



presents

FLO FILM FESTIVAL



REEL WOMAN POWER

18 - 20 FEBRUARY, 2016

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Chief Minister
Maharashtra
16th February 2016

MESSAGE

I am happy to learn that FICCI FLO Mumbai Chapter is organising 'FLO FILM FESTIVAL'.

I personally appreciate the efforts taken by FICCI Ladies organisation in organising the event.

My best compliments for the Festival Catalogue and other endeavours.

(Devendra Fadnavis)

Smt. Falguni Padode
Chairperson,
FICCI FLO Mumbai Chapter.

Screening schedule for FLO Film Festival 2016

Thursday, 18th February 2016

Time	RR Hall
11:30 AM	Title: <i>Fatima</i> (2015) Country: France, Dir: Philippe Faucon, Duration (hrs): 1:19
1:15 PM	Title: <i>Mission Rape: A Tool of War</i> (2014) Country: Denmark, Dir: Annette Mari Olsen, Katia Forbert Petersen, Duration (hrs): 1:01
2:40 PM	Title: <i>She Objects</i> (2016) Country: Hong Kong, Dir: Nicola Fan, Duration (hrs): 0:50
4:00 PM	Title: <i>Poshter Girl</i> (2016) Country: India, Dir: Sameer Patil, Duration (hrs): 2:19

Time	JB Hall
10:00 AM	Title: <i>Inauguration Ceremony of FLO Film Festival</i> Duration (hrs): 2:00

3:00 PM	Title: <i>Driving with Selvi</i> (2015) Country: Canada, Dir: Elisa Paloschi Duration (hrs): 1:14
5:00 PM	Title: <i>Tales (Ghesseha)</i> (2014) Country: Iran, Dir: Rakshan Bani-Etemad, Duration (hrs): 1:28

Time	Russian Centre
11:00 AM	Title: <i>The Price of Sex</i> (2011) Country: USA, Dir: Mimi Chakraborty, Duration (hrs): 1:13
12:40 PM	Title: <i>Morality TV Aur Loving Jihad: Ek Manohar Kahani</i> (2008) Country: India, Dir: Paromita Vohra, Duration (hrs): 0:31
1:40 PM	Title: <i>Swayam</i> (1991) Country: India, Dir: Mahesh Bhatt, Duration (hrs): 2:20

4:25 PM	Title: <i>Our Family</i> (2007) Country: India, Dir: K. P. Jayasankar, Anjali Monteiro Duration (hrs): 0:56
5:55 PM	Title: <i>The Boxing Girls of Kabul</i> (2012) Country: Canada, Dir: Ariel J. Nasr, Duration (hrs): 0:52
7:10 PM	Title: <i>I Am A Girl</i> (2014) Country: Australia, Dir: Rebecca Barry, Duration (hrs): 0:52

- Q & A with Elisa Paloschi & Selvi + ITVS & FLO after the screening of Driving with Selvi
- Q & A with Nicola Fan & Su Mei Thompson after the screening of She Objects
- Q & A with Paromita Vohra after the screening of Morality TV
- Q & A with Anjali & Jayasankar after the screening of Our Family
- Q & A with Locsi Ferra & Abhishek Srivastava (ITVS) after the screening of The Boxing Girls of Kabul and I Am A Girl
- Interaction with Sonalee Kulkarni and cast & crew after the screening of Poshter Girl

Friday, 19th February 2016

Time	RR Hall
10:30 AM	Title: <i>I Am Nojoom, Age 10 and Divorced</i> (2014) Country: UAE, Dir: Khadija Al-Salami, Duration (hrs): 1:39
12:35 PM	Title: <i>Lajwanti (The Honour Keeper)</i> (2014) Country: India, Dir: Pushpendra Singh, Duration (hrs): 01:03
2:10 PM	Title: <i>Paulina (La Patota)</i> (2015) Country: Argentina-France, Dir: Santiago Mitre, Duration (hrs): 1:43
4:20 PM	Title: <i>Siti</i> (2015) Country: Indonesia, Dir: Eddie Cahyono, Duration (hrs): 1:28
6:15 PM	Title: <i>Speed Sisters</i> (2015) Country: Palestine-USA-Qatar-UK-Denmark-Canada, Dir: Amber Fares, Duration (hrs): 1:20

Time	JB Hall
10:45 AM	Title: <i>28</i> (2014) Country: Sri Lanka, Dir: Prasanna Jayakody, Duration (hrs): 1:38
12:50 PM	Title: <i>Threads</i> (2014) Country: USA-Canada-Bangladesh, Dir: Cathy Stevulak, Duration (hrs): 0:31

2:00 PM	Title: <i>She's Beautiful When She's Angry</i> (2014) Country: USA, Dir: Mary Dore, Duration (hrs): 1:32
4:05 PM	Title: <i>Mustang</i> (2015) Country: Turkey-France, Dir: Deniz Gamze Ergüven, Duration (hrs): 1:34
6:05 PM	Title: <i>Under Construction</i> (2015) Country: Bangladesh, Dir: Rubaiyat Hossain, Duration (hrs): 1:28

Time	Russian Centre
11:00 AM	Title: <i>Daughters of Mother India</i> (2015) Country: India, Dir: Vibha Bakshi, Duration (hrs): 0:45
12:20 PM	Title: <i>TrueLoveStory + Printed Rainbow</i> (2014 + 2006) Country: India, Dir: Gitanjali Rao, Duration (hrs): 0:35
1:20 PM	Title: <i>Climb Media Films (Sand Castle, Here I am, Like Sisters)</i> (2015, 2015, 2013) Country: India, Dir: Kireet Khurana, Ricky Sandhu, Prashant Shikare, Duration (hrs): 0:10
2:05 PM	Title: <i>Shamiana Films (Blouse, Shikaayat, Leeches, The Corner Table, Pava)</i> (2013, 2014, 2015) Country: India, Dir: Vijayeta Kumar, Richa Agarwal, Payal Sethi, Manjary Makjany, Vaishnavi Sundar, Duration (hrs): 1:25

4:05 PM	Title: <i>Inside Out, Bharatmata ki Jai, HerStories</i> (2009, 2012, 2014) Country: Canada, Dir: Divya Cowasji, Shilpi Gulati, Avadhoot Khanolkar, Arpita Chakraborty, Amol Ranjan, Shweta Radhakrishnan, Fareeda Muhammad, Milanth Gautham, Ridhima Sharma, Shiva Thorat, Silja Wurgler, Duration (hrs): 1:11
5:45 PM	Title: <i>No Problem! Six Months with the Barefoot Grandmamas</i> (2012) Country: India, Dir: Yasmin Kidwai, Duration (hrs): 0:57
7:15 PM	Title: <i>Invoking Justice</i> , (2011) Country: India, Dir: Deepa Dhanraj, Duration (hrs): 0:52

- Q & A with Vibha Bakshi after the screening of Daughters of Mother India
- Anamika Chakravorty from US Consulate will present the film She's Beautiful When She's Angry
- Q & A with Pushpendra Singh after the screening of Lajwanti
- Q & A with Cathy Stevulak & Leonard Hill after the screening of Threads
- Q & A with TISS students after the screening of Inside Out, Bharatmata ki Jai & HerStories
- Q & A with Kireet & Tehzeeb Khurana after the screening of Climb Media films
- Q & A with Yasmin Kidwai after the screening of No Problem!
- Q & A with Locsi Ferra & Abhishek Srivastava (ITVS) after the screening of Invoking Justice

Saturday, 20th February 2016

Time	RR Hall
10:30 AM	Title: <i>Speed Sisters</i> (2015) Country: Palestine-USA-Qatar-UK- Denmark-Canada, Dir: Amber Fares, Duration (hrs): 1:20
12:15 PM	Title: <i>Under Construction</i> (2015) Country: Bangladesh, Dir: Rubaiyat Hossain, Duration (hrs): 1:28
2:10 PM	Title: <i>Margarita, with a Straw</i> (2014) Country: India, Dir: Shonali Bose, Duration (hrs): 1:42
4:25 PM	Title: <i>Siti</i> (2015) Country: Indonesia, Dir: Eddie Cahyono, Duration (hrs): 1:28
6:20 PM	Title: <i>28</i> (2014) Country: Sri Lanka, Dir: Prasanna Jayakody, Duration (hrs): 1:38

Time	JB Hall
10:45 AM	Title: <i>Paulina (La Patota)</i> (2015) Country: Argentina-France, Dir: Santiago Mitre, Duration (hrs): 1:43

12:50 PM	Title: <i>Newborns</i> (2014) + <i>Saving Face</i> (2011) Country: India; US-Pakistan, Dir: Megha Ramaswamy, Daniel Junge; Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, Duration (hrs): 0:49
2:20 PM	Title: <i>I Am Nojoom, Age 10 and Divorced</i> (2014) Country: UAE, Dir: Khadija Al-Salami, Duration (hrs): 1:39
4:25 PM	Title: <i>Television</i> (2012) Country: Bangladesh, Dir: Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, Duration (hrs): 1:46
6:35 PM	Title: <i>Mustang</i> (2015) Country: Turkey-France, Dir: Deniz Gamze Ergüven, Duration (hrs): 1:34

Time	Russian Centre
11:00 AM	Title: <i>Taza Khabar (Hot off the Press)</i> (2008) Country: India, Dir: Bishakha Datta, Duration (hrs): 0:31
12:05 PM	Title: <i>Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines</i> (2012) Country: USA, Dir: Kristy Guevara-Flanagan, Duration (hrs): 0:55

1:35 PM	Title: <i>Pray the Devil Back to Hell</i> (2008) Country: USA, Dir: Gini Reticker, Abigail Disney, Duration (hrs): 1:12
3:10 PM	Title: <i>Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai</i> (2008) Dir: Alan Dater and Lisa Merton, Country: USA, Duration (hrs): 1:00
4:35 PM	Title: <i>Slum Innovation</i> (2015) Country: India, Dir: Nawneet Ranjan, Duration (hrs): 0:31
5:50 PM	Title: <i>Camera Woman</i> (2012) Dir: Karima Zoubir, Country: Morocco, Duration (hrs): 0:59

- Q & A with Bishakha Dutta after the screening of Taza Khabar
- Q & A with Megha Ramaswamy after the screening of Newborns & Saving Face
- Q & A with Nilesh Maniyar, Malini Chib & Sminu Jindal after the screening of Margarita, with a Straw
- Q & A with Nawneet Ranjan & Dharavi Girls after the screening of Slum Innovation
- Q & A with Locsi Ferra & Abhishek Srivastava (ITVS) after the screening of Wonder Women!, Pray the Devil Back to Hell & Taking Root

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Mukesh Sharma,

Director General, Films Division, Mumbai

मुकेश शर्मा
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MUKESH SHARMA
DIRECTOR GENERAL
Films Division
Mumbai

M E S S A G E

Films Division is proud to be associated with FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) in co-hosting the first edition of FLO Film Festival which is being held from the 18th-20th February, 2016 at the FD complex.

The festival, I am told, aims at creating a platform to address the representation of women and girls on screen, and exploring – through cinema – themes unique to this side of the gender spectrum. Features, documentaries, short fiction and animation films dealing with women's issues along with workshops and interactions being held during the event, I am sure, will help create the right atmosphere for all stakeholders to ideate, draw right conclusions and to change the mind sets vis-a-vis gender imbalance.

I congratulate the FLO team for this notable and timely initiative and wish the festival all success.



(MUKESH SHARMA)

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चुटकी में चिपकाए





The Power to Empower

Archana Garodia Gupta

National President, FLO

FLO (FICCI Ladies Organisation) has worked actively to create this platform – the FLO Film Festival – through which it will work with the film industry to positively influence gender perceptions. Indian cinema is hugely influential in creating cultural mores in India, and indeed the world. Our collaboration with the Geena Davis Institute is another strong step in that direction.

FLO is the oldest business chamber for women in South Asia, and is working on its mission to economically empower women for the last 32 years. We do this by creating entrepreneurial motivation amongst women, training, skill development with employer tie-ups, and encouraging women to take up more non-traditional jobs. We also work at changing gender stereotypes amongst both men and women.

While the Indian constitution grants equal rights to women, and India has some of the most progressive laws in the world, gender inequality shows up visibly in many measures.

Through the Festival, we aspire to take steps towards making an indelible imprint in the minds of filmmakers to change gender stereotypes, and in the process, influence millions of Indians.



Falguni Padode

Chairperson FLO (Mumbai)

The FLO Film Festival was conceptualised with the intention of giving a platform to the wonderful initiatives of FLO (FICCI Ladies Organisation) all within the realm of women's empowerment. Films being the great unifier that they are – play a critical role in sending out strong messages in our country of over 1,600 dialects. The festival meant for both men and women, is intended to buttress the work that FLO does towards empowering women, and so women-centric films that reinforce these messages have made the cut. We hope that the messages conveyed through this selection have a meaningful and lasting impact, with filmmakers making an effort to change stereotypes by portraying more women in varied roles in cinema, and striving to highlight the struggles that women continue to face today.

Falguni Padode

Rashmi Lamba

Festival Director, FLO Film Festival

Greetings and welcome to the first FLO Film Festival.

Using *'Reel Woman Power'* to initiate real change and a paradigm shift in gender perceptions underlies the theme of the *FLO Film Festival*. I invite you to join us for a stellar selection of International and Indian films, curated to initiate awareness and empathy along with engaging conversations and interactions. A reflection on gender biases through unique workshops will help in *Changing the Story, Unpacking the Media* and looking at films *through the Gender Lens*.

Helping us take the first step, Films Division of India came on board as an Associate Festival Partner. We gathered speed as the committed FLO team worked together to bring in strong partners and sponsors. A strong synergy emerged with the reputed *Geena Davis Institute for Gender in Media* to host their first Symposium in India. Recognition of a shared vision by UN Women and ITVS-*Women and Girls Lead Global* program has given the Festival a huge boost.

I thank the Festival team, ASAPP staff, FLO members, volunteers and all the professional associates for sharing their time and expertise. Above all, I am deeply grateful to Falguni Padode, Chairperson, FLO (Mumbai) for taking the very first FLO Film Festival to a height we could hardly have imagined!!



Rashmi Lamba

FLO - FICCI Ladies Organisation

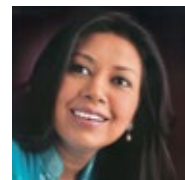


Archana Garodia

FLO - FICCI Ladies Organisation - is the oldest business chamber for women in South Asia and is working on its mission to economically empower women since the last 32 years.

“We do this by creating Entrepreneurial motivation amongst women, training, skill development with employer tie ups, and encouraging women to take up more nontraditional jobs. We also work at changing Gender stereotypes amongst both men and women. Today, FLO is the most prestigious pan-India business organisation with 13 chapters plus the head office and over 4,000 members across India,” says **Archana Garodia Gupta, National President, FLO.**

Under Ms Gupta's leadership, another empowering year has followed. As an organisation that seeks to empower both its members as well as those at the grassroot level, the year for all chapters across India, has been outstanding. As it has for the Mumbai chapter. **Falguni Padode**, Chairperson, FLO Mumbai Chapter, and an energised executive committee worked at delivering a year of action and one that would make a difference.



Falguni Padode





Some key programmes and first time initiatives of the FLO Mumbai Chapter:

FLO Film Festival

The FLO FILM FESTIVAL, themed on women empowerment and gender equality is a labour of

love and passion, and a firm belief that we all can and must be integral contributors to societal change. Hosted by the FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) Mumbai Chapter, the event seeks to aggressively enter the realm of thought leadership and advocacy, while using the proceeds to further the existing FLO initiatives on educating the girl child.

It was an idea that was then fuelled with the wonderful partnership with the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media. Held in conjunction with the festival, the 3rd Global Symposium on Gender In Media serves as the perfect platform to share its research on the impact of Indian films in our society and to influence film makers: to portray more women on screen, in varied roles, thus reducing women stereotypes on screen and ultimately, in society. The synergy was perfect and the intention was strong: to impact millions of movie goers from the world's largest movie capital through the medium of film, on dispelling stereotypes about women. The FLO Film Festival was announced at a special screening of *He Named Me Malala*.

The women-centric films at the FLO Film Festival have been sourced from across the world. The partners and advisory board comprise leading names – Amruta Devendra Fadnavis, Nandita Das (Actress), Neeta Lulla (Fashion Designer), Manish Mundhra (Drishyam Films), Milan Luthria (Director), Tata Institute of Social Sciences, among many other luminaries and thought leaders. Along with the festival, strategic and powerful workshops are being hosted.

These curated films – international, Hindi and Marathi films – will have a far-reaching impact in banishing gender stereotypes; providing empowering solutions; highlighting women-centric issues such as economic independence, skilling, health, wellness, sanitation, violence and abuse; encouraging debate and dialogue on research findings; raising awareness on existing government campaigns; and attracting national and international coverage for women's issues.





Skilling

In an initiative, we call SWELL – Skilling Women, Empowering Lives - over 100 women from varied economic strata have been skilled in the fields of beauty, hair care, jewellery making, packaging, in the firm belief that 'Teach them a skill and empower them for life'.

Nurturing Women Entrepreneurs

In a program called SWAYAM (to do oneself), an entire ecosystem – mentors, chartered accountants, legal help, marketing professionals, easy loans – has been put in place to help women to either start a business or scale up.

Sanitation: For a Swacch (Clean) Bharat

The organisation's Mumbai chapter funded and inaugurated a 12 toilet complex at Varu Kothrud School, which was devoid of toilet facilities for 15 years since its inception. Better facilities have encouraged more girls to continue with their education as against dropping out at puberty, as is often the case. The chapter has built over 150 toilets over the past 6 years.



Women Directorspeak

With a new directive to have at least one woman director on the board of listed companies, FLO Mumbai hosted an event 'Women Corporate Directors – The Complete Picture' with eminent women directors – independent, executive directors and those in family owned businesses, legal experts, gender diversity professionals.

Thomas L Vajda, US Consul General, hosted the event at the US Consulate. Several questions were raised by an engaged audience and a knowledgeable panel helped dispel all doubts and answer questions.



POSH - Prevention of Sexual Harassment

An online film that seeks to sensitise both men and women at the workplace has several corporates on board.

The 'Cycle' of Life

School girls have been all smiles in the Maval district as the FLO Mumbai chapter distributed 35 cycles this year, the amount towards which was received at the change of guard ceremony in April 2015. The victory for FLO is to know that the attendance of school girls had gone up, freeing them of the 5-km-plus walk each way, to school.

Power of Social Media

FLO's event on social media marketing witnessed keynote speaker Kirthiga Reddy, Managing Director, Facebook and Hareesh Tibrewal, Joint CEO, Social Wavelength focus on social media opportunities. The event was a clear direction to women entrepreneurs on the power of social media and Facebook, and the different avenues available to make the right choice about the marketing medium.

Training Women Directors

FLO Mumbai Chapter conducted a one day training programme for aspiring and existing women directors. They found great value in the programme and the basic preparedness it gave them to take on such a responsibility.

The Power of 'WE'

The WE event in Mumbai brought together all stakeholders who would make it possible to get more women employed in schools as security guards, office attendants in administration, bus drivers and bus helpers, canteen staff and management. The event was lauded by chief guest Amruta Devendra Fadnavis, Maharashtra chief minister's wife and deputy vice president, Axis Bank. School principals, NGOs, bus contractors, and trainers who would be training these girls for free, were enthused by the initiative and everyone signed a pledge to seal their commitment.

And so...FLO continues to work towards the upliftment of women - empowering, enriching and celebrating them.



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FLO Film Festival



The FLO Film Festival creates a platform to address the representation of women and girls on screen, and exploring – through cinema – the themes unique to this side of the gender spectrum. The Indian and international features, documentaries, animation and short films showcased at the Festival will highlight relevant content dealing with women's issues, as well as inspiring stories of hope, courage and empowerment. The mission is to start a dialogue breaking down stereotypes, and to enable audiences to become discerning viewers and critically reflect on their media consumption and how it influences them.

The Festival opens for the first time on 17 February, 2016, with a Global Symposium presented by the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media. The Institute is the only research-based organisation working within the media and entertainment industry to engage, educate, and influence the need to

dramatically improve gender balance, reduce stereotyping and create diverse female characters in entertainment. The festival will also host strategic workshops focusing on gender sensitivity and impact of media.

The FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) is the women's wing of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI). With 13 chapters, over 4000 members across India and 32 years of experience – FLO is a force to be reckoned with. The organisation has launched a number of initiatives that help women from all strata of society progress through education and vocational training. Additionally, they have undertaken projects advocating prevention of sexual harassment, promoting wellness, building toilets for women in underdeveloped communities, and actively lobbying for policy changes. The FLO Film Festival will highlight and boost these active and upcoming initiatives.

Advisory Board



Amruta Fadnavis

Deputy VP, Axis Bank & Wife of Maharashtra CM

Amruta Ranade Fadnavis is Deputy Vice President, Transaction Banking, Axis Bank, and is married to Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra. She was an excellent student, completing her MBA from Symboisis College, Pune. She was also a state level under-16 tennis player, and is a trained classical singer. She actively supports women's causes, recently singing a song against female foeticide and making her debut as a playback singer. Her determination to continue her corporate career while juggling her duties as the CM's wife, makes her a role model for young women in Maharashtra.



Rebecca Reichmann Tavares, Ed.D.

UN Women Representative, Office for India, Bhutan, Maldives & Sri Lanka

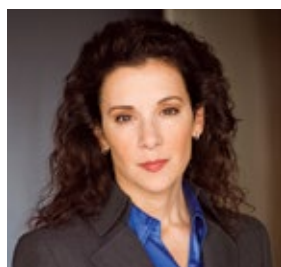
Rebecca Reichmann Tavares is the Representative of UN Women's Multicountry Office for India, Bhutan, the Maldives and Sri Lanka. Previously Dr. Reichmann Tavares was Representative for Brazil and Regional Programme Director of UN Women's Brazil & Southern Cone Office (2009-2013). A native of Southern California, Dr. Reichmann Tavares graduated from Yale University and holds a doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She has published several books, monographs and articles on race relations in Brazil, women's rights, and microfinance in Latin America.



Archana Garodia Gupta

President, FICCI Ladies Organisation

Archana is one of India's leading quizzers, and was declared Champion of Champions by BBC Mastermind in 2001. With an MBA from the prestigious Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, multi-talented Archana is a successful entrepreneur in silver-based jewellery, knows seven languages, and is a trained classical singer, having been tutored by the legendary Shubha Mudgal.



Madeline Di Nonno

CEO, Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media

Madeline is the Chief Executive Officer of the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, the only research based non-profit working with the entertainment and media community to improve gender diversity in children's entertainment through research based programs. Di Nonno leads the Institute's strategic direction and brings over thirty years experience in media, marketing and business development in the entertainment, non-profit, digital media and consumer packaged goods industries.



Manish Mundra

Founder, Drishyam Films

Manish forayed into the world of Indian cinema in 2014, when a tweet by Rajat Kapoor seeking investors for his film Ankhon Dekhi, caught his attention. Cinema being one of his oldest passions, Manish offered to help. The film was not only critically-acclaimed but also won three Filmfare and three Screen Awards. Having achieved tremendous success in the corporate world, Manish felt it was about time he started nurturing his passion projects, so he founded Drishyam Films to foster the growth of Indian cinema.



Nandita Das

Actress, Director, Social Activist

Nandita has acted in over 40 feature films in 10 Indian languages, and in three theatre productions. She debut directorial feature, 'Firaaq' (2008) won her much appreciation and accolades in India and abroad. With an M.A. in Social Work, she continues to advocate for social justice and human rights, receiving the Yale World Fellowship in 2014, awarded to cultivate and empower a network of globally engaged leaders committed to positive change through dialogue and action. 'Between the Lines' marked her debut as a playwright and theatre director.



Malini Agarwal

Founder & Blogger-in-Chief,
MissMalini Media

Malini is the Founder of MissMalini Media, a leading new media network that creates high-value, multi-platform content geared towards India's internet generation. She pioneered Indian lifestyle blogging with MissMalini.com, today's go-to digital destination for all things Bollywood, fashion and lifestyle. With a rapidly expanding organic readership and a social media reach of over 6 million direct followers, she is considered one of India's leading digital influencers and a leading authority on digital brand building. In 2014, MissMalini forayed into television, introducing the reality show 'MissMalini's World' on TLC.



Neeta Lulla

Film Stylist & Fashion Designer

Neeta is a critically-acclaimed fashion and costume designer, hailed as the 'Czarina of Indian Fashion'. She began as a fashion choreographer and stylist and went on to designing costumes for over 350 films. A reputed bridal and couture designer, she is the only Indian designer to have received four National Awards for her contribution to the design and fashion industry. She has also been teaching fashion for two decades, founding the Whistling Woods Neeta Lulla School of Design in 2006.



Locsi Ferra

Project Director, Thematic Campaigns
& Partnerships, ITVS

Locsi is a network builder dedicated to gender equality, diversity, and international development. For the past four years, Locsi has built multi-platform media campaigns with ITVS using documentary film as a tool for social change. She recently completed a successful 4 year initiative, Women and Girls Lead, which reached over 59 million viewers in the United States, and continues to mobilize civil society and audiences to advance gender equity through Women and Girls Lead Global.



Meghna Ghai Puri

President, Whistling Woods
International

Meghna has been involved in every aspect of setup and operations at Whistling Woods International right from its inception. Her top priorities as the institution's President are to help shape students' careers, structuring the media and entertainment industry by mentoring its future workforce. It is her mission to make Whistling Woods International a thought-leader for film and media education worldwide.



Kailash Surendranath

Film Director

Kailash has the distinction of producing and directing the highest number of commercials in the country and possibly the world – over 3,500 and counting in a span of over four decades. He has shot various international commercials on location in Africa, the U.S., the Middle East and across the sub-continent. Under his direction, he and his banner Kailash Picture Company have undertaken several Hollywood projects and commercials shot in India, including the Angelina Jolie starrer 'A Mighty Heart', directed by Micheal Winterbottom.



Milan Luthria

Film Director

One of India's most respected film directors, with almost 20 years experience working in the Indian film industry. What started as a summer job assistant directing for one of Mahesh Bhatt's as a student, became a lifelong passion. Milan made his directorial debut in 1999 with the action-thriller 'Kachche Dhaage'. He has followed up with films such as 'Once Upon a Time in Mumbai' and the critically-acclaimed winner of three National Awards 'The Dirty Picture'.

Advisory Board



Dr. Anjali Monteiro

Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Dr Monteiro is a Professor at the School of Media and Cultural Studies, TISS, Mumbai. She has a BA in Psychology, an MA in Economics and a Ph.D. in Sociology. She has made over 40 documentaries with Prof K.P. Jayasankar, winning several awards. Her doctoral work involved an ethnographic study of working-class Goan TV audiences, in the 1980s. Her writing focuses on documentary film, censorship, critical theory and issues of media representation. Her book, 'A Fly in the Curry', co-authored with Prof K.P. Jayasankar, was published in 2015. She actively campaigns against censorship and for freedom of expression.



Arunaraje

Film Director & Editor

Arunaraje is an award-winning writer, editor, director and producer. She passed out of the Film & Television Institute of India with a gold medal and was the Institute's first trained female technician. She has made several commercials, documentaries, TV serials and features. Many of her films have strong women themes - something she feels passionate about. She is actively involved in film education, and has been part of decision-making bodies in many film schools. She is a National Award winning documentary filmmaker, and has headed the Indian Documentary Producers Association as President, twice in the past.



Deepa Gahlot

Head, Film & Theatre Programme, NCPA

Deepa is a journalist, critic, columnist, editor, and author. She writes extensively on cinema, theatre, the arts, and women's issues for several publications and websites. She won the National Award for Best Film Criticism, and her work has appeared in anthologies on women's studies and cinema. She co-authored 'The Prithviwallahs' with Shashi Kapoor, and her two new books, 'Take 2: 50 Films that Deserve a New Audience' and 'Sheroes: 25 Daring Women of Bollywood' were published in 2015. She now heads the Theatre & Film department of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, Mumbai.



Dr A.L. Sharada

Director, Population First

Dr A.L. Sharada has a Doctorate in Sociology from the Central University of Hyderabad and has been active in the development sector for nearly 30 years. She has consulted with UNICEF and UNFPA for projects in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra, and conducted several programmes for NGOs in U.P. and Rajasthan on issues such as rehabilitation for mentally handicapped persons, mobile crèches for migrant construction workers, innovative education initiatives, empowerment of women, child labour and women's health.



Sminu Jindal

Managing Director, Jindal SAW Ltd.

Sminu Jindal is the first lady to break the glass ceiling in the Indian Steel, Oil & Gas sector. Jindal SAW Ltd. is a total pipes solutions company and a key player in global energy and water infrastructure. Sminu's role requires her to manage daily operations with crisp business acumen and foresight. A wheelchair user after a childhood accident, she feels strongly about providing equal opportunities and independence through accessible infrastructure and transportation systems. Her initiative 'Svayam' works very closely with policy makers, government agencies and civic bodies to nurture an inclusive ecosystem to develop and maintain spaces accessible by all sections of society.



Debra Zimmerman

Executive Director, Women Make Movies

Women Make Movies is a non-profit New York based film organization that supports women filmmakers. Zimmerman has been Executive Director since 1983. During her tenure it has grown into the largest distributor of films by and about women in the world, enabling women filmmakers to get their films made, even winning a few Academy Awards and nominations along the way. Debra is a speaker on independent film distribution, marketing and financing as well as women's film. She has been involved with various reputable film festivals worldwide, receiving the New York Women in Film and Television's Lorean Arbus Award and Hot Doc's 2013 Doc Mogul Award.



Dr K.P. Jayasankar

Professor & Dean, School of Media and Cultural Studies, TISS

Dr Jayasankar is an award-winning Director of photography and editor. He has received several prestigious international fellowships, including the Howard Thomas Memorial Fellowship in Media Studies, at Goldsmith's College, London and the Erasmus Mundus fellowship at Lund University, Sweden. He has served as jury at various film festivals. His areas of research interest include critical theory, hermeneutics, documentary film and censorship. He participates in campaigns against censorship and for freedom of expression.



Harish Sadani

Founder Member, Men Against Violence and Abuse (MAVA)

Harish has been passionately running multi-sector developmental programs on gender and health for over 25 years. Men Against Violence and Abuse (MAVA), established 1993, is India's first all-male organization working against gender discrimination and women's abuse. With an MA in Social Work from TISS, Harish has mentored thousands of adolescent boys and young men across Maharashtra to communicate with peers on healthy relationships, masculinity and sexuality. He trains corporates, universities and NGOs on sexual harassment in the workplace. He is a recipient of the Ashoka Changemakers' Award among others, and has been invited by UN Women and UNFPA to help build capacities to address issues of gender-based violence.



Kireet Khurana

Director, Climb Media

A graduate from Sheridan College, Canada, Kireet has won six National Awards for his works, besides others. He has made over 20 short films for UNICEF International, National Film Board of Canada, Childline, Save the Children India, USAid, John Hopkins, NACO and others, on various public service issues including child marriage, AIDS, corporal punishment, child labour, child rights and cruelty against animals. His film 'Komal' on child sexual abuse won the National Award (2015) and was made compulsory viewing in schools across India by the HRD Ministry.

Colors & Viacom18



The FLO Film Festival themed on women empowerment and gender equality is a strong step towards changing the gender stereotypes portrayed on screen. With our vision to be the most admired media and entertainment company by continuously Entertaining, Engaging and Enriching the life of every Indian through sustained innovation and thought leadership, our engagement with this festival seeks to meet our common goals.

Raj Nayak

CEO, Colors & Rishtey, Viacom18 Media

COLORS:

COLORS is Viacom18's flagship brand in the entertainment space in India. Having launched on 21st July 2008, COLORS offers an entire spectrum of emotions to its viewers. From fiction shows to format shows to reality shows to blockbuster movies – the basket contains all 'Jazbaat Ke Rang'. COLORS is dedicated to promoting cohesive viewing, through programmes like 'Ishq Ka Rang Safed', 'Thapki...Pyaar Ki', 'Sasural Simar Ka', 'Balika Vadhu – Kacchi Umar Ke Pakke Rishtey', 'Udham', 'Chakravartin Ashoka Samrat', 'Swaragini', 'Meri Aashiqui Tum Se Hi', 'Krishndasi', 'Chhoti Anandi', 'Comedy Nights Live', 'Comedy Nights Bachao', 'Naagin', 'Bigg Boss', '24', 'Mission Sapne', 'India's Got Talent', 'Box Cricket League' and 'Khatron Ke Khiladi' amongst others.



VIACOM18:

Viacom18 Media Pvt Ltd is one of India's fastest growing entertainment networks and a house of iconic brands that offers multi-platform, multi-generational and multicultural brand experiences. A joint venture of Viacom Inc. and the Network18 Group, Viacom18 defines entertainment in India by touching people on air, online, on ground, in shop and through its cinema.





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This set the stage for what was to become the world's first skincare brand, and a unique history of skincare breakthroughs all dedicated to helping women keep their skin stronger on the inside, so it can be softer and more beautiful on the outside.

As the 20th Century advanced and World War 2 broke out, women had to step in and take over men's jobs as they went to war. Pond's stood by them with their unique duo of Pond's Cold Cream (the world's first moisturizer not to require refrigeration) and Pond's Vanishing Cream helping them retain their grace, softness and femininity in these stressful new roles.

With the birth of The Pond's Institute in the 1990s (today a global network of 700 scientists and skin specialists), Pond's firmly established itself as one of the world's leading expert in advanced skincare research and diagnostics. With over 200 patents, The Pond's Institute introduced many firsts in skin cleansing, skin lightening and age management. These include VAO-B3, which can lighten dark spots in just 7 days; Conjugated Linoleic Acid (CLA), anti-aging active that works from deep within to speed up skin regeneration and restore damaged skin cells; and GenActiv, a breakthrough skin tone innovation that controls melanin production at the source.

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Drishyam Films



Drishyam Films was founded by Manish Mundra. Born out of a love for cinema, we look forward to build a platform for unique voices of Indian independent cinema and create global content with rich Indian flavours. Our journey started with the film 'Ankhon Dekhi' directed by Rajat Kapoor. The film garnered critical acclaim and went on to win several awards. The success of Ankhon Dekhi was followed by 'Umrika' directed by Prashant Nair, which premiered at Sundance Film Festival in 2015, and won the Audience Choice Award in the World Dramatic Competition section. Soon after, 'Dhanak' directed by Nagesh Kukunoor, not only premiered in the Generation Kplus category at Berlinale 2015, but also won the Grand Jury prize, and a Special Mention from the Children's Jury.

The success at Sundance and Berlin was amplified by Neeraj Ghaywan's 'Masaan', which premiered in the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes 2015, and brought home laurels by winning the Promising Future Prize and the FIPRESCI Award. The film had a great theatrical run of six weeks in India and is touted to be one of the best films of 2015.

Our most recent production 'Waiting', directed by Anu Menon, premiered in the Cinema of the World Program at the prestigious Dubai International Film Festival and received great response from audiences and critics alike.

Focused on development initiatives, we have partnered with the Sundance Institute, USA to organise a Screenwriters' lab for Indian writers. The first edition of the Drishyam Sundance Screenwriters' Lab was successfully conducted in April 2015.

Our Philosophy

Our company has been formed keeping in mind the changing trends of the independent cinema industry. We envision nurturing content and quality driven films that are not only culturally rooted but have an international appeal. The idea is to create a pool of new and young talented filmmakers who have unique stories to share with the world. Our inspiration comes from the Indian film industry today, and filmmakers who are willing to explore new content. This makes it important for us to back the strong content driven films that will not only work at film festivals worldwide but win hearts back home.

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FOR ENQUIRIES, CONTACT rajeev@drishyamfilms.com / +919930244304



Workshops & Symposium

Workshops

Through The Gender Lens

by Laadli, Population First



Date, Time & Venue	Monday 15th February, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm, JB Hall, Films Division
Conducted by	Dr A.L. Sharada, Director, Population First Manjul Bhardwaj, Founder, The Experimental Theatre Foundation
Ideally suited for	Journalists and media professionals, mass media and film students, writers, bloggers, critics
About	<p>Covering topics such as gender & health, gender & patriarchy, sex selection, safe abortion, gender-based violence, and gender & media – the 'Through the Gender Lens' workshop aims to advocate positive portrayal of women in society by influencing the influencers, i.e. media professionals and media students. Theatre techniques will be used to bring out inherent gender biases in participants, and help them redefine their perceptions.</p> <p>Population First is an advocacy and communication organization, that has been advocating for gender sensitivity for over a decade, through creating mind set change in communities. Laadli – their flagship campaign has been on the forefront with its pan-India initiatives towards encouraging positive portrayal of women in society.</p>

Unpacking the Media, Unpacking our Identities

by Tata Institute of Social Sciences



Date, Time & Venue	Tuesday 16th February, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm, JB Hall, Films Division
Conducted by	Prof. Anjali Monteiro, Professor, School of Media and Cultural Studies, TISS Prof. K.P. Jayasankar, Professor and Dean, School of Media and Cultural Studies, TISS
Ideally suited for	Students (at BA and MA levels), teachers, parents, activists and all those who would like to discuss and understand issues related to media representations and how we engage with them
About	The primary focus of this workshop would be on how the media constructs our 'normal' gender identities. Through exercises, screenings and discussions centred on mainstream media content such as TV commercials, print ads, films, newspapers and internet content, it is envisaged that – through this exposure – participants will likely become more discerning viewers and critically reflect on their media consumption and how it influences them.

Change the Story

by Women and Girls Lead Global, Independent Television Service (ITVS)



Date, Time & Venue	Tuesday 16th February, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm, RR3 Hall, Films Division
Conducted by	Abhishek Srivastava, Country Engagement Specialist for India, WGLG
Ideally suited for	Organisations, foundations, filmmakers, community facilitators, donor agencies and CSR representatives using films for social change
About	<p>Only a handful of gender-based organisations or initiatives in India use films for behaviour or attitude change. Films are largely seen as an additional tool to impact the mindsets with limited accountability or measurement of its effectiveness. This workshop aims to effectively communicate the strengths of ITVS's initiative; clear strategy, measurable impact and a time-bound film intervention model.</p> <p>Women and Girls Lead Global is a 21st century media strategy to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through combining world-class documentary films, television partners, and culturally-specific engagement campaigns to help NGOs lift up women and girls in communities in India and around the world.</p>

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India being one of the largest film markets in the world definitely influences and inspires a larger global audience. It also provides a great canvas for film making when it comes to the area of women empowerment and gender sensitivity. But when it is about changing perceptions with

regards to gender sensitivity, that can happen only by bringing about a change in the way women are portrayed in Indian cinema. Such change will help in creating a stronger impact and building a positive image for women in the minds of global audience. ~ Geena Davis

About the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media

Founded by Academy Award®-winning actor and advocate Geena Davis, the Institute is the only research-based organization working within the media and entertainment industry to engage, educate, and influence the need to dramatically improve, gender balance, reduce stereotyping and create diverse female characters in entertainment targeting children 11 and under. For more information visit www.seejane.org

About the Global Symposiums on Gender in Media

Our global symposiums will convene eminent entertainment content creators, business leaders, actors, directors, media personalities, policy makers, to engage in dialogue around the institute's global research along with two panel discussions from leading entertainment industry personalities, content creators along with gender in media related subject matter experts.

Our 2016 Global Symposiums on Gender in Media will be held in *Mumbai on February 17* and *Sao Paulo on March 8*. The Mumbai Symposium is co-hosted by *FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), Mumbai Chapter*, the women's wing of FICCI and sponsored by *ITVS*. The Institute will present new global research which explores the influence of film audiences in the UK, India, Nigeria, France and Brazil funded by the *Oak Foundation*.

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Welcome

FICCI FLO

Introduction

Introduction to GDIGM, event and sponsors

Geena Davis, *Founder and Chair, the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media*

Madeline Di Nonno, *Chief Executive Officer, the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media*

Opening Remarks

Geena Davis, *Founder and Chair, the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media*

Gender Representations in India Entertainment Media

Caroline Heldman PhD, *Global Research Study on Female Representation*

in Media & Gender Equality: India Study

Panel: Media and Social Impact - Film as a Tool to Promote Gender Equality

Panel Opening Remarks

Locsi Ferra, *Director, Thematic Campaigns & Partnerships, ITVS*

Moderated by: Rebecca Tavares PhD, *Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office for India, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka*

Panelists:

Archana Garodia Gupta, *President, FICCI Ladies Organization*

Abhishek Srivastava, *Country Engagement Coordinator, India, ITVS*

Rahul Bose, *Actor, Director, Screenwriter, and Social Activist*

Abhijit Das PhD, *Director, The Centre for Health and Social Justice*

Prerana Langa, *CEO of YES Foundation*

Geena Davis Institute Media Mapping Tool

Tanaya Guha, *Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering at IIT Kanpur*

Panel Keynote

Meghna Ghai Puri, *President, Whistling Woods international*

Panel: The Art of Storytelling for Social Change: Empowering Women and Girls

Panel Introduction Meghna Ghai-Puri, *Educationist, Change Catalyst Mumbai*

Moderated by: Mayank Shekhar, *Broadcaster, Journalist, and Author*

Panelists:

Mahesh Bhatt, *Veteran Film Maker*

Nishtha Jain, *Mumbai based Film Maker*

Aruna Raje, *Editor, Director, Producer, A New Paradigm*

Leena Yadav, *Writer, Director*

Sooni Taraporevala, *Film Maker, Screenwriter and Photographer*

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28 (2014)

Sri Lanka | Sinhalese | 98 minutes



Prasanna Jayakody started his career with the critically acclaimed stage drama 'Seveneli Saha Minissu' (Shadows and Men), in 1993.

The play was thematically woven around a thoughtful conversation on the realities of life, and was awarded Best Stage Drama at Sri Lanka's State Drama Festival. He then forayed into television, which won him several awards as Best Director. His first film – 'Sankara' – won him the Silver Pyramid for directing at the Cairo International Film Festival in 2007. He is deeply influenced by the philosophies of the east, and this is evident in all his creative ventures.

Abasiri and his nephew Mani arrive in Colombo from a distant village in a Sri Lankan hill station to identify a woman who has been raped and murdered. Fifteen years after parting from him, Abasiri recognises his wife Suddhi on the mortuary table. Penniless and destitute, they embark on a dramatic journey with Suddhi's body back to their village. Suddhi addresses the mourners at her own funeral stating that she is now bereft of fear and censure, providing a powerful testimony on behalf of all women.

Directed by: Prasanna Jayakody

Produced by: Rasitha Jinasena

Cast: Mahendra Perera, Semini Iddamalgoda, Rukmal Nirosh, Sarath Kothalawela

Screenplay: Prasanna Jayakody

Cinematography: Chandana Jayasinghe

Edited by: Rangana Singharage

Festivals & Awards:

NETPAC Award for Best Asian Film, Rotterdam International Film Festival, 2014

Nomination for Best Actor and Best Script, Asia Pacific Screen Academy, 2014

Wishing Bell Jury Prize, Bled Film Festival, 2014

Fatima (2015)

Argentina, France | French, Arabic | 79 minutes



Fatima lives on her own with two daughters to support: 15-year-old Souad, a rebellious teenager, and 18-year-old Nesrine, who is starting medical school. Fatima speaks French poorly and is constantly frustrated by her daily interactions with her daughters. Her pride and joy, they are also a source of worry. To ensure the best possible future for them, she works odd hours as a cleaning woman. One day, she takes a fall down the stairs. While on leave, Fatima begins to write to her daughters in Arabic what she has never been able to express in French.

Directed by: Philippe Faucon
Produced by: Yasmina Nini-Faucon, Philippe Faucon, Serge Noel
Cast: Soria Zeroual, Zita Hanrot, Kenza Noah Aiche
Screenplay: Philippe Faucon
Cinematography: Laurent Fénart
Edited by: Sophie Mandonnet

Festivals & Awards:
Premiered at Director's Fortnight, Cannes International Film Festival, 2015
Amnesty International Award at Giffoni Film Festival, 2015
Louis Delluc Prize for Best Film, 2015



Philippe Faucon is a French film director and writer, who was born in Oujda, Morocco. Apart from *Fatima*, he is best known

for the films '*Samia*' (2000), and '*Dans la vie*' (2007). All three films focus on predominantly female characters and the issues of second-generation Middle Eastern cultural identity in France.

I Am Nojoom, Age 10 and Divorced (2014)

Yemen, France, UAE | Arabic | 99 minutes



Khadija Al-Salami is Yemen's first female filmmaker and producer. Forced into marriage at the age of 11, she rebelled – daring to

leave her husband and seek a divorce. With determination and courage, Khadija gained her freedom and changed her fate. At 16, she received an educational grant to study in the U.S. for a master's degree in film production and directing. She has directed more than 25 documentaries, mostly addressing the role of women and young girls in contemporary Yemen. She has received numerous international prizes for her work, including the French Legion of Honor. I Am Nojoom is based on her book 'Nojoom', published in 2009.

A little girl walks into a court room, looks at the judge straight in the eye and tells him: 'I want a divorce.' In Yemen, where there is no age requirement for marriage, 10-year-old Nojoom is forced to marry a 30-year-old man. The dowry offers the family a small income and one less mouth to feed. A legitimate and acceptable arrangement for all – except Nojoom – who will soon see her life take a turn for the worse. A beautiful plea on behalf of all those girls forced into womanhood too soon and for their right to a life on their own terms.

Directed by: Khadija Al-Salami
Produced by: Sheikha Prohaska-Alatas
Cast: Reham Mohammed, Rana Mohammed, Ibrahim Al Ashmori, Sawadi Alkainai, Adnan Alkhader
Screenplay: Khadija Al-Salami
Cinematography: Victor Credi
Edited by: Alexis Lardilleux

Festivals & Awards:
Best Fiction Feature, Dubai International Film Festival, 2014
Official selection, Vancouver International Film Festival, 2015

Lajwanti

(The Honour Keeper) (2014)

India | Hindi | 63 minutes



The light in the Thar Desert in Rajasthan makes the saris worn by the women on their way to the well appear even brighter than they are. In this almost archaic seeming procession, Lajwanti remains hidden from sight behind her veil, until a man with an odd obsession with pigeons crosses the women's path. Lajwanti's curiosity is aroused, as she removes her veil and steps out of her invisibility. In doing so, she becomes a woman of her own free will, no longer waiting fearfully to see if happiness will find her.

Directed by: Pushpendra Singh
Produced by: Pushpendra Singh

Cast: Sanghmitra Hitaishi,
Pushpendra Singh

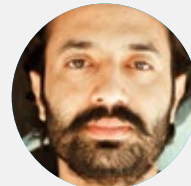
Screenplay: Pushpendra Singh

Cinematography: Ravi Kiran Ayyagari

Edited by: Shweta Rai

Festivals & Awards:

Official selection, Berlinale
International Film Festival, 2014
Official selection, Calgary
International Film Festival, 2014
Official selection, International Film
Festival Colombo, 2015
Official selection, Kolkata
International Film Festival, 2014



An alumnus of the Film & Television Institute of India, Pushpendra began his career as an actor playing one of the leads in Amit

Dutta's award-winning film 'Aadmi Ki Aurat Aur Anya Kahaniya' (The Man's Woman and Other Stories). He has also acted in the German film 'Ich will mich nicht künstlich aufregen- Asta Upset' directed by Maximilian Linz, which also premiered at the Berlinale in the Forum along with Lajwanti.

Lajwanti is his debut film as a director.

Margarita, With a Straw (2015)

India | English, Hindi | 102 minutes



Margarita, With a Straw is Bose's second feature film. The script won the Sundance Global Filmmaker Award in 2012. Bose's debut

film 'Amu' – opened at the Berlin Film Festival followed by TIFF and many more and won numerous awards and critical acclaim. It was released by Emerging Pictures in the U.S. and in Srinagar, India.

Laila is a young romantic, a secret rebel in a wheelchair. Undeterred by cerebral palsy, she embarks on a journey of sexual discovery. Her exhilarating adventures cause a rift both within herself and with those she is closest to. Ultimately, it is in the intensity of these bonds that she finds the strength to truly be herself.

Directed by: Shonali Bose

Produced by: Shonali Bose, Nilesh Maniyar

Cast: Kalki Koechlin, Revathy, Sayani Gupta, William Moseley

Screenplay: Shonali Bose

Cinematography: Anne Misawa

Edited by: Monisha Baldawa

Festivals & Awards:

Sundance Mahindra Global Filmmaker Award, Sundance Film Festival, 2012
Audience Award for Best Feature & Jury Circle Award, Washington, DC International Film Festival, 2015
Best Film – NETPAC, Toronto International Film Festival, 2015
Best Actress, New York Indian Film Festival, 2015

Mustang (2015)

France, Germany, Turkey, Qatar | Turkish | 94 minutes



It's the beginning of the summer. In a village in northern Turkey, Lale and her four sisters come home from school, innocently playing with boys. The supposed debauchery of their games causes a scandal with unintended consequences. The family home slowly turns into a prison, classes on housework and cooking replace school, and marriages begin to be arranged. The five sisters, driven by the same desire for freedom, fight back against the limits imposed on them.

Directed by: Deniz Gamze Ergüven

Produced by: Charles Gillibert

Cast: Gunes Sensoy, Dogba Doguslu, Tugba Sunguroglu, Elit Iscan, Ilayda Akdogan

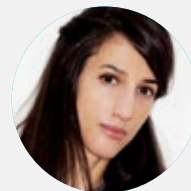
Screenplay: Deniz Gamze Ergüven, Alice Winocour

Cinematography: David Chizallet, Ersin Gok

Edited by: Mathilde Van de Moortel

Festivals & Awards:

Official selection, Director's Fortnight, Cannes International Film Festival, 2015
Nominated for Best Foreign Language Film, Academy Awards, 2016



Born in Ankara, Deniz Gamze Ergüven had a very cosmopolitan upbringing, between France, Turkey and the U.S.

A compulsive cinephile, she studied directing at La Fémis in Paris, after an MA in African History at Johannesburg. Her graduation film, 'Bir Damla Su' (A Drop of Water), screened at the Cannes Festival Cinéfondation and won a Leopards of Tomorrow award at Locarno. Opening with a shot of a veiled woman blowing a bubble with chewing gum, the 19-minute short tells the story of a young Turkish woman (played by Deniz herself) rebelling against the patriarchal attitudes and authoritarianism of the men in her community.

Paulina (La Patota) (2015)

Argentina, Brazil, France | Spanish | 103 minutes



Santiago Mitre is a writer and director from Buenos Aires, Argentina. As a scriptwriter he has worked with filmmaker Pablo Trapero on films

such as 'Carancho' (2010) and 'Lion's Den' (2008), both of which won and were nominated for several awards. Of his own projects, he is best known for 'The Student' (2011), which was also very well-received on the festival circuit, winning Mitre several Best Director and Best Screenplay accolades.

Paulina abandons her successful career as a lawyer in Buenos Aires to engage in social activism back in her homeland on the border between Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil. After two weeks working in a neighbourhood scarred by poverty and marginalization, she is assaulted by a gang. Despite the brutality of the attack, instead of fleeing, Paulina resolves to hold on to her convictions - to survive, against the odds.

Paulina (La Patota) is a social thriller that explores the characters connected to an act of violence - the victims and the perpetrators - and examines how that violence triggers different ideas of justice.

Directed by: Santiago Mitre

Produced by: Laurent Baudens

Cast: Dolores Fonzi, Oscar Martinez, Esteban Lamothe

Screenplay: Santiago Mitre, Mariano Llinás

Cinematography: Gustavo Biazzi

Edited by: Delfina Castagnino

Festivals & Awards:

The Nespresso Grand Prize & FIPRESCI Award, Cannes Critics Week, 2015
Spondylus Trophy for Best Screenplay, Lima Latin American Film Festival, 2015
Horizontes Award, EZA Youth Award & TVE-Another Look Award, San Sebastian Film Festival, 2015
Silver Hugo Award for Best Actress, Chicago International Film Festival, 2015

Poshter Girl (2016)

India | Marathi | 139 minutes

VIACOM 18
MOTION PICTURES



Poshter Girl is a story set in 'Takaode', a fictional village in Maharashtra. Takaode was once known for its rich culture and heritage. The soil is still fertile and capable of yielding crops and enabling prosperity for all. However, the population have grown disinterested in agriculture, and the practice of female infanticide is rife.

The villagers are preparing to sell their farms to make way for a 'Mega City' project. On the other hand, whenever a girl child is born, mother and daughter are banished from the village. Soon, there are no marriageable girls left. The village is swarming with bachelors squandering their youth away. Everything changes overnight when, Rupali, a feisty young girl comes visiting her relatives. Every bachelor in the village starts desperately vying for her attention. What ensues is a mad roller coaster ride where she asks the final five "eligible" bachelors to do the impossible.

Directed by: Sameer Patil

Produced by: Pushpank Gawade,
Hadi Ali Abrar

Cast: Sonalee Kulkarni, Hrishikesh
Joshi, Jeetendra Joshi, Aniket
Vishwasrao, Siddharth Menon

Screenplay: Hemant Dhome

Edited by: Kshitija Khandagale



Sameer Patil started his career as an actor on stage, performing primarily Marathi dramas, and then moved on to acting

on regional Marathi television. He has even anchored a few shows. He then gained experience as assistant director for both television and film, enabling him to release his own directorial debut 'Poshter Boyz' in 2014, followed by Poshter Girl.

Siti (2014)

Indonesia | Indonesian | 88 minutes



Eddie Cahyono, is a filmmaker from Indonesia. He made his first short film in 1998, and in 2001, he founded Fourcolours Films. For his short

films, he has received numerous awards and significant recognition. In 2007, he graduated from the television department of the Indonesian Institute of Art in Yogyakarta. Siti is his second feature film.

The film tells the story of 24-year-old Siti, a young mother. Since her husband had a fishing accident a year ago, Siti became the sole breadwinner in the family, looking after her paralysed husband, her son and mother-in-law. She struggles to support them, and due to increasing debt – she is forced to work day and night. She starts working as a karaoke guide, which her husband strongly disapproves of – creating much tension in their already burdened marriage. She meets a policeman at the karaoke bar who falls in love with her and wants to marry her. She hesitates... then chooses happiness.

Directed by: Eddie Cahyono

Produced by: Ifa Isfansyah

Cast: Sekar Sari, Delia Nuswantoro, Chelsy Bettido, Ibnu Widodo, Bintang Timur Widodo

Screenplay: Eddie Cahyono

Cinematography: Ujel Bausa

Edited by: Gregorius Arya

Festivals & Awards:

Official selection, Singapore

International Film Festival, 2014

Official selection, Vancouver

International Film Festival, 2015

Official selection, International Film Festival Rotterdam, 2015

Swayam (1991)

India | Hindi | 140 minutes

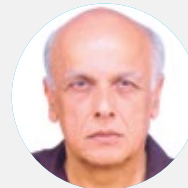


Swayam is the story of a widow, who after losing her husband, chooses to stand on her own two shaky feet and face the twilight of her life with dignity, without having to depend on her two daughters – even though they are more than happy to give her all the emotional and financial support she needs. A hidden gem from Mahesh Bhatt's considerable filmography, that challenged stereotypes of depictions of women on Indian screens.

Directed by: Mahesh Bhatt

Cast: Waheeda Rehman,
Paresh Rawal

Screenplay: Robin Bhatt



Mahesh Bhatt is a veteran filmmaker who has written and re-written the rules of Indian cinema. He began his career in 1973

with the film 'Manzilen Aur Bhi Hai'. Unconventional to the point of being rebellious, he has shattered several myths surrounding movie making. He gained critical and commercial success for his groundbreaking film 'Arth' (1982) that presented the raw reality of infidelity and marriage. He followed with 'Saraansh' (1984), 'Naam, Daddy' (1991), 'Tamanna' (1997) and finally the National Award winning Zakhm (1999) – all of which were born out of his own unique experiences. Bhatt has not limited himself to just filmmaking, and is also an acclaimed writer of books and screenplays.

Tales (Ghesseha) (2014)

Iran | Persian | 88 minutes



Rakhsan Banietamad was born in Tehran in 1954. After studying at the University of Dramatic Arts in Iran, she made several documentaries for Iranian television. In 1987, she directed her first feature film 'Off Limits', and in 1991, she became the first woman recipient of the Best Director Award at Fajr International Film Festival in Tehran for 'Nargess'. Her other features include 'Gilaneh' (2005), which was also a critically-acclaimed festival favourite.

A film by celebrated Iranian director Rakhsan Banietamad, *Tales* tells the story of filmmakers, workers, intellectuals, state employees and social workers – men and women – who have to fight for their rights and freedom of expression. A remarkable example of Iranian cinema, particularly through the eyes of a woman filmmaker.

Directed by: Rakhsan Banietamad
Produced by: Rakhsan Banietamad
Cast: Golab Adineh, Saber Abar, Farhad Aslani, Foojan Arefpoor, Bahareh Daneshgar
Screenplay: Rakhsan Banietamad, Farid Mostafavi
Cinematography: Koohyar Kalari
Edited by: Sepideh Abdolvahab

Festivals & Awards:
Jury Award, Asia Pacific Screen Awards, 2014
Golden Royal Bengal Trophy for Best Film, Kolkata International Film Festival, 2014
Best Screenplay, Venice International Film Festival, 2014
Best Feature Film, London Iranian Film Festival, 2015

Television (2012)

Bangladesh | Bengali | 106 minutes



As leader of a local community in rural Bangladesh, Chairman Amin bans every kind of image in his water locked village, including televisions, considering it un-Islamic. He even goes on to claim that imagination is sinful since it can wander into prohibited territory. The village is also home to some colourful, eccentric and emotional characters – whose reactions to the ban are comical. A plot twist where television comes to his rescue, Chairman Amin is forced to embrace image and the imagination.

Directed by: Mostofa Sarwar Farooki
Produced by: Mostofa Sarwar Farooki
Cast: Shahir Kazi Huda, Chanchal Chowdhury, Nusrat Imroz Tisha
Screenplay: Mostafa Sarwar Farooki, Anisul Haque
Cinematography: Golam Maola Nobir
Edited by: Razon Khaled

Festivals & Awards:
Official selection, Busan International Film Festival, 2012
Special Mention, Dubai International Film Festival, 2012
City of Rome Award for Best Asian Feature Film, Asiatica Film Mediale, 2013
Grand Jury Prize, Asia Pacific Screen Awards, 2013
NETPAC Award, Kolkata International Film Festival, 2013



Mostofa Sarwar Farooki is a Bangladeshi film director and screenwriter, and the pioneer of an avant-garde filmmakers' movement called 'Chabial'. His fourth feature film 'Television', was the closing film at Busan International Film Festival (2012) and won the Grand Jury Prize at the Asia Pacific Screen Awards (2013), in addition to five other international awards. He followed up his success with the film 'Ant Story', which also received several international accolades.

Under Construction (2015)

Bangladesh | Bengali | 88 minutes



Rubaiyat Hossain is one of Bangladesh's handful of female filmmakers, known for her critically-acclaimed debut feature film

'Meherjaan' (2011), which faced political and cultural wrath in Bangladesh for its anti-war narrative and critique of patriarchy. The film was pulled out from theatres across the country only a week after its release, and remains prohibited. Rubaiyat has completed a B.A. in Women Studies from Smith College, U.S., and an M.A. in South Asian Studies from University of Pennsylvania. She currently lives between Dhaka and New York making films and attending classes on Cinema Studies at the Tisch School of Arts at New York University.

Roya, a modern middle-class Muslim woman struggles to find herself in the sprawl of urban Bangladesh. After being replaced by a younger actor for the character of 'Nandini' – the central character of Rabindranath Tagore's political play 'Red Oleanders', and the epitome of Bengali womanhood – she delves into a psychological journey and battles to reconstruct Nandini, reclaiming her identity and sexuality in the process. As she sets the play in modern day readymade garment factories in Dhaka, her journey to establish her individuality as a middle-class woman is juxtaposed with the journey of her teenage housemaid Moyna, who later joins the industrial workforce.

Directed by: Rubaiyat Hossain

Produced by: Rubaiyat Hossain, Ashique Mostafa

Cast: Sahana Goswami, Rikita Nandini Shimu, Mita Rahman, Rahul Bose, Shahadat Hossain

Screenplay: Rubaiyat Hossain

Cinematography: Martina Radwan

Edited by: Sujan Mahmud

Festivals & Awards:

Premiered in New Director's Showcase, Seattle International Film Festival, 2015
Official selection – Focus on World Cinema, Montreal World Film Festival, 2015
Official selection – New Director's Competition, São Paulo International Film Festival, 2015
Official selection, Stockholm Film Festival, 2015
Official selection, Kerala International Film Festival, 2015

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The Boxing Girls of Kabul (2012)

Canada | Farsi | 52 minutes



Ariel Nasr is an Afghan-Canadian filmmaker based in Afghanistan. Fascinated by the pursuit of untold stories, he directed

'Good Morning Kandahar' and 'The Boxing Girls of Kabul' for the National Film Board of Canada. Ariel also designs video installations and writes for radio, and is currently creating an NFB interactive project about storytellers in Kabul. He has co-founded two partner NGOs to help train and promote Afghan filmmakers: Afghan Film Making Education Organization (Afghanistan) and Afghan Film Project (US). He recently produced 'Buzkashi Boys', shot on location in Kabul.

A group of young Afghan women strive to become world-class boxers, training without even the most basic facilities at the national stadium, where only recently women were executed by the Taliban. Loyal to their country, yet daring to defy its traditions - these courageous boxers openly dream of their future, and even a shot at the 2012 Olympics. Committed to a challenging regime and enduring increasing pressure to abandon their training, the women are resolute. The film shadows them closely over a year, coming to know them individually and as a team of competitors. The Boxing Girls of Kabul is a journey of personal and political transformation, illustrating the power of fighting for what you believe in.

Directed by: Ariel Nasr
Produced by: Annette Clarke,
National Film Board of Canada
Screenplay: Ariel Nasr
Cinematography: Kate Brooks,
Ariel Nasr
Edited by: Hannele Halm

Festivals & Awards:
Inspirit Foundation Pluralism Prize,
Hot Docs, 2012
Best Short Documentary,
Canadian Screen Award, 2013

Camera/Woman (2012)

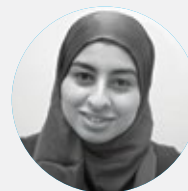
Morocco | Arabic | 59 minutes



Working as a wedding videographer in Casablanca, Khadija Harrad is part of a new generation of young, divorced Moroccan women seeking independence while honouring their families' wishes. A young mother and primary breadwinner for her family, she navigates between the fantasy world of the parties she films and harassment from her disapproving conservative family – who want her only to remarry. *Camera/Woman*, shot in vérité style, follows Khadija on the job, at home, and with friends – also divorced and who share similar experiences. Unveiling issues that confront working-class Muslim women in societies now undergoing profound change, this film reveals that for Khadija – unbowed in the face of overwhelming odds – the camera becomes a liberating force.

Directed by: Karima Zoubir
Produced by: Karima Zoubir
Screenplay: Karima Zoubir
Cinematography: Gris Jordana
Edited by: Sofi Escudé

Festivals & Awards:
World View Award, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, 2012
Human Rights Award, Agadir International Documentary Film Festival, 2013
Ulysses Award for Best Documentary, Cinemed, 2013



Karima has been working as a freelance documentary filmmaker and scriptwriter since graduating in 2005

from the Audiovisual Department of Casablanca University. In November 2005, she attended her first masterclass on filmmaking organized by Marrakech Tribeca Filmmakers Exchanges, and conducted by Martin Scorsese and Abbas Kiarostami. These last few years, she was invited to workshops and markets such as Berlinale Talent Campus, Greenhouse, Access, Medimed, Durban FilmMart with her project 'Woman with a Camera'.

Daughters of Mother India (2014)

India | Hindi, English | 45 minutes



Vibha Bakshi is a National Award-winning filmmaker and co-producer/co-director with Academy Award®-winner Maryann

Deleo. A former business reporter for CNBC, Vibha studied Journalism and Broadcasting at Boston and New York Universities. Films that she co-produced with Maryann – 'Too Hot Not to Handle' and 'Terror at Home' - have been aired respectively on HBO and Lifetime TV in the United States.

Daughters of Mother India reveals the aftermath of 2012's notorious Delhi rape case. For weeks, mass protests filled the streets and the country witnessed previously unparalleled gender consciousness and extraordinary solidarity by ordinary citizens.

Stories about violence against women in India were making headlines worldwide almost on a daily basis. Throughout the film, journalist and filmmaker Vibha Bakshi probes local judges, police officers, teachers, activists and even street performers fighting against gender violence, while simultaneously showing the critical role that each one of these social actors must play to bring about real change in India.

Directed by: Vibha Bakshi
Produced by: Vibha Bakshi
Cinematography: Attar Singh Saini
Edited by: Hemanti Sarkar

Festivals & Awards:
Best Film on Social Issues,
National Film Award, 2015
Best Documentary Film, New York
Indian Film Festival, 2015

Driving with Selvi (2015)

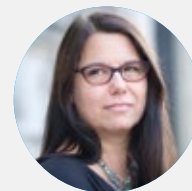
Canada | English | 52 minutes



Selvi, like so many girls in India, is forced into marry at a young age, only to find herself in a violent and abusive relationship. One day, in deep despair – she chooses to escape, going to a highway with the intention of throwing herself under the wheels of a bus. Instead she gets on the bus, choosing to live... and goes on to become South India's first female taxi driver.

Directed by: Elisa Paloschi
Produced by: Elisa Paloschi
Cinematography: Elisa Paloschi
Edited by: David Kazala, Mahi Rahgozar

Festivals & Awards:
Official selection, Raindance Independent Film Festival, 2015
Official selection, Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival, 2015
Official selection, United Nations Association Film Festival, 2015
Official selection, Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival, 2015
Official selection, International Documentary Festival Amsterdam, 2015



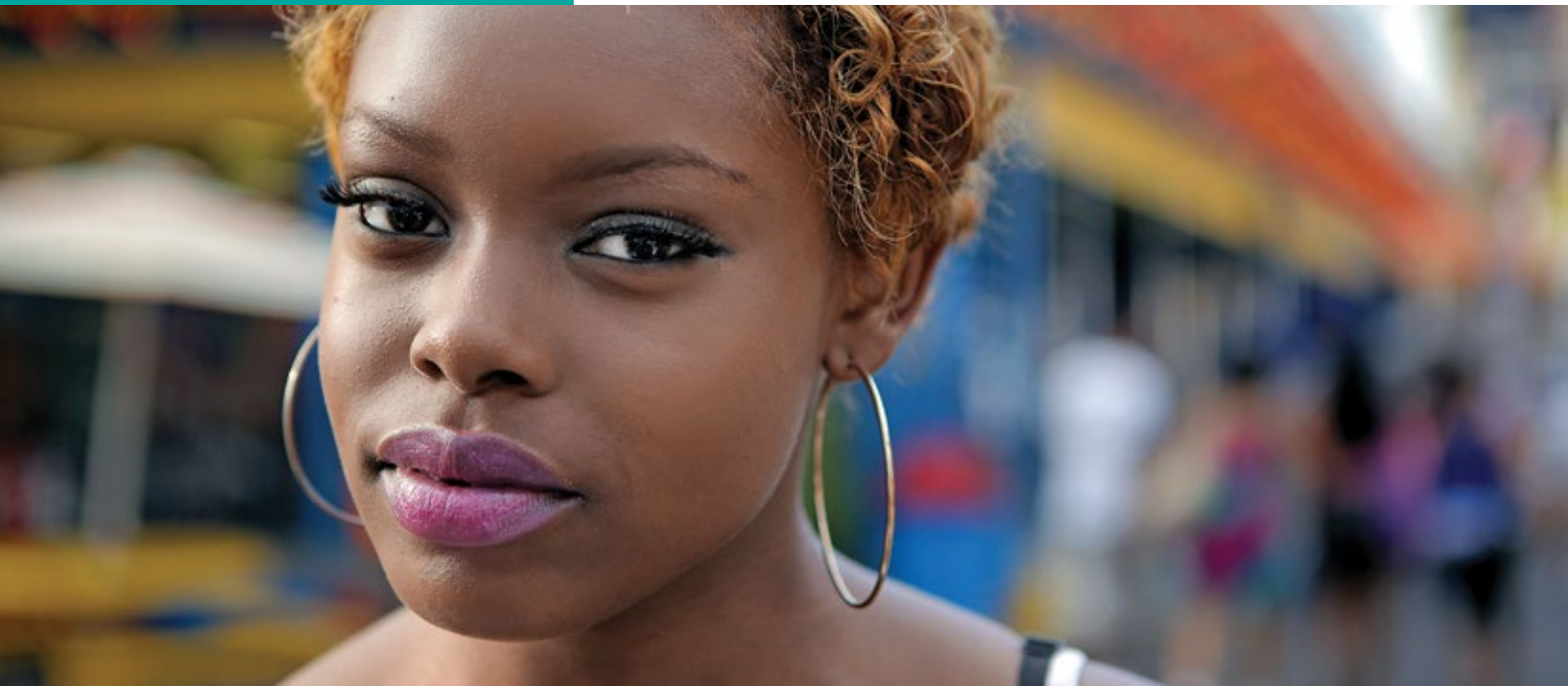
Elisa Paloschi is a documentary filmmaker and cinematographer with more than 25 years experience. She is the

president of Eyesfull, a Toronto-based independent production company, dedicated to making socially relevant non-fiction films. With *Driving with Selvi*, she hopes to create significant and far-reaching impact through grassroots screenings to share Selvi's story with 1 million Indian women and girls; encouraging open dialogue about women in non-traditional occupations; and developing social enterprise initiatives, such as a driving centre for women, and an all female taxi fleet in Mysore. Her objective is to promote gender equality and women's economic empowerment through training, entrepreneurship and earnings. **Much in-keeping with FICCI FLO's own initiative: WE - Women's Empowerment in Education.**



I Am A Girl (2014)

Australia | English, French, Khmer, Tok Pisin | 52 minutes



Rebecca's driving passion is facilitating compelling stories that engage audiences in dialogue. An award-winning director,

writer and producer of documentary and drama films and a graduate from the Australian Film Television and Radio School, her films have screened at various international film festivals and institutions. Her work includes: 'Footy Chicks', 'Inspiring Teachers', 'Home and Away', 'The Surgeon', 'You Am I – The Cream and The Crock', 'Beats Across Borders', 'The Space In Between', 'The McDonagh Sisters', 'A Modern Marriage', and 'Overture'.

Being born a girl means you are more likely to be subjected to violence, disease, poverty, and disadvantage than any other group on Earth. *I Am a Girl* follows six young girls from Cambodia, Afghanistan, NYC, Australia, Cameroon and Papua New Guinea as they come of age in the way their cultures dictate, telling remarkable heart-warming stories of resilience, bravery and humour.

Directed by: Rebecca Barry
Produced by: Rebecca Barry
Cinematography: Nicola Daley
Edited by: Lindi Harrison

Festivals & Awards:
Official selection, Sarasota Film Festival, 2014
Official selection, United Nations Association Film Festival, 2014
Best Documentary Feature, Screen Producers Australia Awards, 2014
Nominated for Best Feature Documentary, Australia Directors Guild Awards, 2014
Nominated for Best Documentary, Best Cinematography & Best Direction, Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Awards, 2014

Invoking Justice (2011)

India | Tamil | 52 minutes



Fed up with male-dominated *jamaats* (community councils), where they have neither voice nor place, Sharifa and other small-town Muslim women in South India set up their own in 2003. This was an act of extraordinary courage, since traditionally they can only be founded and run by men. In this unique *jamaat* – dowry harassment, domestic violence, divorce, maintenance and property disputes are no longer judged by men. Opposition from male clerics and the community is fierce, but the women's *jamaat* have not only prevailed but grown in strength and legitimacy: to date, they have arbitrated over 10,000 disputes using homespun logic and an innate sense of justice to reclaim the Koran.

Directed by: Deepa Dhanraj
Produced by: Deepa Dhanraj
Cinematography: Navroze Contractor
Edited by: Jabeen Merchant

Festivals & Awards

International Premiere,
International Documentary Film
Festival Amsterdam, 2011
Official selection, Helsinki
Documentary Film Festival, 2012
Official selection, Asian American
International Film Festival, 2012
QFX Jury Award, Film Southasia,
2013
Official selection, San Francisco
International Asian American Film
Festival, 2013

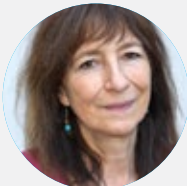


Deepa Dhanraj is a writer, director and producer living in Bangalore. She has produced and directed numerous award-winning

documentaries, including 'Something Like a War' (Channel 4) 'The Legacy of Malthus' (BBC 2), 'Sudeshna' (Faust Film/ARD), 'Nari Adalat' (Women's Courts), and 'What Has Happened to this City?'. Her films have been invited to festivals like IDFA, Berlinale, Leipzig, Oberhausen, Films de Femmes, Vancouver and Chicago – to name but a few. She has a keen interest in education and has created special video materials to address challenges faced by first generation learners.

Mission Rape: A Tool of War (2014)

Denmark | Bosnian | 61 minutes



Annette Mari Olsen and Katia Forbert Peterson, both graduates of the Polish Film School, together established Sfinx Film/TV in 1988 and a number of their projects have been screened at international festivals, including 'Behind the Mountains' – which received the Grand Prix for Best Film at Taiwan International Children's Film Festival in

2006. Olsen taught at the National Film School of Denmark from 1983-84, and conducted several international masterclasses on documentary direction. As media consultant for the Danish Refugee Council, she interpreted several award-winning English, Farsi, Polish, French, and Danish, films about ethnic minorities in Denmark. Peterson has shot some 150 films, including a number of features. She received the Annual Prize from the Association of Danish Cinematographers in 1992, and The Golden Mermaid from WIFT (Women in Film and Television), in 2001.

Rape is an ancient 'weapon of war', and a very effective instrument in genocide and conquest of territory. Yet, when conflicts end – there is no focus on victim's tragedy or fear. The rapists walk free. During post-war court trials, rape is dealt with as the least significant of war crimes. Even in The Hague Tribunal – rape has received low priority against other war-crimes. Mission Rape focuses on Bosnia, where between 1992 and 1995, 25-40,000 women were victims of mass rape. The Bosnian war and its aftermath reflect the poor chances of judicial justice that women raped during armed conflicts have around the world.

Directed by: Annette Mari Olsen & Katia Forbert Petersen
Produced by: Annette Mari Olsen, Katia Forbert Petersen & Karen Hjort
Screenplay: Annette Mari Olsen & Katia Forbert Petersen
Cinematography: Katia Forbert Petersen
Edited by: Wojtek Kloczko

Festivals & Awards:
Nominated for Oxfam Global Justice Award, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, 2014
Nominated for PRIX EUROPA IRIS, PRIX EUROPA, 2014
Official selection, Vienna International Human Rights Film Festival, 2014
Official selection, Mumbai Film Festival, 2014
Official selection, Kosovo Dokufest, 2015

No Problem! Six Months with the Barefoot Grandmamas (2012)

India | English | 58 minutes



No Problem! is about the rural solar electrification project run by the Barefoot College in the village of Tilonia, Rajasthan – where illiterate rural women from all over the world, particularly Africa, are trained as solar engineers. A simple idea from a little-known village in India has the potential to impact global communities.

The film follows the 2011 batch of African women, from Tanzania-Zanzibar, South Sudan, Malawi, and Liberia - leaving their families and countries for the first time. The women live and learn together for six months without a common language, but with a unifying goal - to become solar engineers and bring electricity to their villages back home.

Directed by: Yasmin Kidwai

Produced by: Ministry of External Affairs

Screenplay: Yasmin Kidwai

Edited by: Jabeen Merchant, Nimit Vats

Festivals & Awards:

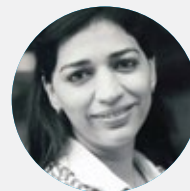
Best Documentary, Delhi International Film Festival, 2013

Best Documentary, River to River, Florence Indian Film Festival, 2013

Best Documentary Award & 'Ousmane Sembene Films for Development' Award, Zanzibar International Film Festival, 2013

Best Direction & Best Documentary, Chennai Women's International Film Festival, 2014

Best Film (Livelihood), Woodpecker International Film Festival and Forum, 2015



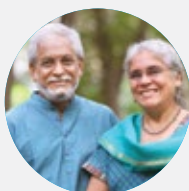
Kidwai founded Spring Box Films in 1998. With over 15 years of experience, she has produced and/or directed over 50

documentaries related to issues such as women's empowerment, women's reservation, old age and tourism. She has also worked extensively with government agencies and NGOs across India. Today, Yasmin is also on the governing body of two prestigious women's colleges in New Delhi – Kamla Nehru College and Gargi College. She is also the Treasurer of Kamla Nehru College.



Our Family (2007)

India | Tamil | 56 minutes



Anjali Monteiro and K.P. Jayasankar are Professors at the School of Media and Cultural Studies (TISS), Mumbai.

Jayasankar is also

Dean of the School. They have made over 40 documentaries, and have mentored a number of young documentary filmmakers. Their works have been screened at many international festivals, and jointly they have won 32 national and international awards. They have had 4 retrospectives of their films in India and abroad, and an adaptation of their film Saacha was part of an exhibition at the Tate Modern, London, in 2013.

Their written work focuses on documentary, censorship, critical theory and media representation. They have been fellows and visiting faculty at several international institutions, including Goldsmith's, London and Berkeley, California. They actively campaign for freedom of expression and are on the boards of several professional and voluntary organisations. Their recent book, *A Fly in the Curry*, on independent Indian documentary, was published in 2015.

What does it mean to cross that line which sharply divides us on the basis of gender? To free oneself of the socially constructed onus of being male? *Our Family* brings together excerpts of a one person performance of 'Nirvanam' (meaning Liberation – specifically the act of liberating oneself from the male body), and a three generation family of trans-gendered female subjects, who are bound together by ties of adoption. The 'normality' of the family's existence is juxtaposed with the dark and powerful narrative, bearing witness to the tumultuous journey towards a reinvented selfhood, fraught with violence, exploitation, affection and courage.

Directed by: K. P. Jayasankar & Anjali Monteiro

Produced by: School of Media and Cultural Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Screenplay: K. P. Jayasankar & Anjali Monteiro

Cinematography: K. P. Jayasankar

Edited by: K. P. Jayasankar & Anjali Monteiro

Festivals & Awards:

Special Jury Award, documentary section, SiGNS Festival, 2007

Certificate of Merit, Special Mention, Mumbai International

Film Festival, 2008

Gold for Best Script, Best Sound Design; Silver for Best Editing;

Certificate of Merit for Best

Documentary, Indian Documentary Producers Association, 2008

Pray the Devil Back to Hell (2008)

USA | English | 54 minutes



Pray the Devil Back to Hell is the astonishing story of Leymah Gbowee, the Liberian women who took on the warlords and regime of dictator Charles Taylor in the midst of a brutal civil war, and won a once unimaginable peace for her shattered country in 2003. As the rebel noose tightened around the capital city of Monrovia, thousands of women – ordinary mothers, grandmothers, aunts and daughters, both Christian and Muslim – formed a thin but unshakeable line between the opposing forces.

Directed by: Gini Reticker
Produced by: Abigail Disney
Cinematography: Kirsten Johnson
Edited by: Meg Reticker & Kate Taverna

Festivals & Awards

Best Documentary Feature, Tribeca Film Festival, 2008
Cowboy Award Winner, Audience Choice Award Jackson Hole Film Festival, 2008
Witness Award, Silverdocs AFI/Discovery Channel Film Festival, 2008
Special Jury Prize for Non-Fiction Filmmaking, Traverse City Film Festival, 2008
Crystal Heart Award for Best Documentary Feature, Heartland Film Festival, 2008
Best Documentary in the Interfaith Category, St. Louis International Film Festival, 2008



Gini Reticker is an Academy Award®-nominated documentary filmmaker, whose work focuses on women engaged

in struggles for social justice. Pray the Devil Back to Hell won best documentary at Tribeca Film Festival, 2008 – and is broadly credited with helping Leymah Gbowee, receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. Since then, Reticker was executive producer of 'Women, War & Peace', a five part series offering a first-of-its-kind look at the modern role of women in war, not just as victims of conflict but as active agents for peace. It won the Overseas Press Club's Edward R. Murrow Award and the Television Academy Honors Award in 2011.



The Price of Sex (2011)

USA | English, Russian, Turkish, Bulgarian | 73 minutes



For the past 15 years, photographer and filmmaker Mimi Chakarova has covered conflict, corruption and the sex trade. The Price

of Sex caps years of on-the-ground reporting, airing on Frontline (PBS) and 60 Minutes (CBS) and earning Chakarova an Emmy nomination. She was awarded the Nestor Almendros Award for courage in filmmaking at the Human Rights Watch Film Festival in New York, and also won the prestigious Daniel Pearl Award for Outstanding International Investigative Reporting.

Chakarova taught visual storytelling at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism for 14 years, and has had numerous solo exhibitions of her photo-documentary projects on South Africa, Jamaica, Cuba, Kashmir and Eastern Europe.

An unprecedented and compelling inquiry, The Price of Sex sheds light on the underground criminal network of human trafficking and the experiences of trafficked Eastern European women forced into prostitution abroad. Filming undercover with extraordinary access, even posing as a prostitute herself, Bulgarian-born photojournalist

Mimi Chakarova travels from impoverished rural areas in post-Communist Eastern Europe, including her grandmother's village, to Turkey, Greece, and Dubai. This dangerous investigative journey brings her face to face with trafficked women willing to trust her and appear on film undisguised. Their harrowing first-person accounts, as well as interviews with traffickers, clients, and anti-trafficking activists, expose the root causes, complex connections, and stark significance of sexual slavery today.

Directed by: Mimi Chakarova
Produced by: Mimi Chakarova
Screenplay: Mimi Chakarova
Cinematography: Adam Keker
Edited by: Stephanie Challberg

Festivals & Awards:
Daniel Pearl Award for Outstanding International Investigative Reporting, 2011
Nestor Almendros Award for courage in filmmaking, Human Rights Watch Film Festival, 2011
Included in American Library Association Notable Videos for Adults list, 2012

She Objects (2016)

Hong Kong | Cantonese | 50 minutes

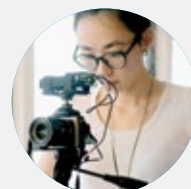


Every day, we are bombarded by television commercials, billboards, social media posts and music videos that objectify women, promote the thinness ideal and portray women in stereotypical roles. Unprecedented numbers of young children and adults are using mobile devices to access media, especially social media. Given that younger media consumers are less able to distinguish airbrushed fantasy from reality or to analyse the media messages they are imbibing, the impact on their attitudes and beliefs can be significant. *She Objects* examines the scale and impact of these media influences in Hong Kong, particularly on younger audiences.

***Premiering at FLO Film Festival**

Directed by: Nicola Fan

Produced by: Jessica Kam & Patty Keung



Nicola Fan is a graphic designer and filmmaker from Hong Kong. Having graduated from Rhode Island School of

Design, she works as an art director in advertising, and has directed and produced branded content, music videos, documentaries and shorts. In 2014, at the recommendation of Hong Kong International Film Festival, her music video *The Eve* was sponsored by Hong Kong Arts Centre in 2014 to be sent to film festivals such as Clermont Ferrand International Film Festival, NYC Independent Film Festival, Incubator for Film and Visual Media in Asia, and more.

She's Beautiful When She's Angry (2014)

USA | English | 92 minutes



Mary Dore is an award-winning documentary producer who began her career with a Boston film collective producing

independent historical documentaries. She has produced TV series for Maine Public Broadcasting and 13/WNET in New York, and dozens of TV documentaries for PBS, New York Times TV, A&E, and Discovery Channel. She co-directed and produced the feature documentary 'The Good Fight: the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War', which screened at Toronto, Sundance, and London Film Festivals. Her work has won Emmys, Cine Golden Eagles, and Cable Ace Awards.

She's Beautiful When She's Angry resurrects the buried history of the outrageous, often brilliant women who founded the modern women's movement from 1966 to 1971. The film takes us from the founding of NOW, with ladies in hats and gloves, to the emergence of more radical factions of women's liberation; from intellectuals like Kate Millett to the street theatrics of WITCH (Women's International Conspiracy from Hell!). It does not shy away from controversies over race, sexual preference and leadership that arose in the women's movement, and brilliantly captures the spirit of the time – thrilling, scandalous, and often hilarious.

Directed by: Mary Dore
Produced by: Mary Dore, Nancy Kennedy
Cinematography: Svetlana Cvetko, Alicia Weber
Edited by: Nancy Kennedy, Kate Taverna

Festivals & Awards
Audience Award for Best Documentary, Boston Independent Film Festival, 2014
Best Documentary, Fair Hope Film Festival, 2014
Audience Award for Best Documentary, Mardi Gras Film Festival, 2015
Best Documentary, Hamburg International Queer Film Festival, 2015
Best of Festival, Zonta Film Festival, 2015

Speed Sisters (2015)

USA | Arabic, English | 80 minutes



The Speed Sisters are the first all-woman race car driving team in the Middle East. Grabbing headlines and turning heads at improvised tracks across the West Bank, these five women have sped their way into the hearts of the gritty, male-dominated Palestinian street car-racing scene. Weaving together their lives on and off the track, Speed Sisters takes you on a surprising journey into the drive to go further and faster than anyone thought you could.

Directed by: Amber Fares
Produced by: Amber Fares, Avi Goldstein, Jessica Devaney
Cinematography: Amber Fares, Lucy Martens
Edited by: Rabab Haj Yahya

Festivals & Awards

Official selection, Hot Docs, 2015
Audience Award for Best Feature, Irish Film Institute Documentary Festival, 2015
Best Documentary, Adelaide Film Festival, 2015
Youth Jury Award, PriMed, 2015
Official selection, DOC NYC, 2015



Amber Fares is an award-winning Canadian documentary filmmaker and photographer, based in New York.

Her feature length directorial debut Speed Sisters, premiered at Hot Docs in 2015, and won the Audience Award at the Irish Film Institute Documentary Festival. It is currently playing at film festivals around the world. Amber's storytelling approach is driven by the belief that personal stories best help connect audiences with important issues, and has worked with organizations like UNRWA, Defence for Children International and Amnesty International. Amber co-founded SocDoc Studios to produce story-driven films that explore social issues.



Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai (2008)

USA | English | 55 minutes



Lisa Merton started her career as a weaver. While studying textile design in Scandinavia, she was inspired by a series of tapestries depicting the Nazi occupation of Norway. She intended to weave art with a social message. However, only when she started filmmaking

did she start weaving together images that could inspire social change. Her skill as a craftsman, and her experience teaching English as a second language in multicultural classrooms, considerably influence her films.

Alan Dater began his documentary film career in New York City. His early projects include two Emmy Award-winning series: 'Lifeline and The Body Human'. His extensive film experience ranges from productions on the arts, social issues, education and corporate films.



Three decades ago, Wangari Maathai suggested to rural women in her native Kenya that they plant trees for firewood and to stop soil erosion – an act that grew into a nationwide movement to safeguard the environment, defend human rights, and fight government injustice. The Green Belt Movement that formed gave the women a reason to come together and become involved in resolving their communities' challenges. The movement led to Maathai becoming the first environmentalist and African woman to win the Nobel Prize.

Directed by: Alan Dater, Lisa Merton

Produced by: Alan Dater, Carl-A.

Fechner, Lisa Merton

Cinematography: Alan Dater

Edited by: Thomas Haneke, Jim Klein, Mary Lampson

Festivals & Awards

Audience Award, Hot Docs, 2008

Amnesty International Durban

Human Rights Award, Durban International Film Festival, 2008

Nashville Women in Film & Television Award for Best Feature

Length Film Directed or Co-

Directed by a Woman, Nashville International Film Festival, 2008

Full Frame Women in Leadership Award, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, 2008

Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines (2012)

USA | English | 55 minutes



Wonder Women! traces the fascinating evolution and legacy of Wonder Woman. From the birth of the comic book superheroine in the 1940s to the blockbusters of today, Wonder Women! looks at how popular representations of powerful women often reflect society's anxieties about women's liberation.

Directed by: Kristy Guevara-Flanagan
Produced by: Kelcey Edwards
Cinematography: Gabriel Miller
Edited by: Melanie Vi Levy, Carla Gutierrez

Festivals & Awards

Audience Award for Feature Film,
Indianapolis International Film
Festival, 2012
Documentary Feature Award,
Dallas VideoFest, 2012
Juror Award for Best Documentary
and Best Directing, BendFilm
Festival, 2012



Kristy's first feature-length film was an acclaimed documentary about four adolescent girls. 'Going on 13' was screened at

Tribeca, Silverdocs and many other international film festivals. It received funding from ITVS and was broadcast on public television in 2009. Kristy has also produced and directed several short films, including 'El Corrido de Cecilia Rios', a chronicle of the violent death of 15-year-old Cecilia Rios, which was screened at the Sundance Film Festival. Now an assistant professor at Diablo Valley College, Kristy has a MFA in Film Production from San Francisco State University.

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Bharatmata ki Jai (2012)

Documentary | India | Hindi | 28 minutes



In the heart of Mumbai's mill compound, Lalbaug-Parel, stands Bharatmata Cinema, one of the few remaining single screen theatres playing only Marathi films. An iconic reminder of a colourful working-class culture now in decline in Mumbai, the film explores the history of Bharatmata through the narratives of Kapil Bhopatkar – the owner, and Baban, one of the theatre's oldest employees.

A film by: Avadhoot Khanolkar, Arpita Chakraborty, Amol Ranjan, Shweta Radhakrishnan | **Produced by:** School of Media and Cultural Studies, TISS



Blouse (2014)

Fiction | India | Hindi | 20 minutes

Posted in the tiny Rajasthani village Meja, Shyam rarely gets to spend time with his beloved wife, Roopa. She only asks him to show up for Karwa Chauth – an important day for married Indian women. He insists on buying her a gift – a new blouse from Meja's famous Babu Tailor. But when he reaches he realizes he doesn't have that the sample blouse she'd given him, and is unable to give Babu Tailor Roopa's exact measurements. Babu Tailor suggests a plan involving ogling the bosoms, albeit discreetly, of every woman in the village. A hilarious narrative thus unfolds.



After studying filmmaking from Jamia Milia Islamia's AJ Kidwai Mass Communications Research Centre in New Delhi, Vijayeta assisted several directors on Hindi feature film and TVC projects. As an independent director, she has made TVCs and online content for various brands, sharpening her skills as she develops the script for her upcoming feature film.

Directed by: Vijayeta Kumar | **Produced by:** Ranjan Singh
Cast: Sumeet Vyas, Imran Rasheed, Preeti Sharma, Ronjini Chakraborty
Screenplay: Vijayeta Kumar, Sanjay Chandwara | **Cinematography:** Arjun Sorte
Edited by: Pranav Mistry, Abhijit Kokate

Festivals & Awards: Best Script, Jaipur International Film Festival, 2014
 Official selection, Bangalore International Short Film Festival, 2014
 Official selection, Jagran Film Festival, 2015

HerStories (2014)

Documentary | India | Hindi, Marathi | 15 minutes

An attempt to challenge the conventional male-centric way of looking at histories, HerStories revolves around the lives of Vaishali Girkar, Sulekha Rana and Laxmi Dhamanase – all former mill workers. The film explores their life in the mills, their struggle after the strike in 1982 and the way in which they continue to negotiate the personal with the political.

A film by: Fareeda Muhammad, Milanth Gautham, Ridhima Sharma, Shiva Thorat, Silja Wurgler | **Produced by:** School of Media and Cultural Studies, TISS

Festivals & Awards: Special Mention, Jeevika Film Festival, 2014



The Corner Table (2013)

Fiction | India | English | 24 minutes

The conversations between a mysterious old foreigner and a young café waitress tell us how strangers can sometimes become friends in the most unexpected way. The Corner Table explores the complexities of human relationships and life's bitter-sweet moments.

Manjari Makijany is from Mumbai and has an extensive background in film and theatre. She was assistant director for films like 'Wake Up Sid' and 'Saat Khoon Maaf'. She also worked on international productions such as Disney's 'Lilly the Witch', 'Gandhi of the Month', the Indian schedules of 'Mission Impossible 4' and 'Batman: The Dark Knight Rises'. Her independent debut was with the 7-minute silent film 'The Last Marble' (2012), which premiered at the Seattle International Film Festival and received much critical acclaim internationally.



Directed by: Manjari Makijany | **Produced by:** Emmanuel Pappas
Cast: Tom Alter, Vinati Makijany, Pushti Shiv Shakti
Screenplay: Manjari Makijany | **Cinematography:** Kevin Pereira
Edited by: Abhijeet Deshpande, Satyajee Kelkar

Festivals & Awards:

Showcased at American Pavilion, Cannes International Film Festival, 2014
Certificate of Cinematic Excellence, Rochester International Film Festival, 2014
Official selection, Short Film Corner, Cannes International Film Festival, 2014





Inside Out (2009)

Documentary | India | Hindi | 27 minutes

Even in the 21st century, in a city as liberal and safe as Mumbai, women's access to public space is limited and largely requires a purpose. But what if one just wants to be? Can a woman ever access public space as freely and completely as a man? The film focuses on the accounts of a young Muslim girl, addressing the need to experience the city purposelessly and in doing so, claiming an unfettered access to public space.

A film by: Divya Cowasji, Shilpi Gulati

Produced by: School of Media and Cultural Studies, TISS



Leeches (2015)

Fiction | India | Urdu, Dakhani | 27 minutes

In the Old City of Hyderabad, Raisa hatches a dangerous plan to save her younger sister from becoming a one-day bride when she finds an archaic remedy to restore a girl's virginity.



Payal Sethi studied film production and history at Tisch School of the Arts, New York. She worked alongside Mira Nair on award-winning films such as 'The Namesake,' 'Monsoon Wedding,' and 'Hysterical Blindness,' before directing her own short film, 'Grant St. Shaving Co.' It won the Best Film award at The Smalls & Florence River to River Film Festivals. Payal has curated films & screenplays for the Independent Feature Project New York, and revamped the Tribeca Film Festival Sloan Filmmaker Fund, which she ran for two years. In 2008, she co-founded FilmKaravan. She is currently working on her first feature film, 'Ooty Queen.'

Directed by: Payal Sethi | **Produced by:** Payal Sethi, Apoorva Marur, Arvind Acharya, Amartya Shahani | **Cast:** Sayani Gupta, Mohammed Abdul Razzak, Preeti Golacha, Manju Raval, Najma Nusrat | **Screenplay:** Payal Sethi, Samir Patil | **Cinematography:** James Demetri | **Edited by:** Vivan Chopra

Festivals & Awards: Official selection, Bengaluru International Film Festival, 2016



Morality TV Aur Loving Jehad: Ek Manohar Kahani (2008)

Documentary | India | Hindi | 31 minutes

In 2005, Indians switched on their TVs to watch yet another “breaking news” story, but one which shocked them. In Meerut, police officers – mostly women – swooped down on couples in a park and beat them up. They took along media reporters with the promise of an exclusive sting operation. The film looks outside the frames that weave the frenetic tapestry of Breaking News on India’s news channels to uncover a town’s complex dynamics, and examines the legacy of this kind of storytelling.

Paromita Vohra is an award-winning filmmaker and writer. She writes extensively for print, and has published fiction and non-fiction besides being a regular contributor to the Mumbai Mirror and Time Out Mumbai. She has done considerable work with young people with a focus on creativity and politics and teaches scriptwriting around the world. She is currently writing a feature film script and working on a non-fiction book about love in contemporary India.



Directed by: Paromita Vohra | **Produced by:** PSBT

Screenplay: Paromita Vohra

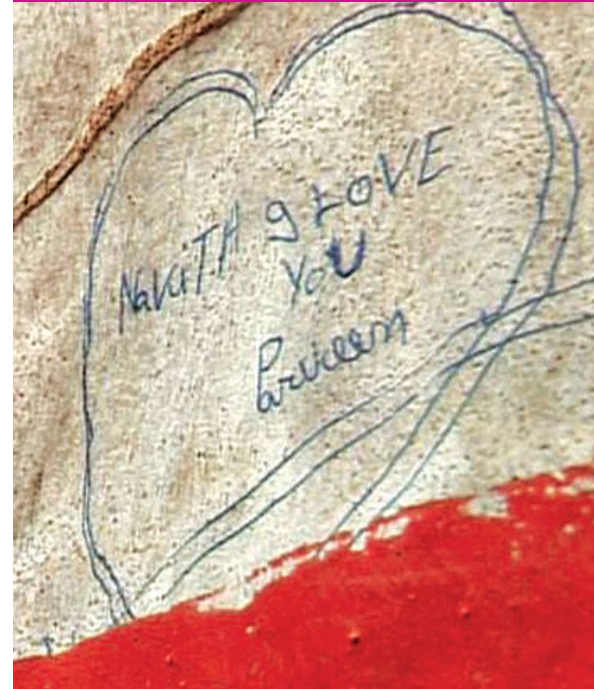
Cinematography: Avijit Mukul Kishore | **Edited by:** Sankalp Meshram

Festivals & Awards: Best Short Documentary, International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala, 2008

Official selection, Mumbai International Film Festival, 2008

Official selection, Asian Hot Shots Berlin, 2008

Official selection, Bengaluru International Film Festival, 2008



Newborns (2014)

Documentary | India | Hindi | 9 minutes

Newborns attempts to provide a lens to the survivors of acid attacks, to look forward and gaze back. They take us through the tedium of their domestic and public spaces in a nameless dystopian city, its factories, houses and motels, and its promises, never honoured.

Megha Ramaswamy is a screenwriter, director and producer based in Mumbai. Newborns, which premiered at TIFF 2014, has since travelled to numerous international festivals winning awards for its powerful storytelling and technique. Megha has also been a beneficiary of the Chicken & Egg Fund for the film and for her work with the support group Stop Acid Attacks. Her banner, Missfit Films, produces innovative content – and her new film ‘Bunny’ premiered at TIFF 2015, and continues to play at film festivals worldwide.



Directed by: Megha Ramaswamy | **Produced by:** Sohum Shah

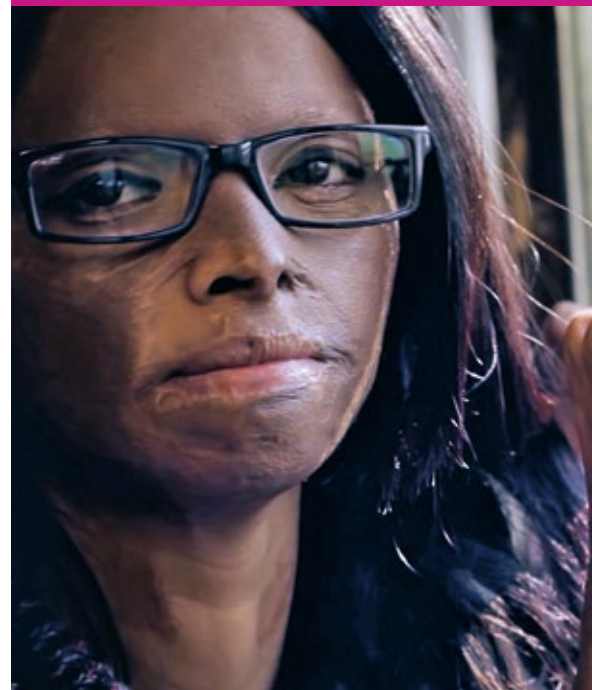
Screenplay: Megha Ramaswamy | **Cinematography:** Satya Nagpaul

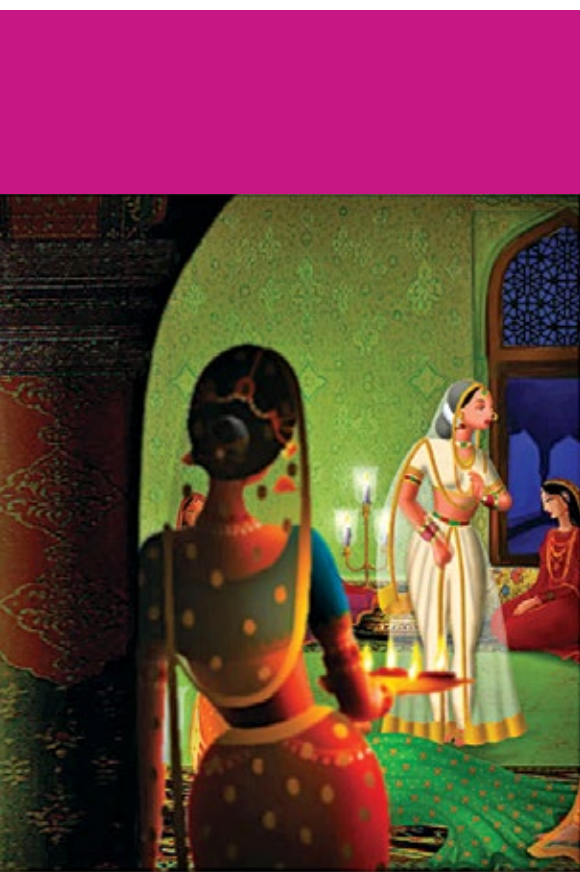
Edited by: Anand Gandhi, Rohit Pandey

Festivals & Awards: World Premiere, Toronto International Film Festival, 2014

Best Short Documentary, Mumbai Women’s International Film Festival, 2014

Jury Prize for Best Short Documentary, Delhi Shorts International Film Festival, 2014





Pava (2014)

Fiction | India | Tamil, Malayalam | 10 minutes

A metamorphosis of a relationship between a young girl and a barber. A journey through myriad emotions, appealing to the nostalgia of growing up, we see how certain moments mark the crescendo of a relationship - not as an end, but as a portrait that will remain etched in memory.



After a varied career in Public Relations, Marketing, Human Resources, Software, Adventure Sports and Advertising, Vaishnavi Sundar decided to tell stories using her collective wisdom. She describes herself as a feminist, filmmaker and lover of art – in that order! She writes, directs and produces films under her banner Lime Soda Films, and has completed three projects so far. She set up Women Making Films India to bring together women who are filmmakers or passionate to pursue filmmaking, and connect them with the world at large.

Directed by: Vaishnavi Sundar | **Produced by:** Vaishnavi Sundar

Cast: Vasudev Menon, Shreya Khrshnan, Ananya Krishnan

Screenplay: Vaishnavi Sundar | **Cinematography:** Pradeep Padma Kumar

Edited by: Abhishek Mallappan

Festivals & Awards: Official selection, International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala, 2014

Official selection, Bangalore International Short Film Festival, 2014

Official selection, IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival, 2015

Official selection, Afghanistan International Women's Film Festival, 2015

Printed Rainbow (2006)

Animation | India | 15 minutes

Printed Rainbow is a journey of a lonely old woman and her cat into the fantastical world of her matchbox collection.



Gitanjali Rao graduated with a Fine Arts degree from Sir J. J. Institute of Applied Art, Mumbai, and is a self-taught animator, filmmaker, illustrator, teacher and theatre artist. She has independently produced, directed and animated three award-winning short films: 'Orange', 'Printed Rainbow' and 'TrueLoveStory'. After premiering at Cannes Critics' Week (2006) Printed Rainbow, was also shortlisted with the last ten films for the Academy Awards in 2008, besides winning 25 international awards and travelling to over 100 festivals worldwide. 'TrueLoveStory' also premiered at Cannes Critic's Week (2014), and has been screened at various international festivals and won four awards.

Week (2006) Printed Rainbow, was also shortlisted with the last ten films for the Academy Awards in 2008, besides winning 25 international awards and travelling to over 100 festivals worldwide. 'TrueLoveStory' also premiered at Cannes Critic's Week (2014), and has been screened at various international festivals and won four awards.

Directed by: Gitanjali Rao | **Produced by:** Gitanjali Rao

Screenplay: Gitanjali Rao | **Edited by:** Gitanjali Rao

Festivals & Awards: Kodak Discovery Award, Young Critic's Award, Rail D'Or – Best Short Film categories, Critics' Week, Cannes International Film Festival, 2006 Golden Conch for Best Animation Film, Mumbai International Film Festival, 2006 FICCI Best Animated Frames Award - Best Short Film – Professional, 2007

Saving Face (2011)

Documentary | US, Pakistan | Urdu | 40 minutes

Winner of the Academy Award® for Best Documentary (Short Subject), *Saving Face* is a harsh view of violence against women in Pakistan, where every year many women are victims of brutal acid attacks, with numerous cases unreported. Plastic surgeon Dr Mohammad Jawad left his London practice for his home country to help such victims. Two of these women, Zakia and Rukhsana, are mutilated by their husbands, and in Rukhsana's case – her in-laws as well. Both attempt to bring their assailants to justice. *Saving Face* also depicts a Pakistan that is changing - where ordinary people and marginalized communities can seek justice and make a difference.

Festivals & Awards:

Best Documentary (Short Subject), Academy Awards, 2012

Best Documentary, News & Documentary Emmy Awards, 2012

Outstanding Editing: Documentary and Long Forum, News & Documentary Emmy Awards, 2012

Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy is an Academy Award® and Emmy Award® winning documentary filmmaker. Her recent films include *Saving Face*, 'Transgenders: Pakistan's Open Secret' and 'Pakistan's Taliban Generation', which aired on PBS, Channel 4, CBC, SBS and Arte and received several awards. Sharmeen has made over a dozen-multi award winning films in over ten countries and is the first non-American to receive the Livingston Award for best international reporting. Her work centres around human rights and women's issues and she has worked with refugees and marginalized communities from Saudi Arabia to the Philippines.



Daniel Junge is an Oscar-winning documentary filmmaker. After attending NYU Film School, his first documentary feature, 'Chiefs', won best documentary at the Tribeca Film Festival and broadcast on PBS. Since then Junge has directed over a dozen feature and short films which have broadcast on HBO, BBC, PBS and over 50 other networks. Apart from *Saving Face*, Junge was also Oscar nominated for Best Documentary Short in 2009 for his film 'The Last Campaign of Governor Booth Gardner'.



Directed by: Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, Daniel Junge

Produced by: Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, Daniel Junge

Edited by: Milkhaus





Shikaayat (2015)

Fiction | India | Hindi | 4 minutes

A 12-year-old boy comes back home from school with bruises all over his body. While cleaning his wounds, the mother tries to find out how he got hurt, but in turn the boy helps heal her bruises that she has been hiding for so long.



Richa Agrawal is a writer and director with a background in advertising. She strongly believes that the narrative must always be the champion. She likes to work on topics close to her heart like women's empowerment, estranged love, time travel and science fiction. A daydreamer at heart, she also works as a copywriter with a leading advertising agency.

Directed by: Richa Agrawal | **Produced by:** Richa Agrawal
Cast: Laxmi R. Iyyer, Jadyne Lancy Coutinho | **Screenplay:** Richa Agrawal
Cinematography: Vishal Gandhi | **Edited by:** Abhay Vats



Slum Innovation (2015)

Documentary | India | Hindi | 30 minutes

Slum Innovation is the story of a group of kids and women from the notorious Dharavi slums in Mumbai, who use the power of stories and technology through mobile applications to solve their community problems.



Nawneet Ranjan is a filmmaker and change maker. He uses narratives and technology to empower women and children from the fringes of society to become problem solvers and advocates of change.

Directed by: Nawneet Ranjan | **Produced by:** Nawneet Ranjan
Screenplay: Nawneet Ranjan | **Cinematography:** Ranjit Mishra
Edited by: Dorin Mehta, Vineet Sharma

Premiering at FLO Film Festival

Taza Khabar (2006)

Documentary | India | Hindi | 31 minutes

With today's celebrity-obsessed sensationalist media, 'Khabar Lahariya' is almost an anachronism. This 8-page newspaper, boasting an all-woman team of journalists is published every fortnight from a small town in Uttar Pradesh, covering all the news that mainstream media forgo. The film follows the team through police stations, polling booths, power cuts, printer failures, and sleepless nights – all to ensure that Issue 62: 'Election Special' – reaches its readers on time.

Bishakha Datta is a documentary filmmaker and writer, with a passion for representing invisible people. Her first documentary, 'In the Flesh', explored the lives of three people in prostitution. Her first book, 'And Who Will Make the Chapatis?' addressed rural women's participation in politics. She is currently researching 'Selling Sex', a book on the struggle for sex workers' rights in India. With an M.A. in communication from Stanford University, Bishakha is the programme director of Point of View – a Mumbai-based not-for-profit organization highlighting women's perspectives through creative and sustained use of art, culture and media.



Directed by: Bishakha Datta | **Produced by:** Nirantar Trust
Cinematography: Ranu Ghosh | **Edited by:** Rajesh Parmar

Festivals & Awards: Official selection, Madurai Film Festival, 2008
Official selection, One Billion Eyes Indian Documentary Film Festival, 2007
Official selection, Wandering Women: The Feminist Docu Film Festival of India, 2015

Threads (2015)

Documentary | USA, Canada, Bangladesh | Bengali, English | 30 minutes

Threads is an intimate portrait of 84-year old Bengali artist, Surayia Rahman, who transforms the quilt-work tradition of kantha to create possibilities for her family and hundreds of destitute mothers in Bangladesh. Over three decades, as their art becomes prized possessions for connoisseurs worldwide, Surayia and the artisans overcome their hardships with needle and thread, stitch by stitch. Threads takes us on a journey illuminating an unconventional path to dignity and independence.

Cathy is a Canadian filmmaker, born in a small coal-mining town at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Ten years ago, while living in Bangladesh and working as a senior adviser with United Nations Development Programme, she met many women who were quietly revolutionizing their own lives through art and craft, looking to their own culture and resources to do so. Their resilience reminded her of the struggles of her own ancestors, and inspired her to make this film.



Directed by: Cathy Stevulak | **Produced by:** Cathy Stevulak, Leonard Hill
Cinematography: Mishuk Munier, Bayazid Kamal, Tobie Caplette
Edited by: Rita Meher

Festivals & Awards: Audience Choice Award For Best Documentary, Gig Harbor Film Festival, 2014
Audience Choice Award For Short Film, Friday Harbor Film Festival, 2015



TrueLoveStory

Animation | India | 19 minutes

TrueLoveStory is a glimpse into life, love and death on the streets of Bombay – told in animation.

Directed by: Gitanjali Rao | Produced by: Gitanjali Rao
Screenplay: Gitanjali Rao | Edited by: Gitanjali Rao

For director information, check Printed Rainbow, p. 68

Festivals & Awards: Golden Conch for Best Animation Film, Mumbai International Film Festival, 2014
Best Animation Film, International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala, 2014
Best Short Film, South Asian International Film Festival, 2014
Best Animation Film, Jaipur International Film Festival, 2016



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PSAs

Here I Am (2015)

Produced for Save the Children India, the film uses a unique Kinestatis technique of moving images. The narrative was weaved together with photographs used for a press campaign.



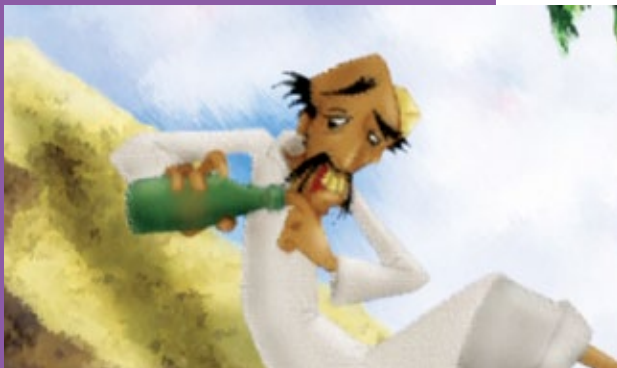
Like Sisters (2013)

Produced for CHILDINE, Like Sisters is an award-winning film about two girls who are best friends, addressing the issue of child marriage. Like Sisters went on to win the top honours at Assocham Infocom Awards.



Sand Castle (2015)

Produced for Save the Children India, Sand Castle employs an artistic and engaging style to communicate the grave dangers of paedophilia. The film went on to win the Seagate Technical Excellence Award, besides being in the official competition for various festivals world over.



A graduate from Sheridan College, Canada, Kireet has won six National Awards for his works, besides others. He has made over 20 short films for UNICEF International, National Film Board of Canada, Childline, Save the Children India, USAid, John Hopkins, NACO and others, on various public service issues including child marriage, AIDS, corporal punishment, child labour, child rights and cruelty against animals. His film 'Komal' on child sexual abuse won the National Award (2015) and was made compulsory viewing in schools across India by the HRD Ministry.



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The Admiral Queen

“Her Complexion was as black as that of a natural Ethiopian;... She was girded at the waist, with a plain piece of thick white Cotton, and barefoot,...From the waist upwards the Queen was naked...In brief, her aspect and habit represented rather a dirty Kitchen wench, or Laundress, than a delicate and noble Queen; whereupon I said within myself. Behold by whom are routed in India the Armies of the King of Spain which in Europe is so great a matter!”

—*Pietro Della Valle, Italian traveller*

Rani Abbakka Chowta was the legendary queen of Ullal near Mangalore, who fought off the Portuguese during the 16th and 17th centuries. Historically, there are considered to be three queens of the same name who ruled from the 1540s to at least the 1620s, and there are many successful tales of valour associated with each of them. There was a queen Abbakka who fought the Portuguese in 1557 and 1568. There is another queen Abbakka who gained a great naval victory in 1618 and who was 40 years old when Pietro Della Valle, an Italian traveler, met her in 1623.

These queens kept the strategic port of Ullal in Indian hands, and often bested the Portuguese in naval battles, which brought them renown across the Indian Ocean, in the courts of Iran and Arabia, as well as Europe. In legend, she is commemorated as a great queen, Abbakka Mahadevi, a little like the Phantom in the comics by Lee Falk.

She was known as the Abhaya Rani, for her fearlessness, and is considered the first Indian woman freedom fighter against colonialism.

She belonged to the Chowta dynasty. The Chowtas were a Digambar Jain dynasty who had migrated from Gujarat in probably the 12th century. They ruled in coastal Canara, in Tulu Nadu. Their main centre was Moodibidri, known as Jain Dakshin Kashi, as it was a cultural centre with beautiful Jain temples, and centres of Jain scholarship. Descendants of Chowta kings still live in the Chowta Palace with its beautiful carvings in Moodibidri.

The Chowtas ruled over a small but fertile part of coastal Canara. Ullal was 10 km from Mangalore, which had been an important port for export of spices and textiles since antiquity. Mangalore had been mentioned by both Pliny and Ptolemy. Trade routes with the Arabs had been established as early as the seventh century and there were many local Muslim trading communities like the Maplah of Kerala and the Biary of Tulu Nadu, who were involved in the maritime trade of pepper and ginger. It was also a very important port for the kingdom of Vijayanagara, through which they imported their all important source of power, the war horses brought in by the Arabs. The Chowtas were feudatories of the great

Vijayanagara kingdom, and were under the supervision of the Nayaks of Keladi from the 16th century onwards.

On this fertile spice coast descended the Portuguese, who were the first Europeans to finally find a sea route to India in 1498 under Vasco da Gama. In 1503, they built their first fort in Cochin. With their superior naval technology, they quickly established total dominance of the Indian Ocean, creating a ring of forts around it, some of them in Mozambique, Muscat, West Bengal, Sri Lanka, and eventually further in the Malaccas, the Indonesian islands, Macau in China, and in Japan. The Portuguese now controlled the entire spice route, within 20 years of Vasco Da Gama's voyage.

During the whole of the 16th century, for a hundred years, the Indian Ocean was a Portuguese lake. No other European power challenged them—the Dutch and the English only made their way there by the beginning of the 17th century. The Portuguese would not let any other ships trade on the Indian Ocean, or only with a Portuguese permit (cartaz), which they charged for (naturally). The Indian Ocean, which had hitherto been a free trade zone with Arab, Egyptian, Persian and Indian ships, became a Portuguese pond. Even Mughal emperor Akbar had to take a cartaz from them for any ships travelling on the Indian Ocean. During this time, though they engaged in many battles with Indian navies that were many times their size, the Portuguese superiority in weaponry meant that they invariably won.

In India, under Afonso de Albuquerque, one of the most successful Portuguese "Governors of India", the Portuguese made great advances, and captured many territories, including Goa in 1510, from the Bijapur Sultanate. They established Goa as their capital in the Indian Ocean. Over time, they also created bases at various ports along the Western Indian coast, such as at Daman, Salsette, Bombay, and Diu. For the people of Asia, the brutality and savagery of the Portuguese was a shock.

However, each advance was bitterly fought by the smaller kingdoms along the coast like Ullal and Kozhikode, who had traded directly with the Arabs, and now refused to knuckle under. There were naval engagements, and their cities were often attacked and cannonaded by the Portuguese, but they did not give up. Many of these kingdoms were finally annexed by the British after the fall of Tipu Sultan in 1799.

In 1526, the Portuguese, under their viceroy Lopo Vaz de Sampaio, took possession of Mangalore port. Ullal was just across the water. It was then ruled by Thirumala Raya III. The Chowtas followed a matrilineal system, but were not matriarchal. This is an interesting system, followed in some communities like the Nairs in Kerala, in which the inheritance descends from the female line, but the rule is by the male. The ruler's sister's son becomes the King. Unusually, since

Thirumala Raya had no nephews, he trained his niece Abbakka in princely crafts like military science, archery, and sword fighting. In local legends, of course, she was a visionary child, unequalled in her capabilities in all the arts and sciences!

A strategic match was arranged for her with the King Lakshmappa Bangaraja of Mangalore. As per the system in matrilineal societies, she continued to live in her own home, the married couple met periodically, and her three children stayed with her. The marriage was fractured, as per legend, because of her desire to fight the Portuguese, and his to compromise. She is supposed to have sent back her jewellery, which was tantamount to a divorce.

This Abbakka Devi is supposed to have ruled from 1544 to 1582, while Lakshmappa Bangaraja II ruled from 1545 to 1556. His nephew, Kamaraya III, who was supposed to have intrigued with the Portuguese against his uncle, and later supported them against Rani Abbakka, was in power from 1556 to 1612.

Rani Abbakka ruled over a multi-religious kingdom. Though she was a Jain, her people and administration largely consisted of Hindus and Muslims. Her army was also diverse; in particular, men of the Mogaveera Muslim fishermen community were a great strength for her in the naval battles with the Portuguese.

Rani Abbakka was not willing to accept the Portuguese embargo on her ships travelling to the Middle East, and she would send spices, fabrics etc with the help of the Zamorin of Kozhikode. Her ships were attacked at sea by the Portuguese, but many would make it back. She also refused to pay the Portuguese the tribute they demanded.

In 1555, the Portuguese finally sent Admiral Don Alvaro da Silveira against Ullal. She fought hard and managed to hold them back. The battle ended in an uneasy truce.

Then Vijayanagara fell in the battle of Talikota in 1565, and the Portuguese became emboldened in their attacks on the erstwhile feudatories of the kingdom.

In 1567, the Portuguese army attacked Ullal under General Joao Peixoto. He captured the city and occupied the palace. However the Queen managed to escape and hide in a mosque. In the dead of night, with 200 soldiers, she raided the Portuguese and managed to kill General Peixoto and 70 soldiers. The invaders fled to their ships. She followed and killed Admiral Mascarenhas.

She formed an alliance in 1570 with the sultans of Bijapur and Ahmed Nagar, and the Zamorin of Kozhikode against the Portuguese,

In 1581, the Goa Viceroy Anthony D' Noronha led an attack against Ullal with a grand Armada. Ullal fell, and was destroyed. The queen also died, as per legend leading her men from the front with the battle cry of "Save the motherland, fight the invaders on land and the sea and push them back to the waters!"

But this was not the end.

There rose from the ashes like a phoenix, another Abbakka. She gained great fame throughout the Indian Ocean by attacking and burning the Portuguese fleet in 1618.

In true family tradition, she had continued defying the Portuguese and trading directly with the Middle East. When the Portuguese captured a rich ship of hers returning from Mecca, she planned a secret attack. On a dark night, her fishermen soldiers, the Mogaveeras and Moplals, got into boats, sneaked in amongst the Portuguese ships, and used thousands of agnivaans (flaming arrows) and coconut torches to set the ships on fire. The Portuguese navy had to retreat with heavy losses.

Pietro Della Valle, the Italian traveler, toured India's west coast between 1621 to 1624. He had earlier met the Persian emperor Shah Abbas, who had praised Abbakka, and asked him to meet her when he went to India.

He managed to run her down to earth in the village of Manel, where the 40-year-old queen had gone to supervise some irrigation work. The Portuguese had decided to leave her alone.

She asked him about his journeys, and then asked, "After seeing the Great Turk, the Persian emperor, the Mughal emperor and Venkatappa Nayaka, what is there to see in this wilderness?"

"I came only to see you, Your Majesty. You are so well-known in my part of the world!" was Pietro's answer.

An excerpt from Pietro's travelogue on the encounter: "We beheld the Queen coming alone in the same way without any other Woman, on foot, accompany'd only with four, or six, foot Soldiers before her, each of them had a Sword in his hand, or at most a Sword and Buckler; there were also as many behind her of the same sort, one of whom carry'd over her a very ordinary Umbrella made of Palm-leaves.

"Her Complexion was as black as that of a natural Ethiopian; she was corpulent and gross, particularly in regard to her person below the waist, where her corpulence, owing to the cotton cloth which she wears, which, according to Indian fashion, is worn very tight, is very evident, but not heavy, for she seemed to walk nimbly enough; her Age may be about

forty years, although the Portugals had described her to me as much older.

"She was cloth'd, or rather girded at the waist, with a plain piece of thick white Cotton, and bare-foot, which is the custom of the Indian Gentile Women, both high and low, in the house and abroad; and of Men too the most, and all the most ordinary, go unshod; some of the more grand wear Sandals, or Slippers; very few whole Shoes covering all the Foot. From the waist upwards the Queen was naked, saving that she had a cloth ty'd round about her Head, and hanging a little down upon her Breast and Shoulders.

"In brief, her aspect and habit represented rather a dirty Kitchen wench, or Laundress, than a delicate and noble Queen; whereupon I said within myself. Behold by whom are routed in India the Armies of the King of Spain which in Europe is so great a matter! Yet the Queen shew'd her quality much more in speaking than by her presence; for her voice was very graceful in comparison with her Person, and she spoke like a prudent and judicious Woman. I imagine she was handsome in her Youth; and, indeed, the Report is that she hath been much of a Lady, of majestic beauty, though stern rather than gentle.

"She was little at home, but, rising at break of day, went forthwith to her Works and there stayed till dinner; and as soon as dinner was done returned thither again and remained there till night. By which action I observed something in her of the spirit of Shah Abbas King of Persia and concluded it no wonder that she hath alwayes shew'd herself like him, that is, active and vigorous in actions of war and weighty affairs. Moreover they said that at night she was employ'd a good while in giving Audience and doing Justice to her Subjects; so that it was better to go and speak to her in the field, while she was viewing her Workmen, than in the house. "

Rani Abbakka's story lives on in folk memory in Dakshin Karnataka, through folk songs and performances of Yakshagana, the local theatre form. In Bhuta Kola, a local ritual dance, a person in trance recounts the great deeds of Abbakka Mahadevi. In all these, Abbakka is portrayed as dark and good looking, always dressed simply as a commoner.

The Indian Navy finally acknowledged India's rare woman naval hero, and named a patrol vessel Rani Abbakka after her in 2012.



Archana Garodia Gupta

The writer is the President of FLO (FICCI Ladies Organisation). One of India's leading quizzers, she was declared Champion of Champions by BBC Mastermind in 2001. Archana owns and runs a successful gems and jewellery business, Touchstone, which is a pioneer in Indian costume jewellery that caters to the middle class.

Articles



The First Feminist

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain rebelled against chauvinistic social mores and defined feminism and women's rights among Muslims in the subcontinent. Her ideas would surprise even many “liberated” women of today.

“Where are the men?” I asked her.

“In their proper places, where they ought to be.”

“Pray let me know what you mean by “their proper places”.”

“O, I see my mistake, you cannot know our customs, as you were never here before. We shut our men indoors.”

“Just as we are kept in the zenana?”

“Exactly so...How unfair it is to shut in the harmless women and let loose the men.”

“Why do you allow yourselves to be shut up?”

“Because it cannot be helped as they are stronger than women.”

“A lion is stronger than a man, but it does not enable him to dominate the human race. You have neglected the duty you owe to yourselves and you have lost your natural rights by shutting your eyes to your own interests.”

“Even their brains are bigger and heavier than women's. Are they not?”

“Yes, but what of that? An elephant also has got a bigger and heavier brain than a man has. Yet man can enchain elephants and employ them, according to their own wishes.”

—*Sultana's Dream (1906) Feminist Utopian Writing by Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain*

Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain (1880-1932) was an early feminist and author. She was unique in her time as the only one to demand equality for women, rather than education so

that they could be better helpmates to men. A free thinker, she did not even pay lip service to many of the holiest cows of those days, or indeed today.

Her scathing writing, laced with wit, humour and logic, spared nobody, not men, not religion, nor women themselves. She wrote profusely in Bengali and English in a number of genres—short stories, poems, essays, novels and satirical writings.

She was a proponent of women's education as a means to get out of their abanati (diminution). Education for self-development was an end in itself and further it could lead to employment and economic independence. To that end, she set up a school which still exists, and headed various women's associations. She herself had received no formal education.

She was a rare feminist who could see the emancipation of women in modern terms, with equality as an inalienable right.

Sometimes praised, often reviled in her time, she was variously called “a shameless woman”, “a misanthrope”, “a radical misguided by the proselytizing propaganda of Christian missionaries”, and a “sexist”.

To understand her context: With the British Raj, educated men, especially in 19th century Bengal, started working to remove the many evils they saw in the treatment of women in India, both Hindu and Muslim. Sati, purdah and extreme seclusion, child marriage, polygamy at unimaginable levels (50-80 wives!) called Kulinism, prohibition of widow remarriage, almost no property rights, and lack of education were some of the issues.

Reformers like Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar managed to get legislation passed combating many of these evils. Schools for girls were set up, the first

being Bethune College in Calcutta, established in 1849.

Women's education was especially espoused by the Brahmo Samaj. While most of the proponents were men, you also had women like Sarla Devi Chaudharani from the Tagore family.

However, the aim of the reform movement was not to make women independent or equal partners of men in family or public life, rather it was to make them better equipped to fulfil their conventional roles as wives and mothers. An educated woman would be a better companion to her now-educated husband, a more competent housewife, and raise healthier and more developed children—in Brahmo terms, be a Sakhi, Sugrihini and Sumata.

This is an old thought of even the most liberal reformers.

The Buddha said in the Samyutta Nikaya, consoling Prasenjit, the king of Kosala, on the birth of a daughter: "A female child may prove an even better offspring than a male one. For she may grow up wise and virtuous. She will honour her mother-in-law and be faithful to her husband (patibrata). The boy she may bear may do good deeds."

Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-1884), the eminent Brahmo reformer, thought that education was meant "to make the woman more adept at running the household". He believed that for a woman, to be a good wife and a good mother was far more important than to be able to write MA or BA after her name. Therefore only those things that were likely to be useful in running a household better were taught to the girls who attended his Victoria College.

Additionally, with the rise of nationalism, the most sacred role for women became motherhood and the keepers of our glorious traditions.

Surprisingly, many of these issues are still current. In the debate about whether women should work, the classic argument offered is that if a woman is denied self-expression and is unhappy, it will make her family unhappy. If she is fulfilled she will be a better mother. As if the only reason a woman is allowed to be happy, or exercise choices about her own life, is to better her family. Her own happiness is not considered an acceptable end in itself.

Here, Rokeya was far ahead of her environment and her time, and had the clarity of vision to see that women were equal and capable of all professions that men followed, and their education and economic empowerment were for their own betterment, and not to make them better adjuncts to men, or a better-functioning cog in society. Also, gender equality was a goal in itself, not just a sub-goal of nationalism. Not only that, she had the courage to say this in her writing, in the most hard-hitting terms. We still have trouble articulating this.



Education and economic independence were prerequisites for this equality. She did not see the exercise of power by women through agency—influencing their sons, husbands etc—as an adequate substitute for direct exercise of power or choice.

Rokeya was born in a rich zamindari family in Pairaband, North Bengal. Her father was Zahiruddin Muhammad Abu Ali Saber, of Iranian descent. Her mother Rahatunnessa was the first of four wives, one of whom was European, and they had 15 children amongst them.

Strict purdah was observed in her family, in an extreme form, where even small girls could not only not meet male but also female strangers. She wrote about this in *Aborodhbasini* (*The Woman Who Lives In A Prison*), her indictment of the purdah system, which she dedicated to her mother. Rokeya later bitterly recounted:

"From the age of five, I had to observe purdah even before ladies who were not family members... If suddenly some ladies came calling, someone at home would give me a warning, and I would run helter-skelter as if I were in mortal fear of my life. I would go and hide myself...sometimes in the kitchen behind a large wicker basket... sometimes inside a grass mat kept rolled up by a maidservant...some other time under a bed."

Her father spoke seven languages, and realized the importance of English in the British Raj. He sent his sons to the prestigious St Xaviers College in Calcutta to learn English, and become part of the new English-speaking Bengali elite. This they did, with her elder brother Ibrahim later joining the Indian Civil Service and becoming a district magistrate. As far as the women were concerned, it was a totally different

story. As per the norm prevailing in their elite Muslim group, they were taught to recite the Quran in Arabic by rote, and taught some Urdu letters, to be able to read didactic tracts on appropriate behaviour for women, and religious sermons. Bengali was not taught as it was considered the language of the lower classes, nor was English; learning these languages would also create exposure to un-Islamic influences.

The fate of her elder sister Karimunnessa deeply influenced Rokeya. Karimunnessa, very talented, and thirsty for learning, secretly learnt writing Bengali; when discovered in her transgressions, she was hastily married off at the age of 14. Karimunnessa wrote profusely in Bengali, but very little managed to see the light of the day, though she did manage to publish a little.

Rokeya saw the enormous waste of human potential caused by the purdah and said of her sister: "Had her community not rigidly suppressed her talent, she could have shone as a bright star."

She also had this to say: "Although Islam has successfully prevented the physical killing of baby girls, yet Muslims have been glibly and frantically wrecking the mind, intellect and judgment of their daughters till the present day. Many consider it a mark of honour to keep their daughters ignorant and deprive them of knowledge and understanding of the world by cooping them up within the four walls of the house."

She saw that the fear of falling outside societal norms and missing out on a rich groom would cause fathers to keep girls uneducated, and scathingly attacked this.

"Our jewelleries—what are these if not the symbol of our bondage? Handcuffs for prisoners are made of steel; ours are made of gold and silver and we call them bangles. Perhaps in imitation of dog collars we have fashioned our neckbands, strung with jewels. Horses and elephants are tethered with iron chains and we happily put gold chains around our necks."

She however had the good fortune of getting support from her progressive brother Ibrahim, who would teach her late at night by the faint candlelight when everybody, particularly her father, had gone to sleep. She managed to learn five languages: Bangla, English, Urdu, Persian and Arabic. Ibrahim taught her English: once he held a big, illustrated English book before Rokeya and said: "Little sister, if you can learn this language, all the doors to the treasures of the world will be open for you."

Her brother, keen that she should continue to live in a liberal environment, found for her a progressive husband, Sakhawat



Hossain, a non-Bengali civil servant from Bhagalpur. He was educated in London, a 38-year old widower in 1896 when they got married. Rokeya was 16.

She lived happily in Bhagalpur for 13 years, encouraged by her husband to read widely in Bangla and English, and to socialize with educated Hindu and Christian women. She had two daughters, who unfortunately died in their infancy. She was encouraged to articulate her fiercely independent feminist thinking, some of which would shock people even today, let alone a hundred years ago. As early as 1905, she suggested that husbands should not be called swami, as was the norm in Bengal, but ardhang (literally, half of the same body).

Her first published work was *Pipasha* (Thirst) in Bangla in 1902.

She then published her tour de force, *Sultana's Dream*, written in English in 1905. *Sultana's Dream* is a feminist utopian fantasy, where she envisions a world of role reversal, in which women rule and control all administrative and social matters, while men are kept in seclusion in the mardanas (men's enclosures) to mind babies, to cook and to do all sorts of domestic work. This is combined with prescient science fiction—the women professors in the universities have invented solar power, water harvesting from the atmosphere, and flying machines. Her account of writing the book:

"My adorable late husband was on a tour; I was totally alone in the house and wrote something to pass my time. After coming back, he asked me what I was doing during those two days. In reply to his query, I showed him the draft of *Sultana's Dream*. He read the whole piece in one go while standing and exclaimed: 'A terrible revenge!' Then he sent the draft to the then Commissioner (of Bhagalpur) Mr McPherson for possible (language) correction. When the writing came back from McPherson, it was noticed that he did not make any pen-mark on the draft. Rather he sent a note attached that read: 'The ideas expressed in it are quite delightful and full of originality and they are written in perfect English....I wonder if she has foretold here the manner in which we may be able to move about in the air at some future time. Her suggestions on this point are most ingenious.'"

It was published in *The Indian Ladies' Magazine* in 1905, and later as a book, and still later, Rokeya translated it into Bengali and had it published for greater reach.

Her husband passed away in 1909. A great believer in women's education, he left money to start a girl's school, which she immediately did. She however had to move to Calcutta in 1910 because of property disputes. She moved the school with her. Sakhawat Memorial Girl's School was her life's work until she died in 1932. It survives till date, run by the West Bengal Government.

In 1911, the school had only eight pupils. By 1930, especially after official approval by the Vicerine, it became well-established as the leading school for Muslim girls. In spite of her personal opposition to the purdah, she ran it as a purdah school, where the girls were taught reading and writing in Urdu, Persian, Bengali and English, gardening, home nursing, music, making handicrafts, cooking, sewing and physical fitness, as well as recitation of the Quran. As there were not many competent female teachers at that time in Calcutta, Begum Rokeya herself used to train the teachers she appointed from Madras, Gaya, Agra and other places.

She however campaigned to make chemistry, botany, horticulture, personal hygiene, healthcare, nutrition, physical education, gymnastics and painting and other fine arts open to women. She wanted girls to be physically strong, and encouraged physical training for girls, teaching them how to play with swords or rods.

In *Sultana's Dream*, she portrays Sister Sara as someone who is proficient in a number of modern branches of knowledge

such as history, politics, military strategy, education and science, while the men in the short novel are busy with masculine vanity, greed, boastfulness and war-making.

In actual day-to-day life, she had to make compromises which must have troubled her greatly. She herself was in purdah in public, as she needed it as a strategy to preserve her school. She said that she did not wish the school to die, "so I had to make a compromise in the interest of my school by observing purdah". The purdah school bus was like a large almirah on wheels where the girls could barely breathe.

In her writing, both fiction and non-fiction, she saw education as the means for women to gain equality in professional life, and become economically independent.

Rokeya, almost alone, dared to say that marriage was not the ultimate goal, and family was not the ultimate end. Even today, educated and "liberated" women find it difficult to openly say what she said a hundred years ago.

"Education must be both for physical and mental advancement. Women must know that they were not born into this world merely to be decorative pieces in fine dresses and expensive jewelleries.... Their life is not to be dedicated for the sole purpose of pleasing their husbands, let them not be dependent on others for upkeep."

"To care for one's husband and his home is not the be-all and end-all of a woman's life. God has given us a very precious life—not to be misspent in cooking and domestic chores."

"Educate the daughters properly and let them go out and fend for themselves."

"Why should we not have access to gainful employment? What do we lack? In fact, why should we not employ the labour and energy that we expend on domestic chores in our husbands' homes to run our own enterprises?"

"From office workers to lawyers to magistrates and even judges—we shall get entry to all jobs and professions.... Perhaps 50 years down the road we may see a woman installed as a viceroy."

"May I ask Astronomer sir, why do we not find your wife with you? When you are engaged in measuring the distance between the earth and the

sun or the stars, why is your wife occupied in the measurement of pillow covers?"

In her crusade for equality for women, she faced a lot of opposition, both from men and women. She often tried to justify her deviation from the mores by saying this was a purer form of Islam, but at other times, she simply rebelled, and placed the imperative of equality above the religious mores.

"The opponents of the female education say that women will be unruly...fie! They call themselves Muslims and yet go against the basic tenet of Islam which gives equal right to education. If men are not led astray once educated, why should women?"

"Whenever a woman has tried to raise her head, she has been brought down to her knees on the grounds of religious impiety or scriptural taboo... What we could not accept as correct, we had to in the belief that it had the authority of a religious dictum... Men have always propagated such religious texts as edicts of God to keep us women in the dark... the scriptures are nothing but a set of regulating systems prescribed by men. You hear that the prescriptions were laid down by saints. If a woman could have become a saint, perhaps she would have prescribed opposite regulations... We must not allow ourselves to bow down to the undue authority exercised by men in the name of religion. It has been seen time and time again that the stricter the religious restrictions, the more severe is the women's victimization."

She herself, though a practicing Muslim, was a liberal in terms of religion.

From Sultana's Dream:

"Our religion is based on Love and Truth. It is our religious duty to love one another and to be absolutely truthful."

On the highest level of the house of religion, "there is just one chamber inhabited by only people, all the same; there are no Hindus, no Muslims; all are worshipping only one God. In the final analysis, there is nothing—except the great God."

Rokeya also founded and headed many women's associations, which organized conferences, vocational training etc for women. She headed the Bengal branch of Anjuman-i-Khawatin-i- Islam. She strongly supported women's right to vote. She did not believe in relying on male help to achieve women's goals. "You all club together and form various associations to protect your rights and demands."

Though her work life was spent in Calcutta, Rokeya is today a heroine for Bangladesh, both for her defense of Bangla over Urdu as the true mother tongue for the Muslims of Bengal, as also the essential progenitor of the women's movement in Bangladesh, one of the most successful and powerful women's movements in the world.

The date of her death, 9 December, is now commemorated as "Rokeya Day" in Bangladesh. There is a women's hall of residence in Dhaka University, and the newly-built public university in Rangpur (2008) was named Begum Rokeya University to honour the "legendary woman scholar who pioneered and promoted female education in the Indo-Pak-Bangla subcontinent".

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said that if Rokeya had not shown the path, women in present-day Bangladesh would not be working in offices, courts, mills and factories, in fields and farms, and in trade and commerce. It is time to honour this extraordinary lady in India too.



Archana Garodia Gupta

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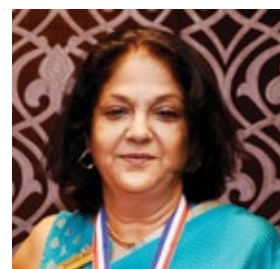
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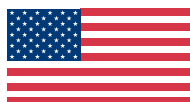


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