



Feature Film Projects

CEYLON

Director: Santosh Sivan

Writers

Santosh Sivan & Sharanya Rajgopal

Language: Tamil / English

Producers

Santosh Sivan & Mubina Rattonse

Production Company

Santosh Sivan Films Pvt Ltd

Budget (INR): 50 Million

Finance in place (INR): 20 Million

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Attending Film Bazaar
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Director's Profile

Graduated from the Film and Television Institute of India. Started Career as a Cinematographer for 45 feature films and 41 documentaries in Hindi, English, Tamil and Malayalam for prominent film makers of India, and abroad.

As a director, his debut film *Halo* (1996) won him a Filmfare Critics Award for Best Movie and National Film Award for Best Children's Film. His second film *Malli* (1998) won him the Best Director and Golden Pyramid awards at the Cairo International Film Festival and the Feature Film (second place) award at the Chicago International Film Festival. His third film, *The Terrorist*, won him four international film festival awards and a nomination for the Phoenix Film Critics Society Award for Best Foreign Language Film. After viewing *The Terrorist*, the actor John Malkovich adopted the film as an executive producer, while the critic Roger Ebert included it in his list of Great Movies.

The production of his fourth film *ASOKA*, based on the life of Ashoka the Great, was documented in the book *The Making of Asoka - A Santosh Sivan Picture* by Mushtaq Sheikh. He then made *ANANDABHADRAM* (2005), *NAVARASA*(2004), *BEFORE THE RAINS*(2006), *PRARAMBHA* (2007) and *TAHAAN* (2008), all of which have won several prestigious awards and traveled across festivals around the world. *Prarambha* recently won the National Award and *Tahaan* among other accolades won the best film- UNICEF and the CIFEJ Jury Award.

Synopsis

Ceylon is the story of a country caught in strife, told through the voice of a young Lankan Tamil girl- Killi.. She sees, experiences and recollects instances from her disturbed life that act as a canvas to the socio-political turmoil in Sri Lanka. The story is set against the backdrop of the last few years in Prabhakaran's life and the LTTE's recruitment of child soldiers. The entire film is told through the perspective of Killi who is scribbling constantly in a little black diary. She writes with a blue ink.

The basic premise of the film weaves itself around the life of Sita(16), Ranga(15), Subbu(15) and Killi(16) who because of various circumstances find themselves in a shelter home run by Athai (late 50's). Killi is brought to the home by her brother Jeeva after witnessing the rape and death of her mother. Jeeva mysteriously disappears soon after and it is assumed that he is dead. Killi slowly acclimatises with her new life as she and the rest of the teenagers get used to living with Athai's . Athai is a bold, outspoken, disciplined, stern yet very loving woman who treats all these children like her own. Through her life stories and memories, she recounts incidents and is vital in establishing the basic issues that Sri Lankan Tamils have lived with.

Athai provides all the basic needs for these children, wants them to all be educated and live in a free and equal environment free from war, turmoil and bloodshed. She sends all of them to school and keeps stressing on the fact that they need to build their own lives. The kids mockingly call her "tsunami" because of her ability to sweep into any situation and dampen their spirits right away. Ranga is like the leader of the pack - very hero like, always mouthing film dialogues. Sita is a typical girl always looking at herself in the mirror and wants to be like

Aishwarya Rai. Subbu is the most timid. He was orphaned at the tsunami, is very quiet and always lives in the shadow of Ranga. Killi is lost in her own world...almost aloof from the rest of the events happening around her. Ranga treats her like his own sister and is very protective of her. In school, the kids are constantly dealing with issues of the war, LTTE Truth Tigers show them propaganda videos as the first step to even recruit them. They watch young girls and boys constantly being questioned and taken under custody by the Sri Lankan Army to produce documents. All of this becomes part of their day to day life.

At a village celebration, there is a firing that happens between the SLA and the LTTE, where a lot of people die. That's when Athai decides that the four children should be married to each other. Ranga with Sita, and Killi with Subbu. The kids protest, but they cannot disobey Athai. Immediately after the wedding, on the first night, a LTTE Soldier breaks into the room where the four kids are...and looks for a hiding spot ..he is being followed by the SLA. And there is a shootout that happens right in front of the eyes of the children. Athai instructs them to bury the dead. And is herself shattered at what is happening to the lives of people around her.

While walking on the fields one day Athai gets caught in a crossfire and loses her life. The children are orphaned once again. This time, Ranga decides to be the man of the moment and look after the girls. They are given an option to set sail to India, but choose against it to stay back in the country and do what Athai always wanted them to do - live in what rightfully belongs to them.

The film then moves to Ranga and Subbu joining the LTTE, and the girls managing by themselves in all sorts of situations. They meet Ranga once, who comes back to tell them that all is well with

them, just that Subbu has been injured and now plays the drums for Prabhakaran. Ranga now has become an expert gunman and has shot over 13 people in the last few months after training. He soon returns back, only leaving his uniform back for his wife Sita. Sita later gets caught holding the uniform by the SLA, gets raped and eventually dies in front of Killi's eyes. Killi goes and takes the uniform which lies next to Sita's maligned body. Hugs it and weeps. She gets taken into cross questioning by Captain Prasanna of the SLA. He finds her diary.

This is point when it is revealed that everything we have seen till now has been read by Captain Prasanna in Killi's diary. He decides to find Ranga and Subbu for her. Meanwhile his associate, Captain Surya has already raped Killi. Ranga and Subbu, in turn come looking for her and notice the bite marks on Killi's arm and decide that they must escape. While escaping Subbu and Ranga get shot by Captain Surya. And Killi is taken back into custody. They need her. Alive. She is Jeeva's sister. Jeeva is LTTE's brain behind all their propaganda videos and internet warfare. They need to nab him and Surya decides that by torturing Killi, her brother will come to her rescue. And so he does. One night, Jeeva creeps into the SLA camp in search of his sister. Killi is in shock. They barely have a conversation when he is taken under arrest...stripped and shot in his head. Jeeva is dead. This time Killi has seen it for sure.

They take her back into questioning. For the first time in the entire film, she gets reactive and violent. Takes her pen and stabs it violently in Captain Surya's groin. The ink turns red.

Director's Statement

Ceylon is set in the background of the LTTE's last few months of struggle in Sri Lanka. A powerful story told through the perspective of a 15 year

old autistic girl. The main vision of the filmmaker lies in the simplicity of telling an intense story in the most honest way, given the socio-political situation.

Production Company Profile

Santosh Sivan Films have made all the films in the last few years that have marked Sivan's vision as a director. The films have traveled all around the world and made an impact in many festivals including Toronto International Film Festival, Dubai Film Festival, Palms Spring Film Festival, Pusan and Rotterdam among other places.

Santosh Sivan, as a producer, has made *Terrorist*, *Malli*, *Navarasa*, *Before the Rains*, and *Tahaan a Boy with the Grenade*.

Mubina Rattonsej has been co-producer on *Tahaan* by Santosh Sivan and *Kaminey* by Vishal Bharadwaj

I AM

Director: Onir

Writers

Onir, Merle Kroeger, Urmi Juvekar

Language: Hindi

Producers: Onir & Sanjay Suri

Production Company

Anticlock Films Pvt Ltd

Budget (INR): 40 Million

Finance in place (INR): 75 %

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Attending Film Bazaar

Sanjay Suri, producer, actor

Onir, writer, director, producer

Ambika Suri



Director's Profile

Onir came to Kolkatta for his college education in 1986 from Bhutan. He studied Comparative Literature at Jadavpur University where he also studied German, Russian, Bengali, and Tamil. In 1991, he made his first documentary, *Glimpses of a College Street* at a work shop organized by Max Muller Bhavan and Chitrabani. He was then offered a Scholarship to train at SFB/TTC, Berlin.

Upon returning to India, he produced and directed his first independent documentary *Fallen hero*, a portrait of a painter and his dilemma with the changing political scenario in Bengal (1992). In 2004, he directed, edited and co-produced his first film, *My Brother Nikhil* which was the first main-stream Hindi film that addressed the issue of homosexuality apart from dealing with issues of human rights and HIV AIDS. In 2006, he directed his second feature film *Bas Ek Pal*. In 2008, Onir and his friend Sanjay Suri established a production house, Anticlock Films. They produced a film titled *Sorry Bhai* which was directed by Onir and was shot in Mauritius and released commercially in 2008. *I Am* is his fourth directorial venture.

Synopses

Synopsis of ABHIMANYU

30-plus, fairly successful film director, Abhimanyu has been battling an identity crisis all his life. And the fact that he sees himself as a girl in his dreams only complicates it further. But Abhimanyu harbors a dark secret, one that has left an emotional and psychological scar he now carries into adulthood; and one that not only made him push every memory of his childhood in the deepest corner of his mind but forced him to change his name as well. When certain circumstances provide him with a chance to confront his perpetrator, Abhimanyu is faced with two choices: moving on and letting his past be a distant memory, or cleaning out the skeletons in his closet and finally finding closure. And when it involves family, that decision becomes all the more hard to make. Will Abhimanyu confront his demons or will he let them slip away?

**Abhimanyu* is inspired by the stories of Ganesh Nallari and Harish Iyre.

Synopsis of OMAR

More often than not people find love unexpectedly. But what happens when you go looking for it? On one of his attempts at getting lucky, Jai, a charming and cocky 30 year old, finds love or so he thinks. 20-something, Omar, witty and suave, turns out to be Jai's object of affection that night. Being instantly attracted to each other, they tease, and flirt, while playing hard to get at the same time. However, they both have hidden agendas of their own, and seamlessly make sure the other doesn't find out. But given how homosexual relationships are still criminalized by Indian law, Omar and Jai get caught in a vicious circle of coercion, sadism, malice and deceit. Omar must forego love to get

out of the hellhole he's in. But does he? Jai must sacrifice his dignity and self-respect for love. But will he? In this tale of betrayal, lies and love, who will stand to lose?

**Omar* is inspired by stories and research material provided by Gay Bombay.

Synopsis of MEGHA

It isn't exactly homecoming for Megha who, after nearly two decades, decides to go back to her hometown a militia-controlled Kashmir on business. After all, a city that destroyed her life and that of other Kashmiri Pandits isn't likely to have a change of heart and welcome her with open arms. On the surface, she appears to be stone cold and strong willed, but Megha knows her arrival will revive bitter memories, both for her and the family she has come to meet with. Rubina, a Kashmiri Muslim woman, is a victim of circumstance. She leads a life of monotony and hardship while bearing her grief in silence. A silence borne out of resignation to the turmoil around her. Now with Megha back after all these years, will a long lost childhood friendship be rekindled? What Megha doesn't realize is that this journey is about to make her discover some harsh realities. That this journey isn't so much about closing chapters as it is about opening new ones. That it never really was about bridging gaps as much as it is about healing old wounds. How will Rubina make Megha realize that she had no part to play in her eviction from her homeland? How will Megha resign to the fact that Rubina is as much a victim of communal violence, hatred and segregation as she is?

**Megha* is a harsh reality faced by scores of Kashmiri Pandits who were forcefully made to leave the valley in the 90's, and thereby made to live as refugees in their own country. *Megha* is a tale of these people who were robbed of their freedom to live.

Synopsis of AFIA

Due to project evaluation work for her company in Switzerland, Afia returns to Delhi, India from her training in the NGO sector there. But Afia doesn't know what's coming her way when, much to her horror, she finds out the highly unethical ways of their operations. Huge embezzlement of funds, shady activities, and scandalous liaisons - all having fatal repercussions. Not one to take things lying down, Afia decides to unravel the scam and corruption. But what she soon learns is that these dubious missions aren't just closer home but widespread. Exposing an international money-laundering ring is not what she set out to do but Afia realizes there is no looking back. How will she unearth this mystery that is as inscrutable as the people involved? How far is she willing to go when she realizes that making someone else's business her own was never a good idea especially when the consequences seem dire? Will Afia finally back down when she begins to realize that her life may just be on the line?

Director's Statement

My recent project *I AM* is a collaboration of four short films. It's an initiative that has been taken to address certain important issues in our society, issues that have otherwise been neglected by the mainstream cinema of the country. I believe that independent cinema exists to give a voice to those working against the tide and outside the system. As such the vision for this project is to use the medium of films to spread awareness while also popularizing the idea of watching content oriented cinema.

The kind of cinema that is not backed by star power or a big budget, but in fact relies on its strong subject matter and themes. The film therefore will contain storylines about

marginalized individuals who are forced to struggle against society.

Producers' Profile

Sanjay Suri (<http://www.sanjaysuri.com>) has been associated with the Indian Entertainment Industry for over fifteen years as one of the favorite actors of the Indian filmmakers and since 2004 as an independent producer. In 2005, Sanjay independently co-produced and starred in *My Brother Nikhil*, a film that won many hearts and awards worldwide and further broke the norms of the Indian Film Industry.

Sanjay co-produced Onir's third feature film titled *Sorry Bhai*, which was shot in Mauritius under the banner of Anticlock Films Pvt Ltd. His diverse experience as an actor and an independent producer empowers him with tremendous knowledge of production, creativity and marketing, which are essential for any successful independent producer. *I Am* is Sanjay's third film as Producer.

Onir produced and directed his first independent documentary *Fallen hero*, a portrait of a painter and his dilemma with the changing political scenario in Bengal (1992). In 2004, he directed and independently co-produced his first film, *My Brother Nikhil*, a film that won many hearts and awards worldwide and further broke the norms of the Indian Film Industry. In 2008, Onir Co-produced his third feature film titled *Sorry Bhai*, under Anticlock Films Pvt Ltd. Onir's sensitivity as a director and experience of producing independent feature films gives him an edge over others. *I Am* is Onir's third film as a Producer.

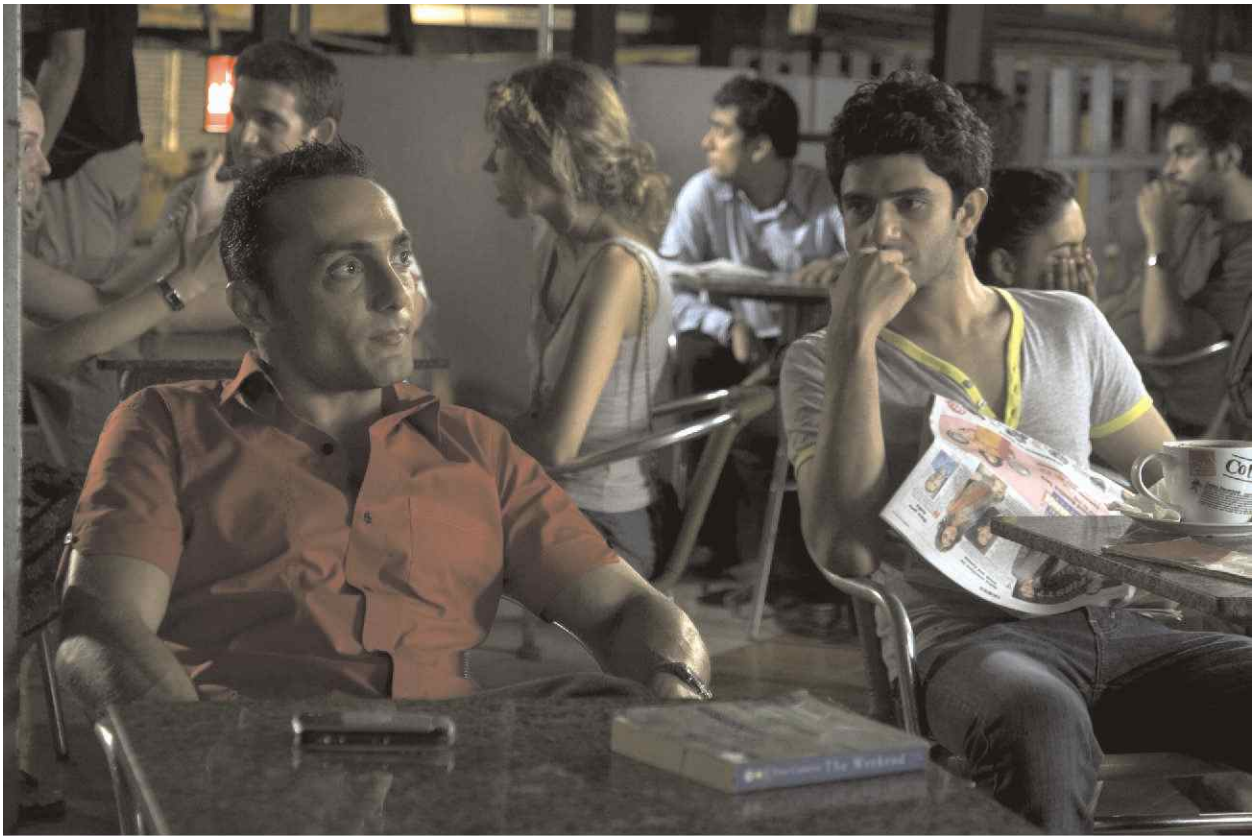
Production Company Profile

Anticlock Films Pvt. Ltd. is a Film Production Company started by film director/producer Onir

and actor/producer Sanjay Suri. The production house was established in the year 2007 with the vision to use the medium of mainstream films to spread awareness while popularizing the culture of watching content oriented cinema. In the year 2008, Anticlock Films produced their first feature film titled *Sorry Bhai*.

In 2009, Anticlock Films started their second venture *I Am* that is a collaboration of four shorts film with a common theme of fear and identity. With this project Anticlock intends to bring in another dimension to independent cinema in India. This project offers scope to different co-producers to partly co-produce any short story along with the main producers.

The film *I Am* will feature four short stories and each one will be approximately twenty minutes in length. The four short films are called *Abhimanyu*, *Omar*, *Megha* and *Afia* and take place in four different cities in India.



Still from *Am*



Still from *Am*

INSIDE-OUT

Director: Ketan Mehta

Language: Hindi and English

Producer: Deepa Sahi

Production Company
Maya Movies Pvt Ltd

Budget (INR): 75 Million

Finance in place(INR): 50 %

Contact Details

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Attending Film Bazaar
Ketan Mehta, Director



Director's Profile

Ketan Mehta is one of the most internationally acknowledged filmmakers from India. He has received many National and International awards for his well-known films like *The Rising*, *Ballad of Mangal Pandey*, *Mirch Masala*, *Maya Memsaab*, *Sardar*, *Holi* and *Bhavni Bhavai*.

Ketan Mehta, a graduate in Film making from India's premier institute FTII (Film and Television Institute of India) has more than 25 years experience in the film industry. His films have been shown at film festivals across the world and he has been a jury member at many international film festivals.

He is also the Chairman of IIFW (Independent Indian Filmmakers Worldwide) a global association of independent film makers and the promoter of Maya Entertainment Ltd, India's leading Computer Animation and Digital visual effects studio.

Synopsis

TIME : Near future.
PLACE : INDIA .

Dr. Bose, a brilliant scientist, has invented gadgets to communicate with plants and animals, now he invents a gadget by which he can communicate with unborn babies. He sees this as a great leap forward in human evolution. Learning can now start in the womb. But he needs some one to experiment with.

One day while jogging on the beach he finds a woman who has been washed ashore. She is unconscious and badly bruised. He revives her and takes her to the hospital.

She recovers but the doctors discover that she is catatonic, she doesn't speak or respond to any external stimuli and that she is pregnant. Bose thinks she is a God given gift. He starts his experiment with the new found woman he names 'Shanti'. He starts communicating with the foetus growing inside her womb. The experiment is successful. The foetus starts responding to the external stimulus. Bose is excited. Babies can now start learning even before they are born. He can create a whole new breed of super intelligent babies. Now he needs to broaden the scope of his experiment.

He and his team select a group of ten pregnant women volunteers from different strata of the society with different socio-economic backgrounds. There is a rich publisher, a social worker, an actress, a maid servant, a village woman, a prostitute, an American diplomat's wife, the daughter of the chief minister and an unmarried teenage girl. With a lot of media hype and publicity the experiment begins with the blessings of the authorities in a specially designed ward.

The initial contact with the unborn babies is established. Then the communication starts. To his amazement and joy, the unborn babies

respond beyond any one's expectations. They start learning and comprehending even before they are born.

Bose is ecstatic. The invention is successful beyond his wildest imagination.

But there is one snag.

When the he is not using his gadget, the unborn babies start using it to communicate between themselves. They access the information available on the Internet and the media networks, share information and experiences, tap into their mother's minds.

Their range of communication also increases to the areas outside the hospital. They soon have a tremendous amount of information regarding the world outside.

The scientist is amazed at the incredible increase in the unborn intelligence. He is euphoric about the possibility of creating a whole new species of super intelligent human beings who will be born at a level of awareness that is far superior to that of the full grown adult humans of the present.

The day when he is to present his new evidence to the unsuspecting world is drawing close. But then things get out of hand.

One morning when Bose reaches his laboratory, he has a message waiting for him on his computer screen.

It's a message from the unborn babies. He reads it. A chill goes up his spine. It is a crisis of unimaginable proportions.

The message reads-

"We the 'Unborn Babies', after collecting all the information available, believe that the world that awaits us outside is unfit for human existence.

You adults, in your shortsighted selfishness, greed, stupidity and cynical callousness, are destroying this planet Earth.

After due consideration, we have come to the conclusion that there is no way of improving the situation without taking extreme measures.

We have, therefore, decided to go on a strike. We will not come out into the world till you adults have learnt to co-exist in a co-operative manner and have created conditions conducive to life."

The scientist gets extremely nervous.

The message continues:

"No baby will come out of its comfortable womb till the humans outside fulfill the following demands:

- ~~B~~an war, genocide and activities of human destruction
- ~~S~~top environmental pollution and ecological degradation
- ~~F~~ree the flow of information & ideas
- ~~P~~revent crime, corruption, & coercion
- ~~A~~bolish all modes of segregation on the basis of class, caste, color, religion, race, sex
- ~~G~~uarantee the minimum necessities of survival i.e. food, shelter, health-care, education and love"

Bose is shocked. He tries to reason with the unborn babies, the problems of the world are very complex, it is not possible to solve all of them at one go. But the babies are adamant, they refuse his entreaties. They claim that what they are asking for is merely the bare minimum essential for a reasonable life. Their message is simple "Change the world".

The scientist breaks the news to an unsuspecting world. The unborn babies are on strike. They

have refused to be born till all the problems facing the world are resolved!

Initially the people laugh at him, call him a lunatic but soon confirmations start coming from various hospitals: it is true - no babies are coming out!

The people are shocked and scared. The authorities panic. The media goes berserk.

"Revolt of the unborn babies", "The ultimate human dilemma", "Future calling".

The human beings comprehend the intensity of their problems for the first time - the world they live in is in a total mess, the lives they live are far from perfect.

The information makes them face up to their own accumulated stupidity and shortsightedness. The magnitude of the crisis dawns on humanity.

Thousands of pregnant women in labour pains are being added every minute of the day to those already in pain. Their numbers are multiplying at a phenomenal rate. The strike is spreading across the globe.

The total attention of the entire world is now focused on this one problem.

The crisis intensifies day by day. The panic spreads. The strike continues.

How do the human beings face the situation?

How does the world resolve this crisis?

That is the story of 'INSIDE OUT'.

Director's Statement

INSIDE OUT is a science fiction parable, social satire, modern mythology. It is a humorous, lighthearted look at the human dilemmas and problems facing the world.

Treating the scientific experiment of communicating with the unborn babies as a catalyst, the film explores the contours of human condition and the horizons of human potential

Weaving glimpses from the lives of the mothers into the film's narrative, the film explores the contradictions of life as it exists at various levels of socio-economic strata of the society.

Using 3D computer animation and digital visual effects the film will create a unique visual tapestry of the worlds inside and out side, where surreality of real life meets hyper reality of imagination.

The film is like a mirror with an attitude, reflecting the present with all its distortions as seen by the future with all its expectations.

Production Company Profile

Maya Movies is a leading film production company of India, with experience of international co-productions and production practices. The company is promoted by internationally acclaimed film director Ketan Mehta and acclaimed film actress and producer Deepa Sahi.

The Rising Ballad of Mangal Pandey (2005) was the last international film release from the company. The film was the biggest film production from India, starring one of the biggest Indian film stars Aamir Khan along with British star Toby Stephens. The film was an epic historical saga set in mid nineteenth century. The film was selected as the inaugural film at

the Locarno International Film Festival and won the 'Audience choice award'.

Colours of Passion (2008), a film based on the life of one of the greatest Indian painters Raja Ravi Varma is a historical romance between an artist and his muse during turbulent times. The film starring Randeep Hooda and Nandana Sen, was screened at the London Film Festival and is now ready for release.

KEEP OFF THE GRASS

Writer, Director and Producer
Ben Rekhi

Language: Hindi and English

Budget (INR): 60 million

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Attending Film Bazaar
Ben Rekhi, writer, director &
producer



Director's Profile

Ben Rekhi has been making bold statements on film for over a decade. An award winning writer, director, and producer, Rekhi graduated from the NYU School of Film and Television where he directed, shot, and produced several short films and music videos.

His thesis film, *The Waste Project*, won the Best Actor prize at the First Run Festival, and his short *Dirty Laundry* received a Post Production Grant from Warner Bros. Pictures. Upon graduation, Rekhi went on to direct music videos for Hindi pop star Sanjay Maroo that aired on Zee TV in India. Rekhi's video for Interscope Record's band Dredg (for the song *Of the Room*) was voted number one on the FUSE TV program *Oven Fresh*, seen by over thirty million viewers.

Ben got his first break in the feature film industry working on the set of the Coen Brothers' cult classic *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* as a camera intern under world-renowned cinematographer Roger Deakins, ASC. He was subsequently hired by *O Brother* star George Clooney to shoot the behind-the-scenes documentary for Clooney's directorial debut *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind* starring Julia Roberts, Drew Barrymore, and Sam Rockwell.

In Los Angeles, Rekhi interned in development, production, and management at New Line Cinema, Sony Pictures, and MGM before forming his own production company, Drops Entertainment, under which he produced his first feature film, *Bomb the System*.

The independent 35mm feature, which stars Mark Webber (*Storytelling*, Jim Jarmusch's *Broken Flowers*) and was edited by award-winning editor Jay Rabinowitz (*8 Mile*, *Requiem for a Dream*), was nominated for the prestigious 2004 Independent Spirit Award for Best First Feature against *Monster*, *House of Sand and Fog*, and *Thirteen*. In addition to participating in nearly thirty film festivals around the world, Rekhi also co-managed the sale and distribution of the picture in the U.S. to Palm

Pictures for a theatrical release and to Now On Media in Japan for a ten-city theatrical run. The film is currently on IFC in the US.

Rekhi then went on to write, direct, and produce his feature film directorial debut entitled *Waterborne*. Revolving around a fictional terrorist attack on the water supply of Los Angeles, the film stars Independent Spirit Award nominee John Gries (*Napoleon Dynamite*), Ajay Naidu (*Office Space*), Chris Masterson (*Malcolm in the Middle*), and international superstar / Indian Member of Parliament Shabana Azmi. *Waterborne* premiered to an Audience Award at the SXSW Film Festival before going on to make cinema history as the first feature film to be distributed online through Google's radical new Video Store. *Waterborne* is currently playing on the Sundance Channel. Rekhi's third feature as producer, the 35mm cult comedy *CarBabes*, was released through Universal Home Video in 2008.

In addition to his directing and producing credits, Rekhi has worked extensively as a professional screenwriter. His screenplay, *Waste*, won the Tribeca Film Festival's All Access Creative Promise Award in May of 2007. He holds the option for three novels, *The Ashram*, a film noir detective story that follows an American doctor in a Himalayan ashram in India, *Brotherhood Of Eternal Love*, a true story which documents the rise and fall of a psychedelic gangster movement in 1960's California, and *Keep Off the Grass*, a current best seller in India.

Synopsis

Keep Off the Grass follows the story of Jay Aurora, a banker from New York who quits his posh life in the US go soul searching in a business school in India only to end up more confused than he was at the beginning. After realizing that school does not have all of life's answers, he and a few college buddies set off on motorcycles

across the country to find their own answers.

When the story opens, Jay is living the high life and working at one of the best banks in New York. Feeling void of any meaning in his life, he journeys back to India to re-discover his roots. During his tenure at a hyper competitive IIM (Indian Institute of Management), Jay befriends Shine Sarkar, an angry genius ranked number one in the school, and Chetan Sharma, the iron willed model of the Indian education system. This unlikely trio ends up becoming the best of friends as they push each other to discover deeper meanings in their lives and the world around them.

While on the road, each confronts their own fears and desires which culminates in an explosive climax during a landslide in the Himalayas. Jay realizes that it's not about the destination in life, but rather the journey you take to get there. *Keep off the Grass* is a story of friendship and self discovery in the most unlikely of places.

Director's Statement

Though based on a book, *Keep Off the Grass* is very much a personal story for me. The journey follows an American in his mid-20's, jaded with his high life in the States, who migrates to India on a half-assed quest for some deeper spiritual truth. I picked up the book within the first month of living in India and was instantly hooked. I had moved to India last year to work and I found the book not only paralleled my choices in life at the time, but also reflected my father's experiences in the Indian education system a generation earlier. It's not often that you find a story that blends such disparate elements together, and it was then that I knew I was going to make this into a film.

Keep off the Grass

Being a product of two cultures, I often find myself relating to both, but married to neither. However, I realize now the tremendous perspective this affords me to express this mix through the medium of cinema. *Keep Off the Grass* is my foray into the Hindi new wave. As an American director, I want to bring western sensibilities to India to make a Hindi film.

The film touches on the raw nerve of the modern youth in India. Each character represents a different facet of the generation of new India; a confused Non Resident Indian (NRI), a rebellious college student, and the age-old ideal student, always chasing the highest ranking.

This story is the anthem for the new generation. A generation that is tired of being told what to do, where to work, and who to marry. So many of us in life just follow the script that is given to us. Then, you wake up when you are 40 and realize that perhaps you didn't live the life you wanted to. This is a story about three people who choose to live their lives on their own terms. And that choice is a universal truth that we all as people share.

Director
Dibakar Banerjee

Language: Hindi

Producers: Ekta Kapoor, Shobha Kapoor, Priya Sreedharan, Dibakar Banerjee

Production Company
Balaji Motion Pictures, Freshwater Films

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Attending Film Bazaar
Dibakar Banerjee, director
Ekta Kapoor, producer
Priya Sreedharan, producer

Director's Profile

After being expelled from National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, India's premiere design college, Dibakar blundered into advertising to get closer to film production and direction. Over the years, he directed and produced several award winning commercials.

His first feature film *Khosla Ka Ghosla* became a watershed critical and commercial hit, redefining the genre and creating a new trend. It won the President's award for Best Hindi Feature Film 2007. The film was also the official selection at MoMa, New York and Stuttgart Film Festival.

His next film *Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!* was released amidst unanimous critical applause and won many popular awards. *Oye Lucky* was also the official selection at the MoMa in 2009. It was screened at the Osian's Film Festival in 2009 and is part of the Indian Panorama at IFFI 2009.

LSD, Dibakar's third film is in post-production where he and Priya Sreedharan, the executive producer of *Oye Lucky*, team up with Ekta Kapoor, Balaji Telefilms, the biggest television producer in India.



Synopsis

Rahul, a final year film student, gears up for his diploma film. With his digital camera, with an amateur cast, he starts etching the perennial themes of the great Bollywood love epic his ideal into his low budget magnum opus. While testing actors for his film he falls in love with his Shruti, a new student who he casts as his heroine. For Shruti too it's almost love at first sight just like in the films she has grown up on. Rahul meets Shruti's family, ultra conservative, ultra rich, complete with an authoritative father and scary brother, just like the subject of his film. Rahul vows to charm them over, persuade them to let Shruti shoot, and complete his love story and win the object of his love just like the countless Bollywood films he has seen.

The shooting starts and to Rahul and Shruti's surprise their love story outside the film and the melodrama within the film have close parallels and paradoxes! Both are being recorded by Rahul's camera as the film and as the making of documentary of the film's production. Outside the shoot, they meet in a neighborhood 24/7 departmental store where the counter girl Rashmi, a friend of Shruti's, lets them enjoy a few moments of togetherness. Midway through the film they learn that Shruti's marriage has been fixed...another parallel with the staple of Bollywood romance. Somehow the film is completed and their secret is still intact but now they'll never see each other again.

But Bollywood love never ends like this. Taking a cue from his own masterpiece, Rahul decides to elope with Shruti and get married the final act of a Bollywood romance...

Somewhere in the same city, Adarsh a know-it-all, never short of words, unemployed young man takes an unofficial commission to install a few security cameras in a small upcoming 24-

hour departmental store - the owner being known to him. A sudden and violent shootout in the shop brings an unexpected bonanza for the shop owner. A TV news channel buys the clip for a neat sum. Always floating bizarre scams to get rich quick, and under pressure to pay off a loan shark, Adarsh gets persuaded by his friend from the camera company to act in a porn clip recorded through the security cameras in the shop. The first attempts to ensnare Sonal, the sexy and coquettish day counter girl fail miserably. The loan shark pressure's builds up. The friend keeps pushing him. Adarsh decides to turn his attention to Rashmi, the plain nightshift girl who is his friend, and someone he actually quite likes, for his porn clip. The CCTV cameras in the shop record unflinchingly their journey together...

In another corner of the city, Prabhat once a committed sting journalist following cases of national importance, tethers on the brink of collapse. A past camera malfunction at a critical sting has warped him enough to keep his hidden camera on throughout his waking moments. Going through a divorce, about to be fired from the sleazy job he hates, he attempts a series of failed suicides while recording them.

On one of them, he meets Naina who is also trying to commit suicide...a confused and dangerous rescue follows and Prabhat gets to hear Naina's story. New in town, she'd been promised a music video by Loki Local, but only in lieu of sexual favours. Prabhat sees the last chance to set his life right - a sting that exposes India's biggest pop star. Prabhat persuades Naina to fall in with his scheme. Naina moves into his house and they come closer over a series of attempts to seduce, blackmail, entrap Loki. It culminates into a final sting where Loki would be caught on tape trying to buy the footage of his indiscretion from Naina. While Prabhat shoots

from his spy camera from a nearby table. They decide to meet at a local 24/7 store...

LSD is a roller coaster ride told through three different cameras that, instead of passively recording the characters, invades the drama, affecting the outcome of the characters' destinies, snooping, prying, baring the fangs of real perversion hidden deep inside all of us.

Director's Statement

The digital eye surrounds us, on TV, on the net, on the CCTV camera that snoops into every step we take, the spy cam sex scandal we enjoy on prime time TV, the home movies we make, the guilty kiss we share with someone, holding out the mobile camera at an arm's length and the MMSs that fly around the nation. The digitized, fuzzy faces, the strobing, jerky movements, the furtive glances, the nervous camera, the clumsy, choppy edit, the scratchy sound, the repetitive slow motion, rewind and forward to me all this is the new grammar of cinema. A language that is evolving as we speak.

I'm not interested in delivering the last word in the digital or film war - I would shoot on paper if there were a technology to do so. The only thing I'm interested in is the medium bringing its own, inseparable aesthetic to the content.

Three stories of love, sex and betrayal shot with three different cameras, three different eyes and attitudes. They come together at a particular point and separate again. Characters walk in from one story to the other, changing the way in which we see them, because the eye seeing them changes. The same incident, when seen from two different vantage points, visual and narrative can veer between scarily violent to merely comic! Time is not linear. It is a slave of the narrative we're immersed in, flowing back and forth like a memory that keeps coming alive

picking up at a point we had left off in another story. Sometimes the characters are even aware of the camera recording them. And sometimes we wonder what would have been the outcome of the story had the camera not been there.

For me, at its human core, LSD is a film about how we feel love and feel about it. Our precepts of how love should be, the received wisdom of Bollywood, and the glorious myth of all conquering power of love clash rudely with the paradoxes of our society that rejoices in sentimental mush while practically preserving all the class and caste distinctions that Bollywood "attacks".

Love, as we see it, is informed by hardcore chauvinism and rampant sexism, where wooing, heckling and treating the woman as a sex object are one and the same thing. Also, LSD looks into what has become entertainment in a society where the ultimate thrill is to be a reality show icon, with half of us looking into keyholes and the other half ready to disrobe, waiting for someone to peep in.

Production Companies Profile

Ekta Kapoor, Balaji Motion Pictures

Ekta Kapoor, Joint MD of Balaji Telefilms Ltd., commenced her career as a Producer and Creative Director at the age of 19. Popularly known as the 'Queen of Indian Television Industry', her contribution comprises of entertainment landmarks that has captured the imagination of Indian audiences. Selected one of Asia's Most Powerful communicators by Asia Week, she's a trendsetter with definite vision. As a pivotal part of her ever growing entertainment empire Ekta is all set to launch her new Motion Picture Studio, 'ALT Entertainment'.

Priya Sreedharan, Freshwater Films

Having obtained a post graduate diploma in film and media from Sophia College, Mumbai, Priya Sreedharan went on to work in the advertising film industry, producing commercials for many multinationals as the producer of Freshwater films. In 2008 she executive produced her first film *Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!* with Freshwater Films and UTV Motion Pictures. As an independent producer her passion for new Bollywood cinema is the driving force behind producing *LSD*.



Still from *LSD*



Still from *LSD*

MANJUNATH

Writer, Director and Producer
Sandeep A. Varma

Language: Hindi

Production Company
ICOMO Advertising I Pvt Ltd

Budget (INR): 30 million

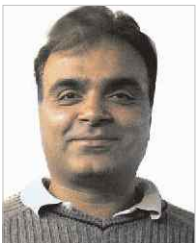
Finance in place(INR): 30%

Partners Attached: NFDC

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Attending Film Bazaar
Sandeep A. Varma, writer,
director, producer
Jaichelle Barretto,
assistant director



Director's Profile

Sandeep A. Varma runs ICOMO Advertising I Pvt. Ltd. as Managing Director. A graduate in engineering from BITS Pilani and an MBA from FMS, University of Delhi, he has had rich corporate experience having worked with Unilever, ITC Ltd. and Mudra Communications.

Breaking off on his own, he scripted and directed his first feature film, *Kahin Door (Miles to go)*, on a shoe-string budget in 2003. A road film shot on DV in the desert state of Rajasthan, the story intertwined the road journey of a cop, a convict, the cop's young second wife and daughter with their journey inward to discover themselves.

Over the years he has made several short films, ad films and documentaries. His short on *Water Conservation* used a mime artist innovatively to depict water wastage in a humourous way. It got felicitated at the Kerala International Film Festival (2003) and the Philadelphia Short Film Festival (2003).

Sandeep has also scripted several mega budget films and serials such as Rahul Rawail's *Arjun Pandit* (film), *Prithvi Raj Chauhan* (series - Star Network) and *Highway* (TV film - Zee network).

His last directorial project was *Arjun Verma*, a feature film shot for Zee. Sandeep is currently writing and directing a feature film titled *Paradise on Earth*-a black comedy based, and to be shot, in contemporary Kashmir. He is also writing, directing and producing a short film *Boomerang* to be shot later this year.

Synopsis

Set in the today's hinterland of Uttar Pradesh and state-of-the-art campus of the Indian Institute of Management-Lucknow, India, *Manjunath* is the story of 27 year old guy, Manjunath Shanmugam. After passing out from the IIM, Manjunath joins Indian Oil Corporation Limited. He is posted in Lakhimpur Kheri, a remote district in rural Uttar Pradesh. One day Manjunath goes missing.

His friends who know and work with him, panic because they know that off late he had been very disturbed and was behaving very strangely. He has become very serious and scared. This is very different from the Manjunath they knew in college, who was always jovial, fun loving, very friendly and a great entertainer.

One of his friends finds him, and he is behaving very frantic. They send him back to his hometown. Manjunath's parents try to convince him to leave his job at Indian Oil that seems to be causing him stress. Initially he seems willing but slowly he realizes that he doesn't want to be quitter. Manjunath believes that, being from a top institute in the country, he is one of the cream 5% who has been given the opportunity. Being the eldest son of a mineworker, he has had a humble upbringing. He is also aware then that the kerosene being mixed with diesel, is coming from ration shops-'it's the poor people's kerosene'. In addition, he also becomes Conscious of the extent of pollution caused by burning adulterated fuel. He finds strength and comes back to fight against his parents wishes.

Now we realize why he was under so much stress. There is a clear threat to his life, because he insists on doing his duty, to stop petrol adulteration. But this time Manjunath is not deterred. He continues doing what he considers right without worrying about the consequences.

As a result of this, one night he gets brutally killed by the people who are getting harmed by his doing his duty. His family, friends suffer, cry at his death. Why? They wonder...why he put himself in so much danger...

The question still remains. Is he a failure or a success? Slowly the worst fears start coming true. Beyond the initial grief, no one wants to come forward to carry on the fight.

In the film, Manjunath is shown watching what happens after he dies. We see him starting to feel that it is all pointless. And he cannot watch his parents' tears any more...what was their fault? Maybe he should have compromised. But how can people not see what he has seen-that what he fought was something very big and very important.

Suddenly like a bolt from the blue, people unrelated to him, who have no connection to him, start to realize the importance of what Manjunath did and start trying to do something. Like novices, they search their way around, but their will is strong. They start getting help again from unexpected quarters. It is nerve wracking, with dangers for everyone who is helping them. But suddenly instead of one or two, there are a lot people helping them. Manjunath who has lost hope realizes that it's not all going waste.

He hopes and prays that they succeed.

The film has Manjunath himself as the narrator, and it cuts back and forth from a rock concert, which is the very unique treatment to the screenplay. And the conflict of the story is not whether Manjunath lived or died but if the effect of Manjunath lives or dies and in the end that's the victory.

The film is being supported by the Manjunath Shanmugam Trust through which the support of

IIM Lucknow and Manjunath's parents has been enlisted.

Director's Statement

At the core level, Manjunath was any young 27 year old who was killed for taking a stand against the oil mafia in a remote, nondescript place called Lakhimpur Kheri - part of the Indian hinterland where illegal gun shops abound and murders are commonplace.

However, in my experience of working with the Manjunath Shanmugam Trust and various people associated with it at various levels, I realized one amazing phenomenon. As time passed, people who knew Manjunath personally started giving less time and people who didn't got more involved.

There's a widow in Haridwar who sent her life's savings to the Trust as donation, just after she heard Manjunath's story somewhere.

What I realized is that people are reacting to 'Manjunath as a concept', and making it interact with their own experiences. It's beyond Lakhimpur, beyond petroleum, even beyond India.

It's more about - why can't we live our life with pride? Why can't things be straight? Why can't honest, smart, hard work be rightfully rewarded? I think somewhere there is a seething frustration that has set in about this. In their life, Manjunath's actions somewhere find that kind of connect with them. After all, all Manjunath did was not some great social service. If it was that, I don't think so many people would have connected. No one has time for all that. Manjunath was just doing his job. He said in my area I am supposed to check if there is adulteration or not and if there is, to report it. In

the simplest terms, that's all he did. People's frustration is about that. Straight line, honest hard work done with brains and with heart must be rewarded.

Not killed. That's how our script has evolved at one level. We've taken it much beyond oil, mafia, caste issues etc. Hence it becomes universal.

There is also another set of people. These are people who have become cynical because of the frustration. The disturbing part is that a lot of these are youngsters in big cities. The short cut, immediate gratification of the senses is what they're going after - that's their manna from heaven. This is troubling because this is generally the age when people are fired by idealism.

One of these youngsters told us, when we mentioned Manjunath, that he thought Manjunath was a foolish man, stupid enough not to see the dangers. He should have taken the 50 lakh bribe, made his life and done some PR about his good efforts using the media.

This heartless, ridiculous comment made us seethe and gave us tremendous motivation for the film. Because in our view, Manjunath was as intelligent and as brave, if not more than Bhagat Singh-one of the most influential and highly acclaimed revolutionaries of the Indian freedom struggle. This is because, if this is the situation after his death, surely while alive, Manjunath would have been told by people that he was so foolish to take on these people for no monetary benefit. On the other hand, Bhagat Singh, even while sacrificing his life doing what he did, had underground support, and a feeling that he was onto something noble. Such was the atmosphere of the freedom movement at that time. But none of that for Manjunath. This is a great indication of his conviction.

We've written the script keeping in mind the cynics - we want them to feel after viewing the film, it's not Manjunath who was foolish, rather it's all those people who are running around endlessly chasing false dreams and leading a purposeless existence who are.

This then is the basic thrust and motivation for the film. It's a very modernly structured screenplay, especially keeping the cynics in the young audience in mind. The idea is to make the film entertaining and palatable to them in a grammar that they understand.

Production Company Profile

Set up in 2001, ICOMO Advertising I Pvt. Ltd. has established itself as a full-fledged ad agency providing communication solutions through television, print, outdoor, media planning & buying, BTL and other innovative media.

With a young and proficient staff, the company's main objective is to consistently provide innovative, yet cost effective services across the board. Our creative work has provided value to several blue chip clients such as IMS Learning Resources Pvt. Ltd., D'dmas Jewellery I Pvt. Ltd., ICICI Bank, Disha Financial Counselling, LaseRx, Shopper's Stop etc.

Since its inception, ICOMO has conceptualized and produced several public interest shorts, ad films and corporate films. Some of the highlights of our work include: a TV Commercial for IMS-ICAP (2007) that was created completely in-house; an all-India ad campaign for IMS Learning Resources in 2006, a short on *Water Conservation* which was felicitated at the Kerala International Film Festival (2003) and the Philadelphia Short Film Festival (2003), to name a few.

ICOMO is currently producing a 15 minute short film *Boomerang*, written and directed by Sandeep A. Varma, which is to be shot later this year, to be followed by a full length feature, early next year.

OBSESSION

Writer, Director, & Producer
Suman Ghosh

Language: Bengali

Partners attached
Vidhi Chhaochharia, Suman Ghosh
Productions

Budget (INR): 10 million

Finance in place(INR): 20 %

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Attending Film Bazaar
Suman Ghosh, writer, director,
producer



Director's Profile

Suman Ghosh received his film training at the Department of Theatre, Film and Dance at Cornell University. *Amartya Sen: A Life Reexamined*, a documentary on the life and work of the only living Nobel Laureate from India is his first film. First Run/Icarus Films is the North American distributor for this film. *Podokkhep* (Footsteps) is his debut feature film which was world premiered at the Vancouver International Film Festival and has been screened at other festivals worldwide including Karlovy Vary.

Podokkhep won the Silver Lotus Award for Best Regional Feature Film (Bengali) and the Best Actor for Soumitra Chatterjee at the 54th Indian National Awards announced on June 10, 2008. LongTale International is the International Distributor of *Footsteps*.

His new feature film titled *Dwando* (Conflict), starring Ananya Chatterjee, Soumitra Chatterjee and Koushik Sen, is an official selection for the Indian Panorama 2009.

Synopsis

The film portrays the descent of a normal man to an abnormal state of existence because of his obsession with cell phones. The screenplay starts with developing the relationship of Abir and Tritha who are deeply in love with each other. They intend to get married and are excitedly making plans of their future married life. It is then that Tritha starts to suspect Abir of having another affair. Abir slowly starts to behave a bit weird and surreptitious. Tritha becomes desperate to find out what's happening as Abir keeps on denying his odd behavior. Tritha in her desperation is hell bent on finding out what's happening and surprises Abir with sudden visits and various traps. To her surprise, she finds nothing. One day as Abir is talking on his cell phone she grabs the phone from him which makes Abir furious. Soon Tritha figures out that it is not anyone in particular but it is the cell phone which has become Abir's obsession and the bane of her existence. She discovers that Abir is losing everything else in his life...and is terribly insecure without his cell phone. In fact it has become a disease...an obsession. With the help of family and friends, Tritha decides to put Abir in a rehabilitation center. After a lot of persuasion he agrees to go and stay there for a while.

The rehabilitation center is a fictitious place in the future which is an amazing place in itself. It specializes in treating such patients who have this mobile phone obsession disease. It is an enclosed area where cell phones are banned. Landline phones are the only mode of communication. In a sense it is a compound which resembles a setting in the 80's before the advent of cell phones. It forms a metaphorical juxtaposition to our current society dominated by electronic gadgets. It is not exactly a jail but in a sense it is, where it collects people who are Victims of society infected by cell phones and

modernization. Abir is one of the inmates there. There are other individuals who have different background stories each peculiar to them. For example an old man named Mr Q, apparently used to talk to his dead wife through the cell phone. She sends messages to him exactly at 12 at night. Without his cell phone in the rehab center he cannot communicate to her.

There is another teenager Shasha, who has lost his speaking ability as he can only communicate through sms. He roams about in the compound like a mad man. There is a gangster who keeps on talking in a virtual cell phone. In his days -before the obsession turned severe- he used to operate 8 cell phones simultaneously, using each of them for different control operations. He continues to run his underground operations (in his mind) through nonexistent cell phones. The film develops the relationships amongst the inmates. Their bonding is of a pure nature, without cell phones. Human interactions are different as in old days. But somehow there is a strong urge for the inmates to get hold of cell phones from outside the compound.

Alongside there are tents outside the compound by lobbyists, set up by cell phone companies who are trying to intrude and export cell phones inside this compound. There is a Nokia tent, there is a Motorola tent, there is an Ericsson tent....and so on and so forth. For them the mushrooming of such 'rehab center's is actually harmful to their market. They are trying to connect with some inmates and smuggle cell phones inside the compound. There are trying to achieve this in very ingenious ways.

Simultaneously there is a raging debate going on, in the press, media and everywhere whether such rehab centers would be allowed in the first place. The inmates are treated like drug addicts and whether that is ethically and morally correct. In the meantime the authorities suspect

that some cell phones have been smuggled inside the compound. There is a farcical combing operation ordered a la searching for AK 47's. Sniffer dogs especially imported from Britain to track cell phones are pressed into service. Cell phones are deciphered from weirdest places. From the soaps that the inmates use (the soaps are actually a camouflage for the cell phones), from shoe soles, and more interestingly from inside bodies- even from someone's rectum.

Abir's condition continues to deteriorate as he just cannot survive without cell phones. His only interaction with Tritha occurs when she visits him during visiting hours. Abir blackmails her to bring a cell phone and to smuggle it through the home cooked food that she brings for her. Tritha in her love for Abir could decipher that it is being impossible for Abir to stay there. Abir convinces the other inmates of a plan as to how they can possibly get out of this place.

A massive jail break is organized which is very ingeniously orchestrated with cell phones. The last part of the film portrays this jail break where the authorities try to track down and stop it from happening. Ultimately the jail break is successful and the inmates run away from the premises- away from the claustrophobic life which they were suffering in a world without cell phones.

The Cinematic Treatment

The genre of the film will be a satirical comedy. It will have absurdist tones throughout. The film starts with a conversation between Tritha and the Super-in-charge of the rehab center. Tritha is explaining to him the case history of Abir. It starts off with their love affair, and slowly how the cell phone takes over Abir's life. In a sense from a cinematic point of view, the cell phone starts to become a major character in the film. It is treated as such also. It simultaneously follows different characters and portrays each one of

their obsessions in a very humoristic manner. Later when Abir goes to the rehab center, do we find out that they are parallel strands in the story, which describes the inmates' plight as to how each of them reached such a state. The transition of a normal young guy to a person possessed by cell phone mania is accentuated by the use of camera, color treatment and editing style. The music will also play a crucial role as it heightens this transition.

The rehab center will actually show us a world of the olden days....when modern electronic gadgets had not encroached our lives. The look of the film will be desaturated from here on, giving a contrast with the modern world which was the look of the film when the love story between Abir and Tritha is developed. The artwork at this compound will also use an antique look to emphasize that fact. The happenings within the compound will have a Kafkaesque feel to it, bordering on the absurd. The last jail break scene at night will have the feel of a thriller. The audience will also want the jail break to succeed in a way they also want to get away from the guilt they all suffer due to the dependence of cell phones in their lives. They want to get back to the security of their cell phone world.

Director's Statement

The cell phone is just a metaphor for our over dependence and over indulgence with technology. I certainly believe the usefulness of such modern gadgets but also feel that a lot of what humanity is all about- personal interactions, communication and togetherness, have undergone a sea change in recent years because of the advent of technology. This is progress and it is inevitable. So definitely I am not someone to make a negative prognosis to such changes. But at the same time I also feel that we as human beings should know how to tame technology. In this film, I want to make such a comment and the route I follow is to

portray the extreme case scenario, where we become completely subservient to such modern electronic gadgets. Interestingly the genre of the film, as a surrealistic comedy, emerged quite naturally out of the content.

The excesses of such subservience give rise to comedy. So through the language of comedy I wanted to explore my vision regarding technological progress. It is much like Charlie Chaplin's take on modernization in the film *Modern Times*. So, almost a century later, I want to examine the modern world and how strikingly similar the concerns remain.

Production Company Profile

Led by a professional management team, SGP LLC is an U.S corporation engaged in the production and promotion of films. We are passionate about movies that are universal in their appeal and have the ingredients to captivate a global audience. The management of SGP LLC comprises of individuals whose collective talents and decades of professional experience span diverse areas like film direction and production, marketing, strategy, business management, legal and finance.

The vision, knowledge and experience is complimented by a set of critical intangibles that are central to the success of a business venture; those intangibles include, but are not limited to, best-in-class ethical standards, planning, execution, control mechanisms and a professional work environment. We strongly believe that we are uniquely positioned to develop a scalable platform that will enable us to:

- Attract a global talent pool for in-house direction, production and promotion of movies.
- Partner with other production companies and leverage our expertise to promote and market

movies in the domestic and international markets.

Our maiden voyage began with a full length feature film called *Dwando* (Conflict). Purely from a cinematic perspective, the decision was elementary. A deeply poignant drama that seamlessly intertwines the lives of four individuals and highlights the complexities of life and its choices, a legend of Indian movies in Soumitra Chatterjee, the passion and multifaceted talents of Suman Ghosh, sheer excellence in cinematography from Barun Mukherjee and the vast musical talents of Mayukh.

Nevertheless, we also had conviction in our vision and ability to lend this venture an added dimension, which we hope will make it a success. You are the ultimate judge and we await your verdict.

THE VIRGIN GODDESS

Writer & Director: K.N.T. Sastry

Language: Telugu

Producer: Ms K.S. Prema

Production Company
Cinema Group

Budget (INR): 30 million

Finance Required(INR): 30 %

Partners Attached
Cinema Group, India
Tropical Storm Entertainment,
The Netherlands

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Attending Film Bazaar
K.N.T. Sastry, writer & director



Director's Profile

Mr. K N T Sastry is a renowned Indian film critic, turned film director, who has received a number of national and international awards for his various films, documentaries and books. Associated with a number of English Magazines and English dailies in India, he has worked with Indian Express, Chennai; Hindustan Times, New Delhi, and was for sometime Resident Editor of Vijayawada edition of Deccan Chronicle. He strayed into documentary filmmaking and has made over 20 full length documentaries, besides number of ad films.

His documentary *Surabhi* received National Award as Best Anthropological film. His debut feature film later, *The rite.. a Passion* (Tiladaanam) has received worldwide acclaim, and won New Currents Award at the Pusan International Film Festival, South Korea, in 2002, apart from Swarna Kamal as Best First feature film of a Director. It also won Best Debut Director Golden Nandi Award from the AP government, apart from an award for best makeup. He has served as a FIPRESCI jury member in the International Film Festivals of Sochi (Russia), and Pusan (South Korea), Kerala; while in 2008 October, he was in Mannheim-Hiedelberg International Film Festival (Germany) Jury. He was chairman of Jury in 2008, for selection of films for IFFI, Goa, appointed by Government of India. He has been on the Indian Panaroma panel, five times, and was Chairman of the National Awards Jury, 2004, for Best writing on Cinema. He has served as jury member for the AP State Nandi Awards panel. He was also Chairman of Critics Jury, Childrens' International Film Festival, Hyderabad in 1997,

Synopsis

The film takes off from the contemporary prevalent system of Kumari in Nepal, wherein a Newar community girl of very young age, 3 to 5 years, is inducted as a Goddess, and worshipped as Kumari - the Virgin Goddess - after she is subjected to certain tests, like her courage to withstand the grotesque walking on blood of slain buffaloes, or withstanding loneliness in a dark room, while masked dancers make weird sounds etc. She is also chosen because there has not been any blood coming out from any part of her body, and once she starts menstruating she is sent out of the Temple, and is no more eligible for worshipping. She starts living as an ordinary girl. The psychological trauma a young teenager faces even as she faces a hostile world, changes in her own body the desires it brings.

The film starts stylistically with the Aghori (Tantric cult practitioners), worshipping the funeral pyres, and drawing patterns of Sri Chakra on the ashes of the pyres. As he throws the shells, an extreme close up of the shell is juxtaposed and cut to the painted third eye of Kumari. Kumari is dethroned from her position, as she has attained puberty, and she is taken to her parental home, not in palanquins but in ramshackle car. It is around this time we introduce the Rahul, a flamboyant photographer, who gets an assignment to supply photographs of Hindu Occultism, to a British publishing house. We introduce this character very stylistically, and hint at his affairs with female models suggesting that he is not a stereotype hero.

In her parental home, Dil is unable to adjust to the "dirty" environs of her house, and feels constricted. Her two younger sisters resent the ways of Dil, as she continues to nurture the feeling that she is a goddess. It is in this atmosphere that she grows up into a sensual girl.

She was exposed in the Kumar House to Video, and is very fond of Shah Rukh Khan's films. She takes a liking towards Ram Bhopal the taxi driver, in whom she imagines a Shah Rukh Khan, who frequents their household.

As their acquaintance grows, and as the girl is becoming aware of her own sensuality, she almost seduces the taxi driver during a trip to Himalayan Hills. But Ram is wary, because of the fact that there is the stigma that anyone marrying a former Kumari may meet untimely death. Dismissing this as a mere belief Dil tries to play with him. Ram Bhopal is in reality a drug peddler. Ram is taken away by police for trading hashish, for which Dil Kumari is blamed. The household prepares for the marriage of her younger sister, since Dil, as the household members believe, cannot marry.

Dil, as an adolescent girl is just realizing her sexuality, and the decision of parents to marry off the sister. She cajoles Ram to take her away from those environs, and both of them flee, though Ram is unwilling. In their way, when the bus has stopped near a Dhaba, police whisk him away for possessing hashish, while the Dil, who was sleeping in the bus, reaches Varanasi alone. She goes around, deposits her bag in a cloak room, and has a bath in the Ganges, and is sitting on the steps of the river ghat. The Aghori is also in search of a virgin to complete his ritual pooja, and he stumbles upon this girl. Rahul has also reached Varanasi. Aghori who is passing by, happens to see Dil, and remembering his visit to Katmandu, looks at the girl, and prostrates before, recognizing her as the Kumari of Katmandu. Rahul's camera catches this prostrating before Kumari.

In the rush of bathing ghat, Dil is weaned away by a woman, and sent to a brothel house. Rahul on reaching his hotel, looks at the photographs in his laptop, and tries to pursue the Aghori seen in

The Virgin Goddess

the photo, for his photography purpose. Dil uses the belief of the stigma attached to her marriage, and warns that anyone trying to exploit her sexually will meet with death. Rahul who is in search of a model comes to the brothel, and Dil and Rahul get friendly.

Soon, she realizes that she is no more a divine person, and had to forcibly succumb to the desires of a ruffian. She tells Rahul, who visits her often to use her as a model, that she would like to get away, and that she is craving for an identity and a status in the society - that of a wife. Meanwhile the Aghori and madam of brothel arrange a mock police raid, and Aghori in the process walks away with Dil, to pursue his pooja of worshipping a virgin.

Rahul visits the brothel house, only to find that she is not there. With the help of a friend, he finds her in a deep forest with Aghori doing the Pooja. He telephones his publisher in excitement to tell that he has got the ultimate photograph of the Aghori's worshipping a Kumari. Though Rahul is a worldly person, and is not interested in saving Dil, his acquaintance, the Aghoris have sex with the woman and sacrifice her. He tries to find ways to save the girl.

Meanwhile the British publisher also telephones him, asking him to catch the Aghori live, and also save the woman. The confrontation between Rahul and Aghori takes place, even as Rahul with the help of local men rescues the girl. Dil agreeing that she is not a Goddess, she pesters him to marry her. Rahul promising that he will marry her, takes her to Calcutta, gives her some money, he tells her that he will be back soon. But Rahul has decided to wash his hands off the girl.

The friend takes her to a whorehouse again, and deposits her. The film ends with a song comparing her to a Goddess, even as frustrated Dil, resigns herself to her fate. The film is not

just about a Dil Kumari, but about the status of woman, how the society treats them, and finally casts them away, as children after playing with their toys, cast away them.

Director's Statement

The adage that religion is the opiate of masses is in full play in India, where God men and God-women are professing cures for a fee, commercializing the religion. In Contrast Nepali's Kumari system adopts 5/6 year old girl, gives her the status of a living goddess, only to be shunted out when she attains puberty. She does not claim any healing powers. Behind the worship of virginity there are stories of girls, bereft of education and worldly knowledge, turning misfits in their after-Kumari lives. They become prey to unscrupulous elements and land in brothel houses in cities like Mumbai.

My story is about one such girl, Dil, reaching sacred city of Varanasi, and her struggle to find herself an identity. There is also Rahul, a photographer on an assignment of occult photographer. His worldly ways are contrasted with the Dil's forced bondage in a brothel, and how she fights. There is also the story of an occult practitioner, Aghori, who tries to wean away Kumari for his own nefarious ends. The story gives an account of privation which lonely women face in cities of India, and the struggle of their identity often taking them to more sordid encounters with life.

The film is not about one girl, or one woman, it is about the entire female race, as the society around her, especially if she has some weaknesses, exploits her only to cast away in a cesspool, and she is left to fight back or go down fighting.

Production Company Profile

Cinema Group began as a publishing house, and undertook publication of quality literature on Films in Telugu and English languages. It published the biography of noted yester year actress, P Bhanumati, which won a National Award, apart from various other award winning publications. With Mr. K N T Sastry, Founder Director, straying into film making, Cinema Group also started producing films and till now produced two features, and over ten documentaries during the last few years.

Producer K S Prema is in charge of day to day affairs of Cinema Group, which started as a publishing house and later concentrated in providing all production facilities to mainly Mr. Sastry's films, apart from others.

THE RETURN OF THE TIGER

Director: Mike H Pandey

Writers: Mike Pandey, Atish Kumar,
Mike Salesbury (BBC)

Language: Hindi & English

Producer: John Abraham

Production Company
John Abraham Productions &
Riverbank Studios

Budget (INR): 80 million

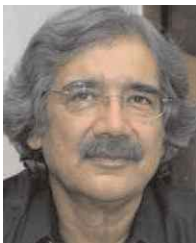
Finance Required(INR): 65 %

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Attending Film Bazaar
Mike Pandey, director
Arjun Pandey, executive producer



Director's Profile

Listed by the Time magazine as a "Heroes of the Environment" 2009, (in the October 7th 2009 issue), they write "In the home of Bollywood film can be a powerful force for good" they start by describing his work "Al Gore wasn't the first person to use a movie to help save the world. In India, efforts to protect every...thing from whale sharks to elephants, vultures to medicinal plants owe a debt to prolific wildlife-documentary maker Mike H. Pandey".

With over 3 decades and 200+ awards both international and National, Mike has been described by many as 'a living legacy for wildlife and environmental conservation' and 'a legendary film maker' by others.

His films including the Shores of Silence are said to be the only films which have brought about legal protection for the species they focus on, in addition to raising awareness and creating a movement among the people at large for conservation and protection of the environment.

He has 3 green Oscars and 6 National Awards, and also won the highest conservation award in India, the Rajiv Gandhi Award, for his untiring work to protect wildlife and promote environmental conservation internationally. His Television series Earth Matters has become the longest running wildlife series and has been airing on Doordarshan, the Indian Public service broadcaster for 13+ years now, on a weekly basis it reaches 800 million viewers and gets a staggering amount of viewer feedback so much so, that the postal department has issued postcards and cancellation stamps in honor of the series.

Synopsis

The story is about a Tigress with her three cubs and their struggle for survival. All the incidents are culled from real life experiences.

The central character is a filmmaker who is living in the jungles of India to document the heart-breaking story of habitat loss, disappearing forests and species and the drying rivers. Added to this scenario is another threat - that of poachers.

This provides the climax in which the hero has to battle for his life. The story which emerges from the film is that of the tender, trusting relationship between the hero and the tigress and her cubs which develops naturally.

This is a story of survival, passion and love of a primordial wild heart (the tigress). Intertwined with this story is also the story of the dying forest; how the rivers would not have run dry if the jungles had been left intact; how wild animals prefer to remain in the jungle than come out of its safety and protection; only when food and water is scarce they come out of the forests in search of food and become entangled in man-animal conflicts.

The Tiger is fighting for survival... poaching... habitat loss and diminishing resources has created a crisis for the world's most powerful predator.

Being the apex of the food chain the Tiger symbolizes a vibrant eco-system, in fact the health of the living planet. Its disappearance could tip the delicate balance that has sustained life on earth for thousands of years.

We need the tiger to protect the forests and we need the forests if mankind has to have a future. The tiger is the protector of the forest that keeps the planet alive, I believe, the minute we understand the role of the tiger we will respect it and what we respect we love and protect.

The urgent need today is for increased policing of the Tiger protected areas. It is important that each citizen becomes the eyes and ears to protect the Tiger from those who seek to destroy it. It is time that all of us realize that the Tiger is our very own national heritage. A common property that belongs to each of us is in severe crisis and needs to be protected.

If we protect and ensure the livelihood of the local communities, farmers and people living close to the national parks, we protect the parks and animals in those parks. If the park becomes a major sustainable source of livelihood every person dependent on the park will ensure that the animals and their habitat survive. There can be no better protector or policemen than these very villagers living in proximity to the protected areas.

It is an established fact that humans, we all, no matter where we live, protect things that belong to us and relate to our needs, have a value and benefit us in some way. The objective is to generate awareness and make people understand why it is important to protect the tiger - our own lives and future may well depend on it.

Director's Statement

The tiger is critically endangered today and there is an urgent need to reach out to the stakeholders across the county and the most effective and quickest way is through a film.

Given our past experience and success in making a difference through films, I sincerely feel that a docu-drama based on real life incidents will touch the mind and hearts of people, policy makers and especially local communities without whom conservation cannot be possible and work to join in and reach out and protect the planets most critically acclaimed predator.

Working with the form of a docu-drama, because a larger audiences reaches out to it, and as we

The Return of the Tiger

have (actor) John Abraham involved as an active partner in the film. The objective is to generate awareness and make people understand why it is important to protect the tiger, our own lives and future may well depend on it.

In spite of 40 years of project tiger, the tiger is still dying, at an average of one tiger dying every day, in many places the disappearance of the tiger has meant the overpopulation of other species that are destroying the jungles, along with deforestation by vested interests, this has led to the destruction of age old forests which in turn has led to the destruction of the water regime, water bodies and streams, because forests attract rainfall.

The return of the Tiger is possible if we make a collective effort. The story that motivates and inspires and informs and makes us believe that each one of us can make a difference as long as we take the first step towards it.

The answer lies in effective communication that touches the hearts and minds of the people and makes a difference.

Producer's Profile

John Abraham is a leading Indian actor and has been the highest-paid supermodel in India. His film debut was in 2003, *Jism*, earned him a Filmfare Best Debut Award nomination. In 2004, John acted in *Dhoom*, an action film produced by Yash Raj Films, which was the biggest commercial success and emerged as one of the highest grosser of that year.

In 2005 he had a major role in the critically acclaimed film *Water*, which portrayed the tragic fate of Hindu widows in British India of the 1930s. The film was written and directed by Canadian film-maker Deepa Mehta, it was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the 79th Academy Awards.

In 2008, Abraham starred alongside Abhishek Bachchan and Priyanka Chopra in *Dostana*,

produced by Karan Johar, the film was very popular. Apart from his movie commitments, John is also the brand ambassador for some of the leading brands in India.

Abraham associates himself deeply with social causes related to the environment. He is the winner of the 2008 Eco-warrior award which was given to him by the Vice-President of India, the award instituted by the Earth matters foundation was for John's work to aid setting up an elephant village in the state of Maharashtra.

His production house John Abraham Productions was set up to make truly Global Indian cinema. As a part of the endeavor John feels that Documentary films especially about the Wildlife and Environment of our country that need to be protected need to be made and reach out to a wider audience.

TWOSOME

Writer & Director: Siddharth Sinha

Language: Hindi

Producers

Pierre Walfisz & Vikash Dhorasoo

Production Company

Trompe Le Monde

Budget: 945,000 Euros

Finance in place: 275,000 Euros

Partners attached

Trompe Le Monde

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Attending Film Bazaar

Siddharth Sinha, writer and
director

Pierre Walfisz, producer

Director's Profile

Siddharth Sinha, 1978, India, completed his post graduate diploma in film direction from Film & Television Institute of India. His graduation short film with Indian title *Udedhbun* and international title *(un) Ravel* has won the Silver Bear award at 58th Berlin International Film Festival 2008 and since then it has traveled to several film festivals worldwide. The same film recently won the Rajat Kamal at National Film Award, India for Best Short Film.

He was invited as a student filmmaker for a workshop, Berlin Talent Campus in 2006. His earlier short docu fiction student film project *Rangbela* was premiered at International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam 2006. He was invited as a jury member to Noor de lijk Film Festival in Netherlands and Upper Film Festival in New Delhi in 2008. He is also appointed as a selection committee member at the Mumbai film festival 2009 India.



Synopsis

Is it possible that a man woman relationship can have shades of a mother-son's dependency? And a mother son relationship can have warmth of a man woman's romance. *Do Duni* or *2 x 2* is about a journey of two women in Mumbai who are living their life on the edge.

Mansi is a single working mother of a 12 year old mentally challenged boy. One fine day her late husband's business partner claims her only property which is a flat to be company's in the court. Mansi and her son's life goes through a roller coaster ride in this process. She somehow tries to manage all this until her son develops a dangerous interest which takes off the ground under their feet.

Shalini becomes a part of a prostitution racket. She explores this new world with her young eyes. She meets lot of interesting characters on this job. She witnesses extremes of appreciation and humiliation. Later she develops feelings for the pimp and sacrifices the woman's most immense desire for him. But everything goes in vain when she realizes that she is just a prostitute for him.

Director's Statement

It's a new age, dark, incorrect and uncompromised film. The film reflects upon the time in cinema where the excitement is generated by the form. And in the content I am interested in how two different faces come together and form a single portrait; of a woman in this case.

Production Company Profile

The film production company Trompe Le Monde was founded by iconoclastic soccer player Vikash Dhorasoo and Pierre Walfisz, former music producer and director of music festivals.

The two associates met in 2006 around the production of Fred Poulet's documentary *Substitute*, a record of Vikash Dhorasoo's experience being relegated to the status of substitute on the French national team during the World Cup Soccer tournament in Germany.

Producer of Fred Poulet's musical ventures, Pierre Walfisz handled executive producer duties on this one-of-a-kind, feature-length documentary. *Substitute* won the SEMTA prize at the Entrevues festival in Belfort and was selected for Berlin, as well for festivals in Lisbon, Kiev, London, Munich, Copenhagen, and Amsterdam (IDFA). This experience motivated the two men to further pursue film production by founding their own production outfit. They named it Trompe Le Monde, after an album by cult U.S. rock band The Pixies.

Taking the spirit that marked the production of *Substitute* as its base, Trompe Le Monde seeks to produce unconventional films that defy existing categories. The uncharacteristic backgrounds of the founders also play a strong role in their desire to see images created that are personal and subjective.

In addition to the feature film by Siddharth Sinha, Trompe Le Monde is currently developing a short film by Polynesian director Paul Manaté (in post-production), a short film that mixes animation and live action by Arno Salters (writing stage), a fictionalised documentary on the British rock group The Eighties Matchbox b-line Disaster by Jenifer Lumbroso and Sofiane Boukhari (in production), and a feature length mix of documentary and fiction about a rebellion among a community of children by Colin Ledoux (writing and development), as well as Fred Poulet's second film, an existentialist Spanish western (shooting in April 2010).

