

C O P R O  
D U C T I  
O N M A R  
K E T



by NEFC

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**NFDC**  
cinemas of india



## Welcome to Co-Production Market 2016

From 2007 till now, it has been 10 rewarding years for NFDC Film Bazaar Co-Production Market. Over the last decade, the Co-Production Market has become the most sought after platform for South Asian filmmakers to find funding, collaborators and support. On the other hand, the Market is also the focal point for top festival directors, programmers and sales agents to find fresh voices from South Asia. Over 28 films presented at previous editions of the Market have gone on to receive national and international acclaim.

For CPM 2016, we are happy to present an exciting line-up of 18 projects from established filmmakers as well as new talent making their first feature-length film. We welcome back filmmakers who have returned to the Market with new projects.

The greatest strength of the NFDC Film Bazaar Co-Production Market has always been its wide variety of subjects, genre, language and themes. This year's selection includes stories from Nepal, Bangladesh and Afghanistan with genres ranging from thrillers, children's films, animation, satire and mythology.

After last year's success of Open Pitch, we decided to introduce video pitch this year. Video pitching offers filmmakers a chance to show a glimpse into the world of their proposed film to potential collaborators. Filmmakers have found this to be the most effective way of communicating their vision.

Additionally, these video pitches will help participants optimise their time at the market as they will be available for viewing through the 4 days of the Market.

Film Bazaar has always tried to expand its scope by bringing together non-traditional collaborators. This year we are happy to announce our partnership with the recently launched Film Facilitation Office to facilitate and promote various schemes offered by the states to filmmakers. In addition, many states are represented at Film Bazaar through Film Offices. This year the Co-Production Market Team will assist the filmmakers and the state representatives to interact with each other to explore the possibilities for collaboration.

Here's looking forward to an exciting and successful Co-Production Market 2016.

**Co-Production Market Team 2016**



SHOR IN THE CITY | CPM 2007



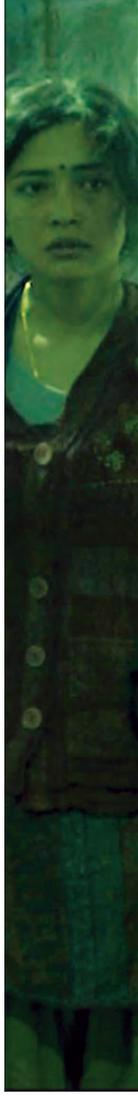
CHAUTHI KOOT | CPM 2012



MISS LOVELY | CPM 2008



THAT GIRL IN YELLOW BOOTS | CPM 2008



LIAR'S DICE | CPM 2011



COURT | CPM 2012



CHAURANGA | CPM 2011



SHANGHAI | CPM 2010



ARJUNODAY | CPM 2012



LOVE SEX AUR DHOKHA | CPM 2009



I AM | CPM 2009



28 | CPM 2013



TITLI | CPM 2012



QISSA | CPM 2008



सत्यमेव जयते

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

# Incredible India



# CPM Open Pitch

21 November 2016 | 9:30 AM - 1:30 PM | Grand Ballroom, Goa Marriott Resort

	Directors	Producers	Countries	
<b>Apodartho</b> [A Foolish Man]	Abu Shahed Emon	Mostafa Sarwar Farooki Batayan Productions	Bangladesh	6
<b>Bhonsle</b>	Devashish Makhija	Piyush Singh	India	8
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<b>Dastaan-e-Awaargi</b>	Ankit Kothari	Priya Sreedharan	India	12
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<b>Kabuliwala</b> [Man from Kabul]	Soumitra Ranade	Sunil Doshi	India	22
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<b>Punyakoti</b>	Ravi Shankar	Sindhu SK	India	26
<b>Ram Ji ka Ghoda</b> [The Dragonfly]	Bishnu Dev Halder	Courtyard Entertainment	India	28
<b>The Biryani Seller</b>	Rajdeep Paul Sarmistha Maiti	Mahesh Mathai	India	30
<b>The Cineaste</b>	Aboozar Amini	Jia Zhao Joost De Vries	China Netherlands	32
<b>The Sunshine</b>	Leena Manimekalai	SR Prabhu	India	34
<b>The Umesh Chronicles</b>	Pooja Kaul	Charlotte Most	India Sweden	36
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<b>Wapsi</b> [The Return]	Asad Hussain	Abbas Raza Khan	India	40

Bangladesh  
Bengali  
Comedy, Drama

# Apodartho

## A Foolish Man

### Synopsis

Yakub grows up being bullied and called a foolish man by his peers. Unable to retaliate, Yakub dreams of becoming a policeman. Confident of his future as a policeman, he begins to terrorize people in his locality. Unfortunately, he does not get a job in the police. However, to save face in the locality, Yakub starts lying that he has joined the police. To hold up the tale, he even migrates to the city and gets a job as a caterer. There, he befriends a real policeman and relays his friend's stories as his own to his folks back home. In the meanwhile, Yakub manages to get a role as a 'Background Police Extra' in a film.

Now dressed in a police costume, he enjoys being a 'real' policeman in the megacity. Through Yakub's unique perspective, we experience the culture of policing and being policed. Ironically, when a group of terrorists targeting the police mistake him for a real policeman and kill him, Yakub's journey comes to an end. Seizing this opportunity, the authorities now claim Yakub as police casualty and use his dead body for propaganda. Thus, Yakub the foolish man in life, officially becomes a policeman in death.

#### Budget

200,000 USD

#### Financing in place

62,000 USD

#### Production Company

Chabial and Batayan  
Productions

#### Present at Film Bazaar

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### Director's Statement

Along with tigers, crocodiles, ghosts and demons, my mother used 'police' to scare me as a child. Even through cinema and life experiences, I rarely heard positive stories about the police force. While I was at Dhaka University, a police constable of my age was brutally beaten up by student protesters. It was his second day at the job. When I went to help him, his police costume did not hide his fear. He was just as powerless as I was. In our society, the police are committing over hundreds of extra-judicial killings and are also getting killed by terrorists. Interestingly, arrests of fake policemen by the official police force are also on the rise.

*A Foolish Man* is a very personal story. It is the story of crisis of a powerless man. I want to examine why and how he gains his own personal power, his motivation, objective and actions behind it. I identify with Yakub and through his story, I want to present my understanding about the police force. The actions which I could never do in real life will be realised, through Yakub, in this film.



## Abu Shahed Emon

Director & Producer

Abu Shahed Emon, a psychology graduate from Dhaka University, pursued higher studies in filmmaking from film schools in Australia and South Korea. He directed several award-winning short films before making his debut feature *Jalal's Story* which travelled to more than 20 leading international film festivals. It also received awards at Busan, Kerala, Jaipur, Dhaka and Avanca film festivals. In 2015, *Jalal's Story* was Bangladesh's entry for the 88th Academy Awards for Best Foreign-Language Film. *Apodartho* is his second feature.



## Mostafa Sarwar Farooki

Producer

Founded by Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, Chabial is often regarded as the production house that brought freshness to Bangladeshi cinema. To its credit, the production house has two feature films – *Television* (2012) and *Ant Story* (2013) which have won multiple awards. Chabial is currently producing *No Land's Man* which won the MPA-APSA Academy Film Fund 2014 and the Most Promising Project Award at Film Bazaar 2014.

## Batayan Productions

Production Company

Batayan Productions is an independent production house in Bangladesh which has produced several award-winning short films, documentaries, and TV fictions. Batayan has also worked with local and international companies like Channel I, NTV, British Council, DANIDA, VSO, US Department of State, among others. The American Center of Dhaka has recently funded Batayan's project *Film For Freedom* – a filmmaking workshop in which more than 20 young first-time filmmakers made their first short films. Abu Shahed Emon is also producing several young filmmakers' short film projects.



India  
Hindi  
Drama

# Bhonsle

## Budget

605,923 USD

## Financing in place

126,023 USD

## Production Company

Muvizz.com

## Present at Film Bazaar

Piiyush Singh

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## Synopsis

Mumbai. At a time when scheming Marathi politicians are using violence to get rid of North-Indian migrants from the state of Maharashtra, Bhonsle, an ageing Marathi sub-inspector, has just been retired against his will. He desperately wants an extension of service. But he is dying.

Bhonsle is that rare breed of lawman who has more regard for the human condition than the rulebook. This turns out to be both his biggest strength and the one thing that does him in.

A solitary figure all his life, he now suddenly finds himself forging an unlikely companionship with

young Sita and little Lalu, his new North-Indian migrant neighbours in his primarily Marathi chawl. Harassed for being 'outsiders' by the boorish local political goon Vilasrao, Sita and Lalu turn to Bhonsle. Heartbroken at having lost the life of duty he had known for over 40 years, Bhonsle takes up the challenge, finding one last battle worth fighting for.

His noble but desperate action brings a vicious and unexpectedly violent turn. It is his fault and he must now face the consequences, or risk losing the only two people in the world he has only just started to love.

## Director's Statement

Mumbai's ability to shelter and support an enormous influx of migrant workers is as unbelievable, as the faith that these thronging millions repose in the city. *Bhonsle* is set in the middle of this 'migrant' issue, manufactured by a leading political party, and the jamboree that followed. It is this politically manufactured feeling of mistrust in a city that otherwise effortlessly copes with its diversity – native or migrant – which serves as the backdrop.

This is the story of a cop, unable to come to terms with his retirement – a man who is looking to reclaim his purpose as the protector of the city. Like many who inhabit Mumbai, he wants nothing to do with sectarian politics, but finds himself in the eye of the storm. This story has no clichéd sense of heroism.



## Devashish Makhija

Director

Devashish Makhija has researched and assisted on *Black Friday* and was the chief assistant director on *Bunty aur Babli*. He has written numerous screenplays, notably Avik Mukherjee's *Bhoomi* and Anurag Kashyap's *Doga*. He has also written and directed the acclaimed short films *Rahim Murge Pe Mat Ro*, *El Ayichi*, *Agli Baar*, *Absent* and *Taandav*, and the full length feature film *Oonga*. Apart from filmmaking, Devashish has written Tulika's bestselling children's books *When Ali Became Bajrangbali* and *Why Paploo Was Perplexed* and a Harper-Collins collection of short stories *Forgetting*. He has also held a solo art show titled 'Occupying Silence'.



## Piiyush Singh

Producer

A keen entrepreneur, Piiyush Singh has multiple ventures in the media space. With a media background of over 10 years of production experience, Piiyush is an investor and a consultant for Muvizz.com – a globally funded online video streaming portal for independent cinema. Before venturing out on his own, Piiyush has worked with companies like Friends Media Group, and Rudra Enterprises as a managing partner.

Canada  
English  
Drama

# Calorie

## Budget

1,433,171 USD

## Financing in place

443,171 USD

## Production Company

Compass Productions inc.  
www.compassproductions.ca

## Present at Film Bazaar

Joe Balass  
joe@compassproductions.ca

Eisha Marjara  
eishamarjara@hotmail.com

## Synopsis

13-year-old Alia is anorexic and her life hangs in the balance. She arrives in India with her rebellious big sister Simi (18) and mother Monika to visit their great aunt and uncle, Gurdeep and Mohan. Monika is at her wits' end and she prays that connecting the girls to their Indian roots will inspire them to be good. But India is a total culture shock to her daughters who resent being uprooted from their home in Montréal.

Alia befriends free-spirited Namita (14) whose cousin Jai (16) has Alia smitten. But it's the unexpected bond she develops with uncle Mohan that touches Alia the most. Mohan sees through Alia's

obsession with calories. Through him, she learns the devastating news about her grandmother, Dalbir. Alia drills her mother with questions, but Monika has not overcome the loss of her mother Dalbir, who was killed in the bombing of Air India flight 182 – it is a family tragedy shrouded in secrecy. When Alia uncovers the truth, she opens the old wounds that splinter the entire family.

Alia's anger leads her to the Golden Temple where she attempts to drown herself. Monika is forced to finally step up as a mother to save her daughter and reconcile with her past.

## Director's Statement

Countless summers of my childhood spent in India, and my experience of filming *Desperately Seeking Helen* there, have helped familiarize me with the climate, light, and colours of the landscape.

My family arrived in Canada in 1971. My father had come to study at Université Laval in 1969 and my mother followed two years later with three young daughters. She had never set foot outside her village in Punjab. She was excited and scared and keen to adapt and belong. But for my mother, the belonging did not happen in the way she had hoped. She had one foot here and one foot there. It is not an uncommon story of the immigrant experience. Living in two worlds. Straddling two identities and experiences, while trying to retain a sense of dignity and wholeness. Her struggle affected me profoundly.

While I battled anorexia in the hospital, my mother and younger sister left for India one summer and were killed on their flight. Air India flight 182 which was headed to India from Montreal, exploded in mid air. My mother's story, my own struggles with anorexia as a teen, and the story behind the Air India flight are the inspiration for *Calorie*.



## Eisha Marjara

Director

With a background in photography, Eisha Marjara first drew attention with *The Incredible Shrinking Woman* showing her skills as writer, cinematographer and director. Her provocative docudrama *Desperately Seeking Helen* produced by the National Film Board of Canada was shot in India and received the Critic's Choice Award at the Locarno Film Festival and the Jury Prize at the München Dokumentarfilm Festival. Following that, she pursued fiction filmmaking with the German-Canadian film *The Tourist*, which was nominated for best short at Toronto's Female Eye Film Festival. Recently her transgender drama *House for Sale* received multiple awards at various international film festivals. She is currently in production on her first feature, *Venus*.



## Joe Balass

Producer

Compass Productions founder Joe Balass resides in Montreal and works in both fiction and documentary. He has produced and directed a number of award-winning films including *Nana, George & Me* (1997), *The Devil in the Holy Water* (2002) *Parting Words* (2006), *Baghdad Twist* (2007), *JOY!* (2012) and *The Length of the Alphabet* (2013). His work has screened at festivals around the world including TIFF, DocuWeek, IDFA, and Tribeca. In 2014, the Toronto Jewish Film Festival and the Cinémathèque québécoise honoured him with a retrospective. In 2016, he was selected for the prestigious Talents Program at the Berlinale. He is currently in production on the feature-length, gender-bending drama *Venus*.

India  
Hindi  
Comedy, Drama

# Dastaan-e-Awaargi

## Budget

400,000 USD

## Financing in place

100,000 USD

## Production Company

Open Air Films  
022 26436647  
www.openairfilms.com

## Present at Film Bazaar

Priya Sreedharan  
priya@openairfilms.com

## Synopsis

Love-struck Baka is an overweight 17-year-old with only one thing on his mind: to barrel into manhood. He's tired of his cherubic, fair face and wide girth, and the fact that he can't grow a beard. He envies the local goon Sunderbala for his dark skin and auto-start Kinetic scooter. He also smokes, drinks and that, Baka knows, gives Sunderbala a better chance with the girl of his dreams, Pandya.

To change his fate, Baka seeks out a mentor and finds a Karate teacher who has come from the mountains with an unattainable

air of mystery around him. Baka adopts the alcoholic but stern 'Karate Sir' as a father figure and seeks to emulate him.

Baka manages to develop a close friendship with Pandya, at the Karate class. This leads to multiple conflicts with Sunderbala. Baka braves it all with his best friend Zaverchand and faithful sidekick Brau, a huge furry dog.

Baka's dream comes crashing down as he witnesses Pandya elope with the Karate Sir. He is forced to get closer than he ever was to becoming a real man.

## Director's Statement

*Dastaan-e-Awaargi* is filled with the nuance and poetry of daily life. It explores infatuation, teenage love and the innocence of an age gone by. The small town of the film is full of quirks and characters that colour the life of Baka, our protagonist.

The film is tied to him, the camera never allowed to fully explore the other characters around Baka. In a voiceover the film explores his inner mumblings and the world he inhabits through his naïve gaze.

The music used in the film will be an homage to garish Hindi songs of the early 90s, juxtaposed with a lot of silences and simple melodies. The approach will be very intimate to add value to poignant moments in the script.

For casting, I intend to explore local talent in order to get the authenticity of voice and gait. The appeal of the film is in its atmosphere and tragicomic approach to one of life's earliest truths.



## Ankit Kothari

Director

Ankit Kothari moved to Mumbai after receiving his Bachelor in Fine Arts (Applied Arts) from M.S. University of Baroda. After a successful stint as an art director in the advertising agencies he moved to film. He has worked as a graphic designer, script supervisor, researcher and assistant director on *Oye Lucky Lucky Oye*, *Love Sex aur Dhokha* and *Shanghai*. He recently completed his stint as the Chief Assistant Director on Recyclewala Films' much-awaited epic period fantasy film *Tumbad*, which is currently in post-production. His script *Dastaan-e-Awaargi* was selected for the NFDC Screenwriters' Lab in 2015.



## Priya Sreedharan

Producer

Priya Sreedharan is a well-known independent producer in Mumbai. Her first film as executive producer was *Oye Lucky Lucky Oye*, released in 2008. Her second film, *Love Sex aur Dhokha*, was the first commercially successful, breakthrough digital film in India. She was also a producer of *Shanghai*, a political thriller based on the polemic novel *Z* by Vassilis Vassilikos, released in 2012. Her fourth film, tentatively titled *Three Storeys* is ready for release in early 2017. Currently her other projects in development are *Chuskit*, *Char Log Kya Kareng* and *Barzakh*. All three stories are rooted in India.

India  
Bengali, Hindi  
Drama, Thriller

# Ink

## Budget

750,000 USD

## Financing in place

300,000 USD

## Production Company

Friends Communication

## Present at Film Bazaar

Pratim D. Gupta  
91 9830777909  
teriyakidonutfilms@gmail.  
com

## Synopsis

Shantilal is a weather reporter at a reputed English daily in Kolkata. He is in his late 30s, unmarried and lives with his mother. Humiliated by his boss everyday, his only escape from this dreary life is his ever-growing library of porn films, his daily night show.

He gets a prized invitation to the premiere of a much-awaited Bollywood film. He is mesmerised by the stunning leading lady Sofia. At the premiere, Shantilal chances upon a long lost scandal about the reigning box-office queen, Sofia. The journalist in him is roused. He sets about investigating the story in Chennai, Sofia's hometown.

As the investigation progresses, Shantilal realises that this story can be his ticket to a better life. Trying to auction his "breaking news" to newspaper editors, Shantilal gets obsessed with reaching out to Sofia. When she learns that someone has got a whiff of her past, Sofia pulls her own strings to reach out to Shantilal.

Two very different people from two very different strata of society from two very different 'Indias' come face-to-face and that climactic meeting decides whether 'the story of a lifetime' finds its way in ink on a newspaper page.

## Director's Statement

There are many 'Indias' present in India today and it has not been a harmonious cohabitation of late. The rich are becoming richer and the poor poorer, leading to an economic divide that has the society bursting at the edges.

This troubling thought provoked me to write *Ink*: how moralities of the middle class have reached dangerous proportions leading individuals to seek desperate measures to achieve personal goals.

*Ink* is about class and culture clash on the surface but it's ultimately about the desire to belong.

The film also sheds light upon India's long history of pornography. The softcore films were often the ultimate resort for failing production companies in south India and these 'dirty films' made stars out of their actresses making porn a full-fledged parallel industry.

While the film is a suspenseful investigative drama about whether the ink on Sofia's body turns itself into the ink of the newspaper, I want *Ink* to be a social commentary on the changing character of morality and sexuality in India.



## Pratim D. Gupta

Director

Pratim's first feature screenplay *Vanish* was selected for the first NFDC Screenwriters' Lab. His debut as writer-director, *Paanch Adhyay* (Afterglow), was the Centrepiece Premiere at New York's South Asian International Film Festival (SAIFF) and was picked as New Voice in Indian Cinema at MAMI in 2012. The screenplay of *Ink* was part of the Mumbai Mantra Sundance Screenwriters Lab in 2013. Pratim's work also includes the experimental collaborative feature *X: Past is Present* which was screened in SAIFF, 2014. His new feature *Shaheb Bibi Golaam* premiered at New York International Film Festival 2016.



## Firdausul Hasan

Producer

A leather businessman, Hasan's passion for the movies drove him to create Friends Communication in 2012, with the goal to make content-driven cinema. Their first production *Rupkatha Noy* (2013), starring Soumitra Chatterjee and Radhika Apte, travelled to several film festivals.

Friends Communication has made critically acclaimed films like *Take One*, *Abby Sen* and *Natoker Moto* (2015) which was featured in the International Competition section at the International Film Festival of India.



India  
Hindi, Malayalam  
Adventure

# Insha'allah

## Budget

822,000 USD

## Financing in place

300,000 USD

## Production Company

Jar Pictures

## Present at Film Bazaar

Geetu Mohandas  
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geethumohandas2007@  
gmail.com

## Synopsis

13-year-old Mullakoya lives a carefree life with his gang of boys in one of the islands in Lakshadweep surrounded by the Arabian Sea. His days go by listening to the tall tales and folklore about the adventures at sea and about Akbar, his brave older brother whom Mullakoya has never met. Akbar is believed to have swum across the ocean to the mainland – Mumbai. Some say that he was looking for adventure.

The tiny island has its share of legends about the adventurous forefathers but Akbar's stories are the most famous and infamous

in the close-knit community because, like most Islanders, he respects the sea, but only he could understand the language and soul of the animals living under the Ocean. The islanders looked at Akbar with pride and sometimes with envy. Something happens in the island which propels Mullakoya to leave the island embarking on a treacherous journey to meet his brave older brother, Akbar, in the mainland. His misadventures at sea lands him in the city of dreams, wherein a series of events plunges him into a world of crime, sex and deceit.

## Director's Statement

I chose to tell this particular story as it has an element of fantasy mixed with a subterranean human emotion. When I started, my goal was to write a fantasy film. But as the idea gradually took shape, I realized that the film had become an intimate portrait of the immigrants who struggle to get a foothold and not lose their identities in the land of opportunities. This idea germinated in my head when I came across a newspaper story of a boy lost at sea during my travel to Lakshadweep. I decided to dig deeper. The Islanders had different versions of the plot which intrigued me even more. The process got me closer to them and I felt the need to tell their stories, capture the lyrical and diverse beauty of their lives and the island.



## **Geetu Mohandas**

Director

Geetu Mohandas, with her cinematographer husband Rajeev Ravi, formed their film production house Unplugged in 2009 which produced her directorial debut short film titled *Are You Listening?* The film premiered at the International Film Festival of Rotterdam and won many awards. Her first feature *Liar's Dice* received the Hubert Bals fund for script and project development. The film was selected in competition for the World Dramatic Section at Sundance Film Festival in 2014. *Liar's Dice* won six major international awards across the world and two National Awards in India. The film was also India's official entry in the Best Foreign Film Category for the 87th Academy Awards.



## **Ajay G. Rai**

Producer



## **Alan McAlex**

Producer

In 2011, Ajay set up Jar Pictures in partnership with Alan McAlex – a versatile film production company that is steadily gaining a stronghold in the Indian film industry. From the critically acclaimed *Liar's Dice* which premiered at the Sundance 2014 to the mainstream *Luv Shuv Tey Chicken Khurana*, their filmography is swiftly building up with films of varied genres. McAlex and Ajay recently produced *Killa*, which won the Crystal Bear at Berlinale 2014 and a National Award in India. Their latest venture *The New Classmate*, premiered at the BFI London Festival, opened to great critical response in India & had a successful theatrical run.



Nepal  
Nepali  
Drama

# Jhyalincha

## Season of Dragonflies

### Budget

490,000 USD

### Financing in place

85,000 USD

### Production Company

Icefall Productions  
www.icefallproductions.com

### Present at Film Bazaar

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Ram Krishna Pokharel  
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## Synopsis

Based on true events, *Jhyalincha* (Season of Dragonflies) is a story about Rudraawati, a feisty yet warm-hearted woman in her 40s.

Having undergone mastectomy, Rudraawati is faced with a dilemma of whether to rebuild her house ravaged by the earthquake, or get breast implants. Instead of reconstructing her house with the money entrusted to her by her mother, Rudraawati chooses to reclaim her sexuality by getting

breast implants to win back her estranged husband .

This choice catches up with her, and despite her efforts to save her marriage, she finds herself isolated from the very people she had fought hard to hold together, including her beloved daughter.

Rudraawati's only chance to regain hope and happiness is learning to let go of the false restraints.

## Director's Statement

My cousin, with whom I had spent all my childhood, came to live with us while struggling with breast cancer. She failed to survive. After her death, I came to know that her husband was having an affair. She had never mentioned this to me or anyone else. Why did she keep it a secret? Was it because she thought her mastectomy was the real cause of her troubles? Did she think breast implants could mend her relationship? Why did she never leave him? How did she bear this trauma while fighting cancer?

In our society, a girl defines herself through her relationships with men; if she is alone, she is considered cursed. Every Nepali woman knows she is expected to be an obedient daughter, submissive wife, dutiful daughter-in-law, caring mother and so on. She would rarely get an opportunity to be herself and a fully realized woman. She, who tries to traverse a different path, is looked down upon, and often punished.

After my cousin's death, I was in a meditation retreat to salvage my sanity. I decided to write this distressing personal story to understand what defines a woman in Nepali society. I turned to explore my cousin's yearning, angst, confusion, flaws and her rediscovery, through which *Jhyalincha* became an emotional tale of hope, acceptance and awakening.



## **Abinash Bikram Shah**

Director

Abinash Bikram Shah is a freelance writer-director based in Kathmandu. His work has travelled to film festivals worldwide including Berlinale, Venice and Busan. His short films have won a host of awards, including Best Short Film in India, Bangladesh and Nepal. He is an alumnus of Asian Film Academy 2000, Busan and Berlinale Talent Campus 2010. Abinash also works as a Programming Director at Ekadeshma International Short Film Festival.



## **Ram Krishna Pokharel**

Producer

Head of Icefall Productions, Ram has developed and produced features and short films that have screened in several national and international film festivals. His filmography includes Ludovic Bernard's *L'ascension* (2016), Serge Ha Anavicius' *Number One* (2016) and Hirayama Hideyuki's *Everest Summit of the Gods* (2015).

India  
Manipuri  
Adventure, Drama

# Josephki Macha

## Joseph's Son

### Synopsis

In the backdrop of the infamous Kuki – Naga ethnic clashes in 1992 in Manipur, Joseph and Mary have been eagerly waiting for many days for their only child's return. Finally, when they receive a message of an unclaimed body lying in the morgue, Joseph is forced to take a journey that no parent or human being would want to take. But Joseph has no option as it is the last day for identification before the body is declared unclaimed and

disposed of. During his journey to the morgue, Joseph encounters different situations that remind him what it means to be human, and how time and situation have planted hatred in our peaceful coexistence. The journey ends with a strange situation where, for the first time in his life, Joseph's old friend asks him to identify himself as Kuki or Naga.

#### Budget

210,000 USD

#### Financing in place

55,000 USD

#### Production Company

Oli Pictures

#### Present at Film Bazaar

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### Director's Statement

My home state Manipur is a northeastern state of India where decades of insurgency has thrown the society into chaos. But apart from insurgency and HIV another major issue that is looming to explode anytime is the huge unrest among the various ethnic tribes. Manipur is home to 29 different recognized tribes and sub-tribes.

In 1992, for the first time the issue of ethnicity came to the forefront because of a big conflict, which started between the two major ethnic groups of Manipur namely the Kukis and the Nagas, having its root at Moreh – a border town between India and Myanmar. The clash not only resulted in the killing of many innocent persons and burning of houses but also led to the internal displacement of many persons and families. The conflict continued for around four years till 1996. The incident has and will always remain a dark chapter in the history of Manipur where people have been living peacefully since time immemorial.



## Haobam Paban Kumar

Director & Producer

Haobam Paban Kumar is a Manipuri filmmaker whose debut fiction feature *Loktak Lairambee* (Lady of the Lake) was selected for world premiere at Busan International Film Festival 2016. The film was part of the Film Bazaar Work-in-Progress Lab in 2015. Haobam is an alumnus of Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata and his films have screened at several international festivals, and have won awards including the FIPRESCI prize at Mumbai International Film Festival 2006. He was one of the six emerging talents to represent India at Cannes in 2011. His latest documentary *Floating Life* was nominated for the Leipziger Ring award at the 58th DOK Leipzig 2015.

## Oli Pictures

Production Company

Oli Pictures was established in the summer of 2005 in Imphal, Manipur by Haobam Paban Kumar. The company was started as an audiovisual documentation and research centre. Today it boasts of having produced many national and award winning films, documenting the rich cultural heritage of the region. Some notable productions are *Kangla*, *Orchids and Manipur*, *A Cry in the Dark* and *Mr. India*. *Loktak Lairambee* (Lady of the Lake) is the latest production under this banner.

India  
Hindi  
Animation, Drama,  
Fantasy

# Kabuliwala

## Man From Kabul

### Synopsis

Six-year old Mini lives in a dream world. Her reality, however, is quite different. Preoccupied with work, her parents hardly have any time for Mini, leaving her with no option but to play with her dreary dolls.

In a chance encounter, Mini meets a big, burly dry-fruitseller from Kabul. Initially she is intimidated by his appearance but his brilliantly mirrored shoulder bag fascinates her. When he magically pulls out a gorgeous Arabian horse from it, little Mini is mesmerized.

Soon she realizes that Kabuliwala, a refugee who has relocated to Kolkata, carries the most astonishing stories in his bag. Fascinating tales from far away

lands – of courage, compassion, wit and ingenuity. An intimate bond develops between the two and they, the most unlikely of friends, become inseparable.

But a devastating accident separates them for 15 years. When they reunite, Mini comes to know of Kabuliwala's tragic past – of incessant wars and his daughter Amina.

This animation film underlines that beyond geographical boundaries, religion, race and culture, the true essence of our existence is shared humanity – an understanding that is missing in today's world of rising conflicts.

#### Budget

2,500,000 USD

#### Financing in place

450,000 USD

#### Production Company

Handmade Films  
Alliance Media &  
Entertainment Pvt. Ltd.  
B-1306, Ankur,  
Relief Road,  
Goregaon West,  
Mumbai 400062  
022 28755645  
022 28785067  
www.alliancemedia.in

#### Present at Film Bazaar

Soumitra Ranade  
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paperboatstudios.co

### Director's Statement

*Kabuliwala* was written in 1892 and I feel that it is even more relevant today. In an increasing atmosphere of suspicion, hate and violence, the story talks about love, compassion and brotherhood.

I have adapted the story to today's times and have added a magical element to it. Stories that Kabuliwala pulls out of his shoulder bag are stories from across the globe. The artwork, animation style and the music used in telling of these stories would reflect the visual and musical aesthetic of those parts echoing the vast variety of audio-visual images that make up this spectacular kaleidoscope of our world.

I grew up in Kabul as a teenager. Those four years were the most definitive years of my life where I was witness to some of the most disturbing events in modern history. The invasion by the Soviet army, recurring military coups and the eventual rise of Taliban were some of the events that shaped the political atmosphere of the world.

This film to me is an attempt to bridge numerous gaps that exist in our societies today. The film attempts to cross over to embrace the other side.



## Soumitra Ranade

Director

An alumnus of Sir J.J.School of Arts and FTII, Soumitra Ranade has written, directed and produced a number of animation and live action films. His work includes children's feature films *Jajantaram Mamantaram* and *Goopi Gawaiyaa Bagha Bajaiyaa*, animated TV serials *Karadi Tales* and *Bandbudh Aur Budbak* and documentary, *Khoob Asti Afghanistan?* Soumitra's latest live-action feature *Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyun Aata Hai?* will be releasing in 2016. He is the Founder/ Chairman of Paperboat Design Studios Pvt. Ltd. and also the Co-founder/ Chairman of School of DAAF (Design Art Animation Film).



## Sunil Doshi

Producer

Sunil Doshi has quintessentially been a film activist for many years. He has worked in production, acquisition and distribution of different kinds of films and programming of the Indian films at various film festivals. Some of his past productions include Santosh Sivan's *Navarasa* (Nine Emotions), Rajat Kapoor's *Mixed Doubles*, Sagar Ballary's *Bheja Fry*, Rupali Guha's *Aamras*, Bela Negi's *Daayen ya Baayen*, Jaideep Varma's *Hulla*, Jaybarto Chatterji's *Love Songs*, Maneej Premnath's *The Waiting Room* and Sharat Katariya's *10ml Love*. Handmade Films is currently involved in the post-production of *Bioscopwala*, a live action feature-film based on Rabindranath Tagore's 'Kabuliwala'.

Bangladesh  
Bengali  
Drama

# Nonajoler Kabbo

## The Salt in Our Waters

### Budget

275,000 USD

### Financing in place

70,000 USD

### Production Company

Laboratory NYC

### Present at Film Bazaar

Rezwan Shahriar Sumit  
rss457@nyu.edu

## Synopsis

City-based sculptor Rudro (32) moves to an ocean-side fishing village of Bangladesh to work on his new series. Local fisherman Bashar (40) hosts his makeshift studio. Bashar's children Tuni (19) and Taher (12) become his guides. The locals also develop an interest in his art.

A sense of panic spreads out as Hilsha, their most coveted harvest, disappears from the ocean. Rudro explains that it's a toll of climate change. But the local committee Chairman (60) blames it on the figurative sculptures Rudro makes and proclaims the practice to be sinful. Shocked but not surprised, Rudro decides to keep

his sculptures private. However, unlike others, Tuni continues to visit him and inspire his art. The Hilshas eventually arrive giving Rudro a ground to win back the fishermen's goodwill.

But soon, the centre stage is taken over by an even more feared enemy – a cyclone. A warning forecast sets off a wave of panic. Chairman bans the use of radio and asks everyone to have faith in God. He orders the fishermen to go back to fishing. On the contrary, Rudro is certain of the impending doom. He inspires a revolt among them. As people head to safety, Rudro finds out that Tuni, his muse, has gone missing.

## Director's Statement

I want to shoot the film in a small fishing village of 15-20 families neatly tucked into the Potuakhali shore where the constant sound of breaking waves creates a sense of doom. The season will be monsoon with the coconut trees undulating to strong gusts and the mangrove trees saturated with fresh green leaves. The overcast sky and the clouds in these regions work as a natural filter causing the light on the landscape to be very dramatic.

I will use a naturalistic handheld technique, shot mostly from Rudro's POV who, being an artist, has a tendency to turn things around, jump in, get wet, touch and feel. The camera work will reflect his spurts of creativity.

The key roles will be played by trained actors. All other cast will be handpicked from communities along the coastal belt to be able to get raw, naturalistic performances out of non-actors.



## Rezwan Shahriar Sumit

Director

Born and raised in Bangladesh, Sumit attended the Graduate Film Program of NYU Tisch School of the Arts as a Tisch Fellow. His docudrama *City Life*, shot entirely on a friend's handycam, earned him a place at Berlinale Talents 2008 as a director. There, for the first time, he realized filmmakers are change-agents in the same way student politicians or grassroots inventors are. Sumit's short films have traveled to several international film festivals and have been acquired by MUBI and VPRO for worldwide distribution.



## Gigi Dement

Producer

Gigi has produced several award-winning films, including *God of Love* (winner of the Academy Award for Best Live Action Short in 2011). She is the first Filipino to produce an Oscar-winning film. Gigi has also produced the features, *Bastards of Young*, and the critically acclaimed *BabyGirl*, an Irish-American co-production which premiered at Tribeca Film Festival 2012 and won top prizes at other international film festivals. Currently, Gigi is in production on a feature documentary about the Hollywood of Uganda's ghettos titled *Wakaliwood*.

India  
Sanskrit  
Animation, Drama,  
Fantasy

# Punyakoti

## Synopsis

The villagers of Karunadu decide to build a bridge across the river Kaveri and urbanize the jungles that lay on the other bank. Gopajji, an old mystic, warns about disturbing nature's balance but is ignored. Kaalinga, a cowherd takes the side of Gopajji. Among Kaalinga's cows, is Punyakoti, a magical cow that speaks the truth at all times.

That year, rains fail. There is an impending drought. Gopajji and Punyakoti use their magical powers and predict approaching rains. The next day, clouds gather over Karunadu. Frightened by the thunder, Kaalinga's cows run helter-skelter. In the chaos,

Punyakoti loses her magical bell that she has promised her calf.

While searching for the bell, Punyakoti encounters a tiger, Arbuta, who has her bell. She pleads with the tiger to let her go and honour her promise to her calf. He reluctantly agrees. After giving the bell to her calf, Punyakoti leaves her friends much against their pleas to stay and returns to Arbuta. Seeing Punyakoti return, Arbuta regrets his animal ways and decides to let go of his prey.

A flash flood destroys the bridge. But the spirit of river Kaveri brings back Punyakoti to safety and reunites her with her calf.

## Director's Statement

The Kannada folksong of Punyakoti, believed to be around for over 800 years has moved millions of people. The courage of the cow, its integrity, its love for her calf, the transformation of the tiger have all been sources of inspiration for the millions.

It made me wonder if there was a story that we did not know behind the folksong. This was my inspiration to write a story about an impending drought in Karunadu, the village in which the folksong happens.

I chose animation as I felt it was the right medium for telling the story of animals in an era that was timeless. Since we chose to exploit the style of folk arts prevalent in India, we felt 2D could be more suitable for the storytelling.

There is hardly any contemporary Sanskrit work for introducing the language to kids. I decided to make the movie in Sanskrit as a tribute to the language that is the bedrock of the one of the oldest living civilisation in the world.

### Budget

338,500 USD

### Financing in place

92,500 USD

### Production Company

Puppetica Media

### Present at Film Bazaar

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Sindhu SK  
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## **Ravi Shankar**

**Director**

Ravi Shankar has been a multimedia and animation pioneer in India when he directed the first interactive CD-ROM in India in 1995. Since then he has been working on children's literature, animation and in the edutainment sector. A Senior HR Solutions Designer in Infosys, Ravi has over 20 years of experience in directing and managing large programmes and productions.



## **Sindhu SK**

**Producer**

Sindhu SK is a singer and music teacher. Sindhu has managed the largest crowd-funding campaign in India through a platform last year and was instrumental in the success of the campaign.



India  
Hindi  
Drama

# Ram Ji Ka Ghoda

## The Dragonfly

### Synopsis

Losing his playground to an under-construction factory, happy-go-lucky Dipu (10) finds a new game. He ties string to the tails of dragonflies and flies them around. Dipu ignores his pregnant mother's warnings against the curse of Lord Ram for torturing the dragonfly, which, she said is called 'Ram Ji Ka Ghoda' (Lord Ram's horse).

Dipu ends up killing a dragonfly and, later, his mother passes away at childbirth. Believing that the curse caused it, Dipu blames himself for the death.

Dipu's life complicates further as the need for motherly love and care for little Dipu forces his father to remarry before he returned to

the army. Unaware of his father's intentions, Dipu ruthlessly rejects his stepmother as he also comes to believe that she was sent by Lord Ram to punish him. Dipu looks for an escape and demands to be sent to a boarding school. With no other solution in sight, his soldier father sends Dipu to a military boarding school.

But Dipu soon suffocates in his new regimental life. Once a free flying village dragonfly, Dipu finds his own tail tied in the boarding school. He looks for an escape again. But he has to spend a physically and emotionally gruelling year before he can return to his carefree village life. A year that can make or break a fragile Dipu forever.

### Director's Statement

This is my debut feature fiction film, and, for this, I have chosen a subject that I know best – my own childhood.

The film, with its slice-of-life, realistic, treatment will have its share of humour along with numerous heartwarming moments.

Set in the 1980s, the story is not just about the transformation of a few individuals, but also of an era when television and industrialisation changed the way of life in agrarian villages forever.

#### Budget

550,000 USD

#### Financing in place

200,000 USD

#### Production Company

Courtyard Entertainment  
Pvt. Ltd.  
47A, First Floor, Om Heera  
Panna, New Link Road,  
Andheri West, Mumbai  
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022 40101090  
www.courtyard.net.in

#### Present at Film Bazaar

Bishnu Dev Halder  
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bishnu@courtyard.net.in



## **Bishnu Dev Halder**

**Director & Producer**

An alumnus of Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Bishnu's documentary, *Bagher Bachcha*, won the National Film Award in 2007 and was also the Opening Film of IFFI, Goa. Selected for Talent Campus India in 2007, Bishnu was awarded the UK Environment Film Fellowship in 2010. His debut film, *I Was Born in Delhi*, was nominated at IDFA in 2011. Bishnu's other acclaimed films include *Pratyabartan* and *The Diary of a Refugee*.

*Ram Ji Ka Ghoda* was part of the Junior Co-Production Market at Cinekid for Professionals 2016.

## **Courtyard Entertainment**

**Production Company**

Founded by Bishnu Halder, Courtyard Entertainment's award-winning body of work comprises feature-length projects that have been co-produced in partnership with Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program, Japan Broadcasting Corporation, NHK, National Partners Documentary Resource Initiative, Films Division/Public Service Broadcasting Trust and the British Council and telecast on channels like National Geographic Channel, NHK, YLE, and Doordarshan.

India  
Bengali  
Drama, Romance

# The Biryani Seller

## Budget

450,000 USD

## Financing in place

138,000 USD

## Production Company

Highlight Films  
Mathurdas Mills  
Compound, Lower Parel,  
Mumbai 400013, India  
[www.highlightfilms.com](http://www.highlightfilms.com)

## Present at Film Bazaar

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Sarmistha Maiti  
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## Synopsis

Asim is a roadside Biryani seller from Kolkata whose childhood dream of being an artist got buried in his struggle to sustain his family. Now he has a singular aim to make his younger brother Ajay an artist.

Rebecca, a European filmmaker, starts making a documentary film on Asim, about how the grand Mughal cuisine Biryani has become a popular street food and a means of livelihood for the unemployed youth in the wake of globalization. Asim's world is turned upside down when she discovers that it is not Ajay but Asim who has more potential as an artist.

The discovery of his own potential unfurls Asim's creative urges. He starts painting prolifically as he falls madly in love with Rebecca, the first person to value his talent. As Asim starts living his dream for himself, his brother Ajay feels abandoned and betrayed. Entangled in the web of his creativity, responsibilities, an impossible romance and the media-hyped mirage of easy success, Asim begins to ignore his livelihood, the Biryani business. *The Biryani Seller* is a tale as layered, textured, aromatic and flavored as the Biryani itself.

## Director's Statement

Set in a transitioning city in a global world, *The Biryani Seller* is a tale of many hues – soaring dreams, fervent creativity, feverish love, bitter betrayal, economic unrest and media mirage. We intend to bring out all these narrative layers emphasizing as much on the basic plot as on its social milieu, textures and people – be it a painting, the delicious Biryani, the city itself, discovery of magic in the mundane. Rebecca, the foreign filmmaker and her camera will become the medium to experience the familiar in newer ways exploring both the emancipating and manipulative nature of filming. Flashbacks, dialogues that seamlessly transform into monologues and voiceovers, and visual exploration of the changing cityscape would be used to portray both the personal history of the characters and the social history of a country in transit. Wit, humour, pathos and romance will blend to create an emotional, evocative and delicious concoction just as the long strands of rice, meat and various spices mix in layers to form the wholesome delight of the Biryani.



**Rajdeep Paul**  
Director



**Sarmistha Maiti**  
Director

Rajdeep Paul & Sarmistha Maiti are National Award winning filmmakers and alumni of Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata. They have worked with eminent producers like Doordarshan, PSBT and Ministry of External Affairs, India, PBS, USA. They jointly run their company, Triambigram Arts with Rajdeep as the Creative Head. As co-writers of *The Biryani Seller*, Rajdeep and Sarmistha have been part of the Mumbai Mantra Cinerise Screenwriters' Lab. They have made acclaimed short fictions like *3 on a Bed* (about a polyamoric triad), *The Woman and the Man*, *Itvar* and documentaries like *At the Crossroads Nondon Bagchi Life and Living* (National Award), *Mrinal Sen – An Era in Cinema* and *She Creates to Conquer*.



**Mahesh Mathai**  
Producer

Founded by Mahesh Mathai in 1987, Highlight Films is one of the most successful advertising commercial companies in India. Mahesh made the acclaimed feature film, *Bhopal Express* in 2000. The film opened the Panorama section of the Berlin Film Festival and won seven International Awards. He has also directed the British feature film, *Broken Thread*. Highlight Films has also produced *Mystic India* (2005), *Outsourced* (2006), *Aapa Akka* (2009) and *Manali Cream* (2009) among others.

Netherlands, China  
Persian  
Drama, War

# The Cineaste

## Budget

1,695,000 USD

## Financing in place

339,000 USD

## Production Company

Silk Road Film Salon  
www.silkroadfilmsalon.com

## Present at Film Bazaar

Aboozar Amini  
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Joost De Vries  
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## Synopsis

Asif is an Afghan cineaste in his early 30's who runs a small screening room in a village near Bamiyan Afghanistan.

In 1996 Afghanistan falls into the hands of the Taliban who ban any kind of arts and culture, enforcing their rule with the death penalty. Despite the ban, Asif cannot abandon his most precious ten films that include the works of Ozu, Kurosawa and Chaplin. When caught by the Taliban, Asif asks to screen just one film before they kill him. His wish is granted. Asif randomly picks up *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. The Taliban are captivated and amused by the film and let Asif live under one

condition: he must show them a new film every day. Now Asif has ten days to change the 'brain-washed' soldiers and save his life.

The Taliban soldiers are confronted with lives, customs and moral values, that were completely unknown to them. Gradually, the films inspire existential discussions amongst them. They even start questioning the Sharia inspired rules they impose on the villagers. But when the Taliban leader starts showing a certain interest in Asif's sweetheart Firoza, the situation turns delicate again. Finally US troops invade Afghanistan and the fragile co-existence of villagers and Taliban comes to its final chapter.

## Director's Statement

My name is Aboozar. But I am also Asif; the hero of this story. I was born in the same region where the story is set, near the Buddha of Bamiyan. I feel the same passion that Asif feels for cinema, and share his loneliness to convey the love of great filmmakers with those in Afghanistan who have never seen a movie in their life and consider cinema a sin of death.

There are many untold stories about Afghanistan, but some, like this one, are so relevant to mankind that they simply can't stay untold. This story digs deeply into the brainwashed Taliban state of mind, and attempts to unravel a part of what makes Taliban, Taliban. In this film, a situation is created where soldiers become the kids they really often are. They find themselves captured by a storyteller and are slowly seduced to let go of their deeply ingrained prejudices, and political and religious convictions.

The film is a universal story about the meaning of culture in the life of ordinary people and mankind. It is a respectful ode to human civilization. The ten films are not only milestones in the history of cinema, but more importantly, reflect the essence of human life.



## Aboozar Amini

Director

Aboozar Amini's graduate film *Angelus Novus* (2015) premiered at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and won various awards worldwide. His latest film *Where is Kurdistan?* (2016) was commissioned by IFFR. Aboozar holds a Bachelor of Arts from Rietveld Art Academy where his graduation film *Kabul Tehran Kabul* (2010) won the Wildcard award of Dutch Film Fund. He also holds a Masters degree in directing and aesthetic language of cinema at London Film School.

While Aboozar moved to the Netherlands at a young age, his Afghan origin plays an important role in his work. He is one of the few Afghan filmmakers who chose to return to Afghanistan after the education in the West. He now lives and works in Kabul, Afghanistan and Amsterdam, Netherlands.



## Jia Zhao

Producer

Jia Zhao is a Chinese-Dutch producer based in Amsterdam. As founder and producer at Muiy Film (cultural/artistic documentary) and Silk Road Film Salon, Jia focuses on collaborations between the East and West. Her recent works include productions with Frank Scheffer (*The Perception*, IFFR 2016, KNF award; *Inner Landscape*, Holland Festival 2015); Yan Ting Yuen (*Mr Hu and the Temple*, in competition at IDFA 2015 and at NFF 2016), Aboozar Amini (*Where is Kurdistan?* IFFR 2016; *Angelus Novus*, IFFR 2015), Yang Yang (*Steel Rose*, 2016); Laetitia Schoofs (*Unbinding Feet*).



## Joost De Vries

Producer

Joost established Lemming Film with Leontine Petit and Marco van Geffen in 1995, which is now one of the most prominent Dutch companies with a track record of high quality feature films and television drama including *Heli* 2013 (Amat Escalante), *The Lobster* 2015 (Yorgos Lanthimos), *Full Contact* 2015 (David Verbeek), and recently, stop motion animation series *Rintje* 2016 (Ben Tesseur & Steven de Beul). In 2011 Lemming Film set up a sister company called Hamster Film in Germany. He is a member of the board for the Dutch film producers association (FPN) since 2008. In April 2016 Joost established himself as an independent producer.



India  
Tamil  
War

# The Sunshine

## Budget

3,000,000 USD

## Financing in place

376,000 USD

## Production Company

Dream Warrior Pictures  
www.dwp.in

## Present at Film Bazaar

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com

S.R. Prabhu  
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## Synopsis

Armstrong, a 24-year old painter and his childhood sweetheart, Thanga try to escape to Indian waters after their lives get ravaged in the deadly Sri Lankan civil war. While Armstrong manages to reach India, Thanga has to return to Sri Lanka.

Armstrong is arrested in India due to lack of legal documents. He escapes the prison with his fellow Nigerian prisonmates and goes to Thailand via Nepal. There he claims refugee status, only to be rejected for non-availability of proper documents. He also gets the message that Thanga is pregnant.

Armstrong gets acquainted with Vicky, a French human trafficker and becomes his henchman. Soon, Bangkok police arrests Armstrong with Vicky for their illegal activities. Armstrong cleverly escapes and lives incognito in a Bangkok Tamil Restaurant. Eventually he manages to board a Cargo ship, heading to Canada with 492 other refugees on board. The plan is to sail 40 days nonstop to reach Canada but food and water shortage, seasickness, unbearable heat and mind-numbing cold turns the journey into hell.

## Director's Statement

According to UN estimates, 60000–100000 Tamil civilians were killed over the course of 27-year long war in Sri Lanka. The large scale genocide by the Sri Lankan government has forced 2 million Tamils in the North East provinces to flee their homes and become unwanted refugees in India and other countries.

As a filmmaker, I want to ensure that these people are looked at not as statistics but as real people each with a unique and often tragic story to tell. Translating human trauma to film language can be a challenge, but I want to assert that it is a necessary one.

*The Sunshine* looks back at the perils faced by Vicky, a Sri Lankan Tamil, along his journey from his war torn homeland towards far corners of the world risking life, detention and deportation over the lands and seas.



## Leena Manimekalai

Director

As a leading Tamil poet and filmmaker, Leena Manimekalai has made a dozen films of which include *My Mirror is the Door*, *Goddesses*, *Sengadal* (The Dead Sea) and *White Van Stories*. These films deal with eco-feminism, Dalit women's lives, plight of refugees and fishermen in the Palk Straight, and enforced disappearances in the background of Tamil ethnic cleansing in Sri Lanka. Leena's work is deeply driven by her social commitment to the dynamics of caste, gender, globalization in the contemporary society, art therapy, student politics, post disaster trauma and environmental issues among others.



## SR Prabhu

Producer

Dream Warrior Pictures (DWP) was co-founded by SR Prakash Babu and SR Prabhu in 2010 with a vision to produce radical feature films. *Saguni*, their debut production, was a successful Tamil feature film starring Karthi Sivakumar. As partners and co-producers at Studiogreen from 2006 to 2015, Prakash Babu and Prabhu have successfully produced 14 Tamil feature films. Alongside DWP, they have founded Potential Studios with an initiative to welcome new talent into the film industry. Recently, they produced a fiction feature *Maya* which was one of the most successful commercial film in 2015.



India, Sweden  
English, Hindi  
Drama

# The Umesh Chronicles

## Budget

1,165,000 USD

## Financing in place

135,000 USD

## Production Company

Mostfilm AB

## Present at Film Bazaar

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Charlotte Most  
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## Synopsis

*The Umesh Chronicles* is a story of growing up in small-town middle-class India. It enters the inner world of Radha, eight years old, surrounded by parents, grandparents and servants, and stays with her, with the thoughts and influences, and the particular emphasis on education that shapes her everyday.

Surrounded by books, music and television, Radha has only passing contact with Sundar, a servant boy about her age, who helps her lead a life of privilege. Sundar runs away and when she meets him many years later, Radha is forced to consider that he may be more free than she is.

When Radha, now in her thirties in modern India, is served again but this time by Umesh, she reflects on the meetings and evasions which have affected her life. She then thinks of Sundar and seeks him out.

*The Umesh Chronicles* presents two 'Indias' living next to each other, but still communicates the special Indian code of somehow managing the grace of living side by side.

This is the story of the soul of a nation and the making of a woman.

## Director's Statement

This film is a record of a specific environment, 1980s middle-class India, that is rarely, if at all, seen on film, and a document of the inner world of a child within it. It is an attempt to delineate on film how that specific environment is assimilated by the child's mind, how impressions are formed and imprinted and take root. It traces the events that form a person, the encounters with family, teachers and friends, the shaping of an identity, and tries to find a film language for this developing identity, contemplative and sensually aware.

There is a focus in the script to tell it as it is, to present an authentic sense of place and time which can almost be smelt. The film is sensory and very present in the moment. Through the stories of Radha and her family, through Sundar and glancingly through Umesh, this film attempts to tell of the soul of a nation.

This film has a strong sense of mood, and proposes atmosphere as story, where details, objects and encounters are as important as events. This is a radical, tactile film about the meetings and encounters that make a person, the teachers, mothers, the moments of realisation.



## Pooja Kaul

Director

Pooja Kaul is a writer and director whose work explores urban Indian life. She has trained at the National Film School, Beaconsfield, England and at the Mass Communication Research Centre, New Delhi. Her short films - *Rasikan Re* (O Lover of Life) (2003), *Winter Trail* (2002), *Notes For a Film* (2000) and *Sheher: Lucknow* (1997) have been screened and awarded at festivals worldwide. She is interested in defining an Indian voice in film, where an ancient tradition meets a modern sensibility and form. Her current project *The Umesh Chronicles* was written with a grant from the International Film Festival Rotterdam.



## Charlotte Most

Producer

Charlotte Most holds a Masters degree in Economics from the School of Economics in Gothenburg, Sweden. After attending The New York Film Academy in 1995 she worked in the film and commercials industries. She set up her company Mostfilm in 2000. Attending EAVE 2010, established Charlotte as a producer in Europe. Her films - *Rola* (2012), *Yarden* (2013), *The Arbiter* (2013), *Reliance* (2013), *The Girl King* (2014), *Patria* (2014), *The Monarch* (2014), *Swoon* (2015), *Eggg* (2016) and *The Nile Hilton Incident* (2016) have been screened at various festivals and venues throughout the world. Her productions have been acquired by Swedish National Television. She works and lives in Stockholm.



India  
English, Marathi  
Drama

# Tribhanga

## Three Curve Bent

### Synopsis

*Tribhanga*, set in Mumbai, is the story of Nayan, Anu and Masha, three generations of powerful women from one family. Nayan, a critically acclaimed Marathi litterateur, has two children, Anu and Robindro. Their idyllic childhood had been shattered by their parents' divorce. Anu, now a renowned Odissi dancer, had been a model and actress in the '80s. She had borne Masha out of wedlock, a choice Masha lives with gracefully.

When Nayan slips into a coma, Milind, Nayan's ghost writer, wants to complete her autobiography.

What follows is a regurgitation of all the harsh memories, anger and hurt of the past. This helps heal Anu's acrimonious feelings towards Nayan; but it is too late. Nayan passes away before their relationship can be mended. Milind completes Nayan's autobiography and calls it "Tribhanga", the Odissi dance pose that is disjointed and asymmetrical, yet mesmerising, much like the protagonists. *Tribhanga* is a scathing comment on the patriarchal system that creates obstacles for women who want to achieve something different from the conventional.

#### Budget

4,78,183 USD

#### Financing in place

1,19,546 USD

#### Production Company

Padachinnha Production

#### Present at Film Bazaar

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### Director's Statement

*Tribhanga*, set in Mumbai, weaves a complex tale that goes back and forth in time through three generations of the same family, from the '60s to the modern day. Not narrated in a linear manner, the film will be a visual representation of an autobiography. I'm looking at a very hand-held style of shooting with quick cutting between shots for the present in contrast with the use of long trolley shots in the past. The use of both old Marathi songs will not only create the emotional mood but also help in recreating the era in which that particular music was popular.



## Renuka Shahane

Director & Producer

Renuka Shahane has been an Indian actress for the last 29 years in TV serials (*Surabhi*, *Circus*, *Sailaab*) and films (*Hum Aapke Hain Kaun*, *Masoom*) and has received innumerable awards. She won the Best Director award for her debut directorial Marathi film *Rita* at the 16th Nokia Star Screen Awards 2010. *Tribhanga* was part of the Mumbai Mantra Sundance Screenwriter's workshop in 2013.

## Padachinnha Production

Production Company

Founded in 2015 by Renuka, Padachinnha Production has produced two Marathi short films, *Saathvan* (Mementos) and *Aathvan* (Memory). Both films were officially selected for Nashik International Film Festival 2016 where *Aathvan* won the Best Debut in a Short Film award. *Saathvan* has been officially selected for the Trinity International Film Festival held at Detroit in August, this year.



India  
Hindi  
Drama

# Wapsi

## The Return

### Synopsis

Minhaj has spent his life working in Dubai, one of the millions of migrants in the Gulf state. He saw his family just once every year when he returned to his village in Bihar for his annual vacation. But his time away has provided for a good life for his loved ones, including his only son Sami's admission in a private college in Delhi. Minhaj's tidy world crumbles abruptly when he gets a call from his wife Najma, telling him that Sami has vanished. There had been a low-intensity blast in a Delhi market. Sami was questioned by the police. And then there has been no trace of him. Minhaj returns to Delhi to

search for his vanished son, a boy he never watched turning into a young man. In the process, Minhaj is forced to confront the reality that he is a stranger to his family.

*The Return* follows a father's struggle for answers as he flounders in an unfamiliar megapolis that seems indifferent to his pain. Minhaj realizes that the homeland he dreamed of returning to for so long perhaps exists only in his memories. The only person who can share his pain is Najma. As they live through the nightmare together, the long-married couple begins to discover each other for the first time.

#### Budget

750,000 USD

#### Financing in place

60,000 USD

#### Production Company

Paandan Pictures

#### Present at Film Bazaar

Asad Hussain

Abbas Raza Khan

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### Director's Statement

Films were absent throughout my childhood, somewhat taboo in my Muslim family. I had to travel a long path to discover their power and resonance. It is this world that my characters inhabit.

This film is an attempt to give voice to the stories of young men who simply vanish without a trace, and the pain of their families. My film is also a love story, between a man who has spent his life abroad, and his familiar yet unfamiliar wife.

I aim to film at actual locations in Delhi, particularly the newly constructed colonies on the edges of the city, which are predominantly populated by Muslims, mostly migrants. They are like border towns that divide not on the basis of economic status but religious community. My intention is to capture the poetry and contradictions of these haphazard ghettos that form the underbelly of a city of gleaming malls and shining roads. The shot taking will mirror the bewilderment of Minhaj, who has returned "home" after years away, only to find a country he no longer recognizes. The sound design and pacing will aim to heighten his distress.



## Asad Hussain

Director

Asad was one of the writers on *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* and co-wrote *Children of War*, a film about Bangladesh's war of independence. He has collaborated with internationally acclaimed directors Siddiq Barmak and Murali Nair. Coming from a strong background in theatre, as a director and actor, he has translated the work of Moliere, Beckett, Victor Hugo and Boris Vian into Hindustani. His most recent work, *Naqqaash*, an original play, was workshopped at the Royal Court Theatre, London and premiered in Mumbai. Asad has been awarded the prestigious MacDowell Fellowship for his writing.



## Abbas Raza Khan

Producer

Born in Mumbai and brought up in Muscat, Oman, Abbas graduated from Delhi University with a degree in Journalism. After a brief career as a pressman, he headed to Denmark to study film at the European Film College. Since 2008, Abbas has worked as an Assistant Director with Indian and International independent films, TVCs and Studio Projects including 10 feature films, more than 150 commercials, music videos and short films. He has collaborated with directors like Ashim Ahluwalia, Murali Nair, Rob Cohen, Paula Van Der Oest and Sharat Katariya. He is the co-founder of Paandan Pictures along with Asad Hussain.

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