



**PRODUIRE au SUD**

FESTIVAL des 3 CONTINENTS

Ateliers de formation à la coproduction internationale

# 2021 KoPro/ PAS Workshop

## THE CROWS (Kaak) Bangladesh

### Main Data

Category	Drama
Lenght	90-100 minutes
Language	Bengali
Shooting format	4K
Shooting location	Bangladesh
Shooting dates	January 2022
Expected date of compleiton	December 2022
Stage of production	In development

### Production

Budget	400.000 €
Financing in place	55.000 €
Production company	Batayan Productions
Workshop & platform attended	Locarno Open Doors Consultancy KoPro/PAS 2021



### Synopsis

Old Dhaka's Abdul Majid (27), whose sister Momena was killed fourteen years ago, sees her murderer, Badruddin (49), in the local bazaar. This encounter opens the flood gates of repressed anguish from Majid's past. He rushes back home to confide in his pregnant wife, Yasmin (22), how he can't imagine living here anymore now that Badruddin is a powerful political leader of the locality. Badruddin had fled after the murder, but he returns after receiving amnesty. This unexpected encounter takes Majid back to the time when he witnessed his sister, Momena (19), being dragged by Badruddin's men. They found her lifeless body on a riverbank three days later. Back then, Badruddin used to throw up in the sky chopped pieces of human flesh to feed his crows that snatched them up, ate them or dropped them on unsuspecting locals. Soon after the episode at the bazaar, Majid and Yasmin are blessed with a baby girl. They would have to come up with a civil solution so their daughter doesn't suffer the same fate as his sister. Crippled by the thought of having to cross paths with his sister's killer every now and again, Majid put up for sale his ancestral home.

### Director's statement

My grandfather was a freedom fighter. My first introduction to the war was through his stories. Even after killing 3 million people and raping 200,000 women in 1971, the Pakistani army or their Bangladeshi collaborators (The Rajakars) never formally apologized. On the contrary, in 1973, the war criminals, the Rajakars, were given general amnesty by the ruling party, Awami League, who had led Bangladesh to its independence. In the years following the war, by 1985, during the military rule, the Rajakars had gained substantial political power by collaborating with the main opposition parties. In this historical backdrop, our story follows a young man (Majid) who not only lost his family, but lost his hopes and dreams in the war. His personal journey of facing the trauma, the self-loathing, and the open wound of having to live with his sister's (Momena) murderer (Rajakar Badruddin)- takes centre stage, as the history takes a back seat in "The Crows". When I read this story by writer Shahidul Zahir, it kept me up for several nights. This aspect of war, the impact of being denied justice on a mass level is not seen in our liberation war films. Those films deal with the events during the war, not its long term psychological effects on the victims' families. I acquired the rights from the late writer's memorial trust that handles his copyrights. Being a politically conscious writer with a thirst for history, I believe I have the right aptitude to tackle this story.

### Tasmiah Afrin Mou - Director



Tasmiah Afrin Mou is a Bangladeshi writer, director, producer known for her debut short film 'Kobi Swamir Mrityur Por Amar Jobanbondi' (Statement After My Poet Husband's Death), 2016, premiered at 34th Festival Tous Courts and won six International Awards and in 2019 she made a Short film 'Nayikar Ek Rat' (Heroine's one night) which won the first prize at Meril-Prothom Alo Fame Factory. Tasmiah made seven documentary films. One of her documentaries 'Tokai-2012' was awarded as the Best Short Documentary at Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival, China in 2014. She is currently working on her debut feature narrative film project "Kaak" (The Crows) which was selected for the Locarno Open Doors Consultancy in June 2020.



### Tahrima Khan - Producer

Tahrima Khan is a young Producer- Director from Bangladesh. She has worked in several film projects as producer with Director/Producer Mr. Abu Shahed Emon whose debut feature 'Jalaler Golpo' was the Bangladeshi entry to the oscar in 2016. Her directed first documentary 'Colour of water' was funded by the British council and was made under the International Climate Champion (ICC) program. She has also worked in several documentaries on the indigenous community of Bangladesh in the Chittagong Hill Tracks. Her feature documentary <Munni> is currently in development and has participated in the DOK Leipzig pitching competition, Won 2 awards in Dhaka doclab and Doc New Zealand pitch.



### Abu Shahed Emon - Producer

Abu Shahed Emon is a Bangladeshi film Producer and Director. He studied on Psychology at Dhaka University. He attended University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse for doing his graduation in Communication. He also received Diploma in Screen and Media from Sydney Film School and after that got Advance Diploma in the same subject from RMIT University. After Completing his Diploma and Advance Diploma from Australia he also received the Masters in Fine Arts (MFA) from the Korean National University of Arts. In 2014 Emon's Debut Feature received a support for the Post-Production category from the Asian Cinema Fund (ACF) Funds from Busan International Film Festival. His project the "Tale of a Policeman" received a Script Development funding from Asian Cinema Fund (ACF) in 2011. It is also participated in the Asian Project Market (APM) in 2011 and received the Goteborg Film Festival Fund.

### Contact

Producer	Tahrima Khan	tahrimakhan@gmail.com
Producer	Abu Shahed Emon	shahedemon@gmail.com

Director	Tasmiah Afrin Mou	tasmiahafrin71@gmail.com
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## HASHNOUHANA (A Strange case of Divorce) India

### Main Data

Category	Drama
Length	90 minutes
Language	Bengali
Shooting format	3.2K
Shooting location	India
Shooting dates	November 2021
Expected date of completion	August 2022
Stage of production	In development

### Production

Budget	43.0000 €
Financing in place	30%
Production company	Cherrypix Movies Pvt Ltd
Workshop & platform attended	KoPro/PAS 2021
Current situation	In development



### Synopsis

Hashnouhana, a 23 year-old Muslim woman from the fisherman community, marries Gulab, a 27 year-old man from a farmer's family, in the village of Shahidpur in West Bengal, India. On their wedding night, she discovers her husband has erectile dysfunction. As this is a clear breach of contract, the bride's family takes the groom to the village court demanding divorce and the return of dowry. In the midst of their divorce procedure an unexpected love develops between the couple. On the pretext of a preferred separation, the woman finds herself crippled by the dilemma between the stigma of infertility and a desire for an emotional bond. The man feels helpless and desperate to save their marriage. Their poor economic status adds to the complication as more pragmatic solutions are imminent. While parting ways both of them realize they won't be able to feel love the way they did in the past few days.

### Director's statement

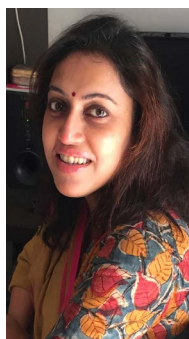
In a time when love is explored mostly through sexuality, this story tries to find love in the absence of sex, but not in the traditional, inhibited way - this is where I feel my story stands apart. While researching for a documentary on local quilting traditions, I met a young Muslim artisan in a village in West Bengal, India. This 23 year-old Muslim girl from a marginal community of rural India had divorced her husband because of his erectile dysfunction, a decision supported by her family. The privileged, liberal, urban woman in me, was baffled for even a discussion on sex is considered taboo within my 'progressive' circle. I soon realised her compulsion to annul the marriage was to avoid the stigma of being deemed an infertile woman. Often marriages in India are meant to bear successors than for sexual pleasure. As I returned to my city, this woman's story began to resonate with my own vulnerability and confusion. I thought what if an emotional attachment grew between the couple during their divorce procedure? This is where my fictional engine revved up. I started visiting villages to experience rural living, their practice of arts and their parochial sentiments. The traditional art of quilting represents recycling the old into new. This philosophy is the guiding principle of my storytelling. The central character being a quilt artisan serves as the silent metaphor. I wrote the script, as Bengali women would stitch old patches of clothes, into a new designer quilt, Nakshi Kantha. I have observed love-stories are unique in the nature of their characters' helplessness. Here an uncanny vulnerability creeps in when the couple starts feeling emotional attachment while standing on the verge of their divorce. The affection transcends the crude pragmatism of the imminent separation that was sought for the sexual inability of the groom. I believe the complex love story of a woman from a conservative, rural sector with the pragmatism to annul her marriage helps dispel a few stereotypes - now, more than ever, when Muslims are battling social prejudice all over the world. I strongly feel there is a need to tell this story as it explores convoluted human questions that prevail across borders, classes and race. I want my audience to experience the complexity and fragility of a human bond.

### Contact

**Producer**  
**Director**

Soumya Mukhopadhyay  
Debarati Gupta

soumya@cherrypix.net.in  
thisisdebaratigupta@gmail.com



### Debarati Gupta - Director

Debarati Gupta is an independent filmmaker and screenwriter based in Kolkata. She made her debut feature film Hoichoi in 2013. Urban Indian middle class women and the quest for their identities have been the central theme of her films. But with the current script she shifted her focus from urban to rural life of India. She directed three more films - an indie film Post Kolkata, a thriller, Kalkijug and a relationship drama, Önek Diner Pöre. Before making her own films she worked as an assistant director in the film Chatrak, directed by reputed Sri Lankan filmmaker, Vimukthi Jayasundara. It was screened at Director's Fortnight, at Cannes in 2011. As a screen writer Debarati has written several web series and films for Zee5, an India based leading OTT platform.



### Soumya Mukhopadhyay - Producer

Soumya Mukhopadhyay is the owner of Cherrypix Movies Pvt. Ltd, a leading audio-visual technical studio based in Kolkata. He has recently left his job of a market researcher after nearly two decades of working at Kantar, his primary passion of producing and directing films. He and his company Cherrypix Movies recently produced two notable projects. Two Friends (Dostojee, fiction feature), Dir : Prasun Chatterjee. (WIP, NFDC Film Bazaar recommends 2019, participated in Marche Du Film Goes Cannes 2020 and Hong-Kong Asian Film Financing Forum WIP lab, 2020.) Metamorphosis, Dir : Sankhajit Biswas (WIP, Colour, Bengali; participated in the pitching forum of Dicedge 2019, Kolkata, India and in the Impact Lab of Good Pitch India, 2020)



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## Main Data

Category	Drama
Length	100 mins
Language	Malayalam
Shooting format	4 K
Shooting location	India
Shooting dates	November 1-26, 2021
Expected date of completion	February 2022
Stage of production	In development

## Production

Budget	368.540 €
Financing in place	102.159 €
Production company	Believe Films
Workshop & platform attended	KoPro/PAS 2021 Workshop

## Payal Sethi - Director



Payal studied screenwriting & direction at Vassar College & NYU/Tisch. She worked at Mira Nair's Mirabai Films & Tribeca Film Festival before making GRANT ST SHAVING CO. She is the recipient of Asia Society's Fellowship for Screenwriters. Her second short, LEECHES, was a National Film Award (India) winner, and screened at over 60 festivals, including Tampere, Palm Springs & Sapporo. It won the Grand Prix Internationale at Brussels Short Film Festival, among several other international awards. Recently, Payal was Creative Producer for RITU GOES ONLINE, a short doc about women's empowerment. Payal is interested in exploring stories that exist in a space between fiction and reality.

# 2021 KoPro/ PAS Workshop

## THE DISAPPEARING FLOWER (Kurinji) India



## Synopsis

Laly, a housewife from a coastal village in Kerala, has learnt to live with loneliness. For over a decade, she has been separated from her husband, Mohan, a migrant labourer in the Gulf. With weekly phone calls and a visit every two years, she has built a life around his absence. It has been five years since Mohan's last visit, and Laly has given up asking him to return home. Instead, she supplements his monthly remittance through her own side business. Her assistant, Gojen, is a young Assamese boy who has migrated to Kerala with his family, but a horrific incident sparks local resentment towards his community. When Mohan's calls and money transfers abruptly stop, Laly uncovers disturbing facts about his overseas existence, while he continues to remain invisible. As the anti-migrant sentiment grows and Gojen becomes vulnerable, Laly is faced with the choice of helping him escape the same cycle of exploitation that Mohan may have fallen victim to.

## Prasanth Varma- Producer



Prasanth Varma is a co-founder, partner and director at Believe Films, a production house based in Bangalore. He has been an independent director for more than five years, having directed and produced TVCs for many national and international brands. Before starting Believe Films, Prasanth has worked as an AD for V.K. Prakash. He earned experience working as the AD in over seven feature films directed by VKP across three regional industries in Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada. Prasanth produced a feature documentary film "Limitless" (about women marathon runners in India), directed by Vrinda Samartha. Most recently he produced "Ritu Goes Online" for the Indian Ministry of Skill and Development, also directed by Samartha.

## Director's statement

KURINJI portrays the insidious effects of migration, distance, and apathy, as seen from the point of view of the woman left behind. I wanted to tell the story of the other side of the coin because, while there is a significant amount of research and data about the husbands who migrate, there is surprisingly limited information about the impact on their left-behind wives. Hopefully, this film will have a small part in righting that imbalance. What is increasingly evident is that male migration has had a great effect on the independence and decision-making skills among migrant's wives. These women have taken responsibility for their households in the absence of their husbands, and I wanted to highlight their strength and resilience through the main character, Laly Mohan. Her story, and those of other characters in the film, is inspired by migrant tales that I have been researching for years. When we meet Laly, she can no longer remember her husband's face clearly, which is how I remember experiencing the loss of a loved one. Most of Mohan's earnings have gone into buying shiny appliances for the big house he is building as a status symbol. He is just the voice on the phone to his family, which is also how the audience engages with him throughout the film. So while she is still connected to him emotionally, she has drifted away physically. She feels like she is constantly being watched, because although society is not yet ready to talk about sex openly with these women, it is very concerned about the sexuality of wives who are stuck in sexless marriages.

## Vrinda Samarth- Producer



Vrinda is the co-founder of Believe Films, a boutique production house based out of Bangalore that has produced short films and several commercials. She began her career as an assistant director for Trends Ad Films, where she worked under National Award Filmmaker V K Prakash. Since then, she has worked on many national and international campaigns, as well as feature films. "Limitless" is her first feature documentary as a Director. Following a successful festival run, the film is now streaming on Netflix. Vrinda enjoys experimenting and constantly recreating new narrative styles. She is drawn to characters and stories that are raw and real.

## Contact

**Producer**  
**Producer**  
**Director**

Vrinda Samarth  
Prasanth Varma  
Payal Sethi

vrinda.sam@gmail.com  
prasanth.varma@gmail.com  
payal1202@gmail.com



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## THE STINK OF RIPENING India

### Main Data

Category	Drama
Length	110 minutes
Language	Kannada
Shooting format	Digital
Shooting location	India
Shooting dates	March / June 2021
Expected date of completion	January 2022
Stage of production	In development

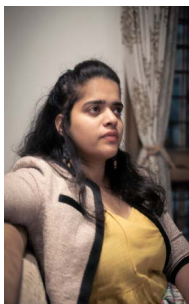
### Production

Budget	161,240 €
Financing in place	41,800 €
Production company	Independent producer
Workshop & platform attended	koPro/PAS 2021
Current situation	In development



### Nandan Gandhapuneni - Director

Nandan Gandham is a 26 year old independent filmmaker who has worked as a director, sound designer and cinematographer on several short films and short documentaries. He has worked at Apostrophe Films in Mumbai, AVM Studios in Chennai and has also assisted on an NFDC funded feature film, before venturing out on his own. He has completed his Masters in Filmmaking from AISFM, Hyderabad. His latest work is an ongoing feature length documentary, about the reformation of lifetime imprisoned convicts inside the central prison of Mysuru, through art & theatre. He is both shooting and directing the documentary, under the mentorship of Mr. Girish Kasaravalli, a world-renowned filmmaker from Karnataka. 'The Stink of Ripening', is his debut feature film.



### Ananya Ayachit - Producer

Ananya Ayachit is an independent film producer, based out of Hubli, Karnataka. After having worked at Red Chillies entertainment & Apostrophe films in Mumbai, she decided to continue her education and graduated from Annapurna International School of film & media, Hyderabad. She has produced short films and short documentaries. Her latest work is an ongoing feature documentary on the reformation of prisoners through theatre and art, at the Mysuru central prison. In 2019, she was the only woman from India to have been selected in the prestigious Producer's workshop at Film Bazaar. In November 2020, she was one of 12 selected participants from Asia for Irena Taskovski's master-class on creative producing, organized by Pame Film Festival in collaboration with British Council.



### Synopsis

After spending a year in seclusion according to Hindu customs, widowed Vijayanti (58) prepares to integrate herself into a group of orthodox upper – caste women in suburban Hubballi. Her daughter Kavya (28) has returned after years of staying away, finally giving in to her mother's wishes of a home-birthing. Having had a troubled relationship all their life, Kavya sees this as a chance to get closer to her forever aloof mother. Bhamu, a young upper – caste woman has been hired to take care of the new-born and also prepare the house for an event of welcoming a propitious Swamiji. During her stay, Bhamu sings songs and narrates folk-tales that set the mother - daughter into a journey of questioning their ancestral truths which shaped their identity. Things change drastically with the sudden and mysterious disappearance of Bhamu. While Kavya feels betrayed given that their relationship had grown intimate, Vijayanti, suddenly afraid of Bhamu's cryptic identity, goes into a frenzy of purifying the house; to the extent of performing a cleansing-ritual that would erase Bhamu's presence altogether. This story unfolds as a cold, enigmatic narration by Alakshmi – The fierce inauspicious Goddess of misery who thrives when the Gods are asleep.

### Director's statement

Born into a family dominated by women, I have always pondered upon the meaning of a mother figure. Literature and cinema have often injected a selfless, all-giving image of a mother into us. Having had a difficult relationship with my own mother, I began to realize that this image was far from reality. Through my film, I wish to bring out the subtle imperfections and anxieties, of taking up this glorified role.

As a writer and director, I trust in bringing forth a certain restraint when it comes to depicting our culture and interpersonal dynamics on screen. I feel this is in line with the generations of systematic and silent repression, we have been through. In 'The stink of ripening', the characters are stripped off their sentimentally fabricated images. We see them in difficult, even ugly intimate situations, but the audience is never forced into taking a side or sympathize. By abandoning this cycle of victim-perpetrator, we give space for flat, yet dynamic cinema, which elevates the medium into an anthropological study.

In terms of film language, the scenes will be constructed as a series of precise shots and at no point in the film will the camera seem unhinged. The soundscape, attenuates the profound experience of silence. White, considered as the colour of purity will undergo a subtle character arc of its own, becoming murkier, as the film progresses.

I hope this conceptual restraint and the philosophy to filmmaking will help us win over the practical difficulties of producing independent cinema; and make a film, which I hope will stand as a testament of today.

### Contact

**Producer**

Ananya Ayachit

ayachitananya@gmail.com

**Director**

Nandan Gandhapuneni

nandan.g94@gmail.com



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## TOUCH ME NOT Nepal

### Main Data

Category	Social Drama
Length	75 minutes
Language	Nepali
Shooting format	Digital
Shooting location	Nepal
Shooting dates	October 2022
Expected date of completion	May 2023
Stage of production	in development

### Production

Budget	176.000€
Financing in place	N/A
Production company	Paradise Pictures Pvt Ltd
Workshop & platform attended	KoPro/PAS 2021
Current situation	in development



### Arjun Subedi- Director

Ongoing Masters In Filmmaking, Wilmington University (2019).  
Bachelors in Digital Filmmaking (2009- 2012).  
He has also worked as an executive producer, editor, cinematographer, and directed a short film, in addition to directing dozen of music videos.



### Jeetendra Khatiwoda - Producer

Energetic and motivating leader with proven ability to effectively manage both personnel and projects. Self starter and strong independent worker. Excel at analyzing products and procedures to generate new ideas to improve efficiency and production marketability. Key member in any team developing and executing strategic business plans.

### Contact

Producer	Jeetendra Khatiwoda	jeetendra.khatiwoda@gmail.com
Director	Arjun Subedi	asubedi22@gmail.com



### Synopsis

Krishna (32) a teacher, his wife menuka (27) a housewife and their daughter deepa (7) are a happy family. Deepa is fond of her father. Krishna has a dream for his daughter, to make her a doctor but he is poor. So, he travels abroad for work. Krishna hasn't seen his daughter for five years. He returns back, without informing anyone, to surprise his daughter on her twelfth birthday. Menuka is shocked seeing him. Krishna asks Menuka about Deepa. Deepa is in a menstrual hut. Krishna is shaken. He wants to see his daughter but Menuka prohibits him. A tussle erupts between the husband and wife. Krishna cannot break inside the hut. His wife begs him. Society prohibits. He cannot go in. Deepa cries asking for help. He is helpless. He has to wait for seven days to see his daughter. Three days later, Deepa dies of over bleeding and suffocation inside the menstrual hut. Krishna, then, files a case of murder against the whole village- citing the societal taboo practice killed Deepa.

### Director's statement

Menstruation in Nepal has many names: Chhui, Chhaupratha. In Nepal Hindu women and girls are prohibited from participating in normal family activities while menstruating, as they are considered "impure". Due to deep misconceptions about the religion and the persisting taboo culture, it is believed that God will curse a menstruating woman who uses river water or a public tap, or touches a priest, religious books, flowers or cows, which are considered holy in Hinduism. In fact, she cannot eat rice, meat, pickle, citrus fruits, or milk products during menstruation. These practices vary with the caste, region, and religion. Chaupadi, practiced widely in 21 districts of West Nepal, requires that girls and women live in a cowshed or a separate hut outside the homes for five to seven days or thirteen days, sometimes. "Chau" means "impure," and "padi" means a "shed". Under this practice, menstruating girls and women have to sleep on the floor or wooden planks without even basic facilities. As a result, some of them contract diseases, some are bitten by snakes, and some are sexually harassed, raped, or murdered. I myself being from a very conservative household, have seen my sisters going through those painful seven days. They weren't even allowed to see the sun for those seven days, unless otherwise. We are in the digital age but our country despite going through multitude of changes and revolution haven't been able to erase this taboo completely. A movie, basically, is a complete mirror of our society. So, I thought it would be amazing to tell a true story about a father and his young daughter who happens to be on her first menstruation cycle, and how she ends up losing her precious life because of her religiously and culturally bound mother's ignorance and her blind faith on Chhau-padi (Impure-shed). It will also focus on the father's journey after the loss of his beloved daughter, and how he drags the entire social community to the local court along with his wife. This movie will address the cruelty and the baseless reality of our society which have been practiced in the name of religion and culture. I have tried to keep the narration as simple as possible, and I believe this movie will at least bring a little ray of hope in the fight against Chaupadi.