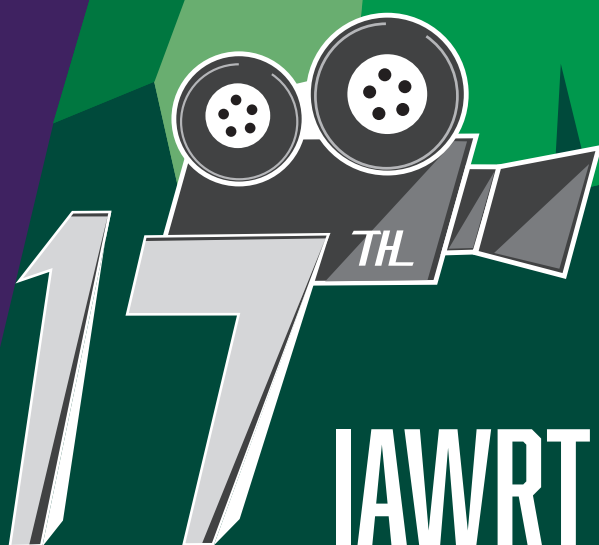


IAWRT
5-7 MARCH 2021

ONLINE EDITION



IAWRT
ASIAN WOMEN'S
FILM FESTIVAL



The International Association of Women in Radio & Television

17TH IAWRT ASIAN WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL

This Festival has been made possible with support from:



Foundation for Universal Responsibility
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Note from the Managing Trustee, IAWRT Chapter India

The pandemic and lockdown was lurking at the edges of our festival in March 2020 and though we were able to come together in this annual gathering, for many of us it was the last public event before the coronavirus unleashed its wrath. The months that followed have shown that in a globalised world, erecting walls and barbed wire fences cannot bring about protection. And so, the need to dismantle enforced segregation and instead build solidarities, is not just a moral imperative but a practical one.

As creative media practitioners, we turn to the arts to help us do that, and our festival this year draws attention to this, both in the form that it has taken as an online festival and in the films that are being screened. We continue to strive towards building networks through artistic practice and highlight common ground with women filmmakers from across Asia. For **IAWRT India**, the **Asian Women's Film Festival** is not a festival of what are commonly termed "women's issues" but one that focuses on women's perspectives of the world, on questions that are of concern to everyone. Thus, the idea of uncertainty that this festival explores is through a plurality of visions seen in the work of women filmmakers from diverse countries - **India, Armenia, Taiwan, USA, Afghanistan, Iran and Hong Kong.**

We hope you will enjoy the films, participate in the conversations with the filmmakers, and listen to what accomplished women practitioners have to say in the **Masterclasses**. While the context of the pandemic has certainly brought constraints, it has also opened up new ways of connecting that we hope will support this non-competitive space that has been nurtured for 17 years.

Until next year, in person!

Samina Mishra

Note from the Festival Director

It is a privilege to be part of the organising team of the **17th IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival** that has grown into a nurturing space for diverse women's perspectives on the world. This year, the experiences of living through the pandemic have shaped the underlying thread of uncertainty that runs through the voices and practices that the programme presents. Through a mix of fiction, non-fiction, animation and experimental films, this year's programme encourages viewers to look towards the challenges facing the world as they manifest in individual and collective lives, and draw from the stories of hope to imagine new possibilities. The films present both the inner lives of characters as well as larger structural issues to reinforce our abiding belief in the inextricable link between the personal and the political.

We are proud to share films that have won accolades at prestigious film festivals as well as some that will have their Indian, Asian and World premieres at **AWFF 2021**. As a festival and organisation that believes in enhancing opportunities for young women, we are pleased to have films by first-time women filmmakers that showcase how the young experience the world. The festival includes conversations around the films to generate dialogue and reflection on ideas and form, making room for different filmmakers to share their process. This is strengthened in the two Masterclasses on Editing and Sound, with Jabeen Merchant and Amala Popuri respectively, that focus on questions of craft and practice, and draw out how women respond to challenges in their work.

The COVID 19 pandemic has meant that this year's festival will be an online edition. While we will certainly miss the physical interactions, we hope that the possibility of watching the films at any time in the 48-hour window and from anywhere in the world, brings us new film-lovers not constrained by location. We look forward to your participation in the discussions and hope you enjoy the selection of films.

Welcome to another edition of films by Asian women!

Deepti Khurana



DEEPTI KHURANA
FESTIVAL DIRECTOR



SURBHI GOEL
ASSOCIATE FESTIVAL DIRECTOR



NINA SABNANI
CURATOR



SMRITI NEVATIA
CURATOR



17TH ASIAN WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL

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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN IN RADIO AND TELEVISION
CHAPTER INDIA

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

5th March 2021

These 9 films explore ideas of conflict, resistance, and yearning at the individual and collective level.

FILMS WILL BE LIVE

8:00 am / 5th March To
8:00 am / 7th March

DAY 1

VILLAGE DES FEMMES (VILLAGE OF WOMEN)	Dir: Tamara Stepanyan Non-fiction Armenia, France/2019/83 min	
PANI PAATA PORATAM (SONGS OF OUR SOIL)	Dir: Aditi Maddali Non-fiction India/2019/52 min	
DRAPCHI ELEGY	Dir: Ritu Sarin, Tenzing Sonam Non-fiction India/2017/17 min	
ABOUT MUMMA	Dir: Maanvi Chowdhary Non-fiction India/2020/40 min	
ANYDAY, EVERYDAY, ONE FINE DAY!	Dir: Raashi Borade Animation India/2020/6 min 30 sec	
A LITTLE MORE BLUE	Dir: Sugandha Bansal Animation India/2020/4 min	
SAAKHYA	Dir: Kunika Kharat Fiction India/2020/29 min	
BROKEN HARMONY: CHINA'S DISSIDENTS	Dir: Risa Morimoto Non-fiction USA/2019/51 min	
THE HOUR OF LYNCHING	Dir: Shirley Abraham, Amit Madheshiya Non-fiction India/2019/19 min	

PANEL DISCUSSION I

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

TOWARDS NURTURING PEACE

Aditi Maddali, Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam, Tamara Stepanyan

Moderated by Subasri Krishnan

The discussion will focus on the varied documentary practices of the filmmakers, linked to the ideas of oppression, resistance, and possible resolutions towards nurturing peace.

MASTERCLASS I

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

DECODING SOUND PRACTICE

Amala Popuri

Facilitator: Shikha Jhingan

How does sound change the way we experience a film? Sound designer and production mixer Amala Popuri will give us a ringside view, covering both fiction and non-fiction cinema.





FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

6th March 2021

The 13 filmmakers in this section use multiple film practices and aesthetic choices to explore the world around them. Their films examine formal possibilities that push the boundaries of cinema.

FILMS WILL BE LIVE

8:00 am / 6th March To
8:00 am / 8th March

DAY 2

SPACE DIALOGUES

Dir: Shashwati Talukdar
Experimental
India/2020/8 min 30 sec

BLANKET TALK

Dir: Jennifer Li, Samantha Chang, Janette Peng
Animation
Taiwan/2019/6 min 34 sec

FOR TASHI

Dir: Rebecca Ruige Xu, Jiayue Cecilia Wu
Experimental
USA/2020/7 min 35 sec

PARWARESHGAH (THE ORPHANAGE)

Dir: Shahrbano Sadat
Fiction
Denmark, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Afghanistan, Qatar/2019/90 min

SOYABEAN BIRYANI (FOR JUNAID)

Dir: Vidha Saumya
Fiction
Finland/2019/12 min

TOMBÉ

Dir: Diana Kardumyan
Fiction
Armenia/2018/20 min

RETIREMENT

Dir: Sawanti Das
Animation
India/2019/4 min 29 sec

LAGI SENANG JAGA SEKANDANG LEMBU (IT'S EASIER TO RAISE CATTLE)

Dir: Amanda Nell Eu
Fiction
Malaysia/2017/18 min

HONAR DAR KHATAR ZENDEGI KARDAN (THE ART OF LIVING IN DANGER)

Dir: Mina Keshavarz
Non-fiction
Iran, Germany/2020/87 min

BEEBAK (DYING WIND IN HER HAIR)

Dir: Shazia Iqbal
Fiction
India/2019/21 min

A CAN OF FISH

Dir: Aditi Chitre
Animation
India/2018/8 min

BAATEIN

Dir: Shruti Jain
Animation
India/2020/7 min 30 sec

YAHAN WAHAN SAARE JAHAN (HERE AND EVERYWHERE)

Dir: Maya Janine D'Costa
Experimental
India/2020/5 min 24 sec

PANEL DISCUSSION II

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

EXPERIMENTS WITH MEDIA

Shahrbano Sadat, Shashwati Talukdar, Jennifer Li, Samantha Chang,
Jannette Peng, Rebecca Ruige Xu, and Jiayue Cecilia Wu

Moderated by Surabhi Sharma

This discussion will facilitate a conversation between filmmakers who, through their experiments with form, nudge us to engage with unusual stories and aesthetic practices.

MASTERCLASS II

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

THE EDITOR AS OUTSIDER

Jabeen Merchant

Facilitator: Bina Paul

How do choices made at the editing table shape the structure and narrative of a film? In this session, renowned film editor Jabeen Merchant will take us through her oeuvre in fiction and non-fiction films.





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CHAPTER INDIA

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

7th March 2021

These 11 films are a reflection on how young women filmmakers see the world around them in these uncertain times.

FILMS WILL BE LIVE

8:00 am / 7th March To
8:00 am / 9th March

DAY 3



RUN KALYANI

Dir: Geetha J
Fiction
India/2019/100 min

A RIFLE AND A BAG

Dir: Cristina Hanes, Isabella Rinaldi, Arya Rothe
Non-fiction
India, Romania, Italy/2020/90 min

THE SPELL OF PURPLE

Dir: Prachee Bajania
Fiction
India/2020/24 min

YATHAWAT (AS IT IS)

Dir: Tribeny Rai
Fiction
India/2015/24 min

BLOOMING BUDS

Dir: Anahita Amani Singh
Fiction
India/2020/28 min

AMEPĀ

Dir: Kshipra Shekhar Dhavle
Animation
India/2020/7 min

AND I, AND I

Dir: Lam Yan Yue
Non-fiction
Hong Kong/2020/27 min

PATCHES

Dir: Rutika Mukund Khustale
Animation
India/2020/4 min

PAVAKUTTI (MY LITTLE DOLL)

Dir: Ashitha Nair
Animation
India/2019/7 min

FUNERAL

Dir: Yiu Wan Yin Anna
Animation
Hong Kong/2020/6 min

SMARAN (IMPRESSIONS)

Dir: Purandhya Sharma
Non-fiction
India/2019/22 min

PANEL DISCUSSION III

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

EMERGING VOICES

Prachee Bajania, Lam Yan Yue, Kshipra Shekhar Dhavle, Tribeny Rai

Moderator: Deepti Khurana

This discussion will focus on the works of young filmmakers as they attempt to take on newer forms of storytelling. Spanning across various genres, their films reflect both the specific and universal concerns of a new generation of filmmakers.

CLOSING REMARKS

6.30 pm



33 FILMS

38 WOMEN FILMMAKERS

10 COUNTRIES



A CAN OF FISH

Aditi Chitre

Animation (8 min) / India / 2018

To those fishermen who remember what natural fish looks and tastes like, watching the Eaters consume batches of empty fish cans is an eerie prelude to the discovery of a factory ship that is scraping the seabed for all the fish it can find. Soon there might be nothing left for the fishermen.

Aditi Chitre is a filmmaker based in India, working in the animation medium through independent films, as well as through collaborations with live action documentary filmmakers.





A LITTLE MORE BLUE

Sugandha Bansal

Animation (4 min) / India / 2020 / English

The film tells a story of a “boy” who is really a girl. Since childhood, she has known she was a girl, who would have to break out of her shackles someday and tell everyone the truth. Until then, she struggles between having the body of a boy and the soul of a girl.

Sugandha Bansal has a Master’s in Animation Design from MIT Institute of Design. Her passion for creative storytelling is evident in her work. She thinks of filmmaking as a strong medium to communicate stories, and believes in using her skills to tell stories that people can relate to; stories with a strong message. *A little more blue* is her second film as a student.





A RIFLE AND A BAG

Cristina Hanes, Isabella Rinaldi, Arya Rothe
Non-fiction (90 min) / India, Romania, Italy / 2020 / Gondi, Madia, Hindi

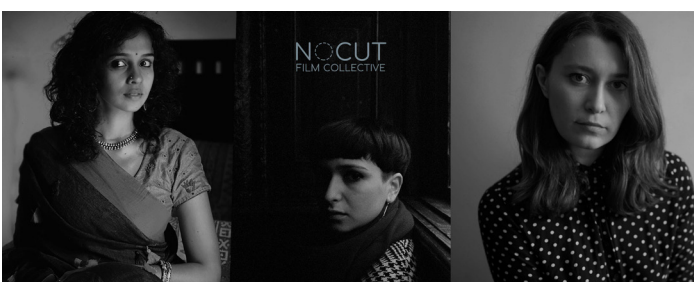
Somi and her husband met and fell in love while fighting alongside the Naxalites, a communist guerrilla group that has been fighting since the 1960s for the rights of the tribal communities of India. After a decade of armed struggle, the couple surrendered to the police. Ever since, they have been striving to forge a new identity, educate their two children, and eventually reconcile their violent past with the fervent desire to integrate into the hostile mainstream.

Cristina Hanes, Arya Rothe and Isabella Rinaldi co-founded NoCut Film Collective in 2016.

Cristina Hanes is a Romanian filmmaker. Her short documentary *António e Catarina* won the Pardino d'Oro in 2017 at Locarno, and was screened in over 25 film festivals around the world. She is an alumna of DocNomads and Aristoteles Workshop.

Arya Rothe is an independent filmmaker from Pune, and an alumna of DocNomads and FAMU. Her short film *Daughter's Mother* (2018) had its world premiere at DOK Leipzig.

Isabella Rinaldi is an independent filmmaker from Rome. She has a Master's from DocNomads, and is currently directing an episode for a documentary series, *Borderline*, for a Brussels-based production company.





ABOUT MUMMA

Maanvi Chowdhary
Non-fiction (40 min) / India / 2020 / English, Hindi

The film explores the life of Lucknow-based architect Shalini Chowdhary through the eyes of her daughter. It delves into the complexities of Shalini's paraplegia, and her relationship with space. It also focuses on the mother-daughter relationship, as the camera and the process of filming make different meanings for the two. The film comments on how the necessities of life and livelihood may differ for different people, and how the means of attaining them bring about different struggles.

Maanvi Chowdhary graduated in filmmaking from Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Bangalore. She has a keen interest in scriptwriting, documentaries, fiction films, editing, and exploring cinema through lived experiences. She is also interested in Sociology, and learning through visuals.





AMEPÃ

Kshipra Shekhar Dhavle
Animation (7 min) / India / 2020 / Idu Mishmi dialect

Enjo leaves home for school like every morning. But he accidentally spots an Eastern Hoolock Gibbon, hidden in a cluster of trees. Despite being warned by grandma Dibili, Enjo waits to take a deeper look at the gibbon. What happens when grandma Dibili finds out about this interaction?

Set amidst a picturesque village in Northeast India, the film – which was inspired by community-based conservation practices – explores a child's curiosity about an animal. The Idu Mishmi tribe from Northeast India protects the vulnerable Hoolock Gibbon species through its deep-rooted folk beliefs and narratives. The film aims to spark a conversation about our relationship with animals.

Kshipra Shekhar Dhavle is an avid reader, traveller and visual artist based in Mumbai, who loves documenting stories from home and beyond. She has a Master's in Animation Film Design from the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad. She is completely in awe of the possibilities of the film medium, and her work reflects her encounters with folk narratives and cultures.



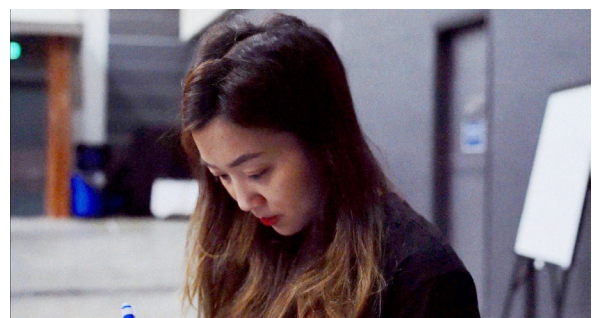


AND I, AND I

Lam Yan Yue
Non-fiction (27 min) / Hong Kong / 2020 / Cantonese

Judy, a single mother, and Peter, her intellectually disabled son, have been through 45 years with each other. Judy must take care of Peter every single minute, from head to toe. The film documents their daily lives, routines, music and laughter. Everything they have gone through is still there, with maybe more to come.

Lam Yan Yue, born in 1997 and based in Hong Kong, is a recent graduate from film school. *And I, And I* is her directorial debut. Her goal is to be a documentary filmmaker.





And I won't be surprised if it's a dream

ANYDAY, EVERYDAY, ONE FINE DAY!

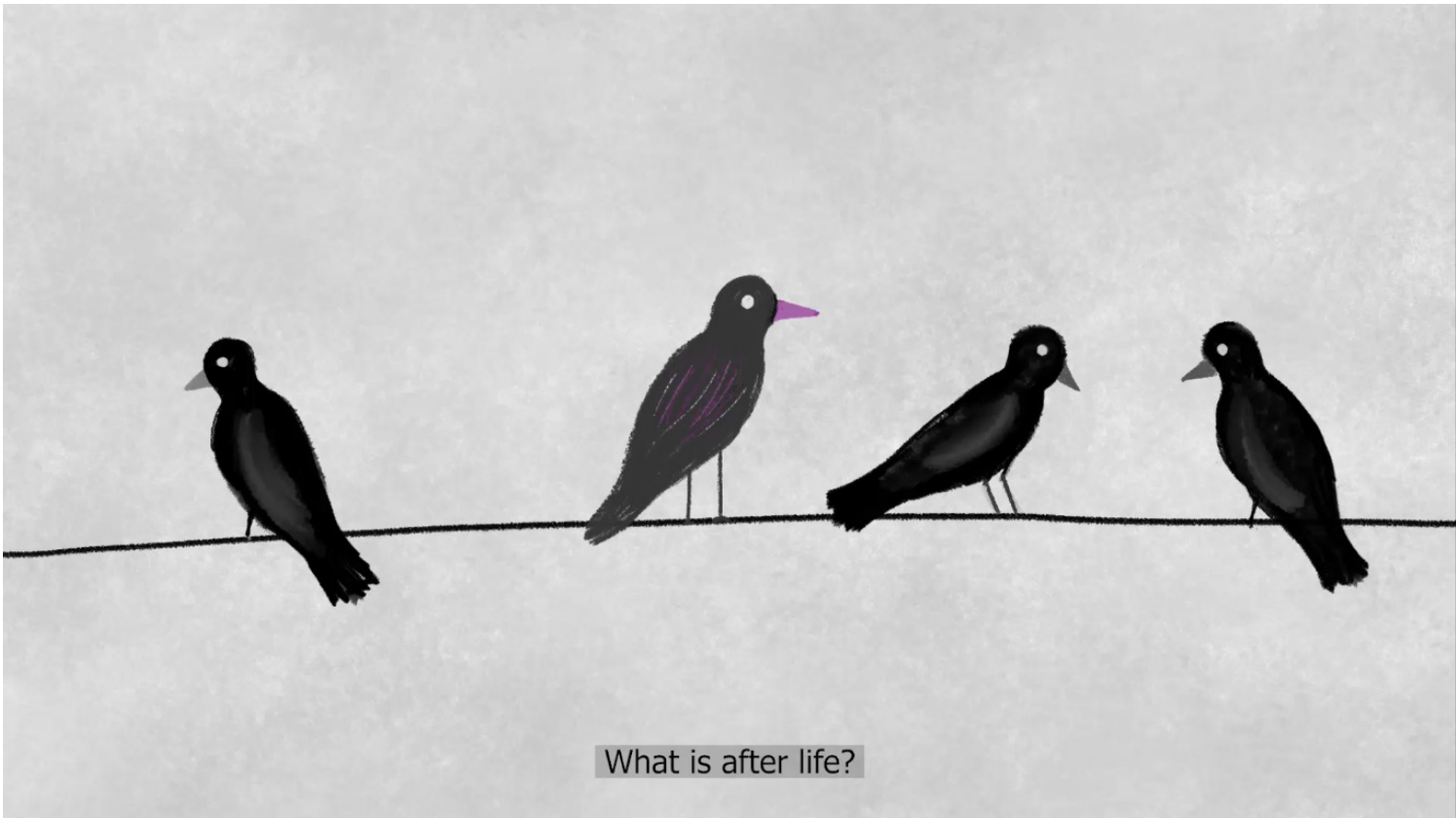
Raashi Borade

Animation (6 min 30 sec) / India / 2020 / English

A little girl struggles to get through her everyday life. The voices in her head and her surroundings make her feel claustrophobic. Her memories of awkward and embarrassing moments override everything else. She builds a box to protect herself. Kindness and understanding from her friends come to her aid.

Raashi is an illustrator, visual designer and emerging animator based in New Delhi. Her art is cheeky, and unapologetically glorifies people being themselves in whimsical spaces.





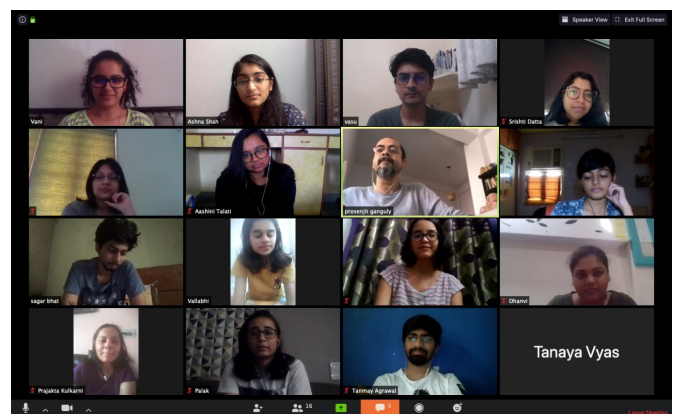
BAATEIN

Shruti Jain

Animation (7 min 30 sec) / India / 2020 / multilingual

The experiences and emotions that all of us go through are explored in four chapters – memories, wonder, angst, hope. The filmmakers asked family, friends, acquaintances to share personal stories across all four themes, and these formed the basis of the conversations in *Baatein*. The film aims to remind viewers of the importance of the smaller things in life.

This film was written, directed and executed by a team of 14 communication-design students, all of whom were screenwriters, directors and animators – each one's role evolving and adapting as the film took shape. In a true *lockdown-spirit*, the team worked from their homes, to create a film close to and from their hearts.





BEBAAK (DYING WIND IN HER HAIR)

Shazia Iqbal

Fiction (21 min) / India / 2019 / Hindi, Urdu

Unable to rely on her cash-strapped family to further her education, Fatin, an ambitious architecture student, seeks a scholarship from a conservative Muslim Trust. When she discovers that the money comes with strings attached, her liberal values are put to the test.

Shazia Iqbal is a filmmaker based in Mumbai. Her debut short *Bebaak* won her the Best Debut Director, International and Audience Choice awards at the 30th Sao Paulo International Shorts Film Festival. Besides winning 15 international awards, it won Best Short Fiction at the MIFF (Mumbai) 2020, and a Jury Special Mention at IDSFFK (Kerala) 2019. She was also Production Designer for the Emmy-nominated Netflix series *Sacred Games*, and the mini-series *Lust Stories*. Her feature script *Blood Circle* was selected for Global Media Makers, 2019 – Film Independent's Residency Lab, LA.





BLANKET TALK

Jennifer Li, Samantha Chang, Janette Peng
Animation (6 min 34 sec) / Taiwan / 2019 / Chinese

At midnight, two children who have not fallen asleep start to play. They travel to fantasy worlds, turning into animals, flying into the sky, having fun under their beloved blanket. They talk about the present and the future...

Jennifer Li, Samantha Chang and Janette Peng are three young women who majored in Animation at Taipei National University of Arts. *Blanket Talk* was their first stop motion film at school.





BLOOMING BUDS

Anahita Amani Singh
Fiction (28 min) / India / 2020 / Hindi, English

Questioning the notions of idealized motherhood, the film explores a daughter's emotions, her expectations, and her fears. In a world where everyone deserves their inner happiness, this journey is about the mother-daughter duo, who locate acceptance for each other's life choices and even celebrate them.

Anahita Amani Singh is a graduate in Film Direction from the State Institute of Film & TV, SUPVA, Rohtak. She has been an admirer of Pina Bausch, whose art motivated Anahita to participate in Physical Theatre, and she has performed in *Bharat Rang Mahotsav 2020*. She loves exploring layers of emotions through her characters, which is reflected in her works as well.





BROKEN HARMONY: CHINA'S DISSIDENTS

Risa Morimoto

Non-Fiction (51 min) / USA / 2019 / Chinese (Mandarin), English

Once a mild-mannered TV director, Hua Ze discovered that an old friend reporting on alleged corruption after the Sichuan earthquake had disappeared, along with any mention of him online. Following a trail of leads over the great internet firewall of China, she discovers a jaw-dropping array of human rights abuses across the country. Her awakening takes her into a new world of dissidents, citizen journalism, human rights lawyers, police harassment and kidnappings. In her own reporting, Hua cannot turn a blind eye to the problems, and is made to pay the price. The film documents Hua's courage, and her willingness to lose everything in her fight for justice.

Risa Morimoto is an award-winning director and producer for film, television and the Web, with many films and series to her credit. Her award-winning documentary *Wings of Defeat*, about surviving Kamikaze pilots, aired both nationally and internationally. She was a 2011 Fellow at the PBS/WGBH Academy, and is a Fellow at Stanley Nelson's Firelight Media Producers Lab.





DRAPCHI ELEGY

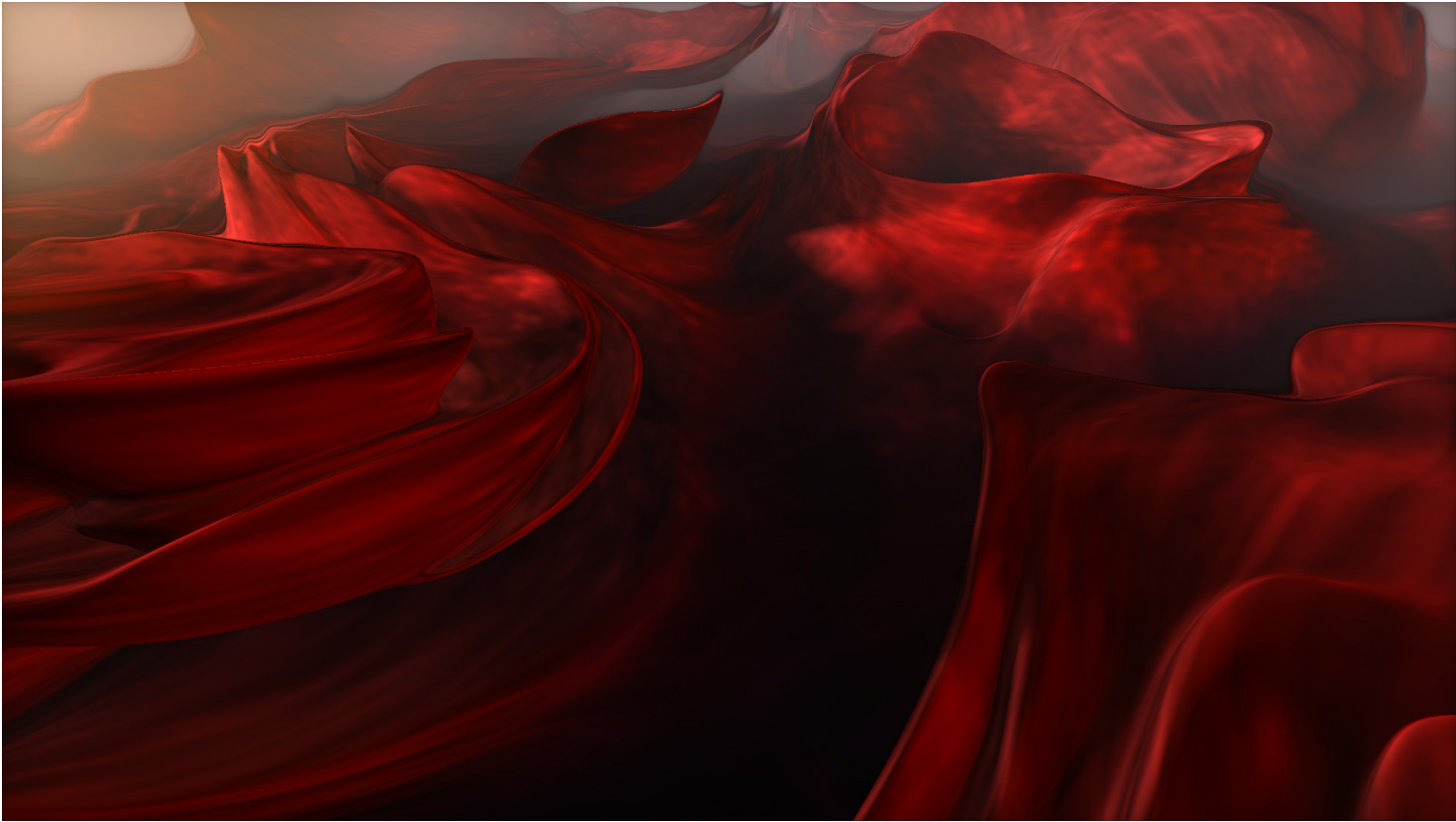
Ritu Sarin, Tenzing Sonam

Non-fiction (17 min) / India / 2017 / Tibetan

The film weaves together vignettes from the everyday life of Namdol Lhamo, a Tibetan refugee living in Brussels who happens to be one of the famous Singing Nuns of Drapchi, a group of nuns imprisoned in Tibet in the early 1990s for peacefully demonstrating against Chinese rule. She recounts her experiences in Tibet while going about her daily work as a caregiver in an old people's home.



Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam are Indian-Tibetan filmmakers and artists based in Dharamshala, India, who have been working together for more than 30 years. Their work includes award-winning films and art installations. A recurring subject in their work is Tibet, with which they have been intimately involved; personally, politically, and artistically. Their feature films *Dreaming Lhasa* (2005) and *The Sweet Requiem* (2018) premiered at TIFF (Toronto). Their art works have been shown in exhibitions worldwide. They are also the directors of the Dharamshala International Film Festival, which they founded in 2012 and which is now one of India's leading independent film festivals.



FOR TASHI

Rebecca Ruige Xu, Jiayue Cecilia Wu
Experimental (7 min 35 sec) / USA / 2020 / English

This short attempts to depict the physical and emotional journey that a woman goes through when losing her baby prematurely, and aims to bring this deeply personal, largely unspoken and often overlooked experience to a wider, more public, shared realm.

Rebecca Ruige Xu's artwork and research interests include experimental animation, visual music, artistic data visualisation, interactive installations, digital performance, and virtual reality. Her recent work has been shown at art galleries and museums in many countries. Xu currently teaches computer art and animation as Associate Professor at College of Visual and Performing Arts, Syracuse University.

Jiayue Cecilia Wu is a composer, scholar, and multimedia artist. Cecilia earned her Science degree in Design and Engineering, followed by a Master of Arts from Stanford, and a PhD in Media Arts and Technology from UC Santa Barbara. As a musician, she received an award from the California State Assembly. As a multimedia artist, she received the Young Alumni Artist Grant Award from Stanford University. As a scholar, she has received several research grants and fellowships. Currently, Cecilia is Assistant Professor at the University of Colorado's College of Arts and Media.





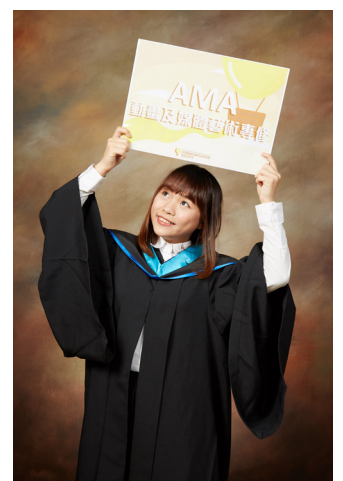
FUNERAL

Yiu Wan Yin Anna

Animation (6 min) / Hongkong / 2020 / Cantonese

In life, we are afraid of death, and want to keep hold of the most important person or the best times; however, we can't control this, and need to face loss bravely. The story emphasises the cycle of life, relationships, and connections between generations according to the Chinese concept of death. The film is about growing, and finding the meaning of death.

An early interest in drawing and animation led Yiu Wan Yin Anna to explore art on her own. She earned a degree in Communication from Hong Kong Baptist University, where she also began to study animation. She loves 2D hand-drawn animation, although her study focused on 3D animation. *Funeral* is her first 2D animation.





***HONAR DAR KHATAR ZENDEGI KARDAN* (THE ART OF LIVING IN DANGER)**

Mina Keshavarz

Non-fiction (87 min) / Iran, Germany / 2020 / Farsi

Mina, the director of the film, and her grandmother Nurijan never got to know each other because Nurijan died before Mina was born. Despite this, the two women still have a lot in common. In an internal monologue Mina gradually reveals more about her grandmother's tragic story and unveils the secret of her mysterious death, which the family refuses to speak about even today. Until it becomes clear that generations of women face the same struggle and the fate of Mina and Nurijan is inextricably linked. Mina wants to embolden her grandmother and rewrites her family history. Her monologue and reappraisal of her family's history is a tribute to the struggle of generations of women before her and an appeal for a better future for the women of Iran.

A documentary filmmaker and producer, Mina Keshavarz was born in Iran in 1984. She has made several awarded documentary films on social issues which have premiered in IDFA, Thessaloniki, Sheffield, Tribeca, London Film Festival, Mina's last film *The Art of Living in Danger*, won the Best International Documentary Award in Busan International Film Festival 2020 and has been qualified for Oscar 2021. Mina is alumna of Berlinale Talents, HotDocs Emerging Filmmaker Lab, Tribeca Film Institute and currently a resident filmmaker in Berlin Air Film Residency.





LAGI SENANG JAGA SEKANDANG LEMBU (IT'S EASIER TO RAISE CATTLE)

Amanda Nell Eu
Fiction (18 min) / Malaysia / 2017 / Malay

Two teenage outcasts form an uncanny friendship in their remote village. As one discovers the other's dark secrets, she observes the changes in her new friend. The film takes us into a realm that merges violence and monstrosity with affection.

Amanda Nell Eu has directed award-winning short films which have screened in international festivals including Venice, Locarno and Clermont-Ferrand. She is developing her first feature film, set in Malaysia. She likes to explore the female body and identity, within the context of Southeast Asia.





PANI PAATA PORATAM (SONGS OF OUR SOIL)

Aditi Maddali

Non-fiction (52 min) / India / 2019 / Telugu

Uyyala songs are an agricultural tradition rooted in the political expression of women in Telangana. Through this oral tradition, the film traces the histories of resistance and memories of disillusionment experienced by women across political assertions in the region. Through looking at women's participation in the Telangana People's Movement, and their demands of justice from the contemporary Mallana Sagar irrigation project, the film attempts to complicate the relationship between memory, history, and cultural production.

Aditi Maddali is a researcher and multimedia producer based in Mumbai.

She is interested in engaging with affect and everydayness in the political journeys of women. *Pani Paata Poratam* is her first independent documentary film.





PARWARESHGAH (THE ORPHANAGE)

Shahrbanoo Sadat

Fiction (90 min) / Denmark, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Afghanistan, Qatar / 2019 / Dari, Russian, Hindi-Urdu

In the late 1980s, 15-year-old Qodrat lives in the streets of Kabul and sells cinema tickets on the black market. He is a big Bollywood fan, who daydreams himself into some of his favourite movie scenes. One day, the police bring him to a Soviet orphanage. But, in Kabul, the political situation is changing. Qodrat and all the children want to defend their home.

Shahrbanoo Sadat is an Afghan writer and director, based in Kabul. She studied at Atelier Varan Kabul. Her first feature film *Wolf and Sheep* was developed with the Cannes Cinéfondation Residence in 2010. Shahrbanoo, 20-years-old at the time, was the youngest-ever-selected. The film won the main award at Directors' Fortnight at Cannes, 2016. *The Orphanage*, her second feature film, is the second part of a planned pentalogy, five films based on an unpublished autobiography. It was presented in the Directors' Fortnight section at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival.





PATCHES

Rutika Mukund Khustale

Animation (4 min) / India / 2020 / English

This is the story of a girl's experiences throughout her life. She has to deal with various situations due to vitiligo, a skin disorder. It is not hurting her physically, but mentally. Because vitiligo makes her look different, she is accepted neither by her schoolmates, nor by society. As she narrates her story, she questions society for segregating her. Her parents' support has not been able to save her from deep hurt, yet she works to overcome the hurdles.

Rutika Mukund Khustale is a postgraduate in Animation from MIT Institute of Design, currently working as an animator in TCS, TATA Group. Her student film Patches was dedicated to people suffering from vitiligo, and aimed to spread awareness about the disorder.





PAVAKUTTI (MY LITTLE DOLL)

Ashitha Nair

Animation (7 min) / India / 2019 / Malayalam

A girl who finds her parents not paying her any attention, when she comes to see her newborn sister in hospital, wants to test their love for her. She runs away, only to get lost in her own insecurities. The doll that she was supposed to give to her little sister plays an important role in bringing her back to reality. Even now, however, a strand of jealousy persists.

Ashitha Nair is a student at Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata. She hails from the southern coastal part of India, which abounds in chinese fishing nets and coconut trees. Her passion for art and cinema has led her to take animation filmmaking as her calling.





RETIREMENT

Sawanti Das

Animation (4 min 29 sec) / India / 2019

Kanti is a widower, hardworking and introvert, a typist in a typical office. He escapes from his loneliness through his office life, but retirement brings challenges. He must come to terms with his new reality.

Sawanti Das graduated in computer science from Raja Narendra Lal Khan Women's College, and is doing a postgraduate diploma in Animation Filmmaking at the Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute. *Retirement* is her first film. She is currently working on two "very personal" documentaries, one on a child with cerebral palsy, the other on pottery. She is keen on making films about social issues that are centred around her own life.





RUN KALYANI

Geetha J

Fiction (100 min) / India / 2019 / Malayalam

Kalyani is a young cook who lives with her ailing aunt in Thiruvananthapuram. Each day is the same, with her duties as a cook and carer. But each day is not the same either. As the romance of poetry ignites a passion, as the stories of other worlds stir a desire, as sharks close in and death draws near, the film builds into an intense crescendo of grief and grit, sorrow and strength.



Dr Geetha Jayaraman is a writer, director, and producer. Her first film was *Woman with a Video Camera* (2005). *Run Kalyani*, her debut fiction feature, has screened at several international film festivals and won many prestigious awards. She is also a documentary producer who has been collaborating with multi-award-winning filmmaker Ian McDonald, most notably on the acclaimed *Algorithms* (2012), about young blind chess players from India. Their latest collaborations included the split-screen docu *Who is Europe?* (2018), and *Freedom* (2017), a four-screen film installation on the radical legacy of Martin Luther King. Geetha lectures on Film Practice at Film@CultureLab in Newcastle.



SAAKHYA

Kunika Kharat
Fiction (29 min) / India / 2020 / Marathi

Compromise and conformism are ideas we associate with mothers. The people around them are rarely aware of the mothers' lost dreams. Asha is one such mother, a middle-class homemaker with two kids and a working husband. At 34, she is just coming to terms with the inertness of her daily routine, and her monotonous life within the four walls of her house in the midst of a bustling city. Her simple wish to have someone to talk to remains unfulfilled, until new neighbours arrive.

Kunika Kharat has a Master's in Film and Video Communication from National Institute of Design (NID). She has always enjoyed storytelling, for which she believes film is a strong medium. She is deeply interested in stories that explore human behaviour, family, and home. She currently works as a Promo Producer at Prime Focus Technology for Disney Asia Pacific.





SMARAN (IMPRESSIONS)

Purandhya Sharma

Non-fiction (22 min) / India / 2019 / Hindi

Our experiences become our stories. Over a few afternoons spent with my grandaunt, the filmmaker gains an insight into her roots as she listens to the reminiscences of an older generation, who have so much to share.

Purandhya Sharma has been interested in filmmaking ever since she attended a summer programme in filmmaking with Kavita Joshi. She studied Documentary at Sri Aurobindo Centre for Arts and Communication (SACAC), Delhi, and was also the Chapter Coordinator for Students for a Free Tibet, Delhi. Purandhya interned with Oscar Foundation, a non-profit based in Mumbai, and *Feminism in India*, a digital media platform. She was part of a group at the Swapathgami Filmmaking Workshop 2017, in Udaipur, that made a short film on "natural learning".





SOYABEAN BIRYANI (FOR JUNAID)

Vidha Saumya

Fiction (12 min) / Finland / 2019 / Hindi

On June 22, 2017, 15-year-old Junaid Khan was stabbed to death on a Delhi-Mathura train after an argument over seats turned ugly. Junaid was returning home from Eid shopping with his cousin Hashim, and two friends. Two years after his death, this video reflects on the political debate around beef-eating, what it means to be visibly Muslim in India, and the current hostility of the state towards the "other", even as it pieces together a recipe laced with development claims and false calls for togetherness, in a poignant remembrance of Junaid – whose favourite food was soyabean biryani.

Vidha Saumya is a Helsinki-based artist-poet whose body of work– drawings, murals, books, poems, sculptures, embroidered textiles, videos, and digital artefacts – are wry and warm in their politics, and kaleidoscopic in their aesthetics. The concept of *Heimat* (Home) land is at the core of her praxis. She holds a Master's from Aalto University, Finland, and is co-founder and co-editor of NO NIIN, an online monthly magazine, as well as a founding member of the Museum of Impossible Forms, a cultural para-institution in Kontula, Finland.





SPACE DIALOGUES

Shashwati Talukdar

Experimental (8 min 30 sec) / India / 2020 / Hindi, English

An experimental found footage odyssey through space and time. A young scientist tries to save humanity. She goes from being a child with special powers to a hologram in this long journey, covered in a short film. Scraps of imagery are put to uses other than what they were intended for: images from fifty years ago; images from NASA shuttles; or the most commonplace graphics for a marketing website.

Shashwati Talukdar's work covers a wide range of forms, including documentary, narrative and experimental. Her films have been shown at festivals and galleries all over the world, including the Busan International Film Festival, Margaret Mead Festival, Kiasma Museum of Art, Helsinki, and the Whitney Biennial. She has degrees in filmmaking from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India, and Temple University, Philadelphia, USA. She lives between India and Taiwan.





THE HOUR OF LYNCHING

Shirley Abraham, Amit Madheshiya
Non-fiction (19 min) / India / 2019 / Hindi

Rakbar, a Muslim dairy farmer, was murdered by a Hindu mob while he was transporting cows. While his wife Asmeena must practice an intense *iddat* to mourn his murder, the hate machinery of Hindu nationalist-politicians, with their foot-soldiers and lynch mobs, work overtime to legitimise it.

Shirley Abraham and Amit Madheshiya are award-winning Indian documentary filmmakers. *The Cinema Travellers*, their debut film, premiered as the only Indian film playing in the Official Selection at the Cannes Film Festival (2016). Subsequently, it screened at 120 film festivals worldwide, winning 19 awards globally, including the National Film Award in India. Shirley and Amit have also made the New York Times Op-Doc, *Searching for Saraswati*. Their work has been supported by the Sundance Institute, the Pulitzer Center, MacArthur Foundation, New York Times, IDFA Bertha Fund, Arts Council of England, BBC, and the Guardian. They have been Fellows of Sundance Labs, Cluster of Excellence Heidelberg, India Foundation for the Arts, and Goethe-Institut, and are members of the documentary branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.





THE SPELL OF PURPLE

Prachee Bajania
Fiction (24 min) / India / 2020 / Gujarati

The sole owner of a small field in tribal Gujarat, Inaas is the target of envious neighbours who brand her a “witch”, and lurk in the shadows of both her land, and her nightmares. Enveloped in fear, she looks for strength in other women – a new mother, a young married woman. As they negotiate different roles and realities that test their resilience, we glimpse the bone-deep weariness that often lies behind daily courage. The Mahua forest bears silent witness to their secret conversations, sometimes reaching out through ancient folk songs.

Prachee Bajania is a filmmaker based in Dhrangadhra, Gujarat. She studied Film & Video Communication at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad; and Film Direction and Screenplay Writing at the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. Prachee worked at the Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Bangalore, directing and editing films on ecology, agricultural practices, and livelihoods. Her work deals with the politics of loss, transient relationships and songs of dissent and desire



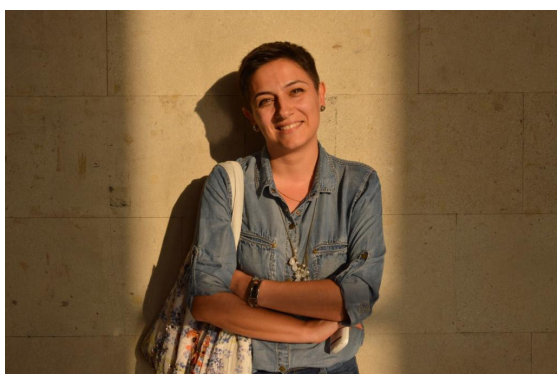


TOMBÉ

Diana Kardumyan
Fiction (20 min) / Armenia / 2018 / Armenian

Kara works in the Goldfish eatery all day long, washing dishes. Her life has become a closed circle of grey days, far from the colours of the big city. She saves money for her family. Every night, she walks home alone. But one night an unexpected incident changes her daily routine.

Diana Kardumyan was born in Nagorno Karabakh. She moved to Armenia with her parents in 1992, and graduated from Yerevan State Institute of Theater and Cinematography with a BFA in film directing. She has participated in different film festivals, workshops and master classes – the Golden Apricot International Film Festival (Yerevan), Zubroffka International Film Festival (Poland), Tallinn Black Nights International Film Festival, and Moscow International Film Festival.





VILLAGE DES FEMMES (VILLAGE OF WOMEN)

Tamara Stepanyan

Non-fiction (83 min) / Armenia, France / 2019 / Armenian

In the Armenian village called Lichk, women, children and the elderly live without the men of their families who are away working in Russia nine months of the year. How do the women endure waiting, loneliness, and the absence of their husbands? The filmmaker becomes an intimate presence in their lives, a confidante who hears and shares in their frustrations, joys, desires.

Tamara Stepanyan was born in Yerevan, Armenia. During the breakdown of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, she moved to Lebanon, before going on to study at The National Film School of Denmark. For seven years now, she has been working and living in France, where she is preparing for her fiction feature. Her previous documentary *Those from the Shore* won the Grand Prix at Amiens International Film Festival (France), Best Documentary at Golden Apricot International Film Festival (Armenia), and the Best Directing Award at Global Cinema Film Festival of Boston (USA). She teaches "education a l'image" in different schools.





YAHAN WAHAN SAARE JAHAN (HERE AND EVERYWHERE)

Maya Janine D'Costa

Experimental (5 min 24 sec) / India / 2020 / Hindi

As the Covid-19 pandemic tightens its grip around the world, the divine Sage Narada travels to remote villages and towns of Central India, only to find multiple, parallelly running narratives of coronavirus among the village and town folk. A confused Narada then makes his way to the gods to report about these human activities.

Maya Janine D'Costa is an artist who uses drawing, video and text to express herself. They enjoy working collaboratively with communities to tell stories. Maya graduated in Art and Design from the Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Bangalore, and currently works with SPS Community Media in Madhya Pradesh.





YATHAWAT (AS IT IS)

Tribeny Rai
Fiction (24 min) / India / 2015 / Nepali

Three sisters, whose father has died, try to win back his government job for the youngest among them, as compensation.

Tribeny Rai is a filmmaker based in Sikkim. She is an alumna of Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata, and Docskool Clinic, Kathmandu. She has participated in the 8th VGIK International Summer School, held in Petrozavodsk (Russia), the Producers Lab at International Film Festival Rotterdam, and the Talent Campus program at the 37th Fajr International Film Festival (Iran). Her production house Dalley Khorsani Productions has produced short films and documentaries.





FILMMAKER STATEMENTS

1. A CAN OF FISH

ADITI CHITRE

The film, *A CAN OF FISH* is a continuation of my interest in the relationship fishing communities have with sea, land, seasons and their community fishing techniques. Juxtaposed with this is my interest in our urban relationship with food. The question of what we eat and why we eat it, is depicted through the entire process of the factory-ship from the method used for acquiring the fish, sorting it, 'poofing' out the meat and serving the 'product' to the Eaters who are merely eating a label. Does the factory-ship create the product for the consumers to eat it or do the consumers eat the product because the factory has manufactured it? Thus the film looks at the stylish and financially well endowed consumer in the form of a factory worker who chews mechanically, through exhaustion, goaded by advertising and privilege. During the research period of this film i was able to explore the idea of this factory-ship, and the function of the Eaters in the factory more closely in the form of a graphic short story, in collaboration with a writer. This work focused on the Eaters, while *A CAN OF FISH* tagged along with the fisherman who encountered the factory-ship.

Email: aditichitre@gmail.com

2. A LITTLE MORE BLUE

SUGANDHA BANSAL

Sugandha thinks of film making as a strong medium to communicate stories. She believes that since she has the skills to share a story, she would like to tell a story that people can relate with; stories with a strong message. *A LITTLE MORE BLUE* is her second film as a student. Many a times, some individuals do not identify with the gender that has been assigned to their biological sex. Such people may feel neglected and unaccepted by society, only because of being different.

Through the film she would like to create awareness amongst the society so that it accepts alternate sexualities, and also amongst the people who are having a problem in identifying with their gender, to comfort them by letting them know that they aren't alone in this.

Email: sugandha.bansal200@gmail.com

3. A RIFLE AND A BAG

CRISTINA HANES, ARYA ROTHE, ISABELLA RINALDI

When she was 12 years old, Somi left her tribal village and joined the Naxalite guerrilla. After more than a decade of violent fight she surrendered to the State under the Surrender Policy. Deserting the movement meant starting from scratch, building a new life for herself and for her children. The act of surrendering has tampered with her value system and the ideology for which she fought, disengaging her from her surroundings and beliefs. *A RIFLE AND A BAG* accompanies Somi as she struggles to make her violent past compatible with her desire to integrate as a civilian in society. The excruciating wait for the social rehabilitation is holding her children's future back. Their sense of identity is now being challenged and it is this state of mind that we want to tackle, to discover the complex texture of moral, ideological and political engagement.

Cristina Hanes (Romania, for sales)- Email: nocutcrisrina@gmail.com

Arya Rothe (India)- Email: nocutarya@gmail.com

Isabella Rinaldi (Italy)- Email: nocutisabella@gmail.com



FILMMAKER STATEMENTS

4. ABOUT MUMMA

MAANVI CHOWDHARY

In life I believe I am everything because of what I have learnt through my parents and that normality is subjective. My normal will never be the same as others. This is a film that shows our family's normal. This film looks at the "normal" my mother lives with, it's a deeply personal journey as I tried to understand the idea of space through her. It is also a journey of a mother and daughter trying to understand and reflect on something that happened 20 years ago that changed their lives completely.

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5. AMEPĀ

KSHIPRA DHAVLE

When I started working on this film, I was not fully aware of how sensitive this topic was. I was simply planning to document a folk narrative through an animated short film. But the more I studied, I realised that I was representing an age-old precious culture, their stories and their relationships with nature through my film. Suddenly it felt like a big responsibility. I was very fortunate that I found friends like Maitreyee Mujumdar, Anoko Mega and Ipra Mekola who guided me at every step of this film making process. In my limited understanding and capacity, I have tried to document a snippet of the Idu Mishmi folk tale.

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6. AND I, AND I

LAM YAN YUE

"Minorities are deemed to live in a tragically depicted life? No relationships are born to be fair? Are they the chosen miseries? This film is a directorial debut with an occasional reconnection with this mother and child. The ongoing true story within an unconventional family."

Email: andiandi172021@gmail.com

7. BLANKET TALK

JENNIFER LI, SAMANTHA CHANG AND JANETTE PENG

I am a Taiwanese animation detractor. *BLANKET TALK* is my first independent animation film. Please follow the steps into a Taiwanese traditional market and become that curious child everyone used to be. A normal day of life can be not so usual, as we can find something special.

I do hope I can always do that.

Email: kitty86102550@gmail.com

8. BLOOMING BUDS

ANAHITA AMANI SINGH

Every situation has two sides, and I like to question the idea of morality. Of how things should be and how life presents itself in those situations. I like to portray emotions that are difficult, far from the idea of black and white. *BLOOMING BUDS* is one such attempt, a journey of a daughter who has to accept her mother as an individual who is capable of falling in love, one who can make mistakes and someone who is also growing much like the daughter herself.

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FILMMAKER STATEMENTS

9. DRAPCHI ELEGY

RITU SARIN AND TENZING SONAM

In the early 1990s, small groups of Tibetans took out peaceful pro-independence protests in the heart of Lhasa. They were quickly arrested by the security forces, charged with the crime of counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement, and given long prison sentences. The most famous of these protesters was a group of young nuns, later known as the Singing Nuns of Drapchi Prison after they secretly recorded songs about the Dalai Lama and Tibet's future on a cassette tape and smuggled it out to the West. Brutally tortured, some of the nuns died in prison. A number escaped into exile after completing their sentences. Among them was Namdrol Lhamo who spent a total of 12 years in Drapchi Prison. Now living in Brussels, she works in an old people's home, taking care of elderly residents. How does someone who sacrificed and suffered so much for her political convictions reconcile herself to her new life as yet another anonymous immigrant in an alien land? *DRAPCHI ELEGY* is our attempt to explore this strange twist of fate and shed some light on the process of forgiveness and reconciliation that gives hope to lives broken by political tyranny.

10. FOR TASHI

REBECCA RUIGE XU and JIAYUE CECILIA WU

FOR TASHI attempts to depict the physical and the emotional journey that a woman goes through when losing her baby prematurely, aims to share this deeply personal, largely unspoken, and often overlooked experience with the public, in the hope to transfer the previously private excursion to a communal experience. Combining computer programs generated visuals, soundscape, voice, and the sound of ancient Asian instrument Konghou, *FOR TASHI* offers an audiovisual experience that provokes emotional resonance and healing via a unity of sensations.

Email: rebecca.xu@gmail.com

11. HONAR DAR KHATAR ZENDEGI KARDAN (THE ART OF LIVING IN DANGER)

MINA KESHAVARZ

I've never seen my grandmother, I was 17 when I found out she committed suicide because of domestic violence. Women were fighting for decades to find their identity in law in Iran, even though my grandmother was living in a secular regime but women didn't have any right according to the law. After fighting for decades women could be successful to pass a law in parliament in 1974. This law is called "Family law" and according to that, women should be able to work, travel, continue their education without permission from a male person in their family. Only 4 years later, revolution happened and even though women had a main role in that revolution but only 2 weeks after the revolution, Imam Khomeinie supreme leader of Iran ordered that "Family law" must be removed and women are not allowed to do anything without their husband, father or other male members in their family. In the past 40 years after the Islamic revolution, thousands of women rights activists have been labeled as spies and enemies of the state. Still 100s of women rights activists are in jail or waiting for their sentence. So as a woman and filmmaker it's very important for me to capture what all these women have done and are doing to stop violence against women, to stop non-equal law in my country to change women's situation to change my situation.

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FILMMAKER STATEMENTS

12. PANI PAATA PORATAM (SONGS OF OUR SOIL)

ADITI MADDALI

Songs are integral to the everyday life and work of women in Telangana. They are woven as life is being lived, rich with aspirations and histories lost. *PANI PAATA PORATAM* attempts to look at the story of work songs with the popular refrain 'Uyyala', to realize that it is also an expression of political assertion of women in struggles of land in the region. Popular and academic engagement with songs of work often relegate them into generic categories of folk traditions and people's cultures, uprooting them from their complex socio-political contexts. The film introspects the politics of cultural engagement and asks questions about how we have been telling the story of these songs. Email: aditi.maddali@gmail.com

13. PATCHES

RUTIKA MUKUND KHUSTALE

PATCHES is a story of a girl's experiences throughout her life. She has to deal with various situations due to a skin disorder – Vitiligo. It isn't hurting her physically, but mentally. Her appearances due to Vitiligo make her look different and which is why she is not accepted by her friends in school and by the society. She is narrating this story to all those who are unaware of the facts related to Vitiligo. She is questioning the society for segregating her from the society. Her parents have always been with her. They always stood by her in order to build her confidence. Despite their support she was deeply hurt within. Patches is all about how she overcame the hurdles and attained positive aspects towards life. Along with this, she is throwing light on the fact that acceptance can make a drastic change in life, no matter how the appearance is. Email : rutumk@gmail.com

14. PAVAKUTTI (MY LITTLE DOLL)

ASHITHA NAIR

PAVAKUTTI is a film that was born from my curiosity to explore what happens when we encounter the first feeling of bitterness as kids. We are often taught to love and be happy but we do not know how to deal with human emotions such as jealousy, loneliness and depression. There is a sense of shame surrounding these emotions. The doll that the elder sister brings for her sister as a token of her love and plays a crucial part in the film. I tried to use the doll as an exteriorization of whatever emotions she encounters and how these emotions grow and control your actions at a later stage. Email: ashi.ashita@gmail.com

15. RUN KALYANI

GEETHA J

I am interested in presenting the very real drama of ordinary people in everyday settings within both a realist and poetic aesthetic. I play with the idea of small changes happening within structural repetitions to give meaning and form to my film. I am keen to explore how these small changes eventually culminate in cataclysmic changes in which the old structures "melt into air". While *RUN KALYANI* is an ensemble drama with important male characters too, it is through the female characters that this is asserted: whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, and contrary to what appears to be the case and what we are told, we all have agency. In this sense, *Run Kalyani* is a woman's film. It is about women's lives, but more so it is a film that brings a feminine sensibility leaving the feminist as a sub text and presenting women as universal subjects. Email: info@akampuram.net



FILMMAKER STATEMENTS

16. SAAKHYA

KUNIKA KHARAT

Compromise and conformism are the ideas we associate with mothers. With their dreams lost to the people around them, we rarely see them Subjectively. This is a film about one such mother. With two kids and a working husband, Asha is a simple middle-class housewife. Thirty-four years old, she is just coming to terms with the inertness of her daily routine. In this bustling city, Asha lives a monotonous life within the four walls of her house. Her simple wish to have someone to talk to remains unfulfilled, until new neighbors arrive. SAAKHYA makes you feel what you have at some point in your life experienced; the feeling of loneliness, even when you are surrounded by your loved ones.

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17. SMARAN (IMPRESSIONS)

PURANDHYA SHARMA

I made this film to understand women of my great grandmother's generation and to explore the different kinds of freedom women enjoyed then and now. Making this film raised several questions for me on a personal level, such as, are women truly independent today? What are the battles of young women of today as compared to Savitri, my great grandmother, who was writing her memoirs in the 1950s? Making this film not only helped me get closer to my roots but opened a world of questions and introspection. It is not just a film to preserve Savitri's memory and a world of storytelling based on life's experiences, but also a lens for me to reflect on my life.

Email: purandhyas@gmail.com

18. SOYABEAN BIRYANI (FOR JUNAID)

VIDHA SAUMYA

On June 22, 2017, 15 years old, Junaid Khan was stabbed to death on a Delhi-Mathura train after an argument over seats turned ugly. Junaid was returning home from Eid shopping with his cousin Hashim and two of his friends Moin and Mohsin. In 2019, two years after his death, the video reflects on the political debate around beef-eating, what it means to be visibly Muslim in India and the current hostility of the state towards the 'other'. The video pieces together a recipe laced with development claims and false calls for togetherness, amidst a poignant remembrance of Junaid Khan whose favourite food was Soyabeen Biryani. While amnesia grips the Secular Democratic Republic of India, this video makes a case to pause, reflect and take note.

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19. SPACE DIALOGUES

SHASHWATI TALUKDAR

Scraps of imagery that can be put to uses other than what they were intended for interest me. Images from fifty years ago, or the most commonplace graphics for a marketing website are all fodder for expression. When NASA made its footage available in the public domain it was just too tempting not to work with it to find a way to tell a story. A story, where different images worked together to create a new meaning.

Email: shashwati@fournineandahalf.com



FILMMAKER STATEMENTS

20. THE HOUR OF LYNCHING

SHIRLEY ABRAHAM AND AMIT MADHESHIYA

"We are out of moral-courage material; we are in a condition of profound poverty," wrote Mark Twain in the essay "The United States of Lyncherdom" in 1901. He was writing in response to the spate of racial lynchings in the American south.

THE HOUR OF LYNCHING is an attempt to bear witness to the forest fire of mob lynchings of Indian Muslims amid terrorising Hindu nationalism. It is an intervention into the silence that is deployed to applaud orchestrated mob murders.

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21. THE SPELL OF PURPLE

PRACHEE BAJANIA

Inaas' profession allows her to stay in touch with plants, insects and the earth, a tactility that anchors her. Rumours about her being a witch proliferate in the village thanks to those who don't approve of a single woman living on her terms. This condemnation stings her like needles in the dark but this 'wild woman' is aware of her power, her sexuality and is unafraid to do what she thinks is right or good for her. She has energy, a life force and a seemingly unwavering defiance in the face of adversity. When everyone around you is hacking away at your spirit, lashing out at you with a vengeance you can't placate, you do all you can to counter it—like a child learning to swim having been thrown into deep waters who must struggle against the fear she feels in that moment. Inaas confronts the village's hostility head on, manoeuvring through it at great personal cost. The questions we are left with: what does ownership of land mean to a woman? What does 'witch' signify in today's context? Are we evolving with the changing landscape of our small towns?

Email: prachbajmail@gmail.com

22. TOMBÉ

DIANA KARDUMYAN

One night, on my way home a taxi driver told a story about an aged prostitute. The prostitute was more than 50 years old and spent a night with four tourists at once. I was shocked and for a long time was thinking about an aged prostitute and her destiny. The main idea considered in *TOMBÉ* is the surrounding reality and sharp social issues conditioned by it; it is an artistic quintessence of surrounding reality. Usually, there is a tendency in Armenia to apply rather to the consequences than reasons. *TOMBÉ* is an attempt to focus on reasons.

Email: dkardumyan@yahoo.com

23. YAHAN WAHAN SAARE JAHAN (HERE AND EVERYWHERE)

MAYA JANINE D'COSTA

YAHAN WAHAN SAARE JAHAN was an attempt at sensitizing people to the potential spread of Coronavirus. Most people in the villages and small towns of Dewas district in Madhya Pradesh had dropped their guard and were seen to be alarmingly casual about the virus. Rumours and misinformation did the rounds, which lead to a certain disbelief regarding the pandemic. With the coming of the festival season where traditionally large numbers of people gather for celebration, it was important to draw the people's attention to the pandemic. Animating characters from Hindu mythology using Kalighat paintings I felt, would be the befitting imagery to appeal to the people and reinforce the importance of taking all safety measures during festivities in a pandemic.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH FILMMAKERS

PANEL DISCUSSION I

'TOWARDS NURTURING PEACE'

Aditi Maddali, Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam, Tamara Stepanyan
Moderated by **Subasri Krishnan**

The discussion will focus on the varied documentary practices of the filmmakers, linked to the ideas of oppression, resistance, and possible resolutions towards nurturing peace.



Aditi Maddali's *Pani Paata Poratam* (Songs of Our Soil), India that explores uyyala songs and how they record women's histories in the fight for agrarian rights, is of timely importance.



Ritu Sarin And Tenzing Sonam's *Drapchi Elegy*, India that weaves together vignettes from the everyday life of Namdol Lhamo, one of the famous Singing Nuns of Drapchi now living in exile in Brussels, presents a facet of spiritual resistance, reflecting how resistance can come in different forms.



Tamara Stepanyan's *Village Des Femmes* (Village of Women), Armenia looks at a global phenomenon of migration for work and how that challenges women, through the lives of women in an Armenian village whose husbands leave to work in Russia for 9 months of the year.



Subasri Krishnan is a filmmaker and also heads the Media Lab at the Indian Institute for Human Settlement (IIHS), an educational institution that works around the urban. Her films deal with contemporary politics. Her first film "Brave New Medium" on internet censorship in South-East Asia, has been screened at film festivals, both nationally and internationally. The award-winning "This or That Particular Person" looks at the idea of official identity documents, and in that context, the Unique Identity number. The film was adjudged as the Best Short Documentary Film at the International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala (IDSFFK), 2013. Her last film "What The Fields Remember" on the Nellie massacre that took place in Assam in 1983, explores ideas of memory, violence and justice through survivors' narratives. Her next documentary film explores questions of citizenship and nationhood in contemporary Assam. As part of the Media Lab at IIHS, she teaches and curates the Urban Lens film festival. She was also the Festival Director of the 2017 edition of the IAWRT film festival (International Association of Women in Radio and Television). Prior to going to film school, Subasri worked for the academic journal 'Seminar'.

CONVERSATIONS WITH FILMMAKERS

PANEL DISCUSSION II

'EXPERIMENTS WITH MEDIA'

Shahrbano Sadat, Shashwati Talukdar, Jennifer Li, Samantha Chang, Jannette Peng, Rebecca Ruige Xu, and Jiayue Cecilia Wu

Moderated by Surabhi Sharma.

This discussion will facilitate a conversation between filmmakers who, through their experiments with form, nudge us to engage with unusual stories and aesthetic practices.



Shahrbano Sadat's *Parwadeshgah* (The Orphanage), Denmark/ Germany/ France/ Luxembourg/ Afghanistan is a mix of stylistic approaches that dips into the fantasy world of Bollywood to tell a gritty tale of a 15-year old Afghan boy who is forced to live in an orphanage after the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.



Shashwati Talukdar's science fiction mobilizes found footage in *Space Dialogues*, India to weave a quirky tale of a young girl trying to save humanity.



Jennifer Li, Samantha Chang and Jannette Peng's *Blanket Talk*, Taiwan is an experimental short animation that takes us to the imaginary fantastical world of two children.



Rebecca Ruige Xu and Jiayue Cecilia Wu's *For Tashi*, USA delves into music and art to represent the deeply personal and emotional journey of a woman losing her baby during her pregnancy.



Surabhi Sharma is an independent filmmaker since 2000. Her feature length documentaries, fiction, and video installations engage with cities in transition using the lens of labor, music, and migration. Surabhi's films have been screened at international film festivals like Dubai International Film Festival, Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, MAMI Mumbai Film Festival amongst others. Her films have been recognized and awarded at the 8th Asia Pacific Screen Awards, Brisbane 2016; Eco-Cinema, Greece 2003 (The Ramsar-Medwet Award), Film South Asia, Kathmandu 2001; Karachi Film Festival 2002; and The Festival of Three Continents, Buenos Aires 2002. She has received

CONVERSATIONS WITH FILMMAKERS

PANEL DISCUSSION III

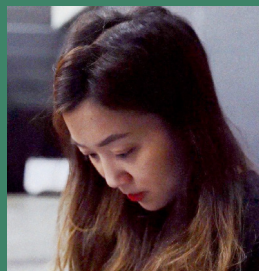
'EMERGING VOICES'

Prachee Bajania, Lam Yan Yue, Kshipra Shekhar Dhavle, zzTribeny Rai
Moderated by Deepti Khurana.

This discussion will focus on the works of young filmmakers as they attempt to take on newer forms of storytelling. Spanning across various genres, their films reflect both the specific and universal concerns of a new generation of filmmakers.



Prachee Bajania's *The Spell of Purple*, India, set in tribal Gujarat, tells a story of everyday resilience and solidarity among women.



Lam Yan Yue's film *And I, And I*, Hong Kong, a short fiction is a prologue on single mother Judy's arduous living, circumstances and will to challenge what's coming in her intellectually disabled son's life.



Kshipra Dhavle's animation film, *Amepā*, India, is set in picturesque Arunachal Pradesh and presents the Idu Mishmi tribe's protection of the Eastern Hoolock Gibbon through a child's eye



Tribeny Rai's *Yathawat*, India is a short fiction about three sisters fighting to win back their father's government job as compensation for his death.



Deepti Khurana is a filmmaker and faculty in the Film School of the State University of Performing & Visual Arts in Rohtak, Haryana. She received training in filmmaking at the Film and Television Institute of India (Pune) and is best known for her film *Rizwan*, which has featured in several national and international film festivals. She was associated with All India Radio, New Delhi as a newsreader and programmer. She has been associated with IAWRT as a member, selector, and curator. She is an avid writer and has been actively involved with Daydreamer Film Company as a creative director. She is also a member of the Advisory board of the Gujarat University's Design academy. She takes a special interest in conducting filmmaking workshops for young children.

MASTERCLASS I

DECODING SOUND PRACTICE

'Decoding Sound Practice' with Amala Popuri

Facilitator: **Shikha Jhingan**

This discussion will focus on the works of young filmmakers as they attempt to take on newer forms of storytelling. Spanning across various genres, their films reflect both the specific and universal concerns of a new generation of filmmakers.

DECODING SOUND PRACTICE

The idea of a film is the germ. It could be a visual, a Sound, an event, an emotion, a feeling. Sound is a quiet beast that permeates into the process of film making from the very inception of the concept of the film. Writing, filming, editing- create an organic base to the "sound entity" of the film. Sound design is the process of reflection on, and absorption of the various elements that get subsumed in the film through all these processes; and using these elements and innovating to create the 'world of the film'.

Why and how to not go overboard yet push the boundaries and still stay with the crux of the film. Amala will also go into how her Sound practice in recording and design has affected how she listens to the world around her and vice versa.



Amala Popuri is a sound engineer and designer based in Mumbai. A postgraduate in sociology with a diploma in Audiography from FTII, she spent about a decade in the mainstream film industry and in the world of independent cinema. A mix of recording and designing talent, she has recently forayed into creating sound-on-its-own pieces. And she has also produced independent films like *Vanishing Point* and *Yeti*. She has worked with directors like Dibakar Banerjee, Rajat Kapoor, Aditya Chopra and critically acclaimed directors like Surabhi Sharma, Pushpendra Singh, Abhijit Mazumdar. She recently won the IRAA award for Best Synch Sound 2020 for her work in the film "Kadakh".



Shikha Jhingan is an Associate Professor at the Department of Cinema Studies, School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her research work focuses on voice, music and the technologies of sound dispersal across diverse media platforms. Jhingan is a founding member of Media-storm, an independent women's filmmaking collective formed in Delhi in 1986. Some of her independent documentaries include *Health Matters*, *Living Through Performance* and *Born to Sing*. She also co-directed a 12-part documentary series on Bombay cinema.

MASTERCLASS II

THE EDITOR AS OUTSIDER

'The Editor as Outsider' with Jabeen Merchant

Facilitator: **Bina Paul**

How do choices made at the editing table shape and structure the narrative of the film? In this session, renowned film editor Jabeen Merchant will take us through her oeuvre in fiction and non-fiction films.

THE EDITOR AS OUTSIDER

The editor is, perhaps, the only member of a filmmaking crew who looks from the outside in. Distanced from the agonies of shooting, unburdened by the information overload of research and recce, not under pressure from actors' egos; the editor's table is the gateway that links a film's director and its audience. Editing can be seen as the process of creating meaning in such a way that the widest number of people outside are able to relate to the filmmaker's vision. How is this to be achieved when faced with a mass of viewers used to consuming mainstream Bollywood and Netflix? What happens when one carries the influences and concerns of independent political documentary into the heart of a commercial film - and vice versa? In this interactive session, Jabeen will discuss these questions in the light of her own practice over the years.



Jabeen Merchant is a film editor and teacher based in Mumbai. She is known for her wide and varied work, editing both fiction and documentary, spanning mainstream Bollywood, art house cinema, television, web shows and short films. She has edited and co-scripted a number of independent political documentaries, in collaboration with some of India's best filmmakers. Her training began in 1991 with Anand Patwardhan on his documentary 'Ram Ke Naam'. After graduating from the FTII in 1995, her first jobs included editing news capsules for TV; and assisting on a fiction film, 'Khamoshi The Musical'. Starting 26 years ago at a time when editors sat at Steenbeck machines physically cutting and splicing strips of film; Jabeen has kept pace with the many technological leaps that have led to today's world of computer software, 8k digital files and special effects. The highlights of her fiction resume include suspense thrillers like 'Manorama Six Feet Under' and 'NH10', indie films like 'Anaarkali of Aarah' and 'The Sweet Requiem', children's films like 'Chuskit' and 'Chhutkan Ki Mahabharat'; a variety of TV shows; and most recently, a web series 'Four More Shots Please Season 2' and a Netflix original film, 'Tribhanga'.



Bina Paul graduated from the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) with a specialisation in editing. She has edited over 40 feature films and has worked with illustrious directors like G Aravindan, John Abraham and P N Menon. She is a recipient of two National Awards and numerous State Awards for editing. She was the Artistic Director of the International Film Festival of Kerala for fourteen years and has been instrumental in shaping it into an important international event. Bina has served on the juries of various international film festivals including those held in Locarno, Durban, Morocco, Toronto and Berlin. Bina is a regular faculty at the FTII and CDIT (Science & Development Documentary Course). As Artistic Director of the International Film Festival of Kerala she was incharge of all curating and programming for the festival. She has also curated film packages on Women Cinema at Udine, Italy in 2008. She is also the Vice Chairperson of the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy, Vice President of the Network for Promotion of Asian Cinema, and a Board Member of the International Association of Women in Radio & Television (India).

About IAWRT

IAWRT is a global network of 14 national chapters and members in 54 countries. IAWRT members are professional communicators or researchers in media and communications. We strive to meet the urgent global challenges faced by women in and around the media.

IAWRT is committed to the enhancement of women's role and participation in media as gender equality cannot be achieved without gender parity in media and communication. We are a non-government organization (NGO) in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

IAWRT advances its mission through national country chapters, organizes conferences, implements projects, undertakes training and activities, and collaborates with media organizations. We also build alliances with international and national like-minded organizations, through the UN CSW and other events.

IAWRT is managed by an elected international board, which oversees funding initiatives for local chapter and for member activities.

IAWRT - Chapter India Board

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Secretary:	Shikha Jhingan
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Geeta sahai	Radhika Kaulbatra	Yashodara Udupa
Iffat Fatima	Radhika khanna	
Imrana Khan	Ranu Ghosh	

FESTIVAL TEAM



Alvaro Fernandes a.k.a. Ally Chill is a creative non-conformist who after being coerced into graduating in Commerce from Pune University, chose to pursue a Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Computer Arts (DACA) from C-DAC. Along the way, he discovered his passion for 'designing' which finally took shape in 2011 when he started his own web design studio, 'Allyscope'.



Anahita Amani graduated from the State University of Performing & Visual Arts, Haryana, in 2018. Since then, she has worked as an assistant director in films/advertisements in Bombay. She is a performer who keeps her passion for theater alive. During the lockdown, she started exploring other mediums to express her love for art, her capacity to grow through situations has helped her to collaborate with different projects.



Ankit a.k.a key Bhardwaj is a Film Editor who Graduated from Film School Rohtak. He has worked as a Data Management, online and offline editor for Bollywood feature films, documentaries, short films, music videos, and T.V shows. His films have won awards at National and International films



Deepti Khurana is a filmmaker and faculty in the Film School of the State University of Performing & Visual Arts in Rohtak, Haryana. She received training in filmmaking at the Film and Television Institute of India (Pune) and is best known for her film Rizwan, which has featured in several national and international film festivals. She was associated with All India Radio, New Delhi as a newsreader and programmer. She has been associated with IAWRT as a member, selector, and curator. She is an avid writer and has been actively involved with Daydreamer Film Company as a creative director. She is also a member of the Advisory board of the Gujarat University's Design academy. She takes a special interest in conducting filmmaking workshops for young children.



Kavita Carneiro is an independent filmmaker. She makes short films for NGOs and corporations. She has made a feature-length documentary called Zaffar & Tudou which is about sport, identity, and the need to belong.

FESTIVAL TEAM



Nabina Chakraborty passed out of A J Kidwai Mass Communication and Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia in 2019. Since then, she has worked with multiple filmmakers in Delhi. Her graduation film 'Iq Rah- One Path, many journeys' has been selected for various film festivals across India. She is also a keen photographer and her photograph 'Urban snow-Chatt Puja' was published by 'The Guardian' as one of the best images of 2019. Nabina is currently working at the Media Lab at the Indian Institute of Human Settlements, Bengaluru.



Nina Sabnani is an artist and storyteller who uses film, illustration, and writing to tell her stories. Her work seeks to bring together animation and ethnography. Her film Hum Chitra Banate Hain, made in collaboration with the Bhil artist, Sher Singh (from Madhya Pradesh), received the national award (Rajat Kamal) for the Best Animation Film, from the President of India at the 64th National Awards for 2016. Nina Sabnani is currently a Professor at the Industrial Design Centre, Indian Institute of Technology (Bombay).



Priya Thuvassery is an independent documentary filmmaker and television producer based in New Delhi, Priya's body of work has focused on women and gender, her stories windows into myriad experiences of the body, the environment, the community, mapped from gender and feminist perspective. Priya has been directing, producing, and editing documentary films & television programmes for New Delhi Television, Fox Traveller, CNA, National Human Rights Commission of India, Films Division of India, Public Service Broadcasting Trust & Khabar Lahariya for over a decade now. Priya is currently an Executive Producer at Chambal Media. Her independent films include Khanabadosh (2009), My Sacred Glass Bowl (2013), Survey Number zero (2016), Coral Woman (2019), and Bawra Lake Your Water (A Chambal Media production, work in progress). Her films have been recognised with participation, mentions, and best film awards in many international and national film festivals. She has been Co-Director of the IAWRT Asian Women Film Festival, New Delhi, from 2019-2020 and is currently a board member for IAWRT India chapter 2020-2022. She is also recognized as a Canon Cinema EOS Platinum Associate. Currently, she is working on a series of climate change films and the impact of Coral Woman films. Priya has a Master's in Mass Communication from the Anwar Jamal Kidwai Mass Communication Research Centre, at Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi.



Samina Mishra is a documentary filmmaker, writer, and teacher based in New Delhi, with a special interest in media for and about children and in the ways that the arts can be included in education. She teaches Film in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme and curates for Half Ticket, the children's section at the MAMI Mumbai Film Festival. She also runs The Magic Key Centre for the Arts and Childhood, a virtual resource centre for children as well as adults working with and for children.

FESTIVAL TEAM



Smriti Nevatia has curated themed film festivals on LGBTQIA+ lives and concerns, gender-based violence, social justice movements, and masculinities, besides often co-curating for IAWRT India's annual Asian Women's Film Festival and has been a selector and jury member for national and international film festivals. She has collaborated creatively on many award-winning Indian documentaries, and freelancers as a script consultant, and as a text editor and translator in Hindi and English. Smriti is co-author of 'No Outlaws in the Gender Galaxy' (Zubaan, 2015).



Surbhi Goel teaches Film culture and theory at Panjab University, Chandigarh, and has been a visiting faculty for Cinema Studies at FTII Pune, IISER Mohali, SUPVA Rohtak, Chandigarh University, Mohali and Films Division, Mumbai. At Films Division, Mumbai she taught in workshops for the technical staff, curated an oral history project, film screenings, was a selector for the National Competition of festival films and was invited to be part of the organising team of Mumbai International Film Festival 2014 and 2016 editions. For the film MOST 72, she collaborated with British, Polish, and South Korean/American filmmakers, on visiting Auschwitz-Birkenau, Oświęcim (Poland). She has published poetry (in Hindi and English) in Harigandha, Chandrabhaga, Muse-India, and dialog.



Vedika Kruti graduated in Film from the State Institute of Film in 2018. Through her films, she tries to explore themes around gender, labor & migration. Currently, she is trying to dab into new mediums of expression such as photography, text & video & amalgamating them with the film. Her recent Digital Photographic Essay titled 'OF SHADOWS', focusing on the post-covid migrant workers crisis was produced & exhibited with the Google Arts & Culture Platform in collaboration with the Chennai Photo Biennale, 2021.

Zoya Riyas is an artist, designer based in Mumbai. She has been associated with IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival for the last two years as a designer.

A stylized, low-poly illustration of three people, likely of South Asian descent, rendered in shades of red and orange. The person on the left is a woman wearing a hijab, looking slightly to the right. The person in the center is a man with long hair, looking forward. The person on the right is a woman with short hair, looking slightly to the left. They are all wearing traditional Indian attire. The background is a solid dark red color.

Festival Team

Catalogue: Smriti Nevatia, Vedika Kruti, Surbhi Goel
Festival Coordinator: Vedika Kruti
Publicity: Anahita Amani Singh, Deepika Sharma
Technical Team: Kavita Carneiro, Nabina Chakraborty
Design: Zoya Riyas
Website: Alvito Fernandes, Priya Thuvassery
Festival Trailer: Ankit aka Key Bhardwaj

Acknowledgements: Aruna Vasudev
Reena Mohan
Aanchal Kapur
Keshav Kumar
Ajay Kumar Singh
Piyush Jaiswal
Akshit Sharma
Yashodara Udupa