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Locarno Festival Open Doors 2-8 | 8 | 2017

Exploring eight countries in South Asia

Afghanistan • Bangladesh • Bhutan • Maldives •
Myanmar • Nepal • Pakistan • Sri Lanka

Open Doors 2016-2018

Exploring South Asia

The fifteenth edition of Open Doors celebrates the second chapter of its South Asian journey

The initiative will dedicate two more years to its in-depth exploration started in 2016 on the eight chosen South Asian countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The Open Doors section offers a three-fold program:

- The traditional co-production platform Open Doors Hub, introduces eight promising projects from the whole region for possible international cooperation. International professionals will have the opportunity to meet the eight filmmakers along with their main producer(s) if any.
- The Open Doors Lab highlights eight producing talents who significantly contribute to the development of the independent film scene and to the emergence of new voices in the region. In 2017, the three countries in focus are Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Both activities will run over 6 days (2 – 8 August 2017) providing a tailor-made program for each participant.

Our intention is to give these talents more visibility and the opportunity to build stronger bounds with their international colleagues; for this specific purpose, regular meetings will be organized between guests from Open Doors, Industry and the Festival – from formal occasions (scheduled one-to-one meetings) to networking events .

- Last but not least, the Open Doors Screenings section presents, every day of Locarno Festival, either a feature length film or a program of shorts from the region; in total, a selection of twenty or so films reflecting the cinematographic creativity over the last fifteen years. Featured countries in 2017 are Afghanistan, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.


We sincerely hope you will fully enjoy our 2017 edition.

The Open Doors Team

Open Doors Hub 2017

Afghanistan • Bangladesh • Myanmar •
Nepal • Pakistan • Sri Lanka

8 Projects in development

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Across the Rainbow Bridge (Indreni Pari) Nepal / Sri Lanka

Synopsis

An old childless couple, SHIVA (72) and his loving wife KASHI (65), live in the quiet village of Nuwakot, Nepal. The old miller Shiva has just returned from his holy pilgrimage, during which he received a message from his deceased father: a premonition of his own death.

Being childless, his father promised to help him travel through the afterlife. However, in the following week Shiva is faced with issues that he can no more neglect, having no heir to take over his ancestral mill or to perform his funeral rites, and needing to understand the miraculous circle of life before submitting to death.

Kashi is affected in a peculiar way as she learns of her husband's imminent death. She sees omens of Shiva's passing. The prized buffalo that provides the milk that Shiva drinks every night dies suddenly. Kashi is determined to replace it and so to guarantee the milk that she thinks could prevent her husband's death, but without success; she is bound to accept the situation.

As he waits for his time to come to an end, Shiva becomes more and more convinced that love and attachment are nothing but fleeting illusions in the cycle of life.

Director's Note

Indreni Pari is a story generated from a very personal space. I was born in the picturesque town of Nuwakot, a valley surrounded by "nine hills". To be born as a son in Nepal is regarded as a privilege: a male heir helps branch out the family, and ensures the dead's path to heaven. But like most privileges, it comes with a huge baggage—you're given the privilege to pursue your dreams and aspirations, but you're expected to sacrifice them for your family if need be.

When my wife was expecting our first child, my family hoped and prayed for a son. They were elated when she actually gave birth to one. When I look at him, I swell with pride; maybe because I "know" that my path to heaven has already been paved.

Through *Indreni Pari*, I want to test and expose these beliefs rooted in my subconscious. Dealing with the void and loneliness that an old childless couple is enveloped with, it dwells in the vacant corners of my childhood home and resonates in the rhythm of the farmers working on the fields. I want to pay tribute to my grandparents' love and wisdom and honor my father who has done everything expected of him as a son.

Producer's Note

I've been deeply impressed with Niranjana's short films. With *Indreni Pari*, Niranjana has tried to bring out an important and spiritual father – son – father relationship. Shiva, in his 70's is lucky enough to find someone to inherit his mill but has no one to do the last rituals when he dies. However, his deceased father promises to help him travel through the after life. We have been working together on the development of *Indreni Pari* for a while and I've decided to be a part of Shiva's journey to eternity. Vimukthi is also on board and we are very excited to be at Locarno Open Doors. We look forward to meeting possible partners and co-producers to make this film possible.

Technical Information

Genre Fiction

Shooting format Digital, Color

Estimated running time 105'

Shooting language Nepali

Production status Writing and development

Shooting location Rasuwa and Nuwakot (Nepal)

Shooting period Mar 2018 – Apr 2018

Total budget EUR 250,000

Funds secured EUR 30,000

Co-producer Vimukthi Jayasundara, Film

Council Productions, Sri Lanka

Visual Concept

Indreni Pari is a spiritual exploration that I want to exercise through cinema. I want to capture the stagnant life of the village and the circular activities of its folks. The images in the film will be still and repetitive, mirroring that same life. The camera will not move until the death of the buffalo, which will break the pattern of the characters' life. As the film progresses so does the movement of the camera falling into a free motion, becoming more unchained.

Colors will also progress through the film. The color red is a hue that Hindu married women wear to glorify the sanctity of their marriage. When a woman turns into a widow, she is expected to wear white and somber hues to show that she's mourning. As Shiva progresses towards his doom, the color of Kashi's attire will become muted to symbolize their predicament.



Director

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Director's Biography

Niranjana earned his bachelor's degree in Film Studies in 2013, followed by a 2-year diploma of Digital Animation and Video Editing and several filmmaking workshops & master classes. His short film *Kafal Pakyo* travelled to more than 65 festivals, winning awards including Best Fiction Film at 5th Water-sprite-The Cambridge international student FF, Audience Choice at Mediawave-Another Connection IFF, Best Short Film at Doc Sunback FF. *Indreni Pari* is his debut feature film.

Selected Filmography

Smell of Rain (Fiction, 2', 2017)

Kafal Pakyo (*Bayberries Have Ripened*) (Fiction, 17', 2015)

Production Company Profile

Established by Ram Krishna Pokharel in 2007, Icefall Productions has produced various shorts that travelled to several festivals. Ram is the first Nepali Producer participating in EAVE Producer's Workshop, where he is developing his project *Jhyalincha* (CNC Award for Development at Open Doors Hub 2016). Ram and Vimukthi Jayasundara are collaborating to identify talents and projects from South Asia. *Indreni Pari* is their first project together.

Selected Filmography

Jhyalincha (*Seasons of Dragonflies*) by Abinash Bikram Shah (Fiction, in development, 2017)

Jha Lo (*Year of the Bird*) by Shenang Gyamjo Tamang (Fiction, 15', 2016)

L'Ascension by Ludovic Bernard, France (Fiction, 103', 2017, as Nepal Unit Producer)

Badeszenen

Afghanistan

Synopsis

Yonus is a 12-year-old Afghan boy living a harsh life of labor under the command of his authoritarian father and practicing Imam Haji, in the impoverished areas of Bamiyan.

The motherless Yonus works arduously to ease the living for the two new wives of his dad, but nothing can stop his imagination yearning for freedom from tyranny. One day when Yonus finds himself increasingly pressured by family tensions and the suspicious kidnapping of his uncle, his vivid curiosity leads him to discover a mysterious new world, filled with light and forbidden wonders. Darkness seems to melt into reverie, yet everything is astonishingly real. He gazes at a group of beautiful female creatures rejoicing in the blossoming nature and sparkling water - a badeszenen oasis marking the contrast between Yonus' cold and merciless raw life, in the middle of a denatured family, and the colorful, steamy and warm feeling surrounding the feminine creatures group.

Going further into this surreal experience throughout an intersection of realistic depictions and imaginative contemplations, the boy starts to acknowledge his precarious position. Facing the frightening choice of his own liberation, deciding to leave home, Yonus targets the vast horizon with endless roads and possible answers, while under him a steep head valley opens up, reminding him of the beautiful yet unreal world he discovered. He has to be free, together with his creature friends...

Director's Note

Badeszenen is a story about my childhood and about the possibilities of breaking through imposed frames of looking at the world. When a person lives under the oppressive workings of an authoritarian system, the possibilities to imagine, play and be free are limited, yet these desires become even more urgent. When I started to re-archive my past three years ago, I wanted to go back to my roots and to a place of origin and nakedness where you can be confronted and ashamed of the terrible yet intimate elements of existence. I call them the inner spaces of violent pain and shame, the "unnatural" mix of indoctrinated religion and ancient spirit of the people.

Badeszenen is about the power of survival through creativity and an investigation of what it means to be human. It is also a way to explore the unknown forces of our brain. Being on the edge of the cliff, as the boy in *Badeszenen* often is, symbolizes looking at the past and at the future at the same time, while having to face the present moment of choosing. And trying to see, what could happen..?! What if.. there is another story to tell?

Production Notes

Until now, my films were mainly concept-based, cinematic investigations in the form of experimental docu, video art, or fiction. *Badeszenen* is going to be my first feature-length fiction, a narrative-based story around a main character, which can be placed somewhere between commercial cinema and art house. Together with my associate producer Husain, who can manage the local production, we are looking for a main European producer dedicated to art house who will want to bring *Badeszenen* up to distribution.

Technical Information

Genre Fiction Magic realism

Shooting format 4K Cinema Scope, Color

Estimated running time 90'

Shooting language Hazaragi

Production status Writing and development

Shooting location Bamiyan (Afghanistan)

Shooting period Nov 2018 – Jan 2019

Total budget EUR 340,000

Funds secured Currently raising

Co-producer Mohammad Husain Naikzad, Bamiyan Film Production, Afghanistan

Visual Concept

The film uses natural light and the raw beauty of the high mountain peaks in Bamiyan. Long, smooth steadycam shots emphasize the contemplative atmosphere. It is winter. The frozen, muddy rocks contrast with the steamy, surreal Badeszenen hot springs. The dialogues are reduced. The sounds coming from nature and animals, the murmuring voices of the mysterious creatures and the sound of praying are often part of the story. The close-up of the characters portraits their often suggestive gaze. High angle shots often render the characters as little dots in the distance, creating a moment of release from the tension of the story.



Director

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Director's Biography

Born in Bamiyan, Dawood is an artist/filmmaker based in Amsterdam & Kabul. BA Fine Arts (Gerrit Rietveld Amsterdam), postgraduate diploma film-making (LFA London), MA artistic research (NFA Amsterdam). His first film *Bekhawy* premiered at IFFR 2009. His films screened at Cannes Short Corner, Krakow FF, Nederlands FF, International competition Short FF Oberhausen. Dawood explores montage as a method to investigate authority, memory and imagination.

Selected Filmography

Me Montage (Experimental documentary, 22', 2017, part of *A journey into zerspace triptych*, 63')

Arvascka (Fiction, 15', 2012)

Bachesh (Fiction, 28', 2010)

Production Company Profile

The Afghan bureau of Hilmandi Productions (Amsterdam, NL), Bamiyan Film Production is a company with the vision of helping young Afghan talents to develop their cinematic voice. Alongside producing films and experimental video works, Bamiyan Film holds workshops for young filmmakers in Bamiyan. *Badeszenen* will be its first feature-length fiction film; its two headquarters will help make the connection between Afghanistan and Europe.

Selected Filmography

A journey into zerspace triptych by Dawood Hilmandi (Experimental documentary, 63', 2017)

Raha by Dawood Hilmandi (Video essay, 10', 2017)

Time and Space by Dawood Hilmandi (Video series, 5-10', 2013)

Barzakh: Between Heaven and Hell

Pakistan

Synopsis

In the decrepit leftovers of a once robust and now sleazy and ragged film industry, middle aged Sheena is still a star. She lives in Lahore, once the center of “Lollywood” and now a city known for exotic dancers and B-movies full of sex and violence. She holds onto her past glory as she tries to maintain her status as the venerable queen of Lollywood in the age of middle-class values and TV soap operas where younger women fight to dethrone her. Sheena is also trapped in an abusive relationship with her longtime boyfriend, Rana, a well-connected cop, who has a wife and son. He is a jealous and possessive lover who often beats Sheena in fits of rage and has hired a spy to keep an eye on her. He doesn't know that his own teenage son Salman, is often found loitering outside her house. One night, a storm compels Sheena to take pity and call the boy inside. Rana's spy informs him about the stranger and he flies into a rage, ready to burst the stranger, only to find his own son, wet and frightened. Livid, he beats Sheena in front of Salman and chops off her hair. The incident causes a rift between Rana and Sheena, which finally compels her to take a film deal and move out of town. On set, a distraught Sheena humiliates a local tabloid reporter, Naseem Bachan, who retorts by running a story claiming that Sheena is a trans-woman. Sheena takes the reporter to court but her career and her relationship with Rana already seems to be ruined in the media frenzy that ensues.

Director's Note

In Pakistan, not a month passes without the news of a brutal killing or incident surrounding a trans-woman. Our attempt with this film is to engage with themes of sexuality, censorship, sexual identity and violence. The film is set against the backdrop of the dying “Lollywood” film industry which fell due to Islamization and the change in attitudes towards entertainers, especially women and transwomen. As recently as 2012 more than six cinemas were set ablaze by violent mobs. While underground dance-halls and pornographic films abound, no dialogue or mainstream representation of themes such as sexuality is permitted. This film is an attempt to lay bare the reality of this hypocritical and conflicting morality around sexuality which inevitably leads to hyper masculine forms of sexual violence. The film is told as a noir mystery centering around the sexual identity of its main protagonist, ‘Sheena’. The visual style of the film enhances the uncomfortable sting of entering this strange, decaying and hellish world.

Producer's Note

Locarno Open Doors Hub is an opportunity to introduce the film to the European Market where bold and unwavering films about marginal sexualities can find a nurturing and exciting market. We are aware of a massive and eager audience of South Asian diaspora in the UK, North America, Australia and many Scandinavian countries where a niche theatrical release will be very profitable. We intend to follow our festival run immediately with a theatrical, TV and VOD release.

Technical Information

Genre Fiction

Shooting format 4K, Color

Estimated running time 90'

Production status Writing and development

Shooting language Urdu, Punjabi

Shooting location Karachi, Lahore (Pakistan)

Shooting period Aug 2018 - Oct 2018

Total budget EUR 760,000

Funds secured Currently raising

Visual Concept

The film is mainly located in the film noir genre, fusing the storytelling techniques of mystery, melancholia and menace. The colors will be highly saturated in Technicolor style so as to immediately bring to mind a 'dated' film look - to reflect a dying film industry and the death of celluloid. The fractured and shadow lives of our protagonists are visualized through fleeting reflections caught in broken mirrors and cheap reflective surfaces such as black vinyl floors. The hallmark of the B and C grade film genre is the harsh and bright lighting and in this film too, it will create a viscerally disturbing and claustrophobic atmosphere.



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Directors' Biography

Meenu Gaur and Farjad Nabi are the writers and directors of *Zinda Bhaag* which was Pakistan's first entry to the Academy Awards after a gap of over 50 years. The film won 14 national and international awards, had a theatrical release in the USA, UAE and Pakistan, and on digital platforms like Netflix (US & Canada). Meenu and Farjad are currently working on their third feature film as well as a documentary film on Karachi titled *Tasting the Secret: Karachi*.

Selected Filmography

Zinda Bhaag (Fiction, 115', 2013)

Jeewan Hathi (Fiction, 60', 2016)

Karachi: Tasting the Secret
(Documentary, 75'-90', 2017)

Production Company Profile

One of Pakistan's leading production companies, Matteela Films has produced four feature films in the last three years including *Zinda Bhaag* (2013), and is credited as one of the leaders in reviving cinema in Pakistan. Pakistan has a unique and volatile geopolitical positioning, and we believe it is essential to be able to work with international producers to create content that tells stories of marginalized people free from censorship and with global outreach.

Selected Filmography

Zinda Bhaag by Meenu Gaur & Farjad Nabi
(Fiction, 115', 2013)

Jeewan Hathi by Meenu Gaur & Farjad Nabi
(Fiction, 60', 2016)

Gardaab by Harune Massey (Fiction, 94', 2015)

Dhanu (Working title)

Sri Lanka / Italy

Synopsis

Dhanu is a 17-years-old boy who lives the difficulties of his age, along with the profound generational changes that Sri Lanka faces today: a country coming out from 26 years of civil war which is now moving towards globalization.

Dhanu grows up in a deep sense of loneliness due to a distant mother, who emigrated to Italy to support her family, and an absent father, plagued by alcohol problems. Despite being marked by moments of conflict, the relationship with his father JINADHASA is deep and allows them both to survive the void left by the mother.

Dhanu's daily life is spent between school and friends, he shares his outbursts and fragility of adolescence with. Even if his mother MALLIKA tries to get closer to her child through regular video calls and by giving in to all his material requests, she inevitably fails. Their tormented relationship collapses when she tells him she intends to take him to Italy. In the meanwhile the father gets hospitalized due to an accident and Dhanu feels more and more lonely.

After the father is discharged he is determined to get his role in the family back. However, when father and son appear to have reached a stronger intimacy, Jinadhasa lets Dhanu know that his mother is coming back to take him to Italy. The parents' decision shakes the already precarious balance of the boy, who now feels betrayed and starts to see his dream of a reunited family being shattered.

Director's Note

Sri Lanka has been theatre of war and conflicts and while the situation is far from being solved, the country is experiencing a period of strong socio-cultural changes. The will to embrace the future with all sort of innovation is deep, especially among youngsters. The post-war era has opened the doors to globalization and the population found itself divided between a strong push towards capitalism and a sense of stiffening to the culture of origin. As I emigrated to Italy and I often go back to Sri Lanka, I had the chance to look at my country of origins from a new and different point of view; I see how deeply the society is changing; this is what interests me and I want to focus on. My first feature film *For a son* was about people of Sri Lankan origins trying to integrate in a foreign country which is slowly becoming their new homeland despite contradictions and difficulties. Since I think that culture is constantly changing, I conceived *For a son* as an Italian story in which the protagonists are new Italian citizens. Whereas now I intend to narrate those who remain and want to remain in Sri Lanka, focusing on youngsters and their need to reinvent their culture. Dhanu is one of them.

Producer's Note

By reaffirming the desire of a free, political, authentic cinema, made with a very few tools, Katugampala commits himself to a kind of filmmaking that tends not to consume words and images, but to transform them into patient and small acts of change. Okta Film chooses to work with this Italian Sri Lankan talented director, because he brings with him an idea of future which we find difficult to see or even more to imagine.

Technical Information

Genre Fiction

Shooting format HD, Color

Estimated running time 90'

Production status Writing and development

Shooting language Sinhala

Shooting location Negombo (Sri Lanka)

Shooting period Mar 2018 - May 2018

Total budget EUR 230,000

Funds secured Currently raising

Visual Concept

The film will be shot with a sober look from a script that acts only as an outline: dialogues and camera movements won't be decided beforehand, creating a realism and an immediacy close to documentary. The small crew will work with non-invasive technical equipment immersing in the daily life of the local teenagers. It will be shot with handheld camera, mostly in natural light and often during twilight, giving the shots density of colors. The final aspect ratio will be 4:3, with a quite casual aesthetics that better represents vitality and youth. There will be plenty of silence and ambient sounds combined with hip-hop music.



Director

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Director's Biography

Suranga D. Katugampala grew up in two different countries (Sri Lanka, Italy), cultivating the desire to see the world from other points of view. He felt in love with auteur cinema and since he graduated in multimedia studies he started to experiment with video and photography. His point of view "from the bottom" brought him to create art on small resources, in a minimalistic way, as he proved with his debut feature film *Puthékuta* (*For a son*).

Selected Filmography

Puthékuta (*For a son*) (Fiction, 74', 2016)

Katada ayti (*My mother's money*) (Fiction, 11', 2014)

Son of the lovely capitalism (Fiction, 17', 2015)

Production Company Profile

Okta Film is firmly biased towards the kind of filmmaking that is in love with reality proposing auteur-driven films in which the activities of looking and listening intersect with the search for narrative forms that are new, skillful, experimental and enjoyable. With a strongly international political outlook and intellectual perspective, Okta Film chooses creative indiscipline, blends of genres, friction and the conflict of languages.

Selected Filmography

Happy Time Will Come Soon by Alessandro Comodin (Fiction, 100', 2016)

The other side by Roberto Minervini (Documentary, 92', 2015)

Redemption by Miguel Gomes (Documentary, 27', 2013)

Discount Workers (Working title)

Pakistan / Germany

Synopsis

A 2012 textile factory fire in Karachi, Pakistan, kills over 260 workers, among which Saeeda Khatoon's only son. A domestic widow, her following politicization transforms her into a key figure in a male-dominated workers' rights movement. In Baldia Town, the massive industrial district of Karachi home to hundreds of textile factories producing for international brands, she starts to organise with survivors and families. With the support of Nasir Monsoor, a trade union representative, a 400-family-strong association is created and Saeeda elected the vice-president. Their goal, to gain monetary compensation, evolves into an all-out challenge to corporate exploitation and political corruption. The factory, producing for the German clothes brand KiK, was certified as "fire safe" by the Italian auditing company RINA - just 20 days before the fire. Lawyers from both Germany and Italy reach out to the families in Baldia Town, traveling to meet them and gather evidence, as lawsuits begin in all three countries. Saeeda finds herself at the center of a growing movement and two potentially system-changing transnational court cases. Now, there is a real chance that systemic change is coming from those at the very end of the supply chain.

Director's Note

Following Saeeda's personal journey allows us to understand many elements of a complex system through a compelling, character-driven narrative. We watch as an uneducated woman moves from understanding very little about the forces shaping her life, to uncovering how a system of international brands, private auditors, and local factory owners functions to sustain the deadly practices of cost- and time-cutting, the victims of which include her son, and those in her community.

We are two directors, from Germany and Pakistan, whose shared passion for cinema and workers' justice have led to this personal-professional collaboration. We want to reveal to the viewer the reality of work on the textile supply chain through impressive cinematographic language, as well as the personal depth of the characters behind the push for a new transformation. Our assumed goal is to make a piece that reveals, teaches and inspires, where one can really feel the characters, places and struggle.

Producer's Note

We read about the global supply chain almost daily. Amid this ongoing debate, the focus is usually on productivity and effectiveness: how to produce quicker and cheaper than ever before, making prices fall. This affects mostly those who are at the end of the production chain.

When I heard about the Baldia Association, it opened new perspectives to me. Formed by the most marginalized and vulnerable, it is taking a powerful action to shift the paradigm, pointing out the broken procedures and bringing the corporations to court to hold them accountable and take responsibility. Depending on how fast the legal cases will develop, our narrative thread can be directed around the court case itself, and we can tell all the implications laid out above along with the happenings of the case. If the proceedings are delayed, we will instead take the chance to broaden the analysis of European corporate involvement in similar factory disasters. We are aiming to release the film in early 2018.

Technical Information

Genre Documentary

Shooting format 4K, Color

Estimated running time 80'

Production status Pre-production

Shooting language Urdu, Italian, German, English

Shooting location Pakistan, Germany, Italy

Shooting period Sep 2016 – Dec 2017

Total budget EUR 200,000

Funds secured EUR 47,000

Co-producer SAMAAJ, Ammar Aziz, Pakistan

Visual Concept

The film will be shot mostly in observational style. A sense of danger and unease is created in Baldia Town, contrasting Saeeda's still life at home with the chaos of the mega city. The film portrays the entire supply chain, from cotton-picking in rural areas, to factories where the cotton is spun into thread, then sewn into T-shirts in urban factories in Karachi, giving a sensory impression of the claustrophobic and dangerous working conditions all along. Court proceedings cannot be filmed and will be depicted coupling audio recording with images of Baldia Association waiting for news, followed by the delivery of news by German counterparts. The narratives will be carefully interwoven through montage.



Directors

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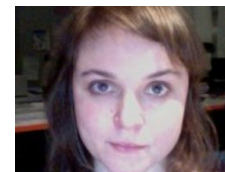
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Directors' Biography

Ammar is a Pakistani film director, whose portfolio features mostly documentaries about labor and gender issues, uniting art and activism. His debut feature documentary *A Walnut Tree* premiered at IDFA in 2015. Christopher is an Australian-German lawyer and documentary filmmaker with experience in creative documentaries, as well as political documentary reportages. His work focuses primarily on issues of business and human rights. Ammar and Christopher have been working together on *Discount Workers* for over a year.

Selected Filmography

Ammar Aziz

A Walnut Tree (Documentary, 92', 2015)

Hashtnagar – a song of another world (Documentary, 25', 2010)

Christopher Patz

Neighbors (Documentary, 17', 2016)

Inflate Exhale (Documentary, 15', 2016)

Production Company Profile

Veronika is a producer at Kloos & Co. Medien GmbH, one of the most active companies on the international documentary scene. They produce high-quality, award-winning creative documentaries for cinema and TV, featuring several co-productions and collaborations with broadcasters worldwide. Their portfolio includes a mix of social issues, human interest, human rights related topics and current social phenomena. The core of Veronika's work are socially- & politically-driven topics.

Selected Filmography

Holy Cow by Imam Hasanov

(Documentary, 82', 2015)

I didn't cross the border, the border crossed me by Toma Chagelishvili (Documentary, 73', 2016)

God is not working on Sunday by Leona Goldstein (Documentary, 86', 2015)

Made in Bangladesh

Bangladesh / France

Synopsis

After a pregnant young factory worker, MOYNA, dies in a fire accident at a ready-made garment factory in Dhaka, her friend, SHIMU, joins the workers' union to fight MOYNA's cause. SOHEL, Shimu's unemployed husband, spends his time at the mosque listening to sermons.

Shimu meets TASLIMA, a young human rights activists, who helps Shimu to organize workers at the factory. Despite the class difference, a friendship develops between the two women. Shimu is given a new voice and purpose by attending workers union meetings, and interacting with Taslima. Sohel is unhappy with Shimu's late hours. After finding a job as a security guard at the Islamic Bank, Sohel wants Shimu to quit the factory. Shimu tries to reach out to Taslima, but finds out that she has taken a leave of absence, being in the middle of a custody battle over her daughter. Shimu is left alone to fight against Sohel, who wants her to stop working, and defend herself against factory authorities who intimidate her to drop the union.

Director's Note

In 2012, a fire broke out at Tazreen Fashion Factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh, killing 117 workers. In April 2013, the Rana Plaza garment factory building collapsed, and over 1000 workers lost their lives. As a response to these tragedies, I wanted to make a film about the resilience of the young women engaged in the Ready Made Garment sector. In the course of my research, I came across Daliya Sikder, a twenty-year-old factory worker, who was the workers union president. Since the Rana Plaza tragedy, workers like Daliya have been important agents of change in improving factory conditions, and giving a voice to the workers. When I told Daliya about my film project, she shared her life story with me. We made plans that there will be multiple screenings of the film, only for workers. I added fictional elements to Daliya's story and named the character Shimu.

At the factory, Shimu's body is exploited for the sake of cheap production, feeding a global network of business and profit. While at home, her body becomes the appropriating ground of her husband Sohel's failed masculinity. Moreover, Shimu's body becomes subject of orthodox Islamic ideologies, when Sohel forces her to put on a hijab. In the face of capitalist exploitation at work, and patriarchal exploitation at home, Shimu is not a passive victim, but very much an active agent. Shimu might be young, small, fragile, but she gains the strength to fight against injustice through building networks and friendships with women workers and activists. *Made in Bangladesh* is about how an individual young woman navigates and creates her own synthesis out of the forces of capitalism, leftist politics and Islamization.

The process of telling women's stories in cinema, for me, is always a process of coming to terms with my own self as a woman. Within the framework of patriarchal-phallogocentric culture, I feel cinema, as a medium, offers a space for women's solidarity, and to articulate women's imagery and self.

Technical Information

Genre Drama

Shooting format HD, Color

Estimated running time 92'

Shooting language Bengali

Production status Writing and development

Shooting location Dhaka (Bangladesh)

Shooting period Nov 2017- Dec 2017

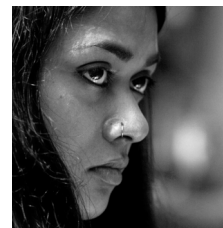
Total budget EUR 465,000

Funds secured EUR1 06,000

Co-producer François d'Artemare, Les films de l'après-midi, France (*attending*)

Visual Concept

In terms of cinematography and mise-en-scene, *Made in Bangladesh* will use some of the formal elements of direct cinema: real locations, non-stylized lensing, and hand-held movements. Long takes and depth of field will be used to capture the development of events. Another visual approach will be an up-close look at a woman worker. The camera will often, for longer durations, move over the workers body, studying its physicality and movement. Women workers' body will be juxtaposed with the machines. Details will comprise a big part of the visual narrative. Shimu's perspective will be the guideline for the spectator's point of view.



Director and Producer

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Production Company

Khona Talkies (Bangladesh)

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Director's Biography

Rubaiyat Hossain has been working as a director and producer since 2008 in Bangladesh. She has produced features, shorts and documentaries. Her debut feature film *Meherjaan* (2011), was banned from theatres because of its critic of masculine nationalism. Her second feature, *Under Construction* (2015), premiered at 'New Directors Showcase' at Seattle International Film Festival, and was theatrically released in Bangladesh.

Selected Filmography

Under Construction (Fiction, 88', 2015)

Meherjaan (Fiction, 119', 2011)

Production Company Profile

Khona Talkies was funded in 2008 by Rubaiyat Hossain with the vision of working with young Bangladeshi talents to produce films in a local terrain with possible foreign co-production and creative tie-ups. Since its inception Khona Talkies has produced and acquired a few award-winning and internationally acclaimed as well as locally significant independent films by young filmmakers. Khona Talkies seeks for international co-production and distribution partnership.

Selected Filmography

Under Construction by Rubaiyat Hossain (Fiction, 88', 2015)

Meherjaan by Rubaiyat Hossain (Fiction, 119', 2011)

The Poison Thorn by Farzana Boby (Doc, 40', 2014)

One Summer Day (Nway Ta Nae)

Myanmar

Synopsis

SAN (30) is a pregnant rural medical doctor who had taken care of her much younger brother, KoSi since their parents died during the civil war in Myanmar. San and her brother KoSi (16) are from the "Mon" minority ethnic group. In spite of having to deal with the difficulties of pregnancy by herself, San continues work in the village clinic. But when the military performs a recruitment drive for young men to join the army, KoSi disappears. San is determined to retrieve his brother from a far-flung military camp despite her pregnancy and lack of decent transportation in the rough countryside of Myanmar. San's expedition paints a picture of Myanmar's economic and political situation.

After hours of travel and painful contractions, San must confront the toughest obstacle yet—the military itself. She chances upon the arrival of the military captain, CAPTAIN KYAWKYAW. The Captain compassionately allows San to meet KoSi. San decides that she will not leave without her only brother as she vividly remembers her memories of the cruelty of the military.

In the Captain's anger, he takes KoSi out of the army and sends him home. However, he is certain that a man, once a soldier will always be a soldier.

Director's Note

I was born in 1985 in an army camp during the military government dictatorship in, what was then called, Burma. My father was a soldier. As a child growing up in the army camp, I saw child soldiers who were the same age as me. I thought, "how come they are not in a classroom like I am?" At the time, I saw the army as the only and best choice to lead the country.

When I was 15, my father retired but warned me not to join the army or he would disown me – it confused me to say the least. Only when I entered university did I see and realise the differences of the Burma I knew and understood as a child to the real Myanmar – a land of oppression where freedom and justice are denied. It was then that I could finally see the military controlling every aspect of life: the social, political and economical. Their control has invaded deep into the minds of the individual, like a disease.

I have chosen to resist. Seeing the suffering of my people has only strengthened my resolve. During the Saffron Revolution in 2007, I took to the streets as a one of the activists, I tried to record the images and covered series of demonstrations and protests at a time when information was closely guarded by the military. I only wanted our struggles to be known. Proved to be risky, I was caught red-handed. I was sent to prison for a crime I committed – recording people in the streets, with a camera.

One Summer Day is a story of contemporary Myanmar that illustrates the Burmese youth who believe, like I once did, that only the military can lead the country. The characters and the narrative reflect that no true freedom has been achieved under the pretense of democracy.

Technical Information

Genre Fiction

Shooting format 4K, Color

Estimated running time 90'

Production status Writing and development

Shooting language Burmese, Kayin

Shooting location Kayin State, (Myanmar)

Shooting period Nov 2018 -Dec 2018

Total budget EUR 280,000

Funds secured EUR 30,000

Visual Concept

One Summer Day is fiction inspired by realities of life. There is no fantasy, so it seems to be natural to treat the film with elements like natural lighting, dress-up, make up, no designed sets or studio locations and long takes etc. With camera work, it evaluates from the static camera to the dynamism and from the dynamism to the freedom of the action. The color is inseparably connected to the lighting. It is important to identify the connection and interaction of the levels of lighting and texture. The story moves like a clock. When Dr. San learns that KoSi is gone, the clock starts ticking; minute-by-minute.



Director

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Producer

Aiess Alonso

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Director's Biography

Wera is an independent filmmaker from Myanmar. His knowledge in film stems from underground initiatives and screenings in Yangon at the time of military rule to film workshops abroad. He is an alumnus of Busan IFF's Asian Film Academy 2013 and Berlinale's Talents Tokyo 2014. Wera participated in Locarno Open Doors Lab 2016 and La Fabrique les Cinémas du Monde 2017 in Cannes to develop his first feature *One Summer Day*.

Selected Filmography

The Robe (Fiction, 18', 2016)

Side Glimpse of a Dragon (Fiction, 17', 2014)

The Glass Man (Documentary, 20', 2013)

Production Company Profile

Green Age Film is a Yangon-based film company founded in 2013 by filmmaker Wera Aung. Its mission is to make films that transcend stories of an unknown Myanmar. It supports and provides young Burmese and international filmmakers with minimal funding and other resources like story development, line production, equipment rental and post-production services, with an aim to move forward the new wave of independent cinema from Myanmar and beyond.

Selected Filmography

The Robe by Wera Aung (Fiction, 18', 2016)

Fat Boy Never Slim by Wera Aung (Fiction, 14', 2016)

Side Glimpse of a Dragon by Wera Aung (Fiction, 17', 2014)

The Whole-Timers

Nepal / France

Synopsis

Gurans is a 13-year-old boy who joins the Maoist revolution with the naïve idea that with the power of a gun he can easily find his missing father. But he discovers very soon that the civil war is too big and complicated for him to carry on with his personal quest.

Unable to fire and kill with his gun, Comrade Gurans becomes attracted to another weapon, a video camera wielded by the Documentarian in his platoon. When Gurans exchanges his AK47 for the camera, he begins to comprehend the chaos of the civil war while developing special bonds with his fellow comrades and mentors. *The Whole-Timers* is Gurans' coming of age story that accounts for the final three years in the decade long civil war of Nepal, told entirely through the perspective of the documentarian guerrillas as they live and die in the line of duty only to discover the disillusion of their revolution.

Director's Note

During the civil war in Nepal which lasted from 1996-2006, the rebelling Maoist faction had a group of guerrillas whose sole duty was to document the war at all times. Equipped with small handy cams, such combatants filmed their training sessions, assaults and speeches to make propaganda documentaries for their party. We, as filmmakers, were naturally drawn to these documentarian guerrillas who saw the ravages of war, first hand. How would it possibly feel to witness naïve and highly impressionable men, women and children morph into ideologically driven killing machines?

The Whole-Timers is an exploration and acknowledgement of the camera-wielding guerrillas who experienced the civil war from the closest quarters. Gurans exchanging the gun for a video camera is an idea that we feel most akin to. Although we didn't witness the civil war - first hand - this idea of a child militia filming his world with a camera became our primary inspiration for recreating a part of history that has been quietly swept under the rug. This very idea moves us to imagine a world of possibilities beyond what's been already shown on screen about the Nepal Civil War.

Films are made to counter man's innate habit of forgetting. Films are also made to make sense of the chaos that engulfs us. No matter how half-baked the outcome of the decade long Maoist revolution seems at this point of time; the adversity faced by thousands of guerrillas was too real to forget. *The Whole-Timers* is a testimony of their sacrifice and passion that has been misinterpreted and misconstrued over the years. It is also an acknowledgement of the fact that a communist revolution that was sparked in the faraway hills of Nepal was in fact fuelled by real blood, sweat and marrow of the people.

Producer's Note

The Whole-Timers is a unique and ambitious first feature-film from very talented directors. We are looking for all kind of partnerships. We have produced the second short-film of Bibhusan and Pooja Gurung, *Dadyaa* (selected at Venice, Busan, Toronto and Sundance).

Technical Information

Genre Fiction

Shooting format HD, Color, B&W

Estimated running time 120'

Production status Writing and development

Shooting language Nepali, Khas

Shooting location Achham, Kalikot, Kathmandu (Nepal)

Shooting period Feb 2019 – May 2019

Total budget EUR 700,000

Funds secured EUR 120,000

Co-producer Sisiko Films (Nepal)

Visual Concept

We envision a film where the lines between the 1st and 3rd person perspectives are intertwined to a level where the distinction between fiction and non-fiction is blurred. Shot entirely in available light and night vision mode, the film will have a balance of properly executed propaganda material as well as footages with frenetic energy of warfare. Amateur footages which carry impressionist and poetic qualities will be a standing motif, which will enable us to give the film an essay like quality. Told through video accounts of 3 Maoist guerrillas, the visual style, aspect ratio, colors and movement will also change throughout the film.



Directors

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Directors' Biography

Based in Kathmandu, Pooja Gurung and Bibhusan Basnet have been working together for the past 7 years. Their short-films *The Contagious Apparitions of Dambarey Dendrite* and *Dadyaa – The Woodpeckers of Rotha* have screened in Venice, Sundance, Toronto, Busan and Tampere. They are currently working on their first-feature film, *The Whole-Timers*, selected at the Cannes Cinefondation L'Atelier 2016 and the Jerusalem International Film Lab.

Selected Filmography

The Contagious Apparitions of Dambarey Dendrite (Fiction, 18', 2013)

Dadyaa – The Woodpeckers of Rotha (Fiction, 16', 2016)

Production Company Profile

Les Films du Tambour is a production company based in Paris founded in 2014 by Marie Legrand and Rani Massalha. It aims at producing independent feature-films from all around the world, from first-time or experienced directors. The company produced *Dégradé* by Arab and Tarzan Nasser (Cannes Critic's Week 2015), and is currently working with directors such as Cagla Zencirci & Guillaume Giovanetti, Atiq Rahimi, Hicham Lasri, Andrei Cretulescu.

Selected Filmography

Dégradé by Arab and Tarzan Nasser (Fiction, 85', 2016)

Charleston by Andrei Cretulescu (Fiction, 125', 2017)

Dadyaa – The Woodpeckers of Rotha by Bibhusan Basnet and Pooja Gurung (Fiction, 16', 2016)

Open Doors Lab 2017

Afghanistan • Pakistan • Sri Lanka

8 proactive producers / filmmakers-producers



- 22 **Jawed Taiman, Tora Bora Media**
Afghanistan
- 23 **Mohammad Mehdi Zafari, ADFO Afghanistan Documentary Film Organization**
Afghanistan
- 24 **Abdul Tamim Zarabi, Rumi Films Productions**
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Sri Lanka
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Sri Lanka



Jawed Taiman

Tora Bora Media

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Biography

I have been producing my own films since I engaged in filmmaking. Currently based in Afghanistan, I studied Cinema at EICAR (Paris, France) in 2006 and founded my own production company Tora Bora Media in 2011. The experience gained through the productions of my first two documentary films (*Addicted in Afghanistan*, awarded worldwide; *Voice of a Nation*) gave me the essential skills to become production manager for the German fiction feature *Inbetween Worlds* by Feo Aladag, nominated at Berlinale Competition 2014. I am currently developing the first fiction feature of the Afghan filmmaker Sayed Masood Eslami.

Production Company Profile

Tora Bora Media was established in Kabul in 2011 by Jawed Taiman. Since then, we have produced 16 shorts by young Afghan filmmakers and 2 feature documentaries, including Jawed Taiman's first documentary *Addicted in Afghanistan* (2009) - a co-production with the UK that won 4 awards and over 20 nominations internationally. We have been co-producers and production managers for several western features, fictions and documentary films. We are now looking into producing feature dramas, bringing in new collaborations to change and enrich Afghan cinema.

Selected Filmography

Addicted in Afghanistan by Jawed Taiman (Documentary, 73', 2009, as independent producer)
Voice of Nation by Jawed Taiman (Documentary 52', 2012)
Amir & Sarah by Sayed Jalal Hussaini (Fiction, 15', 2013)

Line up

The Last Night by Sayed Masood Eslami (Fiction, 90', 2019)
Silent World by Jawed Taiman (Fiction, 90', 2019)



Mohammad Mehdi Zafari

Afghanistan Documentary Filmmakers
Organization (ADFO)

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Biography

Mohammad Mehdi Zafari learned the art of filmmaking at Ateliers Varan in Afghanistan in 2006; later, he attended several workshops in Europe, including La fémis and INA (France), EIUC Workshop on Cinema and Human Rights in Venice (Italy) and Berlinale Talent 2008. Moreover, he studied visual anthropology at EHESS in Paris. Mehdi is now back in Afghanistan to do his part and contribute to peace through documentary filmmaking. Having directed and edited several documentaries, his first experience as producer was in Afghanistan in 2010, serving as associated producer with CSFilm. The latest film he produced is *Democracy* by Ibrahim Bamiyani (2015).

Production Company Profile

Ateliers Varan Afghanistan-trained filmmakers have established ADFO in 2012. Its main objectives are to strengthen fiction and documentary filmmaking in Afghanistan, to promote co-existence and democracy with documentary productions and to enhance social development via training in filmmaking. ADFO has made 35 films; films with local stories that have been screened at international film festivals. The group has a long and steep way to climb to meet its core philosophy while Afghanistan strives to reconcile peace and stability.

Selected Filmography

Spring in Afghanistan by Mohammad Mehdi Zafari (2016, 30', Documentary, as co-producer)
Democracy by Ibrahim Bamiyani documentary (2015, 40', Documentary)
Kaboul Soviet Héroïne by Mohammad Mehdi Zafari (2013, 26', Documentary, as co-producer)

Line up

Pole Sorkh by Sadeq Nasery (2018, 40', Documentary)



Tamim Abdul Zarabi

Rumi Films Productions

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Biography

Based in Kabul, Abdul Tamim Zarabi started working with Rumi Films Production in 2014 as distributor and producer. Since then, he has produced two short films, in which he also took part as an actor: *Mary Mother* (2016) and *The Luck Bird* (2017), by the Afghan filmmaker Sadam Wahidi. *Mary Mother* has been selected for more than 30 international film festivals and won eight awards; *The Luck Bird* is looking for a premiere. Abdul is currently developing Sadam Wahidi's first feature film, *Second Trip*.

Production Company Profile

Rumi Films Production was founded in 2014 by filmmaker Sadam Wahidi. It aims to produce quality and professional fiction films. As a film production company based in Kabul we are able to work all over Afghanistan regardless of any circumstances. Besides *Mary Mother*, *You are not American* (2015) had a successful festival run with 24 nominations and three awards. We are now producing our first feature film production, for which we are looking to collaborate internationally in terms of financing and distribution.

Selected Filmography

Mary Mother by Sadam Wahidi (Fiction, 20, 2016)
The Luck Bird by Sadam Wahidi (Fiction, 23, 2017)
You are not American by Sadam Wahidi (Fiction, 8', 2015)

Line up

Second trip by Sadam Wahidi (Fiction, 90', 2018)



Mehnaz Alavi Diwan

Studio Rail Films

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Biography

A Fine Art graduate, Mehnaz Diwan has been active in the Pakistani theater/television/film industry for the last 18 years. She had the honor to launch two major TV channels in Pakistan, Indus Vision and Geo, heading the Geo Film department as producer. Among her film productions, *Josh* by Iram Parveen Bilal premiered at Mumbai Film Festival 2012. Currently she is the CEO of Studio Rail Films and partner at Another Life Media, following the development of films such as *Lyari Bypass*, *Bloody Nasreen* and *Baghdadi* with producer Faisal Rafi.

Production Company Profile

Studio Rail Films is a Karachi-based production company, founded in 2014. We produce feature-length fiction films, documentaries and music videos, providing in-house technical facilities for production and post-production. Studio Rail welcomes all kinds of scripts, especially those which can be considered game changers in both local and international markets. Pakistan finds itself in a film revival stage, which we hope to boost via international collaborations. We are currently developing three feature films that we aim to complete in 2018.

Selected Filmography

Josh by Iram Parveen Bilal (Fiction, 104', 2013)
Main Hoon Shahid Afridi by Syed Ali Raza Usama (Fiction, 130', 2013, as associate producer)
Chambaili by Ismail Jillani (Fiction, 133', 2013)

Line up

Project Z | Adam by Wajahat Malik (Fiction / Spy, 105', 2018)
Heer by Ismail Jillani (Fiction / Lovestory, 130', 2018)
Ras Malai by Haseeb (Fiction / Comedy, 110', 2018)



Jami Mahmood

Azadfilm

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Biography

Jami studied film at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena (USA). He returned to Pakistan in 1998 with a dream to revive the local film industry. He founded Azad Film to make meaningful, thought-provoking movies. His directorial debut *Pal do Pal* changed the landscape for music videos in Pakistan, launching his series of award winning, critically acclaimed music clips. Jami ventured into commercials in 2002; with these revenues, he produced and directed feature films such as *Moor* (2015), which took 5 years to make. *Moor* travelled internationally (premiered in Busan) and was well received in Pakistan, also becoming the national entry at the 88th Academy Awards.

Production Company Profile

Azad Film is a Karachi-based company partnered by Jami and Nazira Ali. Meaning "Free Cinema", we produce challenging fiction and documentary films, free from stereotypical patterns. While the Pakistani industry is rising again, it still needs time to find its own voice and to be fully ready for non-Bollywood-style films. *Moor* (2015) fits in this interim stage; now we want to move to the next step, making more elaborate films that can also resonate across our borders. We also work with film schools to give the local youth tools to make documentaries on zero budget, enhancing social development and giving voice to their stories.

Selected Filmography

Moor by Jami Mahmood (Fiction, 119', 2014)
O21 by Jami Mahmood and Summer Nicks (Fiction, 125', 2013)
Raman by Jami Mahmood (Experimental music video, short, 2016)

Line up

Hit and Run by Jami Mahmood (Fiction, 120', 2019)
Jugnu by Ali Abbas Naqvi (Fiction, 120', 2019)
92 Cricket world cup by Jami Mahmood (Fiction, 120', 2020)



Mohamed Adamaly

Monad Art

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Biography

Practicing Attorney-at-Law and visiting lecturer in Law and Marketing, I pursued a long career acting, producing and directing, first in Theatre and then in Films. My wife Nadira and I founded the Production Company Monad Art in 2010 and have co-produced two films since then, including *With You Without You* by the established director Prasanna Vithanage (2012, 14 Festivals worldwide including Montreal, Hong Kong, Best Film at Vesoul Film Festival 2013). I aim to produce and direct 2-3 feature films in the next 10 years.

Production Company Profile

Established by Mohamed & Nadira Adamaly in 2010, Monad Art aims to raise the bar and fundamentally broaden the scope of cinema in Sri Lanka, bringing daring stories to a larger public. We have produced 2 socially and politically relevant films in the Sri Lankan context, by both experienced and debutant directors. Among these, *With You Without You* by Prasanna Vithanage (2012) has been acclaimed widely and awarded globally. Our films have been funded mainly by investors, but we wish to pursue a kind of cinema that can appeal to international collaborations (a model we adopted for theater), breathing fresh air into the local film industry.

Selected Filmography

With You Without You by Prasanna Vithanage (Fiction, 90', 2012)
The Strange Familiar by Malith Hegoda (Fiction, 132', 2015)

Line up

Paper Planes by Mohamed Adamaly & Ruwanthi de Chickera (Fiction, 95', 2018)
A film that explores the woeful helplessness of Society and facilities-structures in dealing with the issue of mental illness
The Rule of Law by Mohamed Adamaly & Ruwanthi de Chickera (Based on a true story, 105', 2018) : *A true story of police brutality in an unfortunate situation of mistaken identity, the triumph of justice and the ultimate failure of the Rule of Law*



Rasitha Jinasena

Sky Entertainers (pvt) Ltd

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Biography

Rasitha Jinasena has over 20 years of experience in local and international Film, Television and Video production. He is the co-founder of Sky Entertainers (pvt) Ltd, a fully fledged Sri Lankan Video Production Company established 12 years ago - specialized in local, regional and international television commercials, films and soap operas. Rasitha has produced six films including Prasanna Jayakody's internationally acclaimed *Karma* (2010), *28* (2015, NETPAK AWARD/Rotterdam) and *Dadayakkaraya - Leopard do not bite* (2016, ACF FUND BUSAN), and *Withered Leaf* by Duminda Sanjeeewa (2016, debut).

Production Company Profile

Sky Entertainers is an award-winning fully fledged Sri Lankan film and video production company founded in 2005 and based in Colombo. Our goal is to provide a high-value, reliable service in a stunning array of film and video productions. We, as a production company, create the platform to produce films of all genres covering commercial, art and experimental films, giving both the young and experienced filmmakers in Sri Lanka and South Asia the opportunity to take their project to an international level. *28* and *Karma* were well recognized in international film festivals.

Selected Filmography

28 by Prasanna Jayakody (Fiction, 98', 2014)
Dadayakkaraya - Leopard Do Not Bite by Prasanna Jayakody (Fiction, 75', 2015)
Withered Leaf by Duminda Sanjeeewa (Fiction, 90', 2016)

Line up

Mahamaya by Prasanna Jayakody (Fiction, 80', 2019): *Focused on a simple incident of post war, takes in to a deeper discussion war in general.*
Muruga Sanniya by Jagath Manuwarne (Fiction, 90', 2017): *Debut film, an Answer for the political pressure on the youth in the society*
Journey to Soul by Sumudu Guruge (Documentary, 74', 2018): *Deeper research on What is soul? Where does it exist?*



Anura Silva

Ashram Films

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Biography

Anura holds a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from the University of Colombo. His first time working in the film industry was as producer of Vimukthi Jayasundara's *Between Two Worlds* in 2008; co-produced with France, it reflected the international dimension of Anura's work since the very beginning. Since then, Anura has been representing Sri Lanka at a number of international film festivals, including the Venice Film Festival. He is currently producing his next feature film: *Inflammable* by Chinthana Dharmadasa.

Production Company Profile

Ashram Films was founded by Anura Silva in 2008 with the vision of supporting films by the up-and-coming Sri Lankan filmmakers who had been shaping the next generation. As the company's name suggests, Ashram attracts film projects that allow filmgoers to meditate on their own lives. The company's first co-production with Europe (France) was *Between Two Worlds*, which premiered in the Competition at 66th Venice Film Festival. Its next project, *Inflammable*, is in the final stage of post-production and the company intends to reach out to the international market.

Selected Filmography

Between Two Worlds by Vimukthi Jayasundara (Fiction, 80', 2009)

Line up

Inflammable by Chinthana Dharmadasa (Fiction, 75', 2017)



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