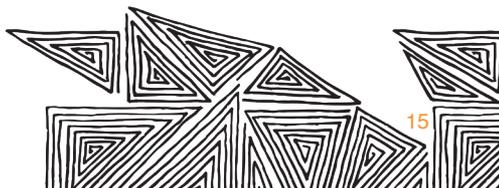
Urmi Juvekar

Urmi Juvekar was actively involved in theatre since her early years. She then moved on to working in a television production house to make non-fiction programmes while writing her first feature film, *Darmiyaan*, which released in 1998. Since then, she has written seven films including *Oye Lucky, Lucky Oye* and *I AM* – both winners of the National Award for Best Film – and has made three documentaries, of which *Shillong Chamber Choir* and *the Little Home School* was shown in IDFA, Amsterdam in 2008. After working as a creative producer with the critically acclaimed and commercially successful film, *Love, Sex Aur Dhokha*, Urmi adapted the famous Greek novel *Z* by Vassilis Vassilikos for her next film, *Shanghai*. Her latest film is *Detective Byomkesh Bakshi*. An alumnus of the Binger Film Lab, Urmi has also been involved with NFDC since 2011 as a consultant for Film Bazaar and script labs.



Chris Paton

Chris Paton has over 25 years of film-industry experience working in publicity with TriStar Pictures, DDA Public Relations, and Premier PR. He has worked with Venice, Hong Kong, and Dubai Film Festivals and is on the Cinemart Advisory Board for International Film Festival Rotterdam. He most recently served as Senior Vice President, Acquisitions at Fortissimo Films and has been appointed UK-Ireland Delegate for the San Sebastian Film Festival.





सत्यमेव जयते

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