



A Rohingya woman with her child seeks food aid in a nearby refugee camp



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Mr. Nilotpall Majumder



## FOREWORD

Documentary is nothing but creative interpretation of reality. And today, when we look around us in this part of the world, we cannot look away from the utter distress of Rohingyas. They have been burnt, tortured, raped, humiliated and ousted from their motherland. And they found their temporary refuge in Bangladesh. For the first time in their lives these Rohingya refugees have experienced love, affection and compassion. They are no different than the refugees of Syria, Yemen or Congo. Everywhere it's a story of human fall, everywhere there are stories of suppression, torture, genocide and sufferings. Hence, its more important than ever to bring those stories in lime light through documentary films and make the voice of love & sanity louder.

Dhaka Doclab tributes its second edition to the hapless and helpless Rohingya population, who are been ousted from their motherland & fled to Bangladesh. We have given them shelter, we have given them food and security, but we still could not give their home back. We wish that soon they will be able to go back to their home, to their motherland safely.

Warmly,

Dhaka Doclab Team

# A Learning Centre for Reality Story-tellers



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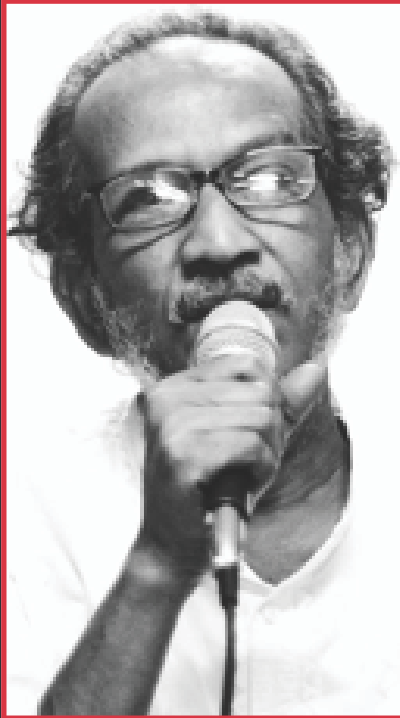
81-85





Aminunnissa (65)  
a Rohingya Refugee,  
entered into Bangladesh  
last year. She had to  
leave all her belongings.  
Both her life and family  
are safe now, and she is  
happy with it.

**TUTORS**

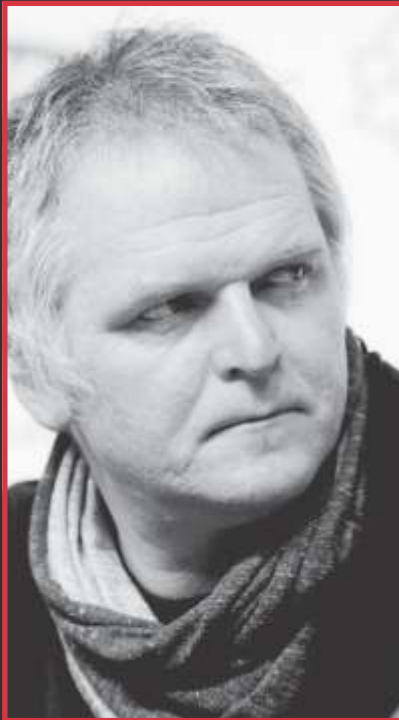


## Nilotpal Majumdar

Founder/President, Documentary Resource Initiative

INDIA

Nilotpal Majumdar is Founder/President of Documentary Resource Initiative that organizes DocedgeKolkata, an Asian documentary pitching forum that is engaged with filmmakers for intensive incubation, mentoring and international co-production opportunities. A postgraduate from Film & Television Institute of India, Pune he received a National Award In 1997 for his film Dhatu Jhar '97. He is a frequent jury member and a tutor-mentor at international documentary film festivals and incubation-cum-pitching sessions. Presently, he is Director, Manipur State Film & Television Institute, Imphal.



## Audrius Stonys

Filmmaker/Producer  
Professor, Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre

LITHUANIA

His films got numerous international film awards. Among them Audience award in Nyon, Grand Prix in Split, prizes in Bornholm, Florence, Gyor, Neu Brandenburg, Oberhausen, Bilbao and San Francisco. In 1992 Audrius Stonys documentary film "Earth of the Blind" was recognized by European Film Academy as the Best European Documentary Film of the Year and received Felix Award. 2004-2005 Documentary teacher in European Film College, Denmark. Lectures and master classes in Kolkata, Sao Paulo, Seoul, Tokyo, Berkeley, Stanford, Moscow, Belgrade, Barcelona, San Francisco, Carpi Modena, Paris.

Recipient of Lithuanian National Culture and Art Award.  
Member of European Documentary Network. Born 1966.04.28 in Vilnius, Lithuania. 1984-1989 studied in Vilnius State Conservatorium film directing. 1989 studied in Jonas Mekas Film Anthology Archive New York.



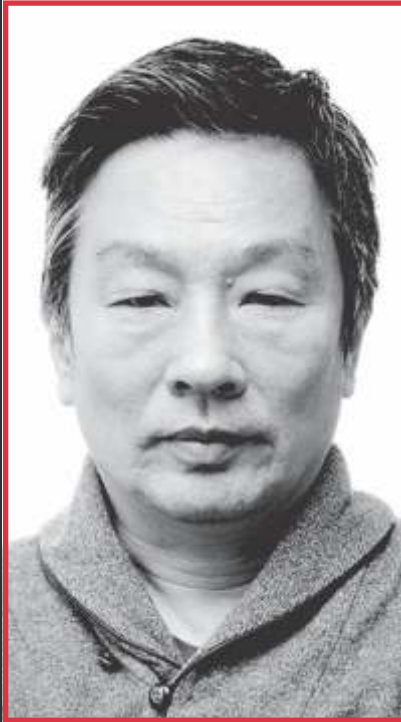


## Graca Castanheira

Filmmaker/Producer  
Pop Films

PORTUGAL

Graca Castanheira graduated In Film in 1989 at Escola Superior de Teatro e Cinema, where she currently lectures Documentary and Film Directing. She is also in charge of a Documentary Film class at Restart — Instituto de Criatividade e Novas Tecnologias. During her career as a documentary film director she was distinguished with many awards. Castanheira is also one of the founding members of Apordoc — Portuguese Documentary Association. In 2008 she created her own production and post-production company called Pop Filmes. She works regularly as a colorist.



## Ryota Kotani

Executive Producer, International Programs  
NHK Enterprises

JAPAN

Since 1986 working for NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) as a director of documentaries and news operations as “News operations of German Unification” (1990) “Urgent Report After Death of Rajiv Gandhi” (1991) and the live show ‘Symphony for the earth — Satellite live Message by Sei ji Ozawa and world musicians” (1995). His directed documentary “European Picnic Plan breaking against Iron Curtain” (1993) won awards of HBF (Hoso Bunka Foundation). He commissioned many productions, from which various films got screened at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, like “Chronicle of Amnesiac” (2007) by Anirban Datta, India and “Char. ..The No-Man’s Island” (2012) by Sourav Sarangi, ‘Spiral Stairs’ by Ji Tang (2009), China and “Japan; love & Hate” by Sean McAllister (2009), U.K won awards at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival.



## Paul Pauwels

Teacher/Moderator

Director European Documentary Network

BELGIUM

Jean Paul Pauwels has been the Director of the European Documentary Network since May 2013. He has been working in the world of audiovisual production as unit manager, production manager, producer, commissioning editor (TV), head of a media training institute and finally as the director of an international professional organisation. He studied at the RITCS film school in Brussels where - in 1979 - he got his degree as director and producer. He worked in feature film production until 1987, when he founded his own production unit: Periscope Productions. The company produced commercials, short feature films and prize-winning documentaries. In 2005, he left Periscope Productions NV to become programme manager at the Flemish Public Broadcaster VRT/CANVAS. Between 2007 and 2011 he was the creator and later the director of the "European Television and Media Management Academy" in Strasbourg, France. He has shared his knowledge as an active documentary producer with several organizations. Amongst them are – Documentary Campus (Germany), the European Documentary Network (Denmark) Greenhouse (Israel), Balkan documentary Center (Bulgaria), International documentary institute (Czech Republic), DocedgeKolkata (India) and Documentary in Europe (Italy).



## Salomé Jashi

Filmmaker

GEORGIA

Salomé Jashi, born in 1981 in Tbilisi, Georgia, is a documentary filmmaker and has previously worked as a reporter for several years. She studied documentary filmmaking at Royal Holloway, University of London, after being awarded a British Council scholarship in 2005. Alongside filmmaking, Salomé has also been a part of Caucasusdoc, a project that supported the development of the documentary scene in the South Caucasus. Salomé has directed and edited “Their Helicopter” (2006), “Speechless” (2009), “Their Leader is Always Right” (2010) and has directed and shot “Bakhmaro” (2011) which received an Honorary Mention for a Young Documentary Talent at DOK Leipzig. Her recent documentary “The Dazzling Light of Sunset” (2016) was awarded the Main Prize at Visions du Réel’s Regard Neuf Competition.

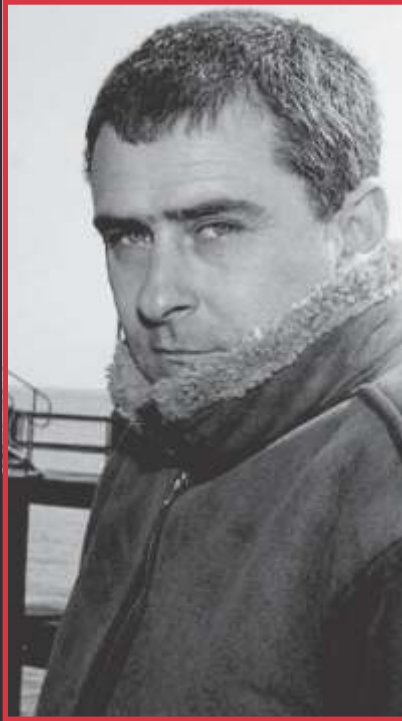


## Brian Tilley

Director/Producer

SOUTH AFRICA

Brian Tilley works in both fiction and documentary. He shot and directed several award winning documentaries that were screened on television around the world. Amongst them are “Fruits of Defiance”, “Jo’burg Stories” and “It’s My Life”, which were screened in the JorisIvens competition at IDFA and on several international television channels. Brian has produced 15 short films for the Steps’ “Why Democracy” documentary series and subsequently produced both the 8 long and 40 short films for the global “Why Poverty” series that was sold to 70 international broadcasters. He has also been the consultant producer on the Emmy Award winning documentary “Miners Shot Down”, and also “Beats of the Antonov” which won the Toronto International Film Festival Audience Award for Documentaries.



## Sean McAllister

Filmmaker

UNITED KINGDOM

Sean McAllister left school at 16, worked in a series of low-paid low-skilled factory jobs in his hometown of Hull before finding a camera. He filmed his way into the National Film and Television School (NFTS), graduating in 1996. Sean has a “Vérité” approach to his film-making where he becomes involved, he intervenes and he asks the questions which often provoke his subjects (and himself) into insights, thoughts, and realisations which they never knew they had. Sean’s work continues to inspire, to surprise and to fascinate audiences, right from his early films “Working For The Enemy” (1997) and “The Minders” (1998) to his more recent successes, such as “The Liberace Of Baghdad”, “Japan: A Story Of Love And Hate”, “The Reluctant Revolutionary” and “A Syrian Love Story”.





Lajja Khatun (90)  
a Rohingya,  
mourns for her  
four dead relatives,  
who were the  
victims of the recent  
ethnic cleansing by  
the Myanmar Army.

# DECISION MAKERS





## Seokpil KANG

Filmmaker and Executive Manager  
Docs Port Incheon/Incheon Film Commission

SOUTH KOREA

Seokpil Kang majored in political science and began his career in 1997 as a documentary producer and director. His films have been invited to many international film festivals including the Berlin International Film Festival (Forum), the IDFA and the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival. His recent work – “Boys Run”, the second part of a village trilogy – won the Best Korean Documentary Award at Busan Int’l Film Festival in 2015. Docs Port Incheon, initiated and run by Incheon Film Commission, is a platform where Asian documentary makers meet together, get opportunities for training, funding and coproduction and find bridges to non-Asian countries. Docs Port Incheon just had the third edition in 2016 and it has already built its role in the Asian documentary scenario. Unique and creative Asian documentary projects are being sought for, to be presented at the next edition in November.

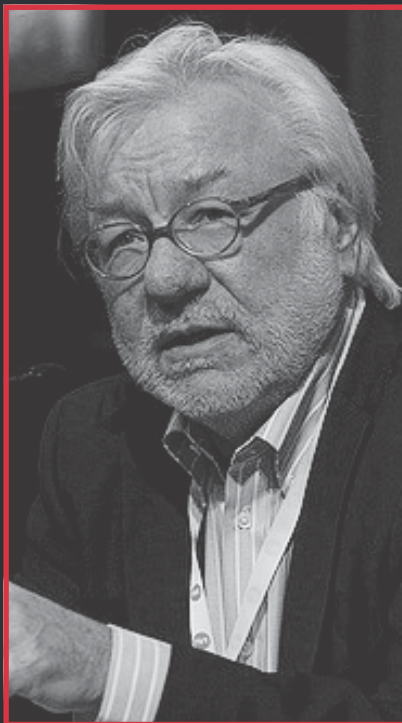


## **Sylvia Bednarz**

Director, Partnerships & Development  
Sheffield Doc Fest

UNITED KINGDOM

Sylvia Bednarz is the Director of Partnerships and Development at Sheffield Doc/Fest – the UK's largest and most exciting documentary and digital media festival. It is a hub for all documentary and non-fiction content across all platforms, from feature length to shorts, and including interactive and virtual reality projects. The Festival comprises - Film programme for the very best international screenings; Alternate Realities for digital and interactive innovation; Talks; Sessions to inspire, inform and debate; Marketplace for international business; Live events and networking; All Year screenings and training for outside the festival period. It welcomes over 32,000 audiences each year, including over 3,500 industry delegates from over 60 countries. This year, the Festival will take place 9-14 June 2017. Prior to joining Sheffield, Sylvia worked in documentary film and TV production, beginning her media career as Production Coordinator on the feature documentary "The Age of Stupid". She then joined Current TV as an Associate Producer, working alongside the commissioning editor to manage both single and series documentaries from development through to broadcast. Sylvia also was the Business Development Director and Film Festival Producer at the digital short film platform – The Smalls.



## **Hans Robert Eisenhauer**

Ventana- Film GMBH

**GERMANY**

Ventana- Film GMBH is a Berlin based TV and Film production company, run by the former Deputy Programme Director of ARTE - HANS ROBERT EISENHAUER. Hans became the Managing Director of Ventana in June 2011, after retiring from the position of Commissioning Editor at ZDF/ARTE specialized in international co-productions. Working for ARTE SINCE ITS FOUNDATION IN 1991, Hans has been responsible for more than 2000 theme-evenings and about 60 feature-length documentaries for cinema and television, a large number of current affairs programmes and series. Hans also works as a consultant and lecturer for different film workshops like the Documentary Campus E.V. and the Greenhouse Workshop for young filmmakers from the Southern Mediterranean countries.



## **Gune Hyoung**

Executive Producer, EBS

SOUTH KOREA

Gunny went to Wayne State University in America where he studied Mass Communication and Film & TV Production. He began with a major in Architecture but he eventually moved to Film & TV. He has worked at the ABU Headquarter in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as a Program Producer from 2010 to 2011 and as one of the training New Media TV Producers at the Radio Netherlands. In 2004, he became one of the members and the first programmer of EBS International Documentary Film Festival (EIDF). EBS Korea is one of the national public TV media networks that serves cultural and educational needs. EIDF began back in 2003 and was the first International Documentary Film Festival then.

Gunny has been involved in documentary production and international film festivals for most of his career. He is currently working for the EIDF as an Executive Producer.



## **Tijana Dukić**

Head Of Sales And Acquisitions  
Taskovski Films

**BELGIUM**

Tijana holds degree in Art History and she has 15 years of experience in the cultural & cinema sector in political and operational functions.

Since beginning of 2015 Tijana is working in Taskovski films as head of sales and acquisitions as well as creative producer on selected film projects.



## **Bernadette Schramm**

Director, International Emerging Talent Films Association

UNITED KINGDOM

Bernadette Schramm is the Director of the International Emerging Talent Films Association (IEFTA)'s Global Film Expression, where she discovers and empowers emerging filmmakers from emerging economies.

Bernadette is also the Festival Producer of Watersprite: the Cambridge International Student Film Festival and coordinates the Refugee Voices in Film programme, in collaboration with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), at the Cannes Film Festival each year. She has served as jury and keynote speaker at several international film festivals. She coordinated the Women in Cinema conference at the 16th Dhaka International Film Festival in Bangladesh, having spoken the previous year on the "Importance of Self-Esteem for Women in Roles of Leadership".

Bernadette graduated from the University of Cambridge in 2016 and started her career at the boutique strategy consultancy, CVA, working on corporate innovation projects between London, Paris and Berlin.



## **Amir Hakim**

Assistant Vice President  
Content Strategy, Development, Insights & Creation  
Malay Content Business

**MALAYSIA**

In charge of new concept & ideation for the all-important Malay Customer Business unit. Lead development team to create/propose new ideas/co-pros/special projects/cross-borders initiatives that can translate into compelling content for our customers on multi-platforms. Been with Astro since 1996 and have been responsible among others to develop new content for Astro such as the 1st ever Islamic Reality shows (Young Iman & The Orator), international factual travelogues and many others. Jury member for ABU Prizes, Japan Prizes and also AIBD Prizes.



## Meenakshi Shedde

South Asia consultant, Berlinale

INDIA

Meenakshi Shedde is an independent film curator, festival programmer, mentor and journalist, based in Mumbai, India., She is the South Asia Consultant of Berlin International Film Festival since 1998. Also started working with Dubai International Film Festival since 2010. Besides, She has been India/Asia Curator/Consultant since 18 years to festivals worldwide, including the Toronto, Locarno, Busan, World Cinema Amsterdam, IFFI-Goa, Kerala, Mumbai and Colombo Film Festivals.

A journalist with 30 years' experience, Meenakshi regularly freelances for Variety, Screen, Cahiers du Cinema, Forbes, Middy and ibnlive.in.com. As a critic she has won India's National Award for Best Film Critic. Meenakshi so far has written for 14 books.







## **N. Rashed Chowdhury**

Independent Filmmaker  
Creative Director, Bengal Creations Limited

**BANGLADESH**

N. Rashed Chowdhury is an Independent filmmaker and film activist in Bangladesh. He has been involved with Bangladesh Short Film Forum-the pioneer organization of independent film movement of Bangladesh since his high school days, back in the early 90's. Rashed had been an active participant of the Film Society movement of Bangladesh, initiated during the sixties. He has made couple of short films and documentaries that were screened in various International film festivals and at the National levels. He has led the alternative film movement and carried out the responsibility of the President of Bangladesh Short Film Forum & worked twice as a Festival Director of the `International Short & Independent Film Festival, Dhaka-the pioneer International Independent Film Festival of the sub-continent-organized biennially by the Forum. Rashed has recently completed his first feature film: Chandrabati Kotha (aka-The Tales of Chandrabati) that earlier won the `National Filmmaking Grant for feature film (2014-2015). He studied Masters from the University of Pune, India.



## Shabnam Ferdousi

Independent Filmmaker  
Program Editor, Ekattor Television

BANGLADESH

Shabnam Ferdousi was born in January 14, 1972. She walked in different paths of life before settling her career in audio-visual media. She started her career in 2000 by making a logo film for Short Film Festival.

She made around 35 documentary films so far and a number of TV programs for different organizations. Her major works are *Spring of Desire*, *In Quest of Life, ... and we cross the same road*, *Water Play*, *The Language Fighter*, *Melodies of the Soul*, *The River Named Titash*, *Lady with the Lamp*, *The Poison Teller*, *The City Song*, *The Seamstress House*, *Neither Lover, Nor Rebel*, *Born Together* etc.

She bagged around 8 awards for her contribution in documentary film including the Bangladesh National Film Award for Best Documentary (2016). For the last two decades, she has been working in electronic media. Currently, she is the Program Editor at Ekattor Television.



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A lost  
Rohingya girl  
searching for  
her family

**PARTICIPANTS**



**Sourabh Kanti Dutta**

INDIA

## KHUSBUTOLA



### LOGLINE

In the red-light area of Forbesganj, a town along the Nepal border, Fatima and other women takes up fight against the complex web of traffickers, Police and her own community, known as the 'Nat' who prostitute their women in the name of tradition, to change the future for their children.



## SYNOPSIS

In the red-light area of Forbesganj, a small town along the Nepal border, lives a community called 'Nat'. They trade their women into prostitution in the name of tradition. Fatima was only nine when she was forced into sex trade through marriage into this community. But she refused to carry on this tradition. The men beat her blue, snatched her breastfeeding baby away for days to bend her. They could not. After having six children, she finally walked out of the marriage. Shoaib, her ex-husband, accuses her of leaving him for money and fame while she struggles to feed and educate all six children by herself.

She manages to make sure that the eldest daughter Jyoti completes graduation; the eldest son Armaan will soon go to another big city for higher studies. Not content, she continues to motivate, fight for other women and children there. But the nexus between pimps, traffickers and police continues to frustrate her efforts. Meanwhile, Fatima's yearning for love and emotional security at the time of her fierce battle for change makes her look for a companion. Asif comes as the new man in her life. Within two years, Fatima painfully discovers that he has a wife, family which he hid from her.

Wrecked with turn of events in personal life, she picks up pieces slowly. For she knows, after all these years, if she falls silent, nobody would probably raise their voice to protect innocent girls in years to come. She aims for what seems impossible – to uproot prostitution/trafficking from there.

Our film will witness this David vs Goliath fight while celebrating Fatima, who stood up taking others along against this whole system that prefers to keep everything

running the way it has been – thriving trafficking, lively brothels around, the archaic customary practices in our families, communities and an extremely vulnerable ecosystem that makes the growing girls to succumb.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Among other things, this century will be known as the century of women fighting for their rights. In this fight, there will be two types of men, the ones who are with them and the ones who are against them. I know which side I am on. Did I have to pick a side? No. It came to me naturally. My mother lives in me. Fifty percent of me is my mother. The rest is my father.

I do believe in empowerment. But I do not take a position of someone who is going to do that himself. Because, there is a sense of chivalry, bragging and one-up man-ship in it. I want to avoid that. Actually, women just need a level playing field. Rest they can take care of themselves. The reality is it is me who has been empowered by meeting this woman. It was therapeutic for me. In reality, I found inspiration in this woman.

I lost my mother at the age of six, had a problematic childhood. Because of my small size and undergrowth, I faced a lot of bullies while growing up, underestimated. And that is what brought me closer to a woman's experience. Women face bullying, underestimation all her life.

I draw a lot of strength from the women who stand up. This is a story that the world should know, where the women, who had been victims, took up a seamless war against this incredibly unfazed, corrupt power system. I want to rekindle the memory of the fight between David



and Goliath, where David won despite his small size marking the triumph of good over evil.

I want to move the soul and the consciousness of the audience so that they participate in the call for change.

## **TREATMENT**

I have been attempting direct cinema so far in this film. But it is not purely 'observational' in the sense that I am choosing what to shoot and what not, which means my camera is not just hanging out there and observing everything in the same/neutral way.

But whenever I am filming, my camera is almost invisible, except where I am engaged in a conversation. Since I am filming myself, the camera makes its presence felt at those places.

Thus, at a few places the narrative style will become participatory. But it will be minimal. Mostly, this film will be direct cinema in its form.

A patient yet free-flowing visual style will be complemented by a near-invisible camera.

Location sound plays an important role in giving the sense of the space. Call for Ajan, sounds of train, motorbikes, television, cows and so on give us a sense of the milieu. Through our conversations with Fatima, Shoaib and the ones who knew Fatima for long, we hear the story of the past, Fatima's past. Through their present day interactions among themselves, we know the present. Knowing the past and the present will eventually give us a hint of the future. Inside Fatima's home, apart from observing, camera also becomes a confidante for Fatima and her children at times.

Jyoti, the eldest one, studies in Patna, the state capital. Camera will continue to follow her with great interest as she embodies the future that Fatima is fighting for.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

National award winner for my directorial debut, I am Bonnie, I'm a history graduate and a self-taught filmmaker. In a career spanning over a decade and a half, I've filmed Documentaries that won International awards and screened in premier Film Festivals around the world.

After working in entertainment/advertising industry as a Cinematographer for a decade, I'm working mostly in documentaries for the last five/six years.

With documentaries, I've turned Director myself. Now, I'm at the production stage of my second feature length documentary (as the Director/Producer/Cinematographer), Khusbutola(80 min.) on women change-makers/anti-trafficking/anti-prostitution in India.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

- June - December, 2018
- Will shift base to Forbesganj, a town 550 kms up north from my current base in India.
- I will film the life of other girls, who are still captive to this sex-trade.
- I will film more of the community's life. I expect resistance from the 'Nat' men who force their women into prostitution. It is natural as they fear loss of livelihood. At the same time, they are eager to tell their side of the story on the camera. Because they think, whatever they are doing in the name of tradition is the right thing to do.

- December, 2018 - February, 2019
- In the winter, there is a fair at Forbesganj. At night, girls used to get traded here till a few years ago. This winter, I will go to this fair with Jyoti and her sisters. Among the male gaze around them I will tell the story of selling of innocents there.
- An all-out effort from the women is building up. I will film the looming showdown between these women and the pimps/traffickers, whenever it happens during this time.

## BUDGET

### KHUSBUTOLA

Shooting Format: HD Total Run Time(s): 70-80 min.  
 Country of Production: INDIA  
 Intended Delivery Date: 08/2019  
 Estimated Shooting Days: 100 days

**Project Total Costs: 66920 USD**

Funding Sources Secured:  
 Peter J Kirby Productions (Uk)  
 Secured 14700 USD

## PRODUCTION STATUS

- I have been filming for last 18 months.
- Considering that I have been able to film 40% of what I intend to, I foresee a filming schedule of another 18 months.
- I have been able to film most of Fatima, the protagonist's love life so far.
- I have filmed her struggle as a mother. I need to film more of Jyoti, her elder daughter. I will explore and film her other three daughters as well. They are all in the vulnerable age bracket of 12 to 16.
- I will also film her two sons as well.
- I have filmed the nexus between the police and the traffickers. I will get more.
- I have been able to film some part of this community's life.



**Anwar Chowdhury**

BANGLADESH

## THE LAST VISIT



### LOGLINE

A displaced Muslim family saga, features parents at the backdrop of partition of Sub-continent and a journey, a last visit of old father to his motherland and a quest to find a lost friend.

## SYNOPSIS

In 1947, Bengal was partitioned on religious grounds, as part of the partition of India, following the formation of independent India and Pakistan and by which eastern part of Bengal became East Pakistan, which became independent again as Bangladesh in 1971 with immense hate for each other. Partition triggered riots and colossal wave of migration in 3 decades, resulting in millions of people are displaced from their homes, from their roots. Hindus migrated to western part and Muslims went to eastern part of Bengal for safe, security and better scopes but the impact afterwards were different.

Safdar (85), the filmmaker's father migrated to Dhaka, the then East Pakistan in the year of 1964, leaving behind his profession of school teaching, the affiliation of the progressive communist movement and cultural activities, the relatives, the village home in Margram, West Bengal, India. Mosiha (71), the filmmaker's mother had no option but to come to Dhaka too in 1968, as she got married to my father, leaving behind her mother, all sisters, near and dear ones and had to sacrifice her vast properties and comfortable life of her village home in Somsar, West Bengal, which she never got in her new life.

Safdar and Mosiha had to take the new identity, new citizenship. They physically somehow adjusted their new life but yet they remained mentally attached to their motherlands as they always recall their memories and carries the pain of detachment. They felt helpless as they can't present at the events and time of sorrows and joys of their near and dear ones. Anwar, the filmmaker and his two sisters Hasna and Shakila-the three children, the second generation also feel isolated too and had difficulties as they find nobody in their time of emergency, crisis in Bangladesh.

The film will focus on the impacts of displacement, the moments of cry, crisis, pain and recollection of memories of a Muslim family. Film will go forward then, when son has planned to accompany with his father to a very emotional last visit to father's village, and to the root of his mother. On this journey, there will also be a quest of the father to find his long lost Hindu college friend and will have a reunion, if he is alive. Son will try to find answers some unasked questions from his parents regarding their migration during this long journey. The film would convey the message of reunion of people, the communities of Bangladesh and West Bengal, if it is not possible by geographically, but by heart, good wishes and humanity leaving behind all hatred and dissonance.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I've read many articles, novels and watched films about the stories, the impacts and the pain of partition of Hindu families who migrated to West Bengal, India from East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, when researching on the subject of partition and migration of Bengal and Bengalis. I've found then there are nothing like those or very rare on Muslim family stories, who migrated from West Bengal to East Bengal, the then East Pakistan. I got the inspiration from all those articles, novels and films to tell my family story in this film. Largely it is heard that the Muslims are happier and benefitted getting their own new country Pakistan, but there are different stories and the coin has the other side too, especially when considering the case of my own family story.

## TREATMENT

On a sunny morning in Dhaka, father is found writing letters. Father is writing to his relatives and a school friend, whom he is not visiting for years and misses a lot! Two years back, I and my mother were visiting elder sister's home in Mednipore, West Bengal, after few months of accidental demise of her eldest sister's grandchild, and seeing a photo album, mother cried and regretted, why they all can't live together so that she could be present in sorrows and joys of her near ones?

My father Safdar (85), migrated to Dhaka, joined a Banking service to the then East Pakistan in 1964 from West Bengal, India and my mother Mosiha (71), had no option but to come to Dhaka in 1968 after marrying my father. Both of them had to leave their root, their beautiful village home in Margram and Somsar and almost all their near and dear ones and for that they trapped themselves in isolation, discomfort and everlasting pain and they never forgot their homelands for a day where they came from.

I handed over father's letter to his school friend in Margram-his birthplace on that India trip. Father wrote, he can still remember many faces but not by names, and asked about who are still alive. I received an old small diary of my father of 1958 from my father's cousin there. I handed over that lost diary to father when returned to Dhaka; he went in to the nostalgia immediately! Suddenly father felt jubilant finding an address of a long traceless friend, Himangshu, who is a Hindu and was his best friend in college; together they had a great time and were involved in student union of the communist party. Father doesn't know he is alive or not. He grieved, if he gets this earlier, he could have been going to find him. Father then wrote two letters to Himangshu and to his unknown children in opposite pages of the paper

providing them his address and phone number.

I often follow father's silent moments, when he sees through his window with blank vision, when he draws the riverside of his village, when he sings nostalgic songs with harmonium, "In the gilded cage, my days failed to remain, all those colorful days of mine.." I also follow video conversations of my family members, complaining to the relatives live in West Bengal for not visiting us and urging them to visit. I and my two sisters-the second generation feels isolated too like our parents and had difficulties many a times as we found nobody here at the time of our emergency, needs and joy. It was evident recently, when the family found no body here to help resolve a boundary wall dispute with the neighbor.

The film goes forward when I followed my father's video conversation with his cousin that he wants to pay a visit his motherland for the last time as he is growing very old. I planned now to accompany with my father on his last visit. Mother will also be with us and I will go to her home village too. I would capture the conversations, recalling memories and emotional moments of meeting and seeing off their near and dear ones and visiting their old belonged places. I will also be with father to his quest to find his lost friend Himangshu and hoping for a great reunion, if he is alive. We will take the train route mostly; during the journey when going back to parents old days, I would seek answers from my parents on the motivation and the decision of the migration, the social, cultural and financial impacts on them, etc, which questions I never asked.

My parents will be the main protagonists in the film; I and my two sisters and some other characters will be in supporting roles. Except some situations and following scenes, I myself capture the family intimate moments with

handheld camera operation. On editing, supported by my personal poetic voiceover, I the director will guide the audience and my commentary will explain the things subjectively. The style of the film is a mixed; mostly of poetic and observational and there will be interactions/interviews too. Various elements of the seasons and nature, the windows, old photographs, train journey, borders, songs of father, etc will act as metaphors and express the mood and tone of the film with the presence of appropriate ambient sound.

With this film I try to focus on the impacts of displacement which carried through generations with a specific family saga of mine and to convey the message of reunion of people, the communities of Bangladesh and West Bengal, if it is not possible by geographically, but by heart, good wishes and humanity leaving behind all hatred and dissonance.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

Anwar Chowdhury is an independent documentary film maker, producer, organizer from Dhaka, Bangladesh. He has directed several short documentaries which were shown in several national and international film festivals. Waterworks and Barren Dreams are Anwar's two most appreciated documentaries. He just finished a short documentary, titled Pale in the Colors, which is competing and selected in 3 festivals in Greece and USA so far. Now he is working on his first feature documentary project about his own family saga. Anwar had acted as General Secretary and President of Bangladesh Documentary Council, a national body of documentary film makers in Bangladesh. He recently has formed his own film production and distribution company, Du CINEMA.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

Production completion (expected): by March 2019  
Post Production: by September 2019

## **BUDGET**

Total Budget: US\$ 1,40,000/-  
Secured fund: US\$ 20,000/- (by Du CINEMA)

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

Development.





**Debalina Majumder**

INDIA

## DEATH OR DARE!



### LOGLINE

Death defying stunts, thunderous cheers! This film will unravel the gendered 'making' of a subculture, making of 'heroes' out of ordinary people, the negotiations, transactions involved in this collective daring.

## SYNOPSIS

Amidst the hustle and bustle of the fair, one hears a piercing announcement of 'ladies and gent artistes' gearing up to put a memorable show. As one follows its trail of banners with pictures of 'brave-hearted' men and women, one sees a man at a counter selling thrills in exchange of tickets. There is a huge makeshift structure of wooden planks, in the style of a well, with a gallery atop. Peeping inside the small hole of a door, one finds the artistes preparing themselves, talking over phones, exchanging team strategies, or arranging babysitters for their kids for the next 15 minutes as they set about to own the well of death.

This film will follow two artistes of Maut Ka Kuan (Well of Death), one man and one woman, to look into the making of this subculture through their standpoints. What pushes them to join a travelling troupe and risk everything to quench the audience's thirst for vicarious adventure? In a socio-political economy that thrives in keeping women in their places, where women are prescribed the roles of homemakers and child bearers, what are the boundaries that they are transgressing? As they look up at the audience while racing away in their bikes, or standing in a speeding car, what do their expressions convey? Does it mock the rules, the boundaries of gender, caste, class that this very audience otherwise set up for them outside this pit? Do they seek appreciation? Do they look back in anger at the humiliation, at having to risk everything just for a few claps? Or is it also a part of the choreographed piece, a professional performance?

The film will tell the stories of these two artistes, their performances, agencies, interpersonal intimacies. Weaved into this narrative, would be the stories, songs, laughs, lives of people they meet while travelling, the moments they share while on the road, at the fairs. This is a story as

much of individual, as of the collective. This film will document the socio-political economy that sustains this culture, the intimate histories, friendships forged through this collective living, collective daring. It will delve into the minds of people who 'consume' this thrill and seek what makes these risking bodies saleable. Above all, the film will tell stories of regular people, who in their own ways, are trying to breath in some 'larger than life' moments in their otherwise quotidian existences.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The idea of travelling with the team of Maut Ka Kuan, visiting different villages, cities, states, being a part of this collective experience has been one of the prime motivators for conceiving this project, for wanting to tell the story of this collective journey with as much honesty as possible. While the spectacle of Maut Ka Kuan itself is a visually arresting tale that has been told before, the stories have mostly been told by men. The grit and courage of the women artistes of Maut Ka Kuan, the norms they defy to be a part of this carnival, the negotiations and the fights they have to put up every day to sustain themselves in this essentially male domain mostly remains shelved in this display of masculine vigour. It is therefore a conscious political choice to tell this story through the standpoints of a male and a female artiste, to probe into the undercurrents of gender, caste and class interactions that this journey facilitates, alters and sustains.

I am also curious as to the reactions my entry to this predominantly male space as a female filmmaker, my presence and my travelling with the troupe will elicit from others. Thus while the narratives of the characters would drive the storytelling of the film, it will be interrupted, interspersed by the narratives of their friends, comrades,



family and the people they meet, trade stories, share loves and laughs with, while travelling. The filmmaking team will be not just passive observers, but participants in this journey, who will have to confront their own social locations, own views while interacting, sharing notes with artistes during this journey.

The film will bear the signs of the road, it will be 'made' on the road, with images, sounds, stories that this journey will gather, will carry with it, and will think of passing on. It will not just be about the journey of the characters, but the film itself will be a journey with the well of death.

## **TREATMENT**

The film will be in the nature of a road movie, following the characters in their travels, performances and their day to day experiences. The filmmaker will be travelling with the troupe for a year, intimately capturing this carnival of risk. The fairs and the performances will form one of the central focuses of the film as the camera and sound design will try to capture the mood, the colours and the flavour of the events in all their rawness. The performances will be shot through multiple cameras (sometimes even attaching it to the performers) to capture the energy, the speed, thrill of the chase, as well as the audience response to the spectacle. So while capturing the entire scope of the event, the camera will also focus on the characters in action, the stunts they perform, the way they zoom past in their bikes/ cars, their interactions with the audience as they shake hands, take a rose, or money from them only to whirl away in seconds and their interactions with each other as they synchronise their movements while balancing life and death.

The film will delve into the psyche of the characters and the lives that intertwine their journey, and thereby, probe into

the caste, class and gender dynamics that this collective transgression challenges. How does this collective living, collective travelling interact with the prescribed norms of the society, how do they reorient themselves when they go back to their regular lives? How do these friendships, intimacies forged on the road interact with/ disrupt their other lives? The film will dig into the fear, vulnerabilities, humiliation and pain that lurk behind these larger-than-life moments and unravel the subtext of exploitation, poverty, the looming presence of death that run through these narratives of heroism, these momentary reliefs of cheating death. There will be multiple interviews which will also be used as voice-overs. There will be close-ups, candid shots to capture the colourful, apparently idyllic images of a carnival juxtaposing these dark subtexts. All of these questions, layers, texts will manoeuvre the pace of the film. The soundscape of the film will try to capture the contradictory pulls of the well of death – adventure, risk, drama, life, death, urgency and the laidback spirit of the carnival. The droning sounds of the vehicles will be interrupted by the popular Bollywood songs that are mostly played prior to the performance.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

Debalina is an independent filmmaker and cinematographer. She has made feature length documentary films, short films, travelogues, telefilms and mixed genre. She is also a still photographer and occasionally writes for newspapers and magazines. Debalina's film *If You Dare Desire...*, in conjunction with ...and the Unclaimed, a documentary made in 2013, toured several international and national film festivals. Her film *Joy Run* was selected at the Shoot Goals! Shoot Movies! short film competition of the Berlinale Talent Campus 2005, at the

55th Berlin International Film Festival. Marginalised lives, social movements and indigenous cultures have often found interpretations in her works.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

Since the film is in its early production stage, initial months will be spent in research and story development. We will be following one or two travelling groups of Maut Ka Kuan and observing the journey of a male and a female artiste. The film will be a road movie and will thus require a lot of travelling; it will have to be almost made on the road. We, therefore, intend to shoot while travelling with the groups and edit in between travels. It should take around two years to complete the film.

## **BUDGET**

Total Budget : 58,850 \$

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

The film is in its early production stage. We are in the process of building contacts, knowing our characters, familiarizing ourselves with the space, with the norms and nuances of this subculture. We have already shot some performances in Park Circus, Kolkata and Silchar, Assam which helped us get a sense of the carnival, the performances, the artistes, the space and the audience. These initial shootings have informed our research and our treatment of the film. We hope to build on it further in the days to come.



**Abhimanyu Dixit**

NEPAL

## CORNER CRICKET



### LOGLINE

At a time when Nepal is yet to find proper names for its newly formed provinces, four Individuals find their identity on a cricket field and declare their corner city the cricket capital of Nepal.

## SYNOPSIS

Dhangadi is a small town about 800 kilometres away from Kathmandu. It is a small town with massive dreams for the people involved with Dhangadi cricket.

Subash wants to create a world class cricket stadium; Subodh wants to be known as a national cricketer and Kavita wants to organise and play cricket, possibly for one last time before assuming a very different identity.

Dhangadi is also the capital of the newly formed province-7 after adoption of Nepal's New Constitution. At a time when Nepal is yet to find proper names for its new provinces, Dhangadi, the city in the far western corner of Nepal, is now emerging as the capital of cricket. It is from this corner where cricket will take the country by a storm, and be historically exemplary.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Kathmandu has always been at the forefront as it is the city where dreams come true. People from all over Nepal migrate to Kathmandu for a better life.

I, being born and raised in Kathmandu, knew how privileged I was; my life was happy with my own set of struggles. However, It came to me as a big surprise when my high school roommate chose to go back to his hometown Dhangadi 800 kilometres away from the city of dreams.

When I reviewed Dhangadi on the map, it was literally in the corner of Nepal. His move had amazed me, and I always stayed in touch, fascinated with his life choice.

It was only years later when I got to visit Dhangadi for the

same friend's wedding. There I discovered he is helping his elder brother Subash to achieve an unfathomable dream of building an international standard cricket stadium in Dhangadi.

There, I also met with a plethora of characters whose lives revolved around my favourite sport, cricket. The people of Dhangadi, those away from the central capital, and their resilience towards making a life for themselves is my primary inspiration and motivation for making this feature documentary.

## TREATMENT

After the first elections in 20 years, lawmakers in the capital city Kathmandu are searching for a name for each of the seven provinces, which is consensual and agreeable to the general public.

Dhangadi, capital city of Province-7, is around 800 kilometres away from Kathmandu. Here, people do not discuss politics, or the possible name of their province. Here, the people discuss cricket.

Among the people, 13-year-old Subodh Ayer, born and raised in Dhangadi, dreams of becoming the opening batsman for the national cricket team. He claims to have solved the mystery spin of Sandeep Lamichhane, the only Nepali featured in the Indian Premier League, by just watching him bowl on television. He aims to debut in Dhangadi Premier League in the 2019 season.

Modelled after the Indian Premier League, the Dhangadi Premier League features Nepali domestic, national and a

few Indian and Bangladeshi Cricketers. Chairman of the Dhangadi Premier League Subash Shahi has said that the league is only a stepping stone towards making Dream Fapla – Nepal's first international cricket stadium. He has presented the masterplan of his stadium to almost everyone and will again present in the next edition of Dhangadi Premier League. He is yet to find sufficient funds.

Kavita Kunwar reminisces the times she spent with the Dhangadi Cricket Academy, five years ago, when she was selected to play women's cricket in Kathmandu. Today most of her friends are married, and have migrated out of Dhangadi. She knows she is next in line. Kavita wants to play once more before becoming just another housewife.

We follow their lives during the 2019 season of Dhangadi Premier League which includes Nepali national players scouting for local talents, a huge media turnout for cricket, and fans of the game coming together one more time to celebrate cricket in Dhangadi.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

Abhimanyu Dixit's first feature Chasing Rainbows (2013), which he produced and edited, has been called to have a 'trailblazer' effect on young cinema in Nepal. Following his undergraduate studies in media, Abhimanyu has been working as a keen cinema practitioner and as a film campaigner from Kathmandu. Currently working as a producer making a social commentary and a fiction TV series, he has been writing, directing, producing, and editing shorts, both fiction and nonfiction, since 2009. His works can often be found questioning Nepal's nuevo modernity. He aspires to tell awesome stories.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

The Production will take place in Five phases

1st Phase: January 2019 - February 2019  
Research and Interviews with selected 'heroes' of the documentary.

2nd Phase: March 2019- April 2019  
Dhangadi Premier League Season  
Production Phase with the Heroes following their lives during the Premier League Season.

3rd Phase: April 2019- June 2019  
Post Event stories, and collecting the aftermath of the Dhangadi Premier Leagues.

4th Phase: August 2019- October 2019  
Post Production (Editing, color corrections, and Shooting any updates of the story)

5th Phase: November 2019  
Project Wrap, and Delivery

## **BUDGET**

Total Budget: 53,000 USD

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

Currently, the project is in the development stage with no formal interviews. However, the contact persons have been established, and rapport with the 'heroes' of the project have been built.



**Saiful Islam Jarnal**

BANGLADESH

## JUMMON'S CINEMA



### LOGLINE

Jummon, the rickshaw puller, For him- cinema is life , life is cinema and is packed obsession of cinema. Jummon lives his life in the fantasy of cinema since the 60's.



## SYNOPSIS

Jummon is a rickshaw puller.

Jummon watched all the films released in Dhaka till now since his childhood, he also observed all its detail, how the light of the cinema projection appears on screen, how the sound comes out and of which machine. His enthusiasm does not stop here; he goes out in the BFDC, convincing the guard to watch the shooting. The light / camera / action get stuck in his mind as he starts working as a co-artist (extra). He becomes fascinated watching the silver screen stars within his reach.

He chose the rickshaw puller's job. He roams around the whole Dhaka city with his rickshaw, from a cinema hall to another cinema hall. Watching the cinema, he tells the stories to his passengers and even sings a few cinema songs, shows some cinema actions on his own way to the surrounding people. He simply overwhelmed by the claps. The picture of this man's family is different from the persona and chat. He lives in a small 10X10 feet house of Sheikh Shahbahb Bazar along with his three children and a wife. He earns as the shows run in a cinema hall, his rickshaw pedals also goes the same - as two shows. This is another reason for his little earnings; Jummon has tied the life with the cinema.

He wakes up in the name of "Jagehuwa Sabera" and tells the shopkeeper in the Mahalla's tea shop that Jagehuwa Sabera means good morning; now give me a cup of tea. His head is full with cinema. All the data from the last 40 years of cinema market, the number of the halls, the names of the directors, the hero's heroine, and the audience's demands are all in the head.

He cannot find any art in acting in cinemas. The cinemas don't touch my soul anymore. He finds pain in empty cinema halls; he is hurt by saturated BFDC. The elephant like big cranes stand tall at BFDC ground. Scattered, depressed faces of co-artists concerns him.

And he has his own philosophy on human life- He also has a good research on human values. He is satisfied with his low income in this rusted time - because hhe is not a shareholder of any corruption.

He watches the running people, busy rush, but his life is paused on cinema screen. The story, song and dance of the cinema has kept him in a magical fascination, which he cherished from his childhood. By passing over six decades of his life, he thinks of himself as like the hero of the cinemas, strong and idealistic.

Life is a cinema or cinema is a life, there is nothing other than it, there is no one else.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Jummon is a rickshaw puller - his entire life is connected with cinema. He will tell the story, song and action of his cinema, in this cinema. If a rickshaw gets the name of a Bengali or a Hindi and Urdu cinema of that time - the date of release, the name, the director, and the hero's name and story is in one go, it is astonishing to see for me. During riding in his rickshaw, his style of storytelling and attitude attracted me as magnet. (Though the is exception), this exceptional matter have made me feel interested in him, making him interested in him so much so that the humble bottom of the person, whose after meat comes mustard thinks about the cinema.



Another reason for the interest is that cinema of nowadays, does not create any impact on people very much, especially commercial, and cinemas are just like chocolate, chips and chicken -buy ticket, watch cinema and then forget it. So what the matter here? Nowadays, the cinema is made from real life or the cinema is much bigger than that of life. There is no objection to the cinema is bigger than life, but this much bigger issue might arise question to the minds of cinema-lovers.

The reality, very reality and surrealism all are in the cinema, but it is through reasoning. It is more of a matter of amazement than the logic in today's cinema, so that ordinary viewers cannot match reality, just get entertainment for the time being, and some others turn away forever.

Why Jummon does not see today's cinema? The answer is that he cannot find any art or part in the cinema or acting. He does not find any practice or dedication in the face of the incompetent heroine. Besides, among the heroes he can only see the muscular body and the rough attitude. he also has a criticism mind, and he feels too like a critic by watching the cinema deeply.

Most of the commercially released films of this sub-continent of 70's, 80's and 90's he has seen (released in cinema hall or have been broadcast on Bangladesh Television), who have thoughts about cinema, who have the idea of preparing cinemas and its projection. I have been searching from Jummon of Sheikh Saheb Bazar of Lalbagh Police Station in Dhaka. We will listen and watch the cinema's past and present through his words.

Jummon is a rickshaw puller, from most marginalized profession in our society, his life is like a cinema.

## TREATMENT

The narrative of the film is about an Experimental lifestyle based on participatory mode. I have spent quite some time with the character and I am personally intrigued by the character of the protagonist.

A hobby of this rickshaw-puller protagonist is to decorate his rickshaw with colors. He wants his passengers to enjoy a ride with him. He wants to share stories of the movies he watched. This is why he paints his rickshaw based on Posters from Bengali Cinema. Rickshaw painting is a popular form of Bangladeshi traditional art that we want to showcase in our film.

The cinema behind the cinema, the cinema within the cinema. We cannot get any perception from marginal people about cinema in our cinemas (documentary). Only the critics or the intellectual cinema-lovers talk about the good, bad, past and future possibilities of the cinema. Now the marginal people are thinking about the cinema, we will see that story in this cinema

This cinema will be captured in the digital video camera. It's very easy to tell a simple story, but some of my personal framing will be there from aesthetic sense.

Video clips of old Bengali Hindi or Urdu cinema will be mixed with Jummon's dialogue in this cinema. The rollicking Jummon ever plays or acts like a hero, and when the dialogue ended, he feels like the director by uttering 'cut'. "Pichdhalai path takeybhalobesechhi..." with this song we will return from the cinema to Jummon's real life where he is a rickshaw-puller; earn his livelihood maintain his family, the wife and the children.

We see some indifferent Jummon towards the world- After waking up in the morning, he goes to colony's tea stall to have his morning tea  
He fills bucket or container from his house with water from

the colony's tube-well.

Returning home, he takes a bath, have breakfast and talks to the wife with cinematic style. Even for this reason his wife rebukes him.

He goes out wearing a gray shirt towards rickshaw garage. Then he takes a nap lying on the van. After taking a proper nap he starts his journey with rickshaw. He starts talking about dialogues and songs of the cinema after taking passenger in his rickshaw.

After dropping out the passenger, he will talk to us.

He will talk about cinema he watched

He will talk about his job selection

He will tell us when he started watching cinema and how this comes to his mind.

He will tell us the experience of working in the film (as a junior or extra)

He will share with us the experience of the atmosphere of the cinema hall of that time.

His will share his opinion about the now-a-days cinema.

The idea behind the cinema and his notion.

Talk about his favorite cinema and hero heroine.

His experience with people.

He will talk about his expectation in cinema.

He will talk about his family.

In his view, the difference between now-a-days director and that time director (commercial).

We will listen to his story about social reality and cinema impact.

Thinking of this cinema with a single character, I have become interested in making a cinema about Jummon in that point is art is not only for art. It's for the mass people.

## PRODUCTION PLAN

| Period          | Description                                        | Time period    |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Pre-production  |                                                    | June 2018      |
|                 | Idea, Idea Dev, Script, Story Board                |                |
|                 | Props                                              |                |
|                 | Costume                                            |                |
|                 | Location Racy (move with character)                |                |
|                 |                                                    | September 2018 |
| Production      |                                                    | November 2018  |
|                 | Shoot with Protagonist (Movement and Interview)    | 15 days        |
|                 | Shoot Cinema hall Around Dhaka                     | 5 days         |
|                 | Shoot Cinema hall 3 division of Bangladesh         | 10days         |
|                 | Shoot in BFDC, Film Archive                        | 5 days         |
|                 | Shoot in Old Dhaka (Rickshaw Painting)             | 8 days         |
|                 |                                                    | March 2019     |
|                 |                                                    | April 2019     |
| Post-production |                                                    |                |
|                 | Script re-arrange (If need) And Editing Rough-cut  | 15 days        |
|                 | Re shoot (If need)                                 | 5 days         |
|                 | Editing & Color Correction with Panel Charge       | 20 days        |
|                 | Sound correction Voice Recording& background Music | 10 days        |
|                 | Feedback and Final Print/Output                    | 10 days        |
|                 |                                                    | December 2019  |

## PRODUCTION STATUS

Pre production

## BUDGET

Grand Total - 15,000 USD (12,70,000 BDT)



**Mehedi Mostafa**

BANGLADESH

## MAKING PLACES



### LOGLINE

An architect, his clients, a construction worker, a maid in Dhaka seek home and build houses in rural areas. They cannot escape Dhaka, one of the densest cities in the world. So they make their own sacred places.

## SYNOPSIS

Everyday, people leave villages and come to Dhaka for better life. And Dhaka remains the most densely populated city by the rivers. Unplanned growth and rapid urbanisation made this city unliveable. But people cannot escape the city. So, they try to make it their home. But home can be found in their idea of an ideal village. The film explores the relationship between these two dreams – dream of modern urban life and dream of home in the ideal mythical village.

Five lives work and seek home in the city. Dipto, an architect, looks for a new office space with his partners and designs rural house projects. Sumon, an artist, gets stuck with his dream house project in the village as he faces financial crisis and criticism from relatives. Hamida's mother, a maid, cleans houses and saves money secretly to build a house in her village. Shapon, a construction worker, has already started building a house for his family in the village and he needs more money to finish it. Roni, a designer, starts building a house in his village after his parents died to keep their memory alive.

They know that they cannot escape Dhaka. They fight for their own places in the city and long for eternal green land. And by creating spaces/ places, they express their sense of identity in this mystic delta. Their built houses stand gracefully in this land as dreams being realised.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When I was growing up I thought Dhaka would become different. I even imagined a utopian pleasant Dhaka when I was in an architecture school. Now it is intolerable with

punishing traffic and population. I thought I could not live here. At the same time, I cannot leave too. Everything is here. And I can live here by making my own space. Architecture does this by creating a world within a world. Maybe cinema does the same. I am developing the film from these paradoxical ideas.

A group of architect friends formed a practice in Dhaka. They got clients who wanted to make houses in rural areas. One architect finds out his house maid is also saving money to build a house in her village. Everyone knows that it is unbearable to live in Dhaka. At the same time, no one can leave. Everyone is dreaming of having a place to go in the village. It is like going to the roots of the land, the delta. A place that contains the softest of all soils and rivers. Where the basic idea of architecture is to dig and raise the plinth with the soil and make the house with available local materials.

The film is atmospheric – the atmosphere of the city and the village. The film shows the contrast and the desire of building and owning places where we can live. And maybe by building places we have a sense of identity.

## TREATMENT

The film has several protagonists, including the city Dhaka. Dipto, an architect, Sumon, an artist, Hamida's mother, a maid, Shapon, a construction worker, and Roni, a designer. Occasionally, a voice-over talks about these characters and their emotions.

Dhaka remains one of the most densely populated cities in the world. Every day, thousands of new people are coming to the city from rural areas and most of them end up in the

slums. Around 40 per cent people of the city live in the slums. People get stuck in punishing traffic with unbearable sound pollution. The traffic noise reaches Dipto's 10th floor office with full intensity. He needs to find a new office space with his partners as the current one becomes too expensive. The city offers too little of what they are looking for. Still, they keep searching.

Dipto gets busy designing a rural house project. It is hard to imagine the rural setting from this city office. The client is Sumon, an artist. He gets stuck with the house project as he faces financial crisis and criticism from his relatives during the construction. He thought of shifting his practice to village. Now it seems impossible. Hamida's mother, the maid in Dipto's house, keeps the apartment tidy. She has a daughter who goes to college. She saves money secretly to build a house in her village. Shapon, a construction worker, starts working on an apartment interior project designed by Dipto. He works and dreams about his family in his village. Shapon has already started building a house there. Now he needs more money to finish it. Roni, a designer, builds a house in his village after his parents' deaths. It is a way for him to remember his roots. Dipto helps Roni with the design.

All these characters play out their roles in the film parallelly. Their connection with each other gets revealed after some time. And Bangla New Year begins. People start celebrating in the city. They also gather around the parliament building complex. We see the magnificent scale and the spaces of the complex. It has the feel of an Ideal Bangla city.

Architects talk about this great beginning of a nation and now we see a different unplanned Dhaka.

Dipto and his friends find a new office space. They start shifting the office. Sumon manages some money to finish the house. He plans to start an art residency project in that house. Hamida's mother goes to her village after several years. She hopes to start building her dream house soon.

Shapon saves enough money to finish the roof of his house. Roni comes back to Dhaka from his village house and watches videos that he made there and recalls the experience. The film ends with the houses that they are building.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

Born in Bangladesh, Mehedi studied architecture in Dhaka before joining a film school in India. He finished his diploma in filmmaking with specialisation in directing in 2017. *Disquiet* (2016), *Flyover* (2017) and *Leopard* (2017) are his short films from school. Currently, he is developing a feature film project.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

Script Development, Research, Funding – (May, 2018 - September, 2018)

Equipment Hiring – September, 2018

Shooting – (September, 2018 - April, 2019)

Editing and Final Cut – (May, 2019 – July, 2019)

Color Correction – July, 2019

Sound Design and Final Mixing – (July, 2019 – September, 2019)

Final Version in Screening format – November, 2019

## **BUDGET**

Total Budget: \$ 35,000

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

Pre-production.





**Rajan Kathet**

NEPAL

## COPING



### LOGLINE

Dinesh's family is in mourning after his mother passes away of cancer. For 13 days, they are guided by ritual prohibitions as they deal, collectively and personally, with their loss.

## SYNOPSIS

After Dinesh's mother passes away of cancer, his family is in mourning. For 13 days, they are guided by strict prohibitions on food and clothing.

Rituals compel Dinesh to wear basic white clothing and he must cook rice and potatoes to feed himself. He cannot touch, or be touched by, anyone else. His father, meanwhile, copes by playing games on his tablet.

After days of repetition, a sense of routineness takes over. Visitors provide a welcome respite, but most of the time family members are left to talk among themselves.

Did we do enough to save her? Anyone knows how much was spent? How much would all the spare medicine bring in? Should we pay the priest cash or give him gold?

Mourning is collective but also personal. While Dinesh looks ahead, his father is locked in self-reflection.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As I watched the body of my aunt 'Bhai-Ama' burning on the pyre, I instinctively started filming the funeral on my phone. Was it because I had been the official family photographer for the last 15 years? This is how the film began.

Family atmosphere at and around home often provides me subjects for my films. Making documentaries in confined spaces and time is my passion. On this occasion too, I got limited time but close scrutiny of my family in mourning.

Not wanting to simply idle away, I decided to make a film out of what was happening at home. These seemingly mundane and often neglected incidents, seen through the rarified perspective of loss, gives this film a deep and personal insight into family life.

## TREATMENT

When Dinesh breaks down at his mother's funeral pyre, a relative tries to console him, saying he did everything he could. Once home, the family is guided by strict prohibitions on food and clothing for the 13 days of mourning.

Dinesh begins his day with a morning bath and waits for the priest to begin the daily rituals. As the only child of his parents, he is compelled to wear basic white clothing and must cook his own meals. He cannot touch, or be touched by, anyone else.

Bhavindra was with his wife during her last stages after she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. His thoughts keep going back to those days and her struggle till the end. At times he distracts himself by playing games on his tablet.

The first days of mourning are hard for Dinesh, his father, and the joint family. Fresh grief keeps taking conversations back to the life and death of Dinesh's mother. As days pass a sense of routineness takes over. Visitors provide a welcome respite, but most of the time family members gather by the room heater, talking amongst themselves.

Did we do enough to save her? Did she have any last wishes? Anyone knows how much was spent? How much would all the spare medicine bring in? Should we pay the



priest cash or give him gold?

Dinesh submits himself to books, the internet and conversations about football and other happenings, while his father is often silent and thoughtful. While Dinesh looks ahead, Bhavindra is locked in self-reflection.

We witness a closely observed portrait of a family whose members show differing levels of attachment to customs and family affairs. Mourning is both collective and personal.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

Rajan Kathet is a national and international award-winning Nepali filmmaker who has made several fiction and documentary films both as director and writer. He achieved his Masters in Documentary Film Direction from DOCNOMADS (Portugal, Hungary and Belgium) in 2014-16, with the support of Erasmus Plus Scholarship. His first directorial Serdhak The Golden Hill (2015) was premiered at Montreal World Film Festival 2015, and Seattle International Film Festival 2015. He is also a Berlinale Talents Alumnus 2017.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

Post Production:  
(Between October and December 2018)

## **BUDGET**

Total (NRS.): 4,32,000

Total in US Dollars = \$ 3,945

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

Filming was based on the 13 days of mourning of a family. Salpa Films Pvt. Ltd. managed itself with camera and sound equipment. Currently, the project is under post production. We are seeking for funders/ collaborators, who can support and supervise us with post production (editing, sound design, foley, sound mixing, and colour correction). We hope to complete the post production of the film before December 2018.



**Naveen Pun**

INDIA

## I'M NOT HOME - STORY OF AN OUTLAW FINDING HOME



### LOGLINE

A gangster-peddler-misfit desires for a mainstream life, first trying to find his home after 25 years of disappearance and then the woman he loves.

## SYNOPSIS

That day it was surprisingly cold in Mumbai, the day when I met 'Shooter Bhai' again. We were supposed to board the train from Mumbai Central, coincidentally the place where he first disembarked 25 years back as a teenager after fleeing from his home. Since then he had never contacted his family. Though a known gun supplier to the underworld, he looked frail and nervous. After many years as a gangster, peddler and prisoner, he finally decided to mend ways and looked for redemption. With a bag full of clothes, hair combed and nervousness written all across his face he boarded the train. Hence began our journey and a serious enquiry into the life of Shooter Bhai aka Lagia.

Lagia is going through a very important part in his life. He has a burdened past but he thinks this is the time when he can rectify things in his life. It has been a few months since he has returned to his home. There he gets a lot of love and acceptance and advice from all round to stay there forever but he does not feel it right to live of his family's provisions. He is also finding it difficult to adjust to the village life. A free-spirited man accustomed to the flare and flamboyance of big city Mumbai finds it difficult to adjust to quiet slow village life. Another major deciding factor in his life is his lover – the only way she promised to come to his life is if he stands on his feet and shows that he is capable of working and living a mainstream life. He desperately wants her. For her he is ready to take up a job and curb his natural instinct of being free.

With so much expectations riding on him to fix his life, the film follows the journey of the man's struggle to change the fundamentals of his existence. On one side is his life of total freedom and on the other is his family and his lover – two things that he desires the most.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In life we often come across people who offer a lifestyle which enamours us not for being successful but for being recluse and different. Few years back while on a film set of a gangster themed movie I met a gentleman who fulfilled such a description. On the set he worked as a supplier of junior artistes, especially of disreputable characters. On my further enquiry I realised that he was a real-life gangster known as Shooter bhai aka Lagia in the Mumbai Underworld, playing the role of a gun handler and part-time drug peddler. Thin, medium heighted, always stooping low, he almost seemed a misfit in the role of a gangster.

What got me interested in him was his approach to life. He was a carefree guy – never worried about his life and future. He literary lived by the moment and never worried about savings, having a home, mundane things that we mainstream thinkers constantly worry about. He often said he does not need these things for himself, he is happy living a life with freedom. Deeply filled with nostalgia about his home and lover, he lived the life not less than a tragic hero.

Then one fine day he told me about his hopes to mend ways and connect with his family. I at once got interested to film his journey of redemption. Here was a man who though being famed as a misfit looked for a last chance to settle down and change his life and lifestyle. It promised a man's strange journey to go mainstream, against all odds a true test of his character and personality.

## TREATMENT

To become more intimate with the characters and get to know their inner conflicts better we have chosen to use

participatory style of documenting. We over the course have become friends with our subjects, especially Lagia, and this gives us a chance to interact freely with him. It gives him a space to discuss his life and thoughts with us without any hesitation. We just live around him respecting his space and roll the camera whenever we feel something relevant is taking place. Lagia himself being an enigmatic character tells us what his thoughts are on issues, no matter how crude they might be.

These conversations with Lagia and his actions will drive the story forward.

The camera work will be observatory trying to capture the turmoil that Lagia is currently going through. His decisions will always be observed, never challenged. We plan to just notice a man's struggle of transformation.

The structure of the film is based on two phases of his life: his return to his home after many years of disappearance and his journey back to Mumbai in search of his lover. During these two journeys a lot of changes occur in him. We through observation and direct way of shooting explore his life and notice a core desire a man seeks in relationships.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

I am an avid film buff with a special liking for documentaries with human subjects. I was trained in Direction from the prestigious Roopkala Kendro, Kolkata and have been working in the audio-visual field for over eight years. I have directed several projects, some personal and others commissioned, and versed myself with the crafts of filmmaking. I am currently focused on telling human stories in fiction and non-fiction format. My strength is I love

listening to what others want to say.

Past documentaries: *When you are Sleeping* and *5 Days of Milan*

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

We plan to shoot the life of Lagia following him in his journey for a mainstream existence. Over the months we have known each other – Lagia and I have become really close friends. The process was gradual and for him to completely open up took time. But we are in a space that whenever I speak to him he tells me how his life is planning out. He is not at all camera shy and takes great pride that his life is being made into a movie. This gives us a control to capture his journey up-close.

We are also in contact with his family in his village and his girlfriend in Mumbai, both playing important roles in his life.

For the shooting we limit the crew to two people, one a cinematographer and a sound recordist, with the intention of not disturbing the reality of his life. At times during events we have an extra hand to get more coverage and all cover aspects of his world.

## **BUDGET**

(In US dollars)

Grand Total: 38,145 USD

## PRODUCTION STATUS

We are currently in early stages of Production where we have extensively captured his journey to his village and his acceptance there. We captured a wedding ceremony of his niece where he was accepted as family and well respected. His brother made him a new shirt and pant and he was elated.

We have also captured his inability to adjust to the village life. He is uncomfortable in doing the village work and not being able to earn restricts his freedom. He also feels lonely when he sees his brothers with their wives and a feeling to be with his girl has never been stronger.

He finally gave in and decided to come back to Mumbai in search for his girlfriend, to try to find a mainstream work and change his life, a condition laid down by her. We travelled back with him to Mumbai where though he was elated he was also sad to leave his mother crying.

In the coming months we plan to closely monitor his life, try to see whether he fulfils his girl's wish or not. A challenge he must accomplish to win her trust. We will try to shoot with him as he tries finding work and settling down something he has never done before.



**Maibam Amarjeet Singh**

INDIA

## THE TRIUMPHANT ONE



### LOGLINE

Khumakcham Sanjita Chanu is an Internationally acclaimed Indian weightlifter. A doping controversy threatens to strip off her Commonwealth Championship and the gold medal. She goes through enormous sufferings and uncertainties to uphold her dignity and protect everything she achieved from sports.



## SYNOPSIS

Khumakcham Sanjita Chanu worked hard to become a champion sportswoman.

Belonging to a humble family with many siblings, she dealt with all the pressures but was determined to continue with her passion for sports. It was almost absurd to embrace sports as livelihood for a girl from an underprivileged state like Manipur. She pursued her undaunted dream with diligence and determination to be a sportswoman of substance. Her journey rose to a dreamy height when she became the champion in the last concluding Commonwealth Games in her category of weightlifting. She nurtures her dream to be in bigger sports arenas like Asian Games and Olympic Games to achieve the next level of glory and fame. While she was undergoing training as part of her preparation for the next level of success, on May 16, 2018, she was informed by her coach that her urine sample was found positive with banned steroid traces. Her world began crashing down.

The urine sample was taken during the International World Championship in Anaheim, USA, in November 2017. The result came into light after her championship performance in the Commonwealth Games. Ironically, two urine samples were placed by the International Weightlifting Federation for the dope test. Which sample was Sanjita's? Was it a conspiracy? She wonders why the sports authorities had allowed her to participate in the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in April 2018 in spite of her being found positive. Sanjita insists that she was innocent and she never took her passion to succeed through unfair means. She is grappling with apprehensions that the test result may lead to her suspension from participation in games she is so passionate about. She is afraid that she stands to lose her life-long achievements.

The film follows Sanjita through her fight to ensure her

dignity and survival. She takes it out in public to question the system which is marred by ignorance, lack of transparency and intent of victimisation. As she pushes her cause, involving all stakeholders in the billion-dollar business of sports, the story unfolds a tragic journey of an individual who is in a war to defend her survival.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I was a sportsperson myself. I played football at the state level and in cricket I represented the state at the national circuit. I am fully aware of the reality of sports management, which is contaminated with favouritism and corruption. I myself feel that I was the victim of injustice in spite of my talent and this led me to be disillusioned about sports. Sanjita evokes in me the same emotion again and I am driven by a sense of responsibility. At the same time, I know doping is a disease and many achievers cannot ignore to embrace it. Why does a banned substance affect the sporting individuals time and again?

I am equally provoked by an anticipation that there might be something wrong. At the same time, I was in dilemma if Sanjita had committed to something unfair to achieve her goals. Thoughts of Sanjita rather give me an emotional stress to imagine what she has been going through. I find it a profound tragedy of life when one is falling from the revered position achieved.

My camera closely follows Sanjita's journey to bring out an experiential participation of the audience into the private world of emotional battle when an individual is humiliated and about to fall from the pedestal of glory and love. To me it is deeply touching for every individual to experience the predicaments and struggle Sanjita goes through. She may have done something wrong for which she is going to pay the heaviest penalty of her life. She may prove her



innocence and unmask the system and its immunity at the cost of passionate sportsperson. Finally, the story underlines an intimate journey of Sanjita who is trying to protect the position she has been breathing in and out – an existential battle of her own. It is a real mix of aspiration, momentary lapses and punishment or it can be a story of conspiracy, ignorance and victimisation – but the arc of the story remains in the realm of the soul of a girl who is undergoing the biggest crisis of her life to survive.

## TREATMENT

The story of Khumakcham Sanjita Chanu is not uncommon in the world of sports. There has been so many examples of sports legends falling from the pedestals they created for themselves due to scandalous doping controversies. Before Sanjita, 12 Indian weightlifters had returned positive in tests conducted by the international federation since 2008. For Sanjita, the fight has just begun. There are many stakeholders – international weightlifting federation, national and state bodies.

Sanjita's case is very different. She raises counter-allegations against the authorities for their ignorance, inconsistencies and lack of a transparent system of tests for doping.

I have been following this incident in her public and personal interactions after the allegation and her suspension were declared official. There are multi-layered elements of lackadaisical handling of the issue from the sports authorities, suppression of facts and so many other loopholes.

However, it is not easy to offset the effect of the ban on her from sporting activities in various championships, unless she proves the allegation wrong. Being an individual, it is an uphill task. But, courageously, she had gone all out to

prove her innocence.

Certain pertinent questions are pivotal to the film. She was the one who brought glory to the country. If she is proved positive, she would be the one bringing shame for her country. For her this shame is unbearable. She has been going through tremendous trauma of being under suspicion. Is she a victim of erratic sporting competition within the associations and bodies controlling such a lucrative industry that fetches glories to nations? Or is she one of the sport persons who takes advantage of the existing lapses in the system of imparting discipline among athletes for success on the stages?

In a way, it appears there are areas that need investigative approach to the way sports bodies are run. The sporting world is one of the biggest industries without much accountability to the people of nations and other stakeholders.

The fight of Sanjita, for the first time, is a fierce opposition to the archaic model of sport management.

However, her bigger fight is to be on the pedestal of glory, love and respect of people that made her an outstanding athlete. The young girl coming from a marginal background created a magical world of appreciation and dignity and now she is forced to defend her identity.

I am more inquisitive about her journey of how she deals with this impending tragedy that might take away from her everything she created for herself with incredible zeal and passion.

It is a fairy-tale whether Sanjita gives up or exposes the ugly world of sports but at the end it is a story of a strong woman making a journey for her ultimate win or loss. I curiously follow a marginal girl trying to deal with intense humiliation anticipating an imminent crash of her life that she builds up by determination and making a lot of sacrifices.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

Graduating from Manipur University, Maibam Amarjeet Singh completed Digital Cinematography course from Kolkata Film and Television Institute in 2008. He also underwent Film Appreciation Course at the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune in 2009. He also attended Short-term Theatre course at National School of Drama, Script Writing and Editing course at Consortium for Educational Communication, India.

He is the founder General Secretary of Television and Cine Foundation Manipur, a society to promote a vibrant documentary film culture in Manipur.

He independently produced and directed his first debut documentary film City of Victims based on extrajudicial killings in Manipur. Last year he was commissioned by Samaj Pragati Sahayog Media and Films Division for directing Sibung, the Generous Land, a film on deforestation and illegal felling that impact the lives of indigenous people. At present he is directing a film titled Highways of Life on absurdity of politically engineered economic blockade in the state of Manipur.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

May – Shooting Begins.

Production Time – Shooting to be continued till July 2019.

Post Production – August – October 2019.

Final Delivery – December 2019.

## **BUDGET**

Total Budget: 85,700/- USD

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

Early Stage of Production.



**Saiful Huq Omi**

BANGLADESH

## **“136” I ACT ROHINGYA**



### **LOGLINE**

A film about genocide love and friendship.

## SYNOPSIS

The world lacks empathy with the Rohingya because they are seen and portrayed by those who wish them harm as well as those who are fighting for their cause, as objects lacking humanity and agency. We do not know the Rohingya as people, we have not been involved in their life decisions, we do not see them as having the same emotions, aspirations and failings that we all do. This is because we have no insight into Rohingya life other than the horrendous tragedies they face. We have not been presented with a representation of the Rohingya being 'normal'. There has been no artistic portrayal or insight into their lives.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The aim of the film is therefore to create a 'human piece' and to humanize the crisis. It features characters living in four countries - Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand and Malaysia. The film records their lived lives and experiences. It primarily revolves around one central character, Abul Kalam, and explores my relationship with him. Abul and the director became friends almost 10 years ago and have spent almost a decade documenting the crisis around the world. Despite the large number of characters in the film, there are a few characters and families who we follow over a long duration. In some places, there've been interactions with the characters and even intervention in the events of their lives. In other places, the narrative thread has been woven through the director's own journey.

It all began very casually in the summer of 2008. I had no particular story in mind and no real plan. And of course, I had no idea that I was just about to open the chapter to the

next ten years of my life.

I remember my first encounter with the Rohingya very clearly. It was a terribly hot Summer's day in early March. I got off the local bus, met the Officer-In-Charge of the refugee camp, showed him my official permission and walked into the camp. I felt like I was walking onto a film set. It was unreal. It was surreal. It was oppressively hot. My first visit didn't last more than ten days. I hardly took any photographs, but I conducted hundreds of interviews. I needed to learn the story and meet the people. I had to get to the heart of the matter.

I was not prepared for what I saw or heard. My findings were shocking. The stories of persecution, rape, abduction, abuse, forced labor, displacement and killing were horrible. But perhaps no less horrible was how lonely the Rohingyas appeared to be. Other communities and nations who have faced similar deprivations and denials have had friends who stood with them. It felt however, that in the wide-open world of Allah, there were no true friends of the Rohingya. Nobody cared... or at least, not enough.

I returned, listened to my recordings and relived the horrible tales. I decided then that I had to work on this for much longer. Perhaps two years later, I realized that I was under a spell. I couldn't leave them 10 years ago. I cannot leave them still.

I began telling the story using my photographs. In the early 2012 I decided to start making my film. Which is finally taking shape after all these years of rigorous filming in 4 countries- Myanmar, Thailand, Bangladesh and Malaysia.

## TREATMENT

The film not only informs the world about the persecution of the Rohingyas but also explores my decade long relationship with the Rohingya characters around the world. It juxtaposes the characters with each other, proceed in a slow pace and I appear as a thread that weaves through the lived life of the Rohingyas. The thread will be weaved in a lyrical fashion. No rigid linear narrative line will be there.

In the film, we will initially construct some sense of spatial integrity. Then we will juggle between the spaces and events with the help of essay type editing technique. We will see three or four different (Shamlapur, Cox's Bazar, Malaysia, Thailand, influx cycle) spatial cycle. These cycles will be semi rigid. We will see the development of the spatial integrity for some screen time then down the line, the integrity will be broken down and we will enter into the essay type editing style (juxtaposition, metaphor, intercutting with graphical similarities etc). Then we will enter into a new space... again a bit of spatial development... again broken down... go on.

In between the narrative cycle, we will watch the theatrical performance that will tie the knot of the narrative in few different, I would say, musical notes! This performance aims to represent the world refugee condition in its historical perspective. The crystallized presentation of the persecuted community is also another phenomena that we want to achieve through these parts.

**Characters:** This film revolves around the character of a photographer (the director) and his Rohingya fixer. This is one of the basic thread lines of the film. With the journey of these two souls we will encounter other refugees down the

road of the film narration. The film follows the refugees in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand and Myanmar. The beach, the hilly terrain of Cox's bazar, the depictions of the various nuances of Rohingya life has also become the character of this film.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Saiful Huq Omi was born in 1980 in Bangladesh. He is a photographer, filmmaker, educator and an activist.

Known globally for his long-term projects, Omi has won many major international photography awards and grants and been published in many major publications in the world. He has been exhibited in 23 different countries since he took photography as his carrier in 2006.

Omi has published three photography books till date.

Omi has founded one of the finest photography institute in the region -Counter Foto- A Center for Visual Arts in 2012.

He produced the Hidden Genocide documentary on the ordeal of the Rohingya people for Al Jazeera TV. He has worked as producer/director for BBC and Channel 4. He directed and produced the Bangladeshi part of TV series Lawless Oceans for National Geographic.

He has directed the 56 min long documentary- Roaring Kanson the struggle of people of Kanson, where they demanded uninterrupted electricity, which eventually became one of the largest movement in Bangladesh's history.

Omi has been working for the last 7 years on his film on the

Rohingyas which should have its global premiere in December 2018.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

Pre- Production: 2008 - 2012

Shooting: 2012 – 2018 (7 years)

Theatrical Part: August 2018

Post Production:

Editing: In Progress

Sound, Foley, Music, Mixing: September 2018

Color: October 2018

## **BUDGET**

The budget of the film is around \$2,00,000

Secured fund- \$1,56,000

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

Post Production (Rough cut is done)





**Shelly J Morais**

INDIA

# INVISIBLE BANKS



## LOGLINE

It is about the people who are denied the basic courtesy of being considered human, hunted down in their own habitat and forced out of their land: the Rohingya refugees.



## SYNOPSIS

This is a documentary that tells stories of some individuals in Rohingya refugee camps who have had a scattered existence in temporary shelters spread through several countries while suffering the deplorable state of being denied a nationality, a citizenship and basic human rights and are plagued by a highly unstable present and future. Jannuthara is an eight-year-old kid who lives in one of the worst refugee camps in the outskirts of India's capital city of New Delhi. She has been living in the refugee camps ever since the forceful displacement of her family right in her childhood days. When her peers get involved in school classrooms and playgrounds, she suffices her whims and fancies in the stinking heaps of garbage. This track unfolds the serene pranks of Jannuthara and other children couched in the sensitive background of the remorseless garbage.

Maung Abdul Khan, a 29-year-old Rohingya, muses the miserable plight of his role as a refugee worker through his sense of loneliness and inner conflicts. The preoccupation of past worries him in this life of constant horror and identity crisis. This second track traversing myriads of disquieting thoughts endeavours to throw light on the manmade wounds of religion and belief in an afflicted community.

Invisible Banks is in pursuit of a space for the people who sail in two unknown, unseen and untold mental and social phases of the refugees. This, in turn probes into the human spaces that are isolated as well as alienated from the social and political spheres of the life. This documentary strives to portray the misplaced existence of the displaced people across the refugee camps in India along with the searing tale happening at two different places at a single point of time.

Rohingya people face different problems of being refugees in different countries. These problems vary geographically and politically from country to country. It is these nuances that Invisible Banks tries to capture. This is done by identifying and problematising the human spaces of individuals existing in three different geo-politico-social situations; that of India, Bangladesh and Myanmar. Owing to the differences in the situations, the state of being refugees itself is at different levels in these three places.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In 2017 I started to write the script for my first feature film, which was about a small group of refugees from an unspecified time and space crossing a river/ sea to another land. As I dwelled deep into the subject my focus of writing a fiction was affected by the harrowing stories of refugees from various annals of history. The decades old and still continuing crisis of Rohingya which was happening very close to us shook me enough to contemplate doing a documentary film on the subject instead of the feature fiction I was planning. A closer, deeper and nuanced research made me pack my camera and started my sojourn of meeting Rohingya people who are scattered all across India. I travelled to Delhi, Jammu, Kashmir, Mathura, Haryana, Hyderabad, and Chennai, and met hundreds of Rohingya refugees across 80 odd camps. I could listen to their personal stories and tried to understand the depth of their personal loss and the uncertainty of handful of people who represent 65.6 million stateless and hopeless people worldwide.

While I was talking to one of the members of the refugee camps, a question was thrown at me and it clung to my conscience ever since: 'Why are we referred to as refugees

while you are still called a human being and how do we cease to become human beings even though we are refugees?’ This film is a personal as well as political search to gauge the depth of the state of being a refugee. Selecting a few individuals from these scores of refugees from 80 odd camps was not at all an easy task, personally and aesthetically, for each individual I met had equally painful and harrowing stories to recount. But still, I decided to have two main characters who would tell us the unimaginable misery they underwent in their homeland and ground level realities living in a refugee camp from two diverse perspectives. Jannuthara, an eight-year-old girl, and Maung Abdul Khan, a man who has dedicated his life as a refugee for refugees are the two human beings who convey the plight and politics of these ‘homeless people’ that I would like to highlight through the documentary. As a filmmaker and human being, I felt the urge to go beyond the headlines and breaking stories about refugees and understand the micro-level realities, everyday emotions, livelihood struggles and hustles with the natives and authorities.

## TREATMENT

Invisible Banks is an observational documentary following deep-rooted emotions and daily rhythms of two individuals: Jannuthara, an eight-year-old kid, and Maung Abdul Khan, a 28-year-old guy, from Rohingya community who live in Indian Refugee camps.

Jannuthara lives in a wasteland area near the Delhi-Haryana border in India and Maung lives with a group of Rohingya people who converted to Protestantism from Muslim religious lifestyle. And that community faces threats from extreme right-wing political parties of India as well as from their community itself in the name religious

beliefs.

Going beyond the visible, external struggles, this documentary will try to portray the deeper, internal struggles and anguishes of individual refugees surviving in different socio-political contexts.

The visuals and sounds throughout the documentary have been planned to give the viewer an immersive and contemplative experience of the lives in these camps.

The documentary will look how global changes impact this crisis and political movements affect individuals and the community. We plan to follow their lives and this crisis for at least 3 years.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Director

Born in Kerala, Shelly did his masters in Visual Communication from Loyola College, Chennai. He worked with Jake Helpert from The New Yorker in 2011, and Canadian documentary film Monsoon by Sturla Gunnarson. He worked in several advertisement films with internationally noted filmmaker Prakash Varma. He worked as co-director of Tamil feature film My Son is a Gay (2016) which was screened in around 20 international film festivals.

Independently, Shelly has directed a number of advertisement films and one silent short film Dreams. He has participated in several film workshops, including one with LUX Scotland.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

First Schedule

India:- may- October- 2018

Bangladesh- November -December-2018/ December  
2018-janury -2019

Myanmar:- February - March 2019

Second Schedule

Starts- 2019 June- December

Third schedule

Starts 2020 January- December

(Each Schedule will cover Bangladesh Kutupalong refugee  
camp for one to two month

## **BUDGET**

Total Budget Of The Project : 45,821 USD (INR 3,204,518)

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

Production is developing in India, New Delhi, Haryana,  
Jammu & Srinagar Areas.

One fourth of the First Schedule has done and remaining is  
progressing.



**Nabila Marzuk**

BANGLADESH

## HIP-HOP & HOPE / THE DHAKA WAY



### LOGLINE

Group of Young Blood Started with NO Teacher, NO Cash and NO Support! WHAT they have is.... HOPE. Introduced a new dance form to the generations to come as a Voice of Protest for BANGLADESH. Its another story about youthful anger in this Muslim nation...The story of Hip-Hop - Peace, Unity, Love & Fun.

## SYNOPSIS

Hip hop in Bangladesh is still relatively young, and is growing faster than ever. It has recently made its way into the local mainstream culture. The filmmaker along with her crew started working on a documentary 'Hip Hop & Hope' to dwell deep into their lives and to understand their needs, their struggles, their happiness and the way they live. The purpose is not to encourage western culture, but how a group of young blood willing to make a difference through their creativity with nothing.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Hip Hop - it lets you talk about the stuff which you can't actually express with words. Everyone involved here are doing their best to represent the greater sides of Bangladesh. But in reality, Society or Mainstream Media, nobody supports them. The whole point of this documentary is to try and change the general public's view on Bangladeshi Hip-Hop as a whole. They deserve a voice, and the artists and groups involved deserve the opportunity to express their feelings and emotions.

## TREATMENT

The method of Documentary is Observational. But in future, I'll add some fictional part if I need to add for entertainment. Intend for my documentary to have interviews with various artists, large or small. And I also want to have any opinions from the public who agree with my thoughts. But given the length of the documentary I have to choose carefully and make sure I don't over run it. I also need to keep my documentary focused on the opinions and not stray from the point.

I intend to have some samples of BD hip-hop either during the title sequence, at the end of the documentary or even use samples as my links for the next interview/shot etc. I want my interviews to be shot with an over the shoulder shot so that you can see the interviewer from behind but can also see the interviewee from face on. I'm thinking of ending the documentary with a question. Maybe something along the lines of, "Hip-hop is not just a genre of music. It is also a culture. Do you want to bring hip-hop out of the shadows or shall we continue its journey into the worlds prisons?"

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

At present, I am working as an Associate Producer at Nagorik TV.

## PRODUCTION PLAN

My Pre-Production started in March, 2018. I started to work from May, 2018. Till now I have 50% footage of my production. I'm planning to shoot the rest in this winter and re-edit the entire project.

## BUDGET

Total: 20,000 USD (approximately)

## PRODUCTION STATUS

Under production





**Faiham Ebna Sharif**

BANGLADESH

## CHA CHAKRA: TEA TALES OF BANGLADESH



### LOGLINE

Tales from Bangladesh of the second most widely consumed drink of the world, which has been shaping millions of lives over the centuries.

## SYNOPSIS

Tea, popularly known as cha/ chay, is the second most widely consumed drink in the world after water. Historically China was the hot bed of tea. After the Opium Wars, British traders decided to launch their own plantation business in colonial India which includes present day Bangladesh.

To fight with the wilderness and prepare today's nice-looking hilly slopes of tea estates, British planters brought workers from different parts of undivided India, namely Bihar, Madras, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. The long journey by boat and on foot towards Sylhet and Chittagong took many lives on the way. Many died for the harsh living condition upon arrival. The present situation of the tea estates has not changed much even after the end of colonialism. Extremely low wage, limited or no access to proper accommodation, education, sanitation or safe water, lack of safety in the work place and deprivation of the very basic amenities of life makes them socially excluded and marginalised. As women lead the work force occupying up to 70 per cent, all the structural violence put them in helpless situation. Altogether, the tea garden workers who are from almost 80 different ethnic groups of schedule caste Hindus and Adivasis are living in bonded labour situation in the estates within the state.

On the contrary, right from the beginning, the management and the owners of tea estates have been practicing Victorian lifestyle. Multinational and local corporations, individual businessman, government and non-profit organisations all share the ownership in the plantation economy, a triangular nexus of government-media-business. Thus, a relationship based on social and economic classes is evident among workers, management and owners, which reflects a colonial legacy

in the gardens.

For Bangladesh, tea is not just an export commodity anymore. It has a very distinct tea drinking culture embedded within the Muslim majority society. Tea is not a luxury anymore, rather a daily cry for millions at home and abroad.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In 2015, I went to a tea garden to cover a workers' movement for land rights. The workers were protesting at a government decision to set up an economic zone in a land where they had been cultivating crops for over a hundred years. The government announced to cancel the land lease given to a multinational tea producing company. In the tea estates, it is a custom that the companies distribute their unused lands among workers, which the workers use for crop cultivation by paying taxes to the companies.

While covering the movement for a local media outlet, I stayed in the labour line, a beautiful but dilapidated village within the estate where the workers live. After a while I came to know, I got myself into a modern-day ghetto, which was an accommodation arrangement by the company for its workers. The ancestors of these workers were brought here from different parts of undivided India with the promise of 'a lovely garden in the hill country where you will look after trees with leaves of pure gold, which would fall if you shuddered them'. But poor access to education, healthcare and sanitation system, safety at work, gender discrimination and, above all, extremely low wages – all these exploitations complement a theoretical framework of the cheapest bonded labour who produce the most consumed drink of the world.

As a Bangali, I grew up in a tea drinking culture. I have learned to offer a cup of tea to any guest I am entertaining



in my house to roadside tea stalls to upscale cafes. Beautifully crafted tea cups, mugs and pots are still considered as one of the most sophisticated souvenirs to decorate houses with. Tea gardens are still one of the most popular tourist spots in the country. But hardly anybody knows the story behind the cup of tea or what lies behind the beautiful lush green fields we see from the highways. Now, Cha Chakra is an ongoing long-term documentary photography research project which will have multi-platform outputs to ensure maximum visibility and presence. The project targets to produce an artistic photobook, a cross-media documentary film, a research publication and an interactive web site as web archive. The documentary film is one important part of the outputs, which converts the research into a visual element.

## TREATMENT

Cha Chakra, an interactive documentary film that presents five parallel narratives of individuals who meet over a cup of tea. The dynamics of the film is evolving where characters may drop off or include and narrate stories using multi-platform media elements. The augmented space gives the feeling of a virtual theatre in a colonial empire where all the protagonists perform.

Arun is a permanent worker at Rema Tea Garden in Habiganj. He lives in a small hut with his wife, three children and a sister-in-law. Arun could not take formal education but believes his children would fulfil the dream by pursuing education.

Nayanmoni is a blind girl who lives with her parents. Her parents work at Ramganga Tea Garden in Habiganj. Nayanmoni loves playing music and aspires to be a singer

one day.

Mohabir is a retired worker at Rema Tea Garden in Habiganj. He lost his right hand while working in the factory. Mohabir has not received any compensation yet and not even any pension from the company.

Alam is a manager in Fayezeabad Tea Garden. During his long career in tea industry, he worked for both multinational and local companies. Now, he is a little bored with his isolated life in his big bungalow of the estate. He enjoys when his friends and family visit him.

The last character represents the owners of the tea estates. Research is underway and when access is granted the character will be focused.

Animated reality and digital map depict the history, migration route of the workers as well as inter and intra continental trade scene. Starting from China, the journey moves ahead through the United Kingdom and India to Bangladesh. The map shows how tea production and consumption facilitated convergence of different continents. The film follows five characters each representing a different tier of a tea garden. The camera follows them in public and private spheres to capture unproblematic and objective account of individual stories. The attached ambience of their spaces also creates a locative engagement with every story.

Through the lives of a male tea garden worker, a blind girl and a disabled retired worker, Cha Chakra enters the tiny villages hidden behind beautiful hilly slopes of tea plantation, where a permanent worker gets BDT 85 (USD 1) a day. Three stories show everyday happiness, pains and struggles of the community from different perspectives. The

film shows their daily resistance which stems from their close association with indigenous culture and religious practices.

Cha Chakra reveals the opposite pole of workers' stories through the manager and the owner. Their daily lives reflect luxury and aspiration of new elites in a post-colonial society. This is in fact an interplay of feudalism, corporation and non-profit organisation – where all these collide in the vantage point for the sake of economy.

The film uses location sound and musical pieces recorded from different events and festivals of tea workers. The workers still play some of their traditional musical instruments and the film uses that music. An independent music will also be composed to interplay with the ambiance. All the mutually exclusive narratives are given different musical treatment.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

Faiham Ebna Sharif is a freelance researcher and photographer. He finished his honours and masters in international relations from the University of Dhaka. Then he did a diploma on Photography from Counter Foto, a photography school where he is currently an adjunct faculty. Faiham worked with local electronic media and also contributes for international outlets. He worked in several feature films and documentaries. He received Magnum Foundation Fund and The Documentary Project Fund for his long-term project on tea. Faiham is also a fellow of Dutch Visitors Programme on Human Rights and Harvard University.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

The documentary film project is still on pre-production stage.

Pre-Production: June 2018 – December 2018

Production: January 2019 – December 2020

Post Production: January 2021 – March 2021

## **BUDGET**

Grand Total: 40,000 USD

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

Pre-production stage.



**Nitin Pegu**

INDIA

## TALES FROM AN ISLAND



### LOGLINE

This film explores what it means to live in an island. It is an exercise of remembering against forgetting, a history of space, people and culture on the verge of being obliterated.

## SYNOPSIS

Majuli, a river island in Assam, India, is a captivating story explored by tourists, photographers, filmmakers, anthropologists many times over – of picture-perfect landscapes, thriving human civilisation faced against nature's fury, of people and culture fighting against obliteration.

This film is to see through the headlines, to scratch the surface, dig deep and reclaim the story of Majuli through the journeys of those who are struggling to carve out a life amidst the ruins. Mr Hazarika, in his fifties, had to witness the eating away of his land from twenty bighas to one. Having no more land left for cultivation, he now milks buffaloes on a sandbar. The daily face-off with nature is taking a toll on his family; what was once a joint family is now splitting with people being pushed to look for means of survival elsewhere. Mrs Doley, in her thirties, saddled with a non-supportive husband and in-laws, has to fend for herself to sustain her daughter's 'education'. As circumstances push her to garner strength for survival, she begins to taste independence. Being the only educated daughter-in-law in the village, she finds herself accidentally becoming a leader, rallying women against corruptions of the contractor of Self Help Group in the village. While being the sole caregiver for her daughter, she also undertakes the care of another young girl, who works as her domestic help – often loving, scolding, cajoling, taking care of her education, advising on life, love, future from her own past experiences. Two brothers, belonging to the Dakhinpat Xatra (a Vaishnavite cult wherein the elder brother is supposed to become the head monk, xatradhikar, and observe celibacy while the younger brother is supposed to marry and father two sons so that the bloodline is maintained), find themselves at crossroads as monkhood

gets imposed on one when the elder brother elopes and marries against tradition. The Taid family found themselves in the middle of a flash flood just as they had moved into their new home, the long aspired tiled house. Nature is a great leveller, hence, even though the house narrowly escaped, it forced the family to rethink their decisions. Tales from an island is the story of these people, their journeys, their dreams, aspirations, fears, everyday negotiations, transactions, transgressions – and their shared history with the Brahmaputra River, its turbulence, its calmness, its potential to build and destroy, to captivate and liberate.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The river island of Majuli has its own set of peculiar seasonal characteristics. During monsoons, the mighty Brahmaputra swells high often upsetting its own potency and making no land visible for days on end, but dismal rooftops and trees. During winters, its vast white sand beaches lie exposed with the yellow mustard fields in full bloom, and being home to some of the most spectacular sunsets.

The island is host to a juxtaposition of tribal and Vaishnavite cultures. On the one hand, it is considered to be the centre of Assamese Vaishnavite culture and on the other hand, it is home to a vibrant and effervescent tribal population, most notably the Misings who descended from the hills of neighbouring Arunachal Pradesh. This intimate coexistence of different traditions, different cultures, feeds into the image of Majuli as an exotic land with exotic cultures, propagated by many TV shows and music videos which display the grandeur of Raas Leela performances or the colourful Ali Aye Ligang festival. All of these along with

the ephemerality of the space and of lives on the island make it an oft-visited story.

My interest, however, lies with the people; the ordinary people whose seemingly ordinary lives are pitted against the fury of nature every monsoon, who struggle to survive, to retain every shred of dignity they have left, and still plan for the future, build a life of hope on this land. Being a native to this place, I have carefully observed the headlines, the urgency of conservation, the promise of new governments, and the stories of these people.

My father's village no longer exists. It has been eaten a few kilometres into the river now like countless other villages. Confronting accounts of lost villages sweep me into nostalgia. This film, also a way of my retelling of the story of my homeland, is my attempt to capture a slice of life in this 'exotic' land and tell their unheard stories of loss, pain, defeat, hope, survival, liberation, resistance and solidarity. This film is thus an intimate portrait of the people of Majuli, of the land with all its contradictions, tensions, anxieties, power struggles, vulnerabilities, strengths, of its people's war with themselves, with the river, with their fate... so as to reclaim its story, to reassert its stories by the ones living it.

## TREATMENT

Mr Hazarika's helpless witnessing of the breaking away of his family, his land, the life that he had built all these years, Mrs Doley's building of a new life, her resistance, her nurturance of newer relationships and solidarities, the next-in-line Xatradhikar trying to make sense of what it means to be a monk in Majuli, of having to negotiate tensions between tradition and modernity, bearing the

weight of an institution fighting to stay relevant at the altar of his personal aspirations and interacting with power, and the remaking of the Taid family – all are having to reorient their aspirations with the reality of Majuli and its impermanence. The river is a recurring motif throughout the film.

Long, static shots will be used to establish a space or the character's interaction with the space. The pacing is deliberate but not necessarily slow. Primarily an observational documentary, the film will deliberately avoid structured interviews, exploring the characters' memories, focussing on their gestures, behaviours, body language so as to gauge their anxieties, discomfort, hopes, anger, or calm surrender. The stories will travel back and forth, intertwining, intercutting, and interrupting each other to tell the story of the island. It will touch upon the undercurrents of caste, class, gender, religious identities that undercut life in Majuli. The stories will also bring out the socio-political locations that influence the character's response to the river, to the space. Furthermore, with the changing contours of politics in the island, with the emergence of a more fuelled brand of Hindu fundamentalism that is trying to retell history and the story of the land in a monolithic way, these voices, these lives, their multiple hopes and dreams offer a resistance to any such homogenisation while also resisting, adapting to onslaughts of nature.

Background music is to be used sparingly – sometimes uplifting, sometimes nostalgic – keeping with the tone of the visual sequence. The Vaishnavite hymns and prayer songs will also feature as an integral part of life and sounds on Majuli island. Towards the end, all these voices are planned to be played in rapid succession and/or overlaid on each other with a visual of the quietly flowing Brahmaputra

to assert the multiplicity of human responses, to the multiple ways of living and being.

## **DIRECTOR'S PROFILE**

Nitin has completed his diploma in Camera and Lighting from the Asian Academy of Films and Television, Noida, in 2011. He has worked as a cinematographer for Films Division in Plea from Himalayas. He has also been a cinematographer for a film on Nabakalebara for IGNC, A Billion and One Voices, a collection of short films for INC and Earning the Badge, a TV series on para forces, for Discovery Channel India. Tales from an Island is his first attempt as a filmmaker.

## **PRODUCTION PLAN**

I started shooting in April 2017. Since then I have been visiting Majuli every three months and I have shot for about 20 days. I plan to do the same in coming months, following the characters' in every three months in order to develop the story of the people and the place. So, along with post-production, I intend to complete the film by February 2019.

## **BUDGET**

Budget in USD  
Grand Total - 55,275

## **PRODUCTION STATUS**

The film is in its early production stage. I started shooting in April 2017 and intend to complete the film by February 2019. Being from Majuli myself, it has been easy gaining the trust of the people. Having met Mr Hazarika a few times during these recce trips, I have developed cordial relations with him and the rest of his family even prior to any shooting. They have willingly shown me around their house and have agreed to be filmed for the next one year. Mrs. Doley is related closely to my family. Amongst all the characters she is the most comfortable with me and shares an affable relationship with the camera. The Taid family is cooperative, to say the least, and the characters at the xatra have also agreed to being filmed at length, in candid, free-flowing interviews and conversations, over a period of time.





**Farzana Bobby**

BANGLADESH

## RHYTHM OF BUBBLE



### LOGLINE

Young artiste Budbud wishes to create tree houses all over the country as he preaches natural living. Will this materialist world allow him to continue his philosophical journey?

## SYNOPSIS

Budbud follows a tradition that considers breathing as a core factor in human body mechanism. But there is little awareness about breathing. Modernity provokes us to focus only on materialism, forging a path towards destruction. Thus, this young artiste chose his name to be Budbud, which literally means bubbles. He digs deep into his own self to explore how nature and human beings can coexist in harmony. He wants to change this world as he believes that life is primarily about enjoyment. That is why he loves to live in a tree-centric world, in nature. He imagines a world in which every person would have a tree of his/ her own. And through the tree houses, he hopes, people would begin to understand the integral relationship between human beings and nature and move away from the materialist world. Budbud wants to build such tree houses across Bangladesh. He believes there are others like him with whom he could create a realistic world where integrity is integral. It is his utopia to reunite people through trees. How difficult this journey can be – he might be considered an insane in this development-addicted world that finds cutting down trees more profitable than saving them. To follow his extraordinary journey, I want to take a close look into his life.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I quit a rowdy city life just for the sake of a peaceful, slow-paced life so that I could concentrate on my inner feelings. I came back to my birthplace which is far away from the capital city of Bangladesh. This is quite absurd for most of the people to accept this kind of a choice. After coming back, I was trying to connect with some likeminded people and then I found Budbud. He is an artiste who loves

to live in nature, do artworks using natural elements, sing, dance, prepare local musical instruments, travel and live in different places. Budbud has at least 23 names; he believes everything is changeable and so he keeps changing his name and place of living. Budbud, to me, is a person who thinks differently; who wants to live a life unlike anyone else; and, above all, his philosophy of life is against the rigid structure of a conformist society. Befriending Budbud was like seeing a reflection of my unfulfilled desire. I often think why I like him; Is he really a different person, or is he another hidden self of mine which is shadowed by societal restrictions. So, I try to explore him as much as I can. Slowly I realised that it has an ample possibility to show the world that a human being can be so transparent and fluid. Nowadays, being natural is a kind of political statement where Budbud is performing this life without any publicity. As a filmmaker friend, I thought it was my responsibility to portray his lifestyle which may offer to the people, who are becoming ever more restless in these times, some valuable insights into alternative ways of living.

## TREATMENT

Rhythm of Bubble is centred around Budbud and his lonely life, in which he finds nature to be a source of healing. The protagonist, Budbud, plans to build tree houses across Bangladesh. He collects materials to build the tree houses: jute rope, pieces of wood, cloth and so on. The process is an eventful amalgamation of songs, discussions and dances. Sometimes, he is uncomfortable with the unbearable weight of his own existence – throwing down his own creations and artworks. As he creates, he is often surrounded by crowds of people, some of whom even help him, curious. They ask him about his work and life. All these events will be gradually incorporated into the texture

of the film.

Ten years earlier, Budbud was seen living in a tree at Suhrawardy Udyan in Dhaka. Now he wants to build a tree house in his old haunt, paying tribute to old memories. This busy park is home to busy lives of city dwellers. There, he had witnessed events and incidents, day and night, rain and shine. Budbud sometimes recall those days.

In Kushtia, the centre of syncretistic bauls of Bangla, Budbud will build a tree house in the house of a sadhu. In line with that, the film will throw some lights on the relationship between human beings and nature as conceptualised by sadhus. Through Budbud's eyes, as he sits atop his tree house, the film will show the lives of sadhus and showcase their songs from Budbud's point of view.

Budbud's life, meditation, music, his solo excursions will be aestheticised in the film. His life and its crises will be presented through observational mode; his presence and gaze will be filmed in poetic mode, as he sits on the tree; his monologue will be used for symbolic imagery of memory and imagination. Much like Budbud's flowing life, the film's narrative will continue to flow.

## DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Farzana Bobby, a 35-year-old Bangladeshi filmmaker and broadcast journalist, learnt the trade through on-the-job training since no institutional programme of studies existed. In 2005, she was the first woman cameraperson in television channels. She directed BishKanta (The Poison Thorn, 2015), based on narratives of three rape survivors of War, and won two national and international awards. She designed video installations Archiving Savar Memory, Journey to the Great No and Block window. She was the assistant director of the feature film Meherjaan (2011) and

co-directed two documentaries, Shajshilpi (2004), and Phulbarir Saat Deen (2008). Based in Khulna, Farzana is also a poet and lyricist.

## PRODUCTION PLAN

| Description                          | Schedule/Timeline              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Pre- production                      | June, 2018 to October 2018     |
| Production                           | November 2018 to November 2019 |
| Post production – log, edit , script | December, 2019                 |
| Edit                                 | January to March 2020          |
| Sound, colour music                  | April , 2020                   |
| Subtitle                             | May , 2020                     |

## BUDGET

Around 1,01,491.72 USD

## PRODUCTION STATUS

Pre- production

I am in a research stage and already Have 7 hours Video footage and 1 hour Audio as research material.





Ahmed (65)  
has travelled more  
than thirty miles  
carrying his mother  
Fatema (90) to  
reach Bangladesh.

**MANAGEMENT**



**Nasiruddin Yousuff**

A valiant Freedom Fighter during Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. After the liberation War he was a pragmatic driving force in establishing organizations like Dhaka Theater (that produced more than 36 nationally and internationally acclaimed stage plays written by famed national and international playwrights). He made his first film in 1993-94. Ekattorer Jishu (Jesus 71), a full length feature film received invitation and nomination to different film festivals around the world. Presently he is working on Alpha, which he loves to define the post modern film.



**Luva Nahid Chowdhury**

Luva Nahid Choudhury is the Director General of Bengal Foundation, a private trust which supports and promotes the arts in Bangladesh. She is an architect by training and is the principal of an architecture practice In Dhaka. Luva sits In the editorial board of arts and literary magazines Kali O Kalam, Six Seasons Review, and Jamini. She heads ICE Media and Bengal Publications, both leading publishing concerns. She is a member of the governing board of BRAC, one of the largest NGOs in the world. She is a trained musician and has published two albums of the songs of Atulprasad Sen, Rajanikanta Sen and D L Roy.





**Samia Zaman**

Samia Zaman owns the production house Versa Media which produces films and television content - both fiction and non-fiction. She has produced 2 feature films and is currently producing a new feature film with a grant of Bangladesh Government. She is the founding President of International Film Initiative of Bangladesh (IFIB). This is a platform to help upcoming filmmakers to connect with the global film circuit. She is the CEO of the premier 24 hours news channel in Bangladesh - Ekattor Television, which produces good number of award winning documentaries.



**Tareq Ahmed**

Tareq Ahmed is currently the Director of Dhaka DocLab. He has worked extensively producing AV programs for local & international development agencies. Besides this he Lead a Media & Communication organization which particularly worked for grassroots media & media professionals. He has attended workshops and trainings on cinema and the medium at home and abroad.



**Syed Gousul Alam Shaon**

Shaon is a portrayer of the many shades of the society we live in and the people that make or break those shades. His strength lies in decoding the collective unconscious of people in order to understand the hidden truths of people's desires, happiness, pain points, ambitions and the grey zones in their minds. His debut film 'Aynabazi' where he contributed as screenwriter, actor and producer, was an instant blockbuster hit. Currently, he is writing and preparing for his next productions, which aim to offer more contemporary contents that Bangladeshi audience had been longing for.



**N. Rashed Chowdhury**

N. Rashed Chowdhury is an Independent Filmmaker in Bangladesh. His documentary and short films were widely screened and acclaimed in various international film festivals & at national level. Rashed became president of Bangladesh Short Film Forum and directed the Film Festival as Festival Director for two editions. He has recently won the National Film Grant for making his first feature film: Chandrabatikotha-based on the legendary female writer of the Bengali Language-Poet Chandrabati.



**Syed Imran Hossain Kirmany**

Born in Dhaka Mr. Kirmany has extensive knowledge of working in the television industry in Bangladesh particularly in the broadcast sector including MCR, Broadcast Operation, Live Program Management and Transmission. He started his career with ETV (Ekushey Television) the first private sector TV station in Bangladesh in 1999.



## PHOTOSTORY

Rohingya- a minor Muslim ethnic group that has lived in Myanmar for centuries. However, racism and other social-political issues amongst the Myanmar majority has caused them to be declared stateless. Today, over 1 million Rohingyas in Myanmar are the most persecuted people in the world, deprived of their own land, human rights, citizenship and victims of a silent genocide by the Myanmar Army. Thus, the Rohingyas have been forced to enter Bangladesh illegally for quite some time. The reason of this intolerance is portrayed as a religious riot between Buddhists and Muslims rather than the true political and business benefits of Myanmar's resources.

### **I Am Rohingya**

Many Rohingya families have lost their loved ones to rape, torture, violence and the other atrocities of the Myanmar Army. This has pushed nearly a million Rohingyas to seek refuge across the border in Bangladesh. Their country refuses to accept them as citizens and even Nobel Peace Prize holder Aung San Suu Kyi remains silent under pressure.

## BIO

Mohammad Rakibul Hasan is a documentary photographer and visual artist. He is currently pursuing a Certificate of Higher Education in History of Art at the University of Oxford and also studying an MA in Photography at Falmouth University.

### **M. R. Hasan**

Hasan holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Photojournalism from Ateneo de Manila University and also graduated in Film & Video Production from UBS Film School at the University of Sydney. He was nominated for many international awards and won several photographic competitions worldwide. His photographs have been published and exhibited internationally. He is based in Dhaka, Bangladesh and represented by Redux Pictures, USA.

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