



2024
Film Bazaar
Official Project
Catalogue

Project Catalogue

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Hawa Mithai

Candy Floss

Maithili, Hindi

Anurita Jha

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Synopsis

In a small village in Bihar, around the year 1980's before the age of smartphone and technology, a six-year-old boy, Tundu's world is upended by the arrival of his newborn sister, Lachmi. Accustomed to being the centre of attention, Tundu suddenly feels left out as his mother Bichia dotes on the new baby.

His innocent heart interprets this as a loss of love, leading to resentment and insecurity. Inspired by tales of Lord Hanuman, Tundu concocts a plan to eat the sun, believing it will make him strong enough and prevent his mother from leaving him. With his best friend Bullu, he embarks on a whimsical quest to eat the sun. This heartwarming tale explores a child's power of imagination, and the expansive nature of a mother's love through the eyes of a mischievous, vulnerable child grappling with change.

Writer's Statement

Hawa Mithai is more than just a tale of childhood adventure. It aims to spark conversations about the nature of belief systems and traditions we inherit. Our goal is not to preach, but to encourage viewers to look at their religious beliefs without fear - much like a child seeing the world anew each day. Through laughter, empathy, and nostalgia, we hope to open hearts and minds to new perspectives on faith and tradition.

In the end, *Hawa Mithai* is a celebration of curiosity, of a child's imagination, and a reminder that sometimes, the most profound truths can be found in the simplest of stories.

Biography

Anurita Jha's journey began by winning the Channel V's *Get Gorgeous* beauty pageant in 2007. Anurita made her acting debut in the critically acclaimed *Gangs of Wasseypur*, which The Guardian ranked as the 59th best film of the 21st century. Her filmography includes diverse projects like the musical drama *Jugni*, the award-winning *Mithila Makhana* first Maithili film from Bihar to win a National Award, *Rocketry* by R. Madhavan won a National Award in 2023, and *Thai Massage* produced by Imtiaz Ali.

In web series, she has had notable roles in *Pariwar* directed by Sagar Ballary, the *Aashram* series by Prakash Jha, and *Asur 2* by Oni Sen. Upcoming projects include *Mithya-2* and *AK-47*. Anurita has acted in impactful short films on social issues like *Unaccused* on marital rape and *Pari and Pinocchio* on societal pressures. She ventured into writing and producing with the short *Holikadahen* and has more such projects in the pipeline. Her talent, hard work and dedication to meaningful storytelling across mediums like films, web series, and shorts establish Anurita as a truly versatile and multifaceted artist to watch in the entertainment industry.



I'll Smile in September

I'll Smile in September

Hindi

Aakash Chhabra

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Synopsis

KISMATEEN, 22, works for a brass band in Old Delhi. An ace trumpeter, he is well-liked by peers, especially the bandmaster ASHOK, 50s, who considers him to be his protege. A crack seeps in this relationship when Kismateen falls for Ashok's only daughter, AVANI, 21, who is studying to be an Art Conservator-Restorer. The two bond over their mutual love for Sufi music, old monuments and Meena Kumari's films. While Kismateen is a socially anxious person who talks through his music, Avani is partially deaf. They start dating secretly.

Eventually Ashok finds out about them and confronts Kismateen. He knocks out his teeth and fires him instantly. Having lost the love of life, his livelihood and his ability to play, Kismateen feels utterly defeated. He moves back to his hometown of Almora to find a renewed purpose in life. Days pass by. Kismateen picks work at a salon. Though the shop's owner is affable, the world around mocks him for losing his girl and his teeth. He stops speaking altogether to avoid further embarrassment. While traveling in a bus one afternoon, he comes across a smile clinic advertisement. He concludes that the only way he can move ahead in life is if he finds his smile back with a set of dental implants. However, even after he gets them, he feels something amiss. The film ends as he gets a portrait clicked, taking off his retainers and smiling with a gap in his teeth.

Writer's Statement

Through *I'll Smile in September*, I want to encapsulate Kismateen's unspoken feelings about his first heartbreak, his separation from the one true love of his life and his vehement yearning to move on in life.

During the pandemic while I lived alone in my apartment, I started to reflect upon the idea of companionship. I thought of my failed romantic relationships over the years, the flawed attempts I made, moving from one partner to another, simply to rewrite the script about perfect endings.

Dejected and desolate, Kismateen considers dental implants to be his only chance at life. He, too, is desperate to rewrite his ending. He is denied a chance at love simply for being a lower-caste Sufi artisan. With a careful balance between a tender romance and a quiet examination of pathos, the film attempts to explore the themes of forbidden love, grief and self acceptance.

Biography

Aakash Chhabra is a writer and director based in Panipat, India. He is an alumnus of the CHANEL X BIFF Asian Film Academy, Busan Asian Film School (AFiS), Locarno Documentary School and Satyajit Ray Film & TV Institute.

His shorts have screened at festivals in Busan, Winterthur, Poitiers, Tehran, Kerala, Oberhausen and Dharamshala. His debut short *Mintgumri* 2021 was nominated for the Film Critics' Guild Critics' Choice Awards 2022, his short documentary *A Winter's Elegy* 2022 featured on the Sight and Sound - Best Video Essays of 2022 and his latest short fiction *Errands* 2024 premiered at the Busan International Film Festival 2024.

He is presently working on his feature-length debut *I'll Smile In September* which is a part of the Torino Film Lab's Red Sea Lodge 2024. It was developed at the Busan Asian Film School (AFiS) 2022 and Produce au Sud Nantes 2022. It has participated in the QCinema Project Market 2024, Ho Chi Minh City IFF Project Market 2024 and BIFF Asian Project Market 2023

He is a recipient of the reFrame Generalities film fellowship 2021-22 and the Rough Edges Uncode Fellowship 2022-23.



Kalaa Kaali

The Art Of The Dark

English, Hindi

Anam Danish

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Synopsis

In a mystical town in Rajasthan, siblings Alisha and Arjun Suryavanshi inherit a supernatural legacy from their grandmother, Lata, who dabbled in the occult. Following Lata's sudden death, they return to their ancestral haveli to uncover its secrets. Alisha, a doctor, and Arjun, an occultist, blend medical care with dark arts. Their routine is disrupted when a session spirals into chaos, revealing increasingly hostile spirits.

While their friend Kanika, an inspector investigating a series of murders in town, seeks Arjun's help, the danger escalates. In the meantime, Alisha uncovers a family curse with gender-specific implications, leading Arjun to propose a drastic solution: Alisha must marry Varun, a suitor chosen by their grandmother. Together with their friends—Kanika, Sameer, Sameer's quirky girlfriend Sara, and their exorcist friend Anshuman—they prepare for a pivotal wedding ceremony that becomes a battleground against a formidable demon, revealing the true nature of the curse and challenging the siblings to confront their destiny.

Writer's Statement

Kalaa Kaali explores the tension between chaotic goodness and ethical ambiguity. The film delves into whether noble ends can justify dubious means, challenging the concept of the "lesser evil" in moral decision-making. Characters strive to benefit others through unconventional methods, raising questions about whether actions driven by self-interest can truly be altruistic.

It questions whether goodness lies in outcomes alone or in adherence to ethical principles, and whether moral behavior is authentic if motivated by personal gain. How does one reconcile a belief in God with the desire for god-like control? *Kalaa Kaali* is a story that needed to be told because it empowers my characters in a way that resonates with our collective aspirations.

Biography

Anam Danish is a writer and lawyer based in Delhi, and a second-generation storyteller. Growing up in a family where storytelling was always celebrated, Anam was inspired to explore narratives that go beyond the ordinary. With a deep love for both the written word and the art of filmmaking, she aims to craft screenplays that venture into the unorthodox – stories that push boundaries and spark new ways of thinking.

Her work spans across genres, from a children's book to award-winning short stories and films, and includes extensive writing in academic circles. But it's in the world of film where Anam's passion truly comes alive. Whether fiction or nonfiction, she believes in the transformative power of stories – those that entertain, provoke, and offer new perspectives.

Currently working in editorial, Anam blends her legal expertise with her love for storytelling, always looking for fresh angles and untold stories. She's excited to keep exploring new creative possibilities and telling stories that challenge the status quo.



Konyak

Konyak

Konyak Naga, Hindi, English

Uddhav Ghosh

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Synopsis

Belonging to the legendary headhunting tribe of Nagaland, Thungpang Konyak's brutal coming-of-age story unfolds against the backdrop of the Raj. As a child, Thungpang is haunted by visions of impending doom, foreseen by the tribe's enigmatic shaman. These visions become reality when a tragic accident and wrongful accusation lead to his best friend Sangba's exile.

Years later, this fragile peace is shattered as Sangba, now a pariah, orchestrates a deadly ambush, plunging the region into chaos. Amidst the breathtaking and unforgiving landscape, Thungpang embarks on an unrelenting chase to save his people, confronting nature's fury and Sangba's vengeance. *Konyak* is an edge-of-the-seat, relentless elevated-genre film that combines action & vengeance with magic realism rooted in folklore. It explores themes of honor, betrayal, & redemption, offering a vivid portrayal of a world where myth & reality collide, at a time when the region grappled with its identity under colonial rule.

Writer's Statement

Konyak is, on its face, a simple story—brother against brother. But simplicity is deceptive. This is a film about the last of the headhunters, a tribe whose rituals & beliefs straddle the line between the natural & the supernatural, where nature itself can be both ally and adversary.

The conflict is in the contradictions. Morality clashing with loyalty. The weight of tradition versus survival. Magic realism colliding with cold, hard reality.

I chose to write *Konyak* because it demands nuanced telling. It's a story that invites you to question, to explore the space where history, myth, and human nature collide, all while delivering the visceral punch of an epic action film.

Simple? Maybe. But so much more.

Biography

Uddhav Ghosh is a storyteller who thrives on the untamed edges of narrative. With 15 years across Print, Radio, TV, and Digital, he brings an unflinching lens to both mainstream and fringe stories, weaving them with cultural nuance and journalistic rigor. Rejecting tidy, algorithm-driven storytelling, his work respects the audience's intelligence and dares to challenge.

As Head of Development and Lead Writer at Irregularity Media, founded by the producer of cult films *Tumbbad* and *An Insignificant Man*, Uddhav oversees creative ideation, writers' rooms, research, writing, and pitching processes for projects destined for international streaming platforms and local studios. His recent works include *Turtuk*, a comedy series set in the last village of India that explores the absurdity of identity; *Salvador*, a limited series about food and the rapid homogenization of Goa; *Narak*, an anti-caste creature feature; *Rust*, a cautionary sci-fi feature about capitalism; and *The Anatomy of Violence*, which examines the link between violence and the Indian male. He is also developing *Aadu Puli Attam* (The Goat & the Tiger), an expansive crime thriller set at the intersection of Tamil Nadu's film and political world, as well as *Sherman*, a zany homage to 90s action comedies.



The Tale of The Holy Beast

The Tale of The Holy Beast

Assamese, Malayalam, Hindi

Triparna Maiti

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Synopsis

Life of a 4-year-old Mangal, an innocent elephant calf, takes a devastating turn, when he loses his herd in a poachers' attack and gets trapped in a muddy pit deep in a forest of Assam. After being rescued and nurtured by a humble indigenous tribe, Mangal is torn away from them by a notorious hunter who sells him off. From here on chains take over his life and Mangal completely loses his freedom.

Passed from one master to another, Mangal gets trained with whips and sticks, finds a friend in a young circus performer named Mala, falls in love at logging camp and grows into a magnificent tusker. Eventually, he ends up in a temple in Kerala revered as a deity, yet confined in chains. Despite his fame, Mangal suffers in isolation, haunted by memories of the lush green forest from his childhood until a robotic elephant comes into his life and changes everything. Will Mangal be able to break free from the chains? Will he ever go home?

Writer's Statement

Back in 2017 during one of my trips to Kerala, I met the superstar elephant Ramachandran at his Thrissur temple. His majestic size and noble demeanor intrigued me to question his existence as a wild animal confined in chains. I got to know that despite his massive fan following, he is known for going rogue at festivals and causing fatalities. He is blind but he is still forced to parade even today. As I watched Ramachandran swaying in musth, the story of Mangal emerged.

The lifelong weight of chains and isolation can turn a god into a monster. This is a story from a country where women are worshiped as goddesses and at the same time abused and restricted to have free will. Bound by the invisible chains of the society, we are constantly judged, questioned and corrected from the day we are born. The practice of capturing wild elephants and breaking their spirit to use them as commodities is a tradition, profoundly resonates with my struggle to find a safe place in the world. Through this deeply personal story, the film explores a journey of captivity and a lost childhood spent in the wilderness.

In one way, this is a simple story of an elephant's journey. In another way, it is about chains- both symbolic and literal, and about growing up, witnessing life, worship and faith, the constant desire to return to one's childhood, and so much more.

Biography

Triparna Maiti is an animation artist, writer, and independent filmmaker based out of Kolkata. Studied at Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI), she specialized in Animation Cinema. Her practice includes themes like identity, memory, sexual expression and animal rights.

Her work as an animation artist and storyteller is driven by a deep commitment to exploring the interconnectedness of nature and humanity. Her Diploma animated short film *Neer* (Water), has been selected at festivals including Anifilm in Czech Republic, and FilmSchool Fest Munich, as well as the Oscar-qualifying BISFF and IDSFFK in India. Presently she is developing her first feature animated film *The Tale of the Holy Beast*, based on the life of captive elephants in India.



Piyush Ki Toh...Nikal Padi

To Pee or Not To Pee

Hindi

Piyush Srivastava

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Synopsis

Piyush, a charming 32-year-old ad agency executive from Delhi, relies on adult diapers to manage his embarrassing bedwetting problem, which has persisted since childhood. His wife, Shikha, was initially shocked and surprised when she discovered his secret, but her love and support have been his rock. Now, as they visit her enthusiastic family in Gwalior for the first time after marriage, Piyush realizes his ultimate shield was misplaced during packing.

To make matters worse, a surprise function at the cozy home attracts more guests, making it difficult for the new son-in-law to slip out and buy more diapers. Surrounded by overwhelming in-laws, Piyush and Shikha desperately try to keep his condition hidden. However, when his mother-in-law accidentally discovers Piyush's bedwetting issue, chaos erupts.

Tension builds, relationships are tested, and the family's warm welcome turns into a comical frenzy.

Writer's Statement

I drew inspiration for the story from my personal experience as a newlywed, navigating the challenging task of visiting my in-laws while harboring a secret that threatened to upend my sense of dignity and self-respect.

This story is a heartfelt exploration of Piyush's journey, a 32-year-old battling a rare condition of bedwetting. Without ever becoming preachy or associating bedwetting with social stigma, my narrative focuses on resilience, delving into the daily struggles of the protagonist, and the power of love and acceptance to overcome even the most daunting challenges. By sharing Piyush's story, I hope to bring forward a rarely explored subject wrapped in a feel-good dramedy that resonates with audiences of all ages, without resorting to stereotypes.

Biography

Piyush Srivastava hails from Jodhpur, Rajasthan. He is a seasoned previsualization artist and filmmaker based in Mumbai. With a storied career spanning associations with top VFX studios like MPC, DNEG, and Rhythm & Hues, Piyush has lent his creative expertise to blockbuster projects including *RRR*, *Kalki 2898 AD*, *Kraven the Hunter* and more. His upcoming collaborations include YRF's *WAR 2* and *ALPHA* where he is lending his creative previz expertise to design thrilling action sequences for these films.

As a writer/director, his horror duology *A Tale of an Onion Witch* has achieved remarkable success, crossing 20 million views across streaming platforms including Disney+ Hotstar and Amazon Prime Video. Piyush has also directed and produced a web series titled *BHARTA* for Sony Liv, along with numerous commercials and music videos for prominent clients including UNICEF. His short films have garnered recognition at prestigious film festivals like BISFF and the Mumbai International Queer Film Festival.



Antaraal

The In-between

Hindi

Mohammed Ali Rukadikar

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Synopsis

Charlie, a 34-year-old private detective specialises in supernatural cases and has a unique ability to speak with the dead. Charlie's world is turned upside down when his mentor, Father Ribeiro, dies under mysterious circumstances and his ghost is missing. As he grapples with despair, an unexpected figure emerges - the ghost of Yash Sethi, a genius tech tycoon trapped between life and death.

An unlikely partnership begins where they undertake some of city's darkest mysteries. Meanwhile, a mystical physicist, Jacky, using a sinister device prolongs his life by absorbing ghost energy is on a killing spree. Risking all they hold dear, Charlie and Yash battle to rescue all the trapped souls from Jacky's clutches, who also has Father Ribeiro's ghost. Navigating the spectral world, Charlie uncovers a prophecy linked to his enigmatic past that puts Yash's life in perils - his only friend who has a chance to be alive again.

Writer's Statement

Antaraal stems from my fascination with afterlife. A world having its own set of problems that can be a reflection to our society. And what can be more fun than a detective duo - one alive and one half-dead, to solve all the problems. Like Charlie, I've often found myself navigating the complexities of life with a sense of being

haunted—not by ghosts, but by past decisions, lingering doubts and the expectations of others. The concept of Yash, the comatose tech billionaire, reflects the modern obsession with technology and the fear of losing one's soul to it, both literally and metaphorically. Jacky, the antagonist, represents the darker side of obsession - the blind quest to gain immortality. The story draws inspiration from a mix of folklore, contemporary societal fears, and the timeless allure of the supernatural.

Biography

Mohammed Ali Rukadikar, a graduate in Bachelors of Mass Media, is a 'Bombay' kid and an avid lover of everything story. Apart from working for many years in advertising from assisting to directing brand films, sketches and music videos, Ali has been developing original story ideas for feature films and series as well. He was signed up with CleanSlate Filmz to develop an investigative horror *The Last Selfie* for director Prosit Roy, an original idea developed by him and his co-writer friend Sarat Rao.

He loves working on all kinds of stories. Stories about people, places or even events that are yet to take place. Wibbly wobbly. Timey wimey. He is naturally more drawn towards magic realism, sci-fi, comedy, thriller, horror and interactive/transmedia ideas as well. Currently, he is signed up with Civic Studios to develop an original feature film with co-writer friend Keshav Naidu. He is currently represented by The Story Ink (TSI).



Mahakaal

Mahakaal

Hindi, English

Aditya Watts

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Synopsis

Mahakaal is set in 1870's India, ostensibly under the tyrannical British Raj. However, It is not the British India you know - It is more. Rudra Bhairava (23) having faced first-hand the consequences of the Raj, is on a quest of bloody revenge against Lieutenant Governor Victor Dyer for massacring his family.

In his quest, Rudra, trained by a mystical Guru, wields a 6-foot Gada won in a battle against a 25-foot Mahabharata era Chiranjeev. But his journey is meant to be no straight tale of vengeance, and Rudra's path transforms forever when he encounters Geet, a girl from the year 2024.

Writer's Statement

Mahakaal is the definition of a passion project. It combines nearly every interest I have ever had as an Artist - Indian Mythology. Mughal & British Indian History. Philosophical Sci-Fi. Gothic Literature. Epic Anime, etc.

Mahakaal is set in History (1870's) but blends elements of Indian Mythology (Acestics, Chiranjeev's, Rakshasas etc.) and also elements of Science Fiction (In the form of a Geet, a girl who accidentally travels back from 2024.)

This helps me to achieve my ambition of exploring India in its entirety - through Space and Time.

Additionally, Through this story, I seek to explore themes that have captivated me throughout my life: Destiny vs Free Will. The nature of Time and Death. The essence of Morality etc. You could say I wrote Mahakaal because I had to. It is everything I am. Everything that has spoken to me and inspired me. That's why - *Mahakaal*.

Biography

Aditya Watts is a formally trained filmmaker (WWI Film Direction: 2008-10) with 14 years of experience in crafting diverse narratives. His writing influences are based both in literature and cinema. He has been deeply interested in Literature from his early 20's and his interests span from Jorge Luis Borges to Thomas Pynchon to JK Rowling. As for cinema, during his initial Film school days Aditya was fascinated by Godard and Kubrick's formalism. Eventually, he has come to appreciate the craftsmanship and vision of mainstream Filmmakers such as Spielberg and Cameron.

His most significant achievement is the recent feature film as a Writer and Director - *Kaansya*, adapted from Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. It has recently been awarded the Semi-Finalist position in the 28th Flickers Rhode Island Film Festival in the US. And is an Official Selection at the 36th Girona Film Festival in Spain. Additionally Aditya has written and directed a found footage Sci-Fi Film *The Golden Boyz* (2015-16). Aditya Watts is currently represented by Scriptors, founded by Saurabh Bharat.