



**Film
Bazaar**
India' 08

Work-in-Progress Lab





INTRODUCTION

Running concurrently and new to Film Bazaar this year is the Work-in-Progress Lab, a workshop for filmmakers in search of feedback on their rough cuts. Film Bazaar has been fortunate enough to put together a panel of unprecedented expertise to view these rough cuts and provide feedback on how to better realize the potential of the filmmakers' material.

With a prolific output of films, the spread of the Indian diaspora, film festivals or sidebars dedicated to Indian cinema, and the Internet, the opportunities for the Indian filmmaker to reach out to a global audience has never been better.

Every year, globally, films emerge as dark horses at the Box Office and at Award ceremonies. It is a fact that there is no one formula for why a film works, and there is no accounting for taste, either! What is universal however, is a good, marketable product that translates across markets.

The Film Bazaar Team

Aijaz Khan
Director



THE WHITE ELEPHANT

Director: Aijaz Khan

Writer: Ayeesha Menon

Director of Photography: Hari Nair

Editor: B Lenin

Producer: National Film Development Corporation Ltd. & NDTV Imagine Ltd.

Shooting Language: Hindi

Synopsis

On the day of the sacred festival, as was the ritual, Nathan (The Holy Elephant) chooses Shabri (a worthless drunk) as its new keeper. For the chosen one, it was a matter of fortune and honor; for the rest it was a matter of envy... Nathan was the holy elephant of the village and the fortunes of its keeper were sure to change.

This 'honor' (Nathan) for the poor Shabri, who finds it difficult to provide for his small family, is initially too much to take on. It is Shabri's new found resolve and the holy elephant's allure that enable him to not only face adversity but also defeat the evil powers of the envious village tantric (practitioner of black magic) and the conniving lady (a timber merchant from the neighboring village) who are both trying to steal the holy elephant, for its godly status, from the village.

Nathan's loss would have meant devastation for the village... The story of Shabri's resolve to safeguard the village's honor, changing fortunes, the envious eyes, the power of spells and connive...above all a story of strength of faith and the impact of believing The White Elephant.

Director's Statement

India is full of mystique and delightful folklore. My intention in making this film is to pull out one of these mystical stories from the heart of Kerala...land of gods and holy elephants. I have shot this film in a small picturesque village of Ottappalam in Kerala. The story is told in a very simple manner, whereby the main character (Shabri) comes across as a very strong individual who fights with faith to keep his family together. There are lots of instances in the film where he is forced to give up but he stills fights and comes out to be a winner.

The shooting with the elephant was a mammoth task but Nathan the elephant remained calm, followed the instructions of the mahout and, in spite of the treacherous Kerala heat, he behaved better than most people around.

There are a lot of characters in the film, they are well etched out and take the narrative forward. It was a conscious decision to ensure that all the characters have an individuality of their own and yet be organic.

The story starts in a small poverty stricken village in Kerala where superstitions still drive the way of life for its people. Where people still believe that solar eclipse means the end of days and birthmark on an animal means, the stamp of God.

A poor man, Shabri has to pay a high price for finding himself. As he goes through a variety of changes, so does the world around him and all this because an elephant walked into his life one day. A story about the strength of faith and the impact of believing...

Director's Profile

Aijaz Khan has directed and produced Advertisement films for big brands for over a decade. The White Elephant is his feature film debut, which is produced by NFDC & NDTV Imagine Ltd.

Contact

NFDC

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Kunwar Rabinder Parashar
Director



WHY DO WE HAVE A SUNDAY?

(YEH SUNDAY KYUN AATA HAI?)

Director: Kunwar Rabinder Parashar

Writer: Kunwar Rabinder Parashar

Director of Photography: Sangram Giri

Editor: Ranu Dey

Producers: BGIL Films & Technologies Ltd & Kumar Sanu Communications (P) Ltd.

Shooting Language: Hindi

Synopsis

The feature film is based on four shoe polish boys of Mumbai (Dholak, Master, Jhingur and Chillar). All of them work at the Goregoan railway station in Mumbai, at platform number five, to earn their daily bread and butter. A corrupt railway police officer, Rane, keeps an eye on these children and he takes weekly protection money from them, making their lives difficult. At night, these children live on the pavement that is 'owned' by a local area Don, Dagdu who comes every night to collect his rent.

The whole day is a struggle, and their lives are full of tension. Above all, there is the problem of the day called "Sunday". From Monday to Saturday, they earn between Rs 50 to Rs 60 per day, but on Sunday, it is reduced to Rs 20 to Rs 25 or sometimes they don't even earn a penny.

In spite of all this, these children are alive and kicking, but they often say "Why do we have a Sunday?"

One day an unfortunate event takes place in their lives, which shakes them completely. One of them goes missing. The others leave no stone unturned to find him. They go to almost all the social welfare organizations and the law and order bodies, including the police, but no one is even interested in their story.

More determined than ever to find their friend, the boys begin to figure out what to do. Help will come from unexpected places...

Director's Statement

One day, while waiting for the train in Bandra Station, upon repeated requests I allowed a shoe-polish boy to polish my shoes and was perturbed when he asked me (in Hindi), "Saab, Yeh Sunday Kyun Aata Hai" (Sir, why do we have a Sunday?)

That statement gave rise to this ambitious project, ambitious because I knew I wanted to shoot in real locations using the real children who perform this work. Four boot polish boys, who were working at the Goregaon railway station of Mumbai, had a personal problem with SUNDAY, because that was the day they did the least business.

Director's Profile

Rabinder Parashar left his home town of Chandigarh for Mumbai in 1992, because he wanted to make movies. Rabinder was highly inspired by Indian filmmakers like Manmohan Desai and Mahesh Bhatt. In 1996, he became an assistant director to the latter on films like "Dushman" & "Zakhm".

He then wrote the screenplays for Mahesh Bhatt's "Yeh Hai Mumbai Meri Jaan" and "Sangharsh". This is his debut feature film as a director

Contact

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Satish Manwar
Director



THE DAMNED RAIN (GABHRICHA PAUS)

Director: Satish Manwar

Writer: Satish Manwar

Director of Photography: Sudheer Palsane

Editor: Suchitra Sathe

Producer: Pacific Entertainment

Shooting Language: Marathi

Synopsis

Gabhricha Paus....'The Damned Rain' is a story of a farmer's family from a small village somewhere in Vidarbha, Maharashtra, India. The extreme weather conditions in this particular region coupled with institutional apathy to solve the issue has led farmers in this area believe that ending their lives may be the best way save their families. This movie depicts the life of such a farmer who is an optimist at heart and is trying out everything that he can to yield a crop and make a living.

The story begins with yet another suicide. A farmer has hung himself from a tree. He has been unable to pay off a debt for a bore-well machine that he has purchased for some time. He leaves behind a wife with a newly born and an old father. Neighbours come to console the family. One such neighbour, Alka talks to the deceased farmer's wife and listening to her over a period of time is convinced that her own husband Kisna is also on the verge of giving up his life.

She along with her mother in law decides to keep an eye on her husband. She also manages to rope in their son, albeit against his wishes and comprehension, to always be with his father and keep an eye on him. He is to report anything out of the ordinary throughout the day to his mother and never leave his father's side. She manages to use some saved up money along with a little debt to make her husband's favourite dishes to keep him happy. She even does away with her last bit of jewelry to help her husband fulfill his crop.

Kisna, on the other hand, has no idea what is happening behind his back and that he is being watched as a possible candidate for suicide. It is the season for preparing for his next crop and is only trying for raising enough money and resources to be able to do so. After coming across various hurdles including lack of rain, and after a while, too much rain, he does manage to have a crop but it is taken away by his creditors. He has to start all over again next year on a bank loan.

Director's Statement

The metro cities and small towns have their differences. Coming from Yawatmaal and settling in Pune and then Mumbai was not very tough job, but the cultural distinctions made me realize that, I need to change.

As I have been away from my native place for some year, that gave me the vision to look at it objectively. The questions and dilemmas of farmers, their miserable lives and the contrast to the bloating mall culture in urban areas...It disturbs me....

My film is story of farmer's family... A farmer who never wants to give up, but he is surrounded by the brutal reality.

The movie is about optimism in the midst of extremely unfavourable conditions. The efforts of the family to avert the suicide do make one smile, albeit sadly at that. The helplessness of any small farmer in India is maybe the same as that of any part of this world in today's global economy. He is trying and trying as hard as he always has been, but so many things, including nature, are stacked against him.

Director's Profile

Satish Manwar was born in a farmer's family in Vidarbha, a region belonging to eastern Maharashtra, India. Drawn to the arts, he did his post graduation in dramatics from the Center for Performing Arts (Lalit Kala Kendra), Pune University and subsequently moved to Mumbai to work in film and television.

Contact

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Mentors of
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MOLLY STENSGAARD

Film editor Molly Malene Stensgaard from Denmark has worked on almost every film made by her fellow countryman Lars von Trier from the series *The Kingdom* to *The Idiots*, *Dancer in the Dark*, *Dogville* and *Manderlay*. In doing so she has left her mark on Danish cinema. In addition, she has worked, for example, with director Anette K. Olesen, whose film *In Your Hands* screened in the Berlinale Competition three years ago. In 2007 she served on the International Jury of the Berlinale.



DEREK MALCOLM

Derek Malcolm has been one of the UK's leading film critics for some 35 years, first with *The Guardian*, London and now with the *London Evening Standard*. Last year he was nominated as one of the six most influential film critics in the world. He has been many times to India and its festivals (his first trip was as captain of the first club cricket side to tour India) and is a personal friend of many of the alumni of the Indian parallel cinema of the seventies and eighties. He also knew Satyajit Ray and his family well. He has been a juror at Berlin, Cannes, Venice and many other festivals and was President of Fipresci, the international film critics association, for 10 years. He is now Honorary President of Fipresci. He directed the London Film Festival from 1982 to 1986 and is a former Governor of the British Film Institute. He is also President of the British Film Society. He has written three books, two on film and one on his controversial family history. He is married with a daughter and lives in London and in Kent.



GARY HAMILTON

Gary Hamilton (Managing Director) founded Arclight Films, a production, sales and distribution company, with former Strand Releasing financier Victor Syrmis, in April 2002. With a focus on medium to high budget theatrical product, the company now has about 100 titles under contract.

Films under the Arclight banner include *Lord of War*, starring Nicolas Cage, Ethan Hawke and Jared Leto; *Infamous*, starring Sandra Bullock and Gwyneth Paltrow; *The Merchant of Venice*, starring Al Pacino and Jeremy Irons; *Bobby*, starring Anthony Hopkins, Lindsay Lohan, Demi Moore, William H. Macy; *Romulus, My Father*, starring Eric Bana, and *Mini's First Time*, starring Alec Baldwin. In 2004, Hamilton launched Darclight Films, the genre division of Arclight. Films under the Darclight banner include the low budget *Wolf Creek*, which was released by The Weinstein Company to healthy box-office returns; the stylish retelling of the vampire myth *Perfect Creature*, which is scheduled to be released domestically by Fox; the epic adventure *Beowulf & Grendel*, with Stellan Skarsgård; *The Last Sign*, a supernatural thriller starring Andie McDowell and Tim Roth; and *Silver Hawk*, starring Michelle Yeoh.

Screen International industry magazine listed Hamilton as the most influential person in the private sector of the Australian film industry in 2001, and *Encore* magazine placed him among Australia's top executive producers.

