



# NFDC FILM BAZAAR

SOUTH ASIA'S LARGEST FILM MARKET  
20 - 24 NOVEMBER 2019 . MARRIOTT RESORT, GOA

## NFDC Film Bazaar 2019 unveils five selected in 'Work-In-Progress' Lab

~Out of 5 selected films, 4 are debut features - *Pedro* by Natesh Hegde, *Shankar's Fairies* by Irfana Majumdar, *Switzerland* by Ajitpal Singh and *Uljhan* by Ashish Pant ~

~The selected films are in three Indian languages - Hindi, Kannada and Gojri~

**Mumbai, 2nd November 2019:** The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of Film Bazaar, organised by the **National Film Development Corporation (NFDC)** announces the **five selected** projects for its **Work-In-Progress Lab 2019**.

The selected projects in the Work-In-Progress Lab 2019 includes *Laila Aur Satt Geet* (The Shepherdess And The Seven Songs) directed by **Pushpendra Singh** (Gojri), *Pedro* directed by **Natesh Hegde** (Kannada), *Shankar's Fairies* directed by **Irfana Majumdar** (Hindi), *Switzerland* directed by **Ajitpal Singh** (Hindi) and *Uljhan* (The Knot) directed by **Ashish Pant** (Hindi).

The Work-in-Progress Lab is open only for fiction features aiming for a theatrical release. A maximum of five films are selected for this Lab. The director and editor of the selected film screen their rough cuts to the panel of mentors and receive an in-depth one-on-one feedback. The international editor assigned to the film guides the director and editor of the selected film through two sessions of the editing lab which takes place at Film Bazaar itself.

The international mentors include a film festival director, producer and film editors. They provide valuable feedback on the edit with the aim of helping the filmmaker achieve an accomplished final cut of the film.

Since its inception in 2008, the Work-in-Progress Lab has moulded films which have gone on to premiere at top international film festivals and receive critical acclaim. Some of the past projects of this Lab include *Eeb Allay Ooo!* (2018), *Aise Hee* (2018), *Nimtoh* (2018), *Soni* (2017), *Moothon* (2017), *Bombay Rose* (2016), *The Gold-Laden Sheep and The Sacred Mountain* (2016), *Lipstick Under My Burkha* (2015), *Thithi* (2014), *Titli* (2013), *Killa* (2013), *Miss Lovely* (2011) and *Ship of Theseus* (2011).

**NFDC Film Bazaar** will take place from **November 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> 2019**, at the **Marriott Resort, Goa, India**.

Details of the selected projects for 2019 are –

### 1. **Laila Aur Satt Geet (The Shepherdess And The Seven Songs)**

*96 min, Gojri*

Director - Pushpendra Singh

Producer(s) - Gulab Singh, Sanjay Gulati, Ajit Singh Rathore

Pushpendra Singh studied at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune, where he is now also a visiting faculty member. His directorial debut feature, *Lajwanti* (The Honour Keeper) (2014), premiered at the Berlin Film Festival. He is also working on his documentary, *Pearl of the Desert* (a recipient of Busan's Asian Network of Documentary Fund), which tells about an extended family of low-caste Muslim musicians in the Thar Desert, Rajasthan. *Ashwatthama* (2017), his second feature (recipient of an Asian Cinema Fund - Post Production grant), premiered at the Busan International Film Festival in the New Currents Competition.

## **2. Pedro**

*160 min, Kannada*

Director - Natesh Hegde

Producer - Rishab Shetty

(Debut feature)

Natesh Hegde is an independent filmmaker working in Karnataka. He did his post-graduation in journalism from Karnataka University, Dharwad. He worked as a journalist in Kannada language newspaper *Prajavani* for a brief period. He also worked as a content writer for Viacom18 and Colors Kannada. He made his two short films *Kurli* (The Crab) and *Distant* using untrained actors in his native village. His short films have been screened at many National and International Film Festivals like New York Indian Film Festival, Dharamshala International Film Festival, Imagine Indian International Film Festival and SiGNS Film Festival, Kerala.

## **3. Shankar's Fairies**

*85 min, Hindi*

Director - Irfana Majumdar

Producer – Dr. Nita Kumar

(Debut feature)

Irfana Majumdar studied Theatre and Performance at the University of Chicago, and then founded the Nirman Theatre and Film Studio in Varanasi, India. She taught theatre, created experimental performances, did research on theatrical techniques and made documentary films. She then pursued further training in rigorous physical theatre forms. She has been awarded fellowships for her commitment to themes of social justice, unique processes of collaborative creation and new vision for theatre and film in India. *Shankar's Fairies* is her first feature film, and has been a deeply personal, life-changing artistic experience. She brings to it her own aesthetic outlook, honed through the theatre, which combines visual dynamism and playful spatial relationships with nuanced character study. This gives a special quality to this film. A time and a culture is highlighted that is essential in deconstructing the inequalities - a part of every aspect of society in today's India.

## **4. Swizerland**

*100 min, Hindi*

Director – Ajitpal Singh

Producer - Ajay Rai, Alen McAlex

(Debut feature)

Ajitpal Singh is a self-taught filmmaker and photographer. He was 8 year old when his father ran a cinema hall in Punjab. After studying chemistry, learning theatre and photography in Ahmedabad, he chose filmmaking as his calling. His first feature script was selected for Sundance India Screenwriter's Lab 2012. He was the youngest member of Indian delegation at Munich Film Festival 2009, selected by the Goethe Institute. He was also selected for 2007 Berlinale Talent Campus, New Delhi edition. The script of his directorial debut feature, *Switzerland* was selected in NFDC Screenwriters' Lab, 2018. His latest short film, *Rammat-Gammat* (My Best Friend's Shoes) won Special Mention at 64th Oberhausen International Short Film Festival and has travelled to 40 major Indian and International film festivals including Oscar affiliated, Palm Springs Short Fest, Cinekid, and MAMI and won 5 awards including best short film. His other short, *Hummingbird* has also travelled to ten film festivals and has won the best short film award in France. He wrote dialogues for *Once Again*, a Germany-India co-production film and worked as an associate director for *Gurgaon* and an assistant director for *Patang* (Berlinale 2011). He has worked as a researcher for 16 German documentary films in India.

## **5. Ujhan (The Knot)**

*135 min, Hindi*

Director – Ashish Pant

Producer – Kartikeya Singh

(Debut Feature)

Ashish is an MFA (Film) from Columbia University, New York. Prior to making films, Ashish worked in the theater as an Assistant Director to directors such as the Late Stuart Vaughan, the Late Jack Hofsiss and Amy Wright. Ashish taught World Cinema at an Acting Conservatory in New York and is now teaching Screenwriting and Cinema Studies at a liberal arts college in New York. He spends his time between his hometown in Lucknow and in New York.

## **Work-in-Progress Lab Mentor Profiles**

### **PHILIPPA CAMPBELL**

Philippa is an Emmy, Golden Globe and PGA award nominee as the producer of Jane Campion's international hit television series *Top of the Lake* and *Top of the Lake: China Girl* starring Elisabeth Moss. One of New Zealand's leading film producers, she has worked with, among others, directors Christine Jeffs, Toa Fraser, Florian Habicht and Jackie Van Beek. Her features have premiered and won awards at major festivals including Cannes, Berlin, Sundance and Toronto and been distributed in key territories. Philippa consults for International screen agencies and development initiatives including NFDC's Work-in-Progress Lab, the Bell Rock Script Laboratory, the Three Rivers Residency, and Script to Screen. She has several co-production projects in development.

## **DEREK MALCOLM**

Derek Malcolm is a film critic with the Huffington Post, an entirely online American and British news aggregator and blog. It has a massive readership all over the world, including India. Derek has an illustrious background in film journalism and criticism, and he covers festivals all over the world. He is also the Honorary President of International Film Critics Association (FIPRESCI), and President of British Federation of Film Societies. He has served on juries at the three main European Festivals in Berlin, Cannes and Venice, as well as at the Moscow, Istanbul, Goa, Singapore, Chicago, Dinard and Rio Festivals. He was formerly the Director of the London Film Festival during the 1980s and a former governor of the British Film Institute. He had also been the chief film critic at The Guardian for 35 years before moving to the Evening Standard, which Derek left in 2015 to join Huffington Post.

## **OLIVIA STEWART**

Olivia Stewart's films as a producer include Terence Davies' 'The Long Day Closes', 'The House Of Mirth', Mark Herman's 'Brassed Off' and Todd Haynes' 'Velvet Goldmine'. Her work has now evolved into broader fields and in collaboration with the Binger Film Lab Amsterdam and NFDC India, she was Mentor/Creative Producer for Scott Graham's 'Shell' (Best Film Torino Film Festival 2012), Ritesh Batra's 'The Lunchbox' (Audience Award at Cannes La Semaine de la Critique 2013, Best First Feature Toronto International Film Festival), Kanu Behl's 'Titli' (Un Certain Regard Cannes in 2014), Kim Farrant's 'Strangerland', Matt Sobel's 'Take Me To The River' (both at Sundance 2015), Gurvinder Singh's 'Chauthi Koot' (Fourth Direction) (Un Certain Regard Cannes 2015, Best Film Mumbai, Singapore and Belgrade Film Festivals) and Miransha Naik's 'Juze' (Hong Kong, Karlovy Vary and Mumbai Film Festivals 2017). In 2014, on behalf of the PJLF Arts Fund, she set up the EYE Prize with the EYE Film Museum Amsterdam to support and promote an artist or filmmaker whose work unites art and film. In 2016, she started The PJLF Three Rivers Writing Residency Programme which offers writer/ directors a five weeks retreat to write and work with expert script advisors, and the chance to present their projects at the Dubai Film Festival. In 2017, she started the PJLF Three Rivers Editing Residency with Rima Das' 'Village Rockstars', which was selected for the Toronto, San Sebastian and Mumbai Film Festivals, where it won the Golden Gateway Award, the Oxfam Best Film for Gender Equality and Young Critics Choice Award. In 2017, Olivia co-authored 'Joan Leigh Fermor: Artist and Lover', a monograph of photographs published in March 2018. She is the Director of Bellrock: Creative Scotland Screenwriting Workshops, which is now in its 2nd year. She has been a jury member for the Locarno, Fajr, Asiatica, San Sebastian Film Festivals, and is a member of AMPAS, BAFTA and EFA.

## **MARCO MÜLLER**

Film critic and historian, director and writer of documentaries about cinema, Marco holds the chair of Production Design at the Academy of Architecture, USI. He started working in 1978 as a festival programmer in Italy (Consultant for Asian cinema at the Venice Film Festival from 1981 to 1995). He created the Ombre Elettriche (Electric

Shadows) Festival in Turin (1981). Subsequently, he was the director of the festivals of Pesaro (1982-1989), Rotterdam (1989-1991) and Locarno (1992-2000), Venice Film Festival (2004-2011) and Rome Film Festival (2012-2014). After one year of head-programming festivals in Mainland China (Beijing IFF, Fuzhou Silk Road IFF), he has directed until November 2016 the 1st Macau International Film Festival and Awards. He is currently the Artistic Director of PYIFF – Pingyao Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon International Film Festival, the new Chinese festival initiated by the celebrated director, Jia Zhangke. In his parallel career as a film-producer, Müller has produced and co-produced 11 features that include award-winning movies (Academy Award for Best Foreign Film, top-tier honours in Cannes, Venice and other major festivals) from Russia, Central Asia, Bosnia, China, Turkey, Iran and Brazil. He has also produced short films and documentaries. He has written and edited several books about Indian cinema and filmmakers, programmed Indian films and monographic retrospectives about Indian films and filmmakers for all the festivals he has directed. For his contribution to the international promotion of non-western cinema, he has received the top honours granted to foreign citizens for cultural merits by nine different Asian governments and foundations.

## **JACQUES COMETS**

Jacques Comets has edited, among others, the films of Bernard Stora, Laurent Heynemann, Raoul Peck, Christine Pascal, Joel Farges, Petr Vaclav, Djamshed Usmonov, Ramadan Suleiman, Pablo Aguero, Tsai Ming-liang, Tonie Marshall, Massoud Bakshi, Dima El-Horr, Pavel Giroud, Samuel and Frédéric Guillaume. He has also co-edited or supervised the editing of feature films in Morocco (Narjiss Nejjar), Colombia (Maria Gamboa, Ruben Mendoza), Lebanon (Lamia Joreige) Switzerland (Jacob Berger, Germinal Roaux), and Vietnam (Nguyen Hoang Diep). He has recently edited Rohena Gera' film "Sir". He is credited as Creative Producer and Supervisor Editor on Miransha Naik's film "Juze", Supervisor Editor on Rima Das' film "Village Rockstars" and on Prateek Vats' film "Eeb Allay Ooo!". Jacques Comets, head of the Editing Department of La Femis - the French National Film School, until July 2018. He was part of many seminars, workshops and juries in film schools and universities in Switzerland, Chile, Cuba, Tunisia, Morocco, Albania, Iran, India (Goa, Dharamsala, Kerala) and Lebanon.

## **LIZI GELBER**

Lizi Gelber was raised in Italy by American parents, and completed her education at Columbia University in NYC. She returned to Rome where she started working in film editing on feature films such as Once Upon a Time in America by Sergio Leone and participated in a prolific moment of filmmaking at Cinecittà. She then worked on feature films in Los Angeles for many years. She is grateful to have worked with many talented directors such as Roman Polanski, Michael Cimino, Robert Altman, Paul Schrader and Roland Joffé. She moved to Paris after meeting her French husband on a film in Zimbabwe, and became interested in the challenges of feature length documentaries, which combined her love of drama and storytelling with her concern for social issues. When Jonathan Demme spent a year in Paris shooting a feature, she

edited and associate produced his documentary The Agronomist. She was also at the origin of Sacro Gra, Gianfranco Rosi's documentary which won the Golden Lion in 2014. She has continued to edit both feature films and documentaries, often supervising and helping to find solutions for problematic narratives.

### **ABOUT FILM BAZAAR**

Since its inception in 2007, Film Bazaar focuses on discovering, supporting and showcasing South Asian films and talent in filmmaking, production, and distribution. The Bazaar also facilitates the sales of world cinema in the South Asian region. The 13th edition of Film Bazaar will be held from 20-24 November 2019 at Goa Marriott Resort in Goa, India.

### **ABOUT NFDC**

Incorporated in the year 1975 National Film Development Corporation Ltd is formed by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (GoI) with the primary objective of promoting the good cinema movement. NFDC is instrumental in creating an ecosystem to support the financing, distribution, and development of independent films across the country.