



108 MIN

NEPAL/GERMANY/BRAZIL/
FRANCE/NORWAY

2026

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NEPALI

SCREENINGS IN CANNES

THU. MAY 14th, 4:15 PM @ Olympia 2
(Market Screening)

SAT. MAY 16th, 9:30 AM @ Olympia 8
(Market Screening)

TUE. MAY 19th, 9:30 AM @ Riviera 2
(Market Screening)

WED. MAY 20th, 11:00 AM @ Salle Debussy
(World Premiere)

THU. MAY 21st, 11:45 AM @ Cineum 3

THU. MAY 21st, 8:15 PM @ Bazin

FRI. MAY 22nd, 9:15 AM @ Cineum X

— ELEPHANTS IN THE FOG

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SYNOPSIS

In a remote Nepalese village nestled deep in the forest, Pirati leads a house of Kinnar women, an ancient third-gender community both revered and feared for their believed power to bless or curse. As wild elephants roam the darkness, the villagers are forced to conduct nightly patrols to protect their crops and homes, with Pirati's Kinnar family volunteering one member each night.

Pirati dreams of escaping with the mustachioed Drum Master she loves, against the sacred vows of celibacy of her community. But when one of her daughters disappears during a nightly patrol, and she's met with cold indifference by police, Pirati is left with no choice but to investigate the disappearance herself. As the mystery unravels, Pirati stirs up dangerous tensions that threaten to sever the ties she has forged with her family, forcing her to choose between love and her beloved community...

A CONVERSATION WITH ABINASH BIKRAM SHAH



What made you want to tell a story about the Kinnar community? How did you approach them and how did you gain their trust?

The story began with my fascination for the Kinnar community's idea of a chosen family. They have survived by redefining kinship, creating mother-daughter lineages built not through blood, but through shared necessity, care, and love. I was deeply moved by that resilience.

I was also drawn to the contradiction of their place within South Asian society. They are often pushed to the margins, yet invited into intimate spaces as spiritual figures whose blessings are believed to bring fortune and whose curses are feared. That tension between rejection and dependence felt deeply human to me.

In approaching the community, trust had to come before filmmaking. For too long, Nepalese cinema has reduced the Kinnar community to flat caricatures, as comic reliefs or hyper-sexualized tropes. I was determined not to break their trust by forcing them into those narrow boxes. Gaining that trust meant simply being present: listening, learning, and acknowledging that their lives cannot be reduced to social symbols. I wanted to portray them in their full, messy, beautiful entirety, with their humor, their tenderness, their flaws, and their anger.

As for accessibility, I don't believe in simplifying a culture for an audience. If you remain truthful to universal emotions, the longing for security, the fear of loss, the complexities of family, the barriers of the 'unfamiliar' disappear. People can enter the story from any corner of the world because they recognize the heartbeat underneath it.

How did you put together this cast? And how did you work with the lead, Puspa Thing Lama in building the character of Pirati?

The casting process was a two-year journey. To remain truthful to the story, I felt it was essential that our actors come from the communities we were portraying, people whose presence alone carried the weight of lived experience. We traveled across the country, meeting people from the gender and sexual minority communities to find our leads.

However, we also integrated trained actors from theatre and film. That balance was vital; non-actors bring raw unpredictability, while professionals provide discipline and craft. The friction between the two created a space that felt both grounded and alive.

Puspa brought something very special to Pirati. She carried dignity, emotional intelligence, vulnerability, and strength all at once. However, we faced a significant hurdle early on. Like many in Nepal, she had been shaped by the heightened, over-the-top aesthetics of Nepalese and Indian soap operas. She believed that "acting" required a layer of artifice, that she needed to give a 'performance'.

My greatest challenge was helping her unlearn that performance. I needed her to see that Pirati wasn't a fictional character from a script. She was a vessel for Puspa's own history and the histories of thousands like her. We spent months in conversation and acting workshops, but the breakthrough didn't come from a technique, it came from trust.

Once that trust was established, the faked emotions evaporated. When Puspa realized that she didn't need to become someone else, that being herself was her most powerful tool, the character of Pirati began to flow naturally. It was no longer a performance; it was just the truth.

What are the origins of the story? Is it based on real events?

To an extent, the film is inspired by real events, though it isn't a direct adaptation of a single incident. The first flicker of the story appeared during the lockdown while I was scrolling through TikTok. I came across videos of Kinnar women, joyful, vibrant glimpses of their lives and community.

What struck me was the jarring contrast: the videos were filled with life, but the comment sections were often filled with cruelty. Despite the hate directed at them, they continued to exist and share themselves openly. That contradiction stayed with me. I initially set out to meet women from the Kinnar community with the idea of making a short film.

Around the same time, a violent incident involving a trans woman made headlines. I was deeply disturbed, not just by the violence, but by how quickly the public conversation shifted toward judging her life rather than addressing the crime committed against her.

As I spent more time with these women, hearing their stories and witnessing the profound relationships they built among themselves, I realized that a short film couldn't hold the weight of what I was experiencing. The film eventually grew from the collision of those moments: what I saw online, the stories I heard in person, and the deep impression left by a community that manages to find joy and connection in a world that often tries to categorize them away.

The landscapes are very evocative. How would you introduce this unique place in to people who aren't familiar with it?

Nepal is often reduced to postcard images of mountains, but the landscape of this film is far more complex. The story breathes through the contrast between two very specific places

in the southern belt of Nepal, near the Indian border. This is a land of plains and jungles, far from the snowy peaks people usually imagine.

Pirati and her "daughters" live in Thori, a village cradled by the forest. While beautiful, it is a place of isolation where everyone's business is known. In a small community like this, it is hard to have a private life.

Her lover, however, lives in Birgunj, a major border city. Birgunj is the total opposite: it is a landscape of concrete, heavy traffic, and the chaotic energy of an industrial hub that never sleeps. Ironically, the city offers Pirati a different kind of sanctuary. In the noise and crowd of the city, she can hide in plain sight. Because everyone there is so busy with their own lives, she can meet her lover without being judged or even noticed.

For Pirati, traveling between these two places is more than a commute; it is a movement between two different states of being. She is caught between the community that shaped her and the promise of a "normal" life where she can finally be anonymous. By filming in these real locations, I wanted to show that her choice is a physical tug-of-war between two worlds that rarely understand one another.

The film offers a fascinating glimpse into the rituals and customs of Nepalese society. How do you see your film within the frame of Nepalese cinema?

Nepal is culturally vast despite its size, so this film only offers a small glimpse into the specific world of the Kinnar community. They have their own festivals, rituals, and hierarchies, carrying a distinct identity of their own. I wanted to show these rituals as they truly exist, interwoven with the larger fabric of Nepalese society.

Historically, our cinema has grown under the shadow of the massive industry next door in India, and those influences naturally exist. But even within that, Nepalese cinema has always struggled to carve out its own unique identity. However, what remains less visible on screen are the lives of those outside of power, class privilege, and traditional ideas of gender. That is what has always drawn me to filmmaking, the stories of those who rarely make it into mainstream storytelling.

It is difficult for me to say where my own film stands in history; that is for time to decide. I only know that this film is shaped by everything that came before it. It is a product of both the Nepalese stories I grew up with and the world cinema that taught me my craft.

Who would you say has influenced your filmmaking?

It is difficult to narrow down my influences, as so many writers and filmmakers have shaped my perspective. However, the two who stay closest to my heart are Satyajit Ray and Hou Hsiao-hsien.

What moves me in both of their work is how gently and truthfully they observe people. They treat their characters with patience and dignity, understanding that intimate lives are never separate from the larger society. From Ray, I learned the importance of emotional clarity and how to find the extraordinary in the ordinary. From Hou Hsiao-hsien, I learned the power of silence and how the environment itself can tell a story as much as any dialogue. Whether they were working with non-actors or professionals, they had a genius for making everyone feel natural within the same world. From them, I learned the importance of empathy in the frame.

Their work proves that if you tell these stories honestly, they become timeless. Their films feel as urgent today as they did decades ago

because they capture the raw, unchanging truth of what it means to be human. That is what I hope to achieve with my own work.

Visually, how did you approach shooting? What was important to you in terms of cinematography?

A key visual reference for me was Nan Goldin, especially her photographs from the 1980s and 1990s, particularly 'The Ballad of Sexual Dependency'. Both my DP Noé Bach and I were moved by the grit of those images, but even more by the tenderness within them. She photographed queer and marginalized communities without turning them into spectacle. The work came from within that world, so it carried intimacy, contradiction, humor, pain, and humanity all at once. But above all, there's an emotional honesty there, there's a presence. More than beauty, I was interested in that presence. That was important to both of us. We wanted the camera to feel close to the emotional life of the characters, not to observe them from a cold distance. We didn't want the images to feel "composed" in a clinical way; we wanted them to feel discovered. The goal was to create an intimacy so deep that the audience forgets the camera is there, leaving only the truth of the people on screen.

Can you tell us about the editing process? Your work with Andrew Bird and Paris Bergen uses very varied techniques that allow the film to span different genres, how did you work with them in the editing process?

I love editing as much as I love writing. However, it is also one of the most difficult stages because you have to surrender a certain amount of control.

Because the subject of this film is so deeply rooted in local Nepalese and Kinnar culture, I knew I needed an "outside eye", someone who could look at the footage without pre-conceived

notions. Since the film is intended for the world, not just Nepal, having editors like Andrew Bird and Paris Bergen was essential. Andrew brings a wealth of experience, and Paris, who is also a trans woman, brought a lived perspective that was vital to the film's soul.

Coming into my first feature, I'll admit I felt some intimidation at first; both Andrew and Paris had far more experience than I did. But that quickly evolved into a deep closeness. Our challenge was finding the right balance between genres. The film isn't a traditional thriller, but it uses those elements to tell a deeply human drama. We spent our time fine-tuning that tension, making sure the "thriller" pace never overwhelmed the emotional truth of the characters. In the end, their experience didn't just help me finish the film; it helped me find its heartbeat.

You use a blend of both modern and traditional music in the film which, despite depicting a society steeped in tradition, gives the film a very contemporary feel. Can you tell us about your choices of music?

My composer, Frederic Alvarez, and I wanted the music to reflect the dualities within the story: its deep roots in tradition and its forward-moving emotional current. Traditional sounds were essential because they are the organic heartbeat of the characters' world; they ground the film in its specific geography and culture.

We made a deliberate choice to let the score evolve into something more experimental and contemporary. We were interested in a fusion of sounds that could hold different worlds together at once. For me, this serves a deeper purpose. While the cultural setting of the film is specific, the experiences of longing, exclusion, and survival are borderless. By blending these musical textures, we wanted to suggest that these emotions echo across all societies. The music acts

as a bridge, allowing the audience to feel the "ancient" weight of tradition alongside the very modern, urgent reality of the characters' lives.

The score also unfolds with a dynamic arc that follows Pirati's journey, both inward and outward: her inner transformation, and his physical quest to search for his symbolic daughter, who disappears at the beginning of the film. In that sense, the music moves with her, from whisper to scream. It begins almost as a murmur, something buried or withheld, and gradually opens into something more raw, more fractured, more exposed. As if the sound itself were undergoing the same painful search as the character.

The presence of wild elephants creates a constant external threat. What do the elephants symbolize for you in relation to the social tensions within the village?

The elephants in the film carry the same contradictions as the people. In reality, they are intelligent, matriarchal, and protective, and in our culture, they are even tied to divinity through Lord Ganesh in Hinduism. But to a farmer whose crops are destroyed, that same elephant is a source of danger and fear. I was interested in that tension.

When you look closely, the way we treat nature isn't very different from the way we treat people. Whether it's caste, gender, or identity, it often comes from the same instinct: the desire to control what we see as "other." The exclusion of certain people and the violence against the land and animals are part of the same conversation.

We see this playing out today across the world. Modern conflicts and wars are often just this same instinct written in much larger, more tragic letters. Whether it is a border fence in a forest or a geopolitical boundary, the root is a fear of what we cannot categorize. We build walls, literal and metaphorical, to protect our-

selves from the "other," but in doing so, we often become the very thing we fear.

To keep the elephants away, villagers use everything from firecrackers and electric fences to symbolic practices like painting eyes on tree trunks. Those eyes, they are a human way of asking the wild to "see" us, hoping the forest might look back and stay away.

Do you see Pirati's journey as one of liberation, sacrifice, or something more ambiguous? How does Pirati's journey speak to all of us in your opinion?

The tension between belonging and escape is the heartbeat of the film. For Pirati, escape isn't just about leaving a place; it's about moving toward the "normal" life and reciprocal love she hasn't fully experienced until now.

She is caught in a difficult conflict, can she reach for her own happiness without abandoning the community that saved her when she had no

one? As she moves toward this new life, she fears repeating the same cycle of abandonment she once suffered. To stay is to sacrifice her only dream; to leave is to sacrifice her only home. There is no easy answer, only the reality of her choice and the price she must pay for it.

I don't see her journey as "liberation" in the traditional sense, because liberation usually implies leaving the past behind without looking back. For Pirati, it is more about the difficult cost of becoming oneself.

What do you hope audiences take away after watching the film?

I hope audiences leave with a sense of empathy that reminds them we are all searching for the same thing, 'to belong.' If the film clears even a little of the fog of prejudice, allowing someone to truly see another person, or perhaps even a part of themselves, then I feel the work has done something meaningful.

— BIOGRAPHY

ABINASH

BIKRAM SHAH

Abinash Bikram Shah is a Nepalese writer and director, alumnus of the Sundance Institute, Berlinale Talents, GMM - Film Independent, and Locarno Filmmakers Academy. He co-wrote *'The Black Hen'* (Venice Critics' Choice) and *'Shambhala'* (Berlin Competition 2024), both Nepal's Oscar entries. After his debut short *'Tattini'* reached international festivals, he became the first Nepali director in an official selection at Cannes in 2022 with *'Lori'*, which received a Jury Special Mention.



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— FILMOGRAPHY

ABINASH

BIKRAM SHAH

As Director (selected)

2026	<i>Elephants In The Fog</i> – Cannes Un Certain Regard
2022	<i>Lori</i> (Short Film) – Special Mention Cannes Competition

As Writer (selected)

2024	<i>Shambhala</i> – Berlinale Competition
2015	<i>The Black Hen</i> – Venice Critics Week
2012	<i>Highway</i> – Berlinale Panorama



A CONVERSATION WITH PUSPA THING LAMA

What made you want to work on the film? What drew you to the material?

What drew me to this film was its emotional truth. More than just a story, it reflects a lived reality that we, as a community, have long experienced but rarely seen represented with honesty. I felt a strong responsibility to be part of a project that brings this reality into the public eye.

“Elephants in the Fog” goes beyond portraying a marginalized community, it also explores the intimate emotional bond between a mother and daughter, while quietly questioning a society that defines motherhood only through blood. Its themes of identity, struggle, dignity, and human sensitivity resonated deeply with me.

This is not a film made simply for entertainment; it invites audiences to reflect, to feel, and to engage in dialogue. For me, being part of it was an opportunity to contribute to a more truthful representation of our lives, and to help carry those voices to a wider stage.

Your character represents a kind of matriarch in the Kinnar community. Could you explain who the Kinnars are to someone who has never encountered them before?

The idea of diversity is not new to our culture. Even the Rigveda, one of the oldest and most important Hindu scriptures, speaks of it as something natural. The Kinnar community includes people with diverse gender identities and expressions, particularly those who identify differently from the sex they were assigned at birth.

At the same time, it is important to say this clearly: we are complete human beings. We have dreams, emotions, relationships, and a desire for dignity and respect. We have families, we face struggles, and we aspire to live with honor, just like anyone else.

Being Kinnar is not about being “different” in a way that separates us, but about living truthfully in one’s own identity. We are part of this same society, and we are equally capable of leading, creating, and contributing to it.

In the film, you will see this reflected through my character, who embodies a maternal, guiding presence. She shows that we, too, carry love, protection, discipline, and responsibility, and that we can fulfill both familial and social roles.

It is important that we are not seen only through the lens of entertainment, but with humanity, equality, and respect. The simplest way to understand our community is not to see us as “others,” but as part of a shared “us.”

This is your first film role. How did you come into acting?

Since 2005, I have been working with the Blue Diamond Society Nepal, focusing on the rights and health of sexual and gender minority communities. From the time I came to understand my identity, I have identified myself as a transgender woman, with pride. In Nepal, Kinnar refers to a culturally rooted community, shaped through shared living, kinship, rituals, and collective belonging. While any transgender person may, through acceptance and belonging, become part of that community, I have not formally been initiated into that specific community structure. My connection to them comes from long-term engagement and mutual respect within the broader movement for gender and sexual minority rights in Nepal.

This journey has not been easy. It has taken a great deal of struggle, self-belief, and perseverance to reach where I am today. From a young age, I loved dancing and watching films, but I never imagined that I would one day be part of this world.

In many ways, my entry into acting feels like a coincidence. I first heard about “Elephants in the Fog” through a fellow community member. At the time, the casting team was looking for actors, and the casting director came to the district where I work to see if there were people from the community who might be interested. I helped coordinate and gather others for the meeting.

That day, he arrived late, and I was already getting impatient because I had another meeting to attend. I reacted quite directly and even scolded him for being late. I didn’t realize it then, but perhaps that moment, or my presence, caught his attention.

I had never seriously thought about becoming an actor, but with Abinash’s guidance and encouragement, I began this journey. Through the workshops, I had the opportunity to truly understand the story and the character, and that deepened my interest in the project.

At the same time, I felt a strong desire to bring forward the stories, pain, struggles, and beauty of my community in a meaningful way. In the beginning, I was afraid. I doubted whether I could do it. But I did not give up. I kept trying, I worked hard, and that is how I arrived here.

For me, acting is not just about performing in a film, it is my voice. Through it, I want to share my experiences, reflect the reality of the Kinnar community, and contribute to a more positive and understanding society.

Was there a rehearsal process? How did you work with Abinash in creating the character of Pirati? How did you prepare for the role?

Bringing Pirati to life in an honest and emotionally grounded way was not easy in the beginning. I felt a strong responsibility, and there was always a fear that even a small mistake might make the character fall into something repetitive or untrue. I was open about this with the team, and their support helped me grow through that uncertainty. I also gave my full effort to the process.

Rehearsals and workshops were essential. In the early stages, I didn’t even have the full script, which raised many questions for me. We would constantly explore scenes together, describing situations and building them on the spot through imagination. During the workshops, we were taken to Suvarnapur, and instead of staying within a rehearsal hall, we moved through villages and nearby forests, working within the environment of the story. That immersion helped me understand the character more deeply.

One of the most important aspects was language. Rather than relying strictly on scripted dialogue, we focused on the way people actually speak in daily life, which made the performance feel more natural and truthful.

Working with Abinash was central to shaping Pirati. I had never done acting professionally before this film. It took Abinash to see something in me and eventually choose me as his Pirati. The process itself took almost two to three years. During that time, he would travel across Nepal to visit me while I was working, and he would encourage me not just to perform the character, but to truly feel her.

To prepare for the role, I tried to live with her. I became more attentive to emotions, to behavior, and to the way she moves through the world. I spent time in Suvarnapur, immersing myself in the environment of the story. To build the relationship between mother and daughter, I worked closely with the actor playing Apsara, and through that process, we tried to genuinely feel that bond.

For my preparation, I drew from personal experiences and from observing the realities of the Kinnar community. I focused less on external gestures and more on understanding her inner life, her pain, her love, her struggle, and her strength.

Perhaps that is why playing her did not feel like acting. I felt like I was living her.

Pirati is a strong character and someone we haven't really seen in cinema in the West at least. Who are your acting inspirations? Did you have anyone or any character in mind when you were performing the role of Pirati?

My inspiration for Pirati came primarily from real life, from Kinnar individuals and marginalized women who continue to live with dignity despite immense struggle. I was deeply moved by their resilience, their quiet pain, their capacity for love, and their determination to exist on their own terms. Rather than drawing from a single reference, I tried to absorb a con-

vergence of lived experiences and bring them together within the character.

On a personal level, my mother was also a major inspiration. She raised her three children alone, without a partner, while navigating both family and societal pressures. Through her gaze, I learned how to understand Pirati, especially her sense of responsibility, sacrifice, and unconditional care. That perspective deeply shaped my emotional approach to the role.

My own experiences of being seen, misunderstood, rejected, and eventually accepted also became part of the character. While I have been influenced by powerful performances in world cinema and strong female and trans characters, I was very conscious of keeping Pirati rooted in a Nepali social reality.

For me, Pirati was never just one person. In my mind, she is made up of many lives, people who are constantly negotiating love, dignity, and identity in a world that often denies them all three. I wanted audiences to not just see her as a character, but to see a real world reflected through her eyes. Balancing her strength, softness, pain, and defiance became central to my performance.

How does it feel to represent the Kinnar community on the global stage?

Representing not only the Kinnar community, but the broader transgender community on a global stage is an immense honor, a deep responsibility, and an emotional achievement. For me, it is not only a personal journey, but an opportunity to carry the voice, struggles, dignity, and rights of an entire community into spaces where we have often been unseen or unheard.

Standing on this stage, I feel as though I am carrying the hopes, courage, and resilience of thousands of Kinnar and gender minority individuals. Many of them continue to face discrimination and challenges, yet still fight to assert their identity and existence. In that sense, I do not stand here alone.

This moment allows us to bring forward those lived experiences, to speak openly about

the inequalities we face, and to raise our voices for equality, inclusion, and human rights. It is also a reminder of how much responsibility I carry, and not just to tell my own story, but to represent those who have been denied the same opportunities and platforms.

At the same time, I believe this visibility allows the world to recognize our existence, our strength, and our contributions with greater respect.

For me, this is the beginning of change. A moment where diversity is no longer seen as a limitation, but as a strength that deserves recognition and dignity.

You play a matriarch in a small close-knit family. In your opinion, how do you take care of yourself and others close to you if the community at large or even the state are part of a system of oppression towards you? What do you do that keeps you going?

When your existence is questioned by society or even the state, even caring for yourself and your loved ones becomes resistance. In such moments, the first necessity is to build a small, trusted circle of people who accept you as you are. Even in nature, we see how living beings create systems of protection and balance in order to survive. That understanding stayed with me.

In the world of Elephants in the Fog, I also observed how elephants live in groups, where leadership is not about dominance but about care, protection, and responsibility. One individual guides the herd, ensuring safety and continuity, and this cycle continues throughout life. That image stayed very close to me emotionally.

Even voiceless beings in nature find ways to survive together. In the same way, when the world feels too large or too harsh, it is this small circle, family, friends, chosen community, that becomes the space where we can breathe.

For me, care is not only physical protection, but emotional presence: listening to one another, supporting each other in exhaustion,

and reminding each other, "you are not alone." To protect love, dignity, and hope within oppressive systems is, in itself, a powerful act.

What keeps me going is self-belief. The understanding that our existence has value, and that our courage can open paths for future generations. Strength does not always come from big victories, but often from small, everyday acts: the love of family, the support of community, pride in identity, and the belief that change is possible.

To keep living, to keep loving, and to remain true to one's self. These are not just personal choices. They are forms of hope, and forms of resistance.

In a world where gender non-conforming people are often being used as political scapegoats, what would be your message to other gender non-conforming people across the world facing prejudice?

As a transgender person myself, standing where I am right now, I carry both pride and a deep sense of responsibility. When I see gender non-conforming people being used as political scapegoats, I am reminded that this is not just a local issue. It is something our community faces across the world.

We are not strangers to each other. No matter where we are, we are part of the same family. That truth cannot be denied. My message is simple: we are not a subject of debate. We are not a political tool. Our identity, our dignity, and our lives are far greater than any narrative shaped by fear, power, or control.

What is done to us is not a reflection of our worth. It is a reflection of broken systems.

History has shown us that even when inequality feels overwhelming, change is always possible through courage, solidarity, and persistence. Many of the rights we now have once felt impossible, yet they were won because people refused to disappear.

At the same time, resistance does not always have to be visible or loud. Protecting your safety and mental health is also resist-

ance. Sometimes, simply surviving, continuing to exist with dignity, is an act of defiance in itself.

You are not alone. All around the world, there are people, within and beyond the LGBT-QIA+ community, who stand for equality, dignity, and justice. From Nepal, I have also seen small but real changes beginning to take shape, and that gives me hope.

Hope is not weakness. It is a way of imagining and moving toward a more just future. And I truly believe that even if change is slow, it is always possible.

What do you think the reception of the film will be in Nepal? What do you hope audiences will take away from the film?

I hope audiences in Nepal receive this film not just as entertainment, but as a reflection of realities that are often left unspoken. For me, it is a story that carries a very clear emotional truth, like clear water, like a mirror, inviting people to see lives and experiences that exist around them but are rarely acknowledged.

At its core, the film tells the story of a mother searching for her lost daughter, moving through many stages of hardship, yet never losing her courage or fear for her child's safety. Her journey is shaped entirely by love, resilience, and an unwavering determination to protect her child at any cost. Through her, we see a form of motherhood that expands beyond traditional definitions.

In our society, the struggles of people from different identities, classes, and communities are often unseen or unspoken. I hope this film encourages audiences to pause, to reflect, and to question, whether by recognizing fragments of their own lives within it, or by beginning to understand someone else's reality for the first time.

More than anything, I hope audiences leave with empathy, humanity, and acceptance. A sense that difference is not a weakness, but a natural and beautiful part of existence. And if the film is able to shift even a small perspective, if it can open even a small space of understanding, then that, for me, would be its greatest success.

PUSPA THING LAMA

Puspa Thing Lama is a long-time social activist and advocate who has dedicated more than two decades to the LGBTIQIA+ rights movement in Nepal, including the upliftment of Kin-nar communities. A trans woman herself, she has worked since 2006 as a key community leader and focal person, helping create change through advocacy, awareness, and support for those often pushed to the margins. Alongside her activism, she remains deeply connected to her family, culture, and everyday community life. Outside her work, she finds joy in reading, travel, dance, and the arts, which continue to shape her understanding of freedom, dignity, and human connection.



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CAST

Pirati	Puspa Thing Lama
Joon	Sahab Din Miya
Chameli	Jasmin Bishwokarma
Apsara	Aliz Ghimire
Maya	Joel Gurung
Master	Aashant Sharma
MJ	Sanjay Gupta
Gurumata	Umesha Pandey
DSP Drishti	Gauri Malla
Gurung Dai	Maotse Gurung
Apsara's Mother	Shanti Giri
Nitu	Mahima Nawabagh
Inspector Shova	Akanchha Karki
Sweety	Mira Gurung
Pinky	Sasha Shrestha
Priest	Arjun Acharya
Maniya	Anil Kurmie
Ganga	Binita Gurung
Doctor at Morgue	Ram Babu Regmi

CREW

Screenwriter & Director	Abinash Bikram Shah
Story by	Abinash Bikram Shah & Sandeep Badal
Dialogue	Sandeep Badal
Director of Photography	Noé Bach
Editor	Andrew Bird
Editor	Paris J. Ludwig
Music Composer	Frédéric Alvarez
Production Designer	Mausam Aggrawal
Sound Mixer	Pedro Sá Earp
Sound Designer	Henrique Chiurciu
Sound Re-Recording Mix	Daniel Turini
Colorist	Marina Starke
Production Companies	Underground Talkies Nepal, Les Valseurs, Die Gesellschaft DGS
Co-Production Companies	Enquadramento Produções, Bubbles Project, Zischlermann Filmproduktion, Storm Films, Jayantii Creations
Producers	Anup Poudel, Justin Pechberty, Damien Megherbi, Michael Henrichs
Co-Producers	Tatiana Leite, Leonardo Mecchi, Paul Zischler, Verona Meier, Prachanda Shrestha, Soham Dhakal, Kumudini Gurung Shrestha, Martin Rehbock, Susanne Mann

CREW

Line Producer	Charles Audinet
Country	Nepal, Germany, Brazil, France, Norway
French Distributor	Les Valseurs Distribution and Arizona Distribution
International Sales	Best Friend Forever
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FILMPRODUKTION, STORM FILMS.

