



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
2025 OFFICIAL SELECTION
SHORT FILMS COMPETITION

KATALOG Presents

ALI

A Voice By
ADNAN AL RAJEEV

PRESS KIT

LOGLINE

In a coastal town, women are not allowed to sing. A teenager joins a singing competition for a chance to move to the city, while hiding his true voice in a sinister way.

SYNOPSIS

Poddopur is a lily pluckers village where women's voices are forbidden, **Ali (15)** and his mother lead a life surrounded by the mountains. Ali has a secret on his throat that Salma diligently stitches and conceals. When news of a singing competition offering a chance to migrate to the other side of the mountain reaches them, Salma is filled with hope as Ali is a talented singer. But Ali refuses to take part in the competition. Ali's mother tries to convince him as she hopes, since godly people live on that side, Ali's secret will be saved and she won't have to whisper to his son anymore.

But Ali's interest is somewhere else. Ali gets caught red handed to his mother while watching a female song on the TV! Ali's mom reacts badly and thrashes the TV down and scolds Ali!

Finally the time comes. Ali auditions for the competition, wowing the godly judges who came here to pick the one from the other side of the mountain. Perhaps he'll win.

But he is found sitting on a boat. Ali discards the cloth hiding his secret wound. As the stitches come undone, an ethereal female voice escapes from his throat, revealing his true identity. Ali's mother, tearful but resigned, no longer holds him back. For the first time, Ali finds both freedom and peace through his song.

B I O G R A P H Y

SURNAME: RAJEEV

GIVEN NAME: ADNAN AL

NATIONALITY: BANGLADESHI

DATE OF BIRTH: 11 MAY 1987

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Adnan Al Rajeev made his directorial debut in 2008 with a TV fiction for local industry. He gained widespread acclaim for his subsequent fictional works, including *Bikal Belar Pakhi* and *YouTumor*. His distinct approach, combining family dynamics and realistic storytelling, has cemented his place as a leading figure in Bangladesh's contemporary cinema.

Beyond directing, Adnan is the founder of Runout Films, one of Bangladesh's premier production houses. Over the past 12 years, the company has produced nearly 1000 commercials, with Adnan personally directing over 500 of them. This journey helped Adnan to uplift his visual taste on a global standard.

He also served as the Executive Producer of *Radikals*, a Filipino short film directed by Arvin Belarmino, the first ever Bangladesh-Philippine Co- production, had its world premiere in the 63rd Semaine de la Critique at Cannes 2024, marking his entry into the international film scene. Adnan is now focused primarily on directing projects for global markets and world cinema.

F I L M O G R A P H Y

Bikal Belar Pakhi

Writer, Director: Adnan Al Rajeev

Duration: 41 minutes | Year: 2017 | Bangladesh

Screening link: <https://vimeo.com/video/1010886374>

Password - adnan.runout

YouTumor

Writer, Director: Adnan Al Rajeev

Duration: 119 minutes | Year: 2021 | Bangladesh

Screening link: <https://vimeo.com/video/1027744357>

Password - adnan.runout

TECHNICAL DETAILS

TITLE : ALI

COUNTRIES: BANGLADESH, PHILIPPINES

YEAR OF PRODUCTION: 2025

LANGUAGE: BENGALI

GENRE : ABSURD DRAMA

DURATION : 15 MINUTES

FORMAT: DIGITAL 2K

ASPECT RATIO: 3:2/1.5:1

DIRECTION : ADNAN AL RAJEEV

SCREENPLAY: ARVIN BELARMINO, KYLA ROMERO

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: HABIBUR RAHMAN TAREQ, KAMRUL HASAN KHOSRU, SHIHAB NURUN NABI

PRODUCER: TANVEER HOSSAIN, KRISTINE DE LEON

CAST: AL AMIN, INDRANI SHOMA

DOP: KAMRUL HASAN KHOSRU

PRODUCTION DESIGN: SHIHAB NURUN NABI

COSTUME DESIGN: ANIQA ZAHEEN

SOUND: BIEN SPARKS

EDITOR: TAIFUL CHOWDHURY SHADHIN

PRODUCTION COMPANY : KATALOG.

LINE PRODUCTION COMPANY : RUNOUT FILMS

CO-PRODUCING COMPANIES: NARRA, BAREBONES, GETAFIXXI

INTERNATIONAL SALES: LIGHTS ON

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

BY ADNAN AL RAJEEV

In my country, expressing your true thoughts or standing up for what you believe in comes at a cost. The government suppresses dissent, and speaking out—whether about injustice, personal beliefs, or anything that challenges the prevailing narrative—can lead to serious consequences. Social media trials swiftly turn public opinion against you, and the authorities ensure that going against the flow is met with punishment, whether direct or indirect. Fear becomes a constant companion, and self-censorship a survival instinct. The right to free speech exists in theory, but in reality, it is a privilege reserved only for those who conform.

Recently, while attending a film festival, I found myself questioning the path I've taken as a storyteller. I've built a thriving advertising company, a venture that sustains itself—a success by many measures. Yet, in a country where dissent is swiftly silenced, I am haunted by a question: Am I truly on the right path? To find an answer to this, I made *ALI*.

In this film, a young boy's struggle to express his female voice becomes a metaphor, mirroring those silenced in society. The boy's experience reflects the oppressed, forced to deny parts of themselves to survive. The oppressed, like the boy himself, are trapped in their own cycle of control, bleeding from the weight of repression. In this world, the cost of authenticity is high, and only the privileged have the freedom to be heard. This is an allegory for the universal tension between self and society.

Through this intimate tale, I want to reveal a much larger truth—a narrative of love, sacrifice, and the complex ways families and communities shape who we become. It's a story that goes beyond my nation's struggle, resonating with a universal reality: too many voices remain quieted everywhere. By bringing these unheard stories to light, I hope to honor Bangladesh's legacy of defiance and speak for those whose truths are silenced. My story will be theirs.

PRODUCTION COMPANY



katalog is a boutique film company founded by a collective of filmmakers from diverse regions across Asia, united by a shared vision of storytelling. We are passionate about amplifying fresh talents and unique voices from Asia, championing unconventional narratives and bold, creative visions. We believe in pushing the boundaries of filmmaking, supporting wild ideas and experimental storytelling that challenge traditional formats.

Our mission is to provide a platform for emerging filmmakers who are eager to bring their distinct, often untold stories to the global stage. By nurturing daring concepts and innovative perspectives, **we aim to foster a new wave of cinematic expression from Asia, one that is fearless, thought-provoking, and unapologetically original.**

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PRODUCERS DETAILS

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