

# **LAST FILM SHOW (CHHELLO SHOW)**

**A Pan Nalin Flight**

## **PRESS KIT**

**Duration: 110 minutes.**

**Language: Gujarati.**

**Color | Cinemascope | Dolby 5.1**

**India-France Co-production**

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## **MAIN CREDITS**

### **Main Cast:**

**Bhavin Rabari** (as Samay), **Bhavesh Shrimali** (as Fazal, Projectionist at the Galaxy Cinema), **Richa Meena** (as Baa, Samay's mother), **Dipen Raval** (as Bapuji Samay's father), **Paresh Mehta** (Galaxy Cinema Manager), **Vikas Bata** (as Nano), **Rahul Koli** (as Manu), **Shoban Makwa** (as Badshah), **Kishan Parmar** (as S.T.), **Vijay Mer** (as Tiku), **Alpesh Tank** (as Teacher Mr. Dave), and **Tia Sebastien** (as Leela Mila)

### **Main Crew:**

**Writer & Director: Pan Nalin**

**Director of Photography: Swapnil S. Sonawane**

**Editing: Shreyas Beltangdy & Pavan Bhat**

**Sound: Gilles Bernadeau, Harikumar M. Nair, Mikael Barre & Rinku Pathak**

**Costume Design: Sia Seth**

**Hair & Makeup: Sara Menitra**

**Production Design: Pan Nalin**

**Art Directors: Pankaj Pandya, Dushyant Kumar & Dhananjay Thakkar**

**Music: Cyril Morin**

**Colorist: Kevin Le Dortz**

**Associate DP: Linesh Desai**

**Chief AD: Subhadra Mahajan**

**Casting Director: Dilip Shankar**

**Associate Casting Director: Nayan Rana, Jackie Ramchandani**

**VFX Producer: Gyan Singh Pal**

**Line Producers: Kashyap Kapta, Ronak Goswami**

**Executive Producers: Yash Gonsai, Hemant Chaudhary & Shubham Pandya**

**Co-producer: Virginie Lacombe & Eric Dupont**

**Produced by: Pan Nalin, Dheer Momaya & Marc Duale**

**Production company: Chello Show LLP, Monsoon Films & Jugaad Motion pictures**

**World sales: Orange Studio**

## **LOGLINE:**

*When the magic of movies conquers nine-year young Samay's heart; he moves heaven and earth in pursuit of his 35mm dreams unaware of heartbreaking times that await him...*

## **SYNOPSIS:**

Set in the remote Indian countryside of 2010, Last Film Show is an ode to cinema and the wonder movies create for all those who experience it's magic. After watching a movie at the Indian Galaxy Cinema, young, free-spirited SAMAY's life turns upside down as he passionately falls in love with films. He steals money from his father's struggling small tea shop, and skips school to watch movies. Samay and his gang passionately begin to create their own 35mm movie of their dreams. Soon Samay's father discovers his nine-year old son's 'immoral' obsession with the movies and physically punishes him and warns him to stay away from the 'filthy' world of films. For Samay it is too late as he is already smitten by the world of movies. Continuing to pursue his obsession with the movie, Samay's path crosses with FAZAL, the projectionist at the Galaxy Cinema. They strike a deal. Samay will let him eat the delicious food that his mother has lovingly made for him.- in return for Fazal letting him watch movies all day from the projection room. In no time their "food-for-films" deal turns into an endearing long- lasting friendship. Soon however, the unlikely duo will be forced to make heartbreaking choices as an era of change is sweeping through the country -- and ultimately their dreams will be altered forever..

## **TAGLINE:**

"Stories become light, light becomes films, and films become dreams."

## **CAST PROFILES**

### **Bhavin Rabari as Samay**

Nangesh Bhavin Aalabhai, aka Bhavin Rabari, age 9, belongs to the Rabari tribe and lives in a remote village of Vasai in Gujarat. Bhavin studies at his village school, and also helps out his grandfather to sell tea at his tea-stall. He is very proud of his Rabari and Kathiawadi heritage. Bhavin rarely goes to see movies as cinema halls are very far in the town. Bhavin likes a very pretty girl in his class named Riya. He thinks she likes him back as it shows on her face, but they never talk.

### **Bhavesh Shrimali as Fazal (Galaxy Cinema Projectionist)**

Previously, Bhavesh Shrimali has acted in a few Gujarati movies and TV series but this is the first major lead role in a movie for him. He is better known as a stage actor, and singer for twenty years. He is also known for his versatile talent, live impressions and mimicry performances. He won Best Actor Award for the play “Postcard like Home” in Ahmedabad.

### **Richa Meena as Ba (Samay’s mother)**

Richa Meena grew up in Jaipur, Rajasthan, where she discovered her passion for acting while doing theatre. She was first noticed by the German photographer George Kurian and soon after was offered the lead role of Mumtaz Mahal for the Emmy nominated docu-drama « Secrets of Taj Mahal » (2011) produced by NatGeo. She has since acted in several award-winning movies, including the American feature « Red Gold » (2014) « Running Shaadi » (2017), « Teen Mahurat » (2018), and the French short « Ghumantu - The Wanderer » (2020). She won Best Actor award for the film « Kasai » (2019) at Moonlight Film Festival. Richa Meena has also been the muse of photographer Steve McCurry.

### **Dipen Raval as Bapuji (Samay’s father)**

Dipen is a well known Gujarati stage, film and television artist. He has acted in about 75 Gujarati plays, and movies. He has also done extensive work in Gujarati television. He won Best Supporting Actor Award in Chitrlekha Drama Competition in 2014.

## Lala Gang from Chalala

### **Vikas Bata as Nano**

A cobbler's son, Vikas Dineshbhai Bata, age 8, is the youngest and naughtiest of the lot. He likes swimming and watching TV. He loves his mother more than his father especially because he always gets beaten by his father for his mischievousness. Surprisingly, he is scared of his younger brother, aged 5 because he is the one who beats him the most.

### **Rahul Koli as Manu**

Rahul Ramubhai Koli, age 11, belongs to the Koli community and lives in a family of eight people in the village of Happa. He is fond of animals and is a proud owner of 3 goats and 2 sheep. His hobbies include swimming, drawing and spending time with his cattle. He wants to learn English soon and wants to become a police officer in the future.

### **Shoban Makwa as Badshah**

Shoban Farooq Makwa, age 10, belongs to the Siddi community of African descent. Shobhan owns 9 pairs of pigeons, and starts his day by feeding them. As a prank he once freed his friend's pigeons and got the worst scolding of his life. But he still has plans to repeat this prank. He doesn't understand science, and doesn't want to make an attempt to understand it.

### **Kishan Parmar as ST**

Kishan Bharat Parmar, age 10, resides in a hostel and belongs to the community of weavers. As weaving crafts traditions nearly extinct his father now works as a construction worker. Kishan is afraid of snakes and hates violence in any form.

### **Vijay Mer as Tiku**

Vijay Vibhabhai Mer, age 11, belongs to the Bharwad tribe. He is fond of horses, Megha being the name of his favourite horse. But he has also got his worst punishment because of the horses as he once took Megah for a bath into a lake while he himself did not know how to swim.

## **CREW PROFILES**

### **Writer, Director & Producer: Pan Nalin**

Pan Nalin' ANGRY INDIAN GODDESSES (Mongrel Media / Netflix) has been enjoying top critical and commercial success across the world. It is the first Indian film to win Audience Choice Award First RunnerUp at the Toronto International Film Festival 2015 and Prix du Public at the Rome Film Festival 2015; followed by many other awards. Pan Nalin came into global limelight with SAMSARA (Miramax) a massive commercial and critical success worldwide and won him some thirty plus international awards including Grand Jury Prize at AFI Fest and Santa Barbara Intl Film Fest. Many critics and spectators considered SAMSARA a *groundbreaking* film. Nalin's romantic epic VALLEY OF FLOWERS(Pandora/TF1/France2) is considered a major *underground* hit. This Japan-France-Germany co-production still continues to enjoy multiple-platform releases with cult success worldwide. As a writer, Nalin's tragicomedy screenplay SLIGHTLY SANE won the CJ Entertainment's Award for The Best International Project at Asia Film Market, Busan, South Korea.

Nalin has also made several documentaries with BBC, Discovery, Canal Plus and other leading international networks. His multiple awards winning feature documentary AYURVEDA: ART OF BEING(Kino) was theatrically released worldwide with major success. Nalin's feature documentary FAITH CONNECTIONS (Cite Films / Jungle Book) was an Official Selection at Toronto, won the Audience Choice Award at IFFLA Los Angeles and it has been theatrically released worldwide. In 2006 Pan Nalin was awarded Spain's highly prestigious Vida Sana Award. Also in 2007, David Flint's Triangle Media Group UK, awarded Pan Nalin as one of the Top 50 Achievers in Global Mainstream Media in the field of Film, Theatre & Drama. Nalin also made it into The Better India's prestigious list of "25 NRI (Non-Resident Indians) Across The World Who Have Made India Proud." Nalin recently completed a first New Zealand – India co-production THE DISAPPEARANCE OF EVA HANSEN, a spiritual thriller set in the Himalayas starring David Wenham and Emmanuelle Beart. Partly autobiographical LAST FILM SHOW is his first Gujarati language film.

### **Producer: Dheer Momaya**

Dheer founded Jugaad Motion Pictures in late 2018, two years of prolific creation, has led Jugaad to be one of the highest regarded production companies in the country, he was recently featured on the coveted Forbes 30 under 30 list. His first feature film "Teen Aur Aadha" has been co-produced by Anurag Kashyap and has won over 18 awards to date and is now streaming globally on Netflix. His second film "Namdev Bhau" premiered at the Busan International Film Festival followed by screenings at BFI London Film Festival (UK Premiere), Palm Springs (US Premiere), and Goteborg (Swedish Premiere). The third feature, titled "Last Film Show" is an Indo-French co-production and is being distributed worldwide by France's mighty Orange Studio.

Dheer Momaya was spotlighted as a top producing talent at the prestigious Berlinale Talents Program, with a project in the Berlinale Co-production Market. He was also the only Indian selected at the 2019 Trans Atlantic Partners program in Germany and Canada. His music video for Prateek Kuhad's "cold/mess" was deemed 'The Best Music Video of the Year' by Rolling Stone. His videos 'Sage' and 'Liggi' for Ritviz, have over 200 million views on Youtube and have gone on to be called "millennial anthems". Having worked with some of the largest record labels (Sony Music, Spinnin Records, Atlantic Records) in the world, Jugaad is widely regarded as the most prolific music video creators of India. Jugaad has also developed and produced award-winning commercials and digital films for multinational brands like Levi's, Volkswagen, Xiaomi, Bacardi, Netflix, Unilever, Bumble, and Tinder. 2021, will mark Dheer's foray into high-quality series production, starting with a Young Adult comedy-drama show for Netflix.

### **Director of Photography Swapnil S. Sonawane**

Swapnil Sonawane is an Indian cinematographer widely known for his work on feature films, series and commercials. He was DP on Netflix's first original series "Sacred Games" seasons in India. Soawane is a frequent collaborator of Pan Nalin, and he has been DP on several movies including Angry Indian Goddesses. He has also been cinematographer of movies like Newton, AK vs. AK, and Zubaan. Sonawane is also a photographer and often dwells in argentic celluloid photo works. He has received and won several nominations for Best Cinematography for his work.

### **Editors: Shreyas Beltangdy and Pavan Bhat**

**Pavan Bhat:** Born in Bengaluru, Pavan Bhat is a film editor & filmmaker, based out of Mumbai & Bengaluru, India. His feature films as an editor include 'Bhasmasur' by Nishil Sheth (Streaming on Netflix), 'Nirmal Anand ki Puppy' by Sandeep Mohan (Releasing in 2020-21), as a co-editor on - 'Last Film Show' by Pan Nalin (Releasing in 2020-21), 'Phir Se Shaadi' by Imran Rasheed (Releasing in 2020-21), & as an additional editor on 'Bulbul Can Sing' by Rima Das (Streaming on Netflix). These films have won accolades & appreciation of the audiences and critics alike, at various film festivals across the world. Although a computer engineer by qualification, he holds a diploma in filmmaking from Whistling Woods International, Mumbai. He has been actively involved in films, documentaries, ads, music videos, promos & trailers since 2013-14, after working in various roles ranging from assistant editor/intern to post-production assistant on films like 'Angry Indian Goddesses' by Pan Nalin, 'Tumbbad' by Rahi Anil Barve, & 'Kothanodi' by Bhaskar Hazarika & many more. In addition to editing and filmmaking, he also has a penchant for teaching and has served as an adjunct editing professor at Miami Ad School, Mumbai. He currently teaches post-production at the DICE Vancouver Film School, Mumbai.

### **Sound: Harikumar M. Nair**

Harikumar Madhavan Nair is a multiple award winning audiographer and sound designer. He works in Hindi and Malayalam cinema. He has also worked on numerous documentary films and has won 3 National Film Award for Best Non-Feature Film Audiography in A MEMORY OF THE SEA (Documentary), A PESTERING JOURNEY (Documentary) and DO DIN KA MELA (Documentary).

### **Costume Designer: Sia Seth**

Having grown up with a keen eye for aesthetics, Sia always dreamt of creating. After studying Fashion Apparel Design, Sia has been working with major European fashion brands since 2011. From being a designer at a Spanish buying house NOVOPROM, she has been presenting Indian textiles in the world of manufacturing and exports for brands like PULL AND BEAR, STRADIVARIUS, PEPE JEANS, MANGO, ZARA, DESIGUAL, SWAROVSKI, etc. Alongside this, Sia has been running a clothing line in women's sustainable and organic fashion for the domestic market. While working as a Stylist, Sia developed immense passion for creating characters to portray beautiful stories in the form of digital media and television. LAST FILM SHOW counts as her first step into feature films.

### **Music Composer Cyril Morin**

Cyril Morin is an Academy member and a multi-faceted artist. He has scored over 120 soundtracks and done orchestrations for other artists. His score for the critically acclaimed "Samsara" (directed by Pan Nalin with Christy Chung), won honors at AFI and fests in Santa Barbara and Melbourne. Morin's many international accolades include two nods from the Auxerre International Soundtrack festival for "The Syrian Bride" (Directed by Eran Riklis with Hiam Abbas) and "Zaina" (with Simon Abkarian). He was nominated for a World Soundtrack Award and a European Film Award, and his score for "Little Jerusalem" (directed by Karin Albou with Elsa Zylberstein), which was screened at the Cannes Film Festival, earned him two awards. He scored Pan Nalin's "Valley of Flowers," which won Best Jury Award at IFFLA LA. Other projects include "Autumn" (directed by Ra'up Mcgee and awarded in Newport Beach), "A Simple Heart" (the Flaubert adaptation with Sandrine Bonnaire), "Ultimatum" (with Gaspard Uliel) and the Eran Riklis "Human Resources" (with Mark Ivanir). He also worked on numerous international documentaries including "Ayurveda, Art of Being" (awarded in Los Angeles at IFFLA). The feature documentary "Unmistaken Child" (directed by Nati Baratz) earned him an award in Israel for best score – the film was also honored in Boston, Fullframe, Riverun and recently aired on PBS). In addition to collaborating as orchestrator for a Madonna's song "Paradise" off of her album "Music," he's worked with multi-platinum French rapper Kerry James, a "Voice USA" finalist. He also produced and composed for albums with Indian singer Vidya Rao ("Song for Shunyata") and U.S. act Zera Vaughan ("The New Seed"). Also a solo artist, Morin's "The Evolutionist" has been hailed a "cinematic journey" and "a beautiful fusion of sound" by critics.

### **Hair & Make-up Design: Sara Menitra**

With portuguese descent and based in London, Sara Menitra is an Award Winning Makeup Artist, who's passion for film is influenced by loves of Art, Design, Architecture and Cinema. Sara's work is recognized for outstanding and exemplary work on her Films Bafta nomination in 2016 in which the lead actress won Best Actor Bafta for Couple in a Hole, and her Makeup Design on the major award winning Angry Indian Goddesses with it's premiere at TIFF, where

it came second to the oscar winning “Room” in the People’s Choice awards there. The film got an incredible standing ovation all over the world.

Sara is often requested for advice on skin care and personal beauty makeup especially for black and brown skin tones as this is one of her expertise. Sara has a degree in Graphic Design, took drawing classes at the National Society of Beaux Arts (Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes, SNBA) and went to Medicine School for one year where she attended Anatomy classes. Sara always held a fascination with the human body as an object of study and inspiration. Later on studied Makeup and Makeup effects in Los Angeles, London, Spain and Portugal.

### **Co-producer: Virgine Lacombe & Eric Dupont**

**Eric Dupont** - Run by Oscar-nominated producer Eric Dupont, Incognito Films produced Vladimir de Fontenay’s debut feature, MOBILE HOMES, which premiered at the Directors Fortnight in the 2017 Cannes Film Festival. Incognito also produced AVE MARIA, which premiered in Official Selection at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for the 2016 Academy Awards in the Live Action Short Film Category. Eric has been working in the film industry for over 20 years. He worked at Fildebroc, a Paris-based film production company, running their development slate. In his partnership with producer Michelle de Broca, they produced films directed by Cannes Festival contender Rolf de Heer and Oscar-nominated Dominique Deruddere. Eric also worked for the London-based talent agency Hamilton Hodell. Incognito Films’ current development slate focuses on auteur-driven projects from unique filmmakers around the world. The company recently expanded into the development and production of tv shows.

**VIRGINIE LACOMBE** has been a producer for fifteen years. She produced THE OTHER SON (2012) directed by Lorraine Lévy, the feature documentary FAITH CONNECTIONS (2013) by Pan Nalin, and July Hygreck’s comedy BLOCKBUSTER (2018), distributed by NETFLIX. She co-produced Vladimir de Fontenay’s MOBILE HOMES (2017), part of Cannes Director's Fortnight. Her latest film, PORT AUTHORITY (2019), executive produced by Martin Scorsese, premiered at Un Certain regard in Cannes. She is developing SPLINTERS OF LIFE, by Lorraine Levy, to be shot in Cambodia, and FLARES, Danielle Lessovitz’s second feature. Virginie is currently in prep of her next production, SILVER STAR by Ruben Amar, to be shot in the US in August.

## **COMPANY PROFILES**

### **Chhello Show LLP**

Chhello Show LLP is created to make Gujarati stories go global. Chhello Show LLP is a vision shared by internationally acclaimed filmmaker Pan Nalin and prolific producer Dheer Momaya, to produce movies and contents that tell stories about their nativelyland Kutch, Kathiawad and Gujarat. There are a number of Gujarati language projects in development at the Chhello Show LLP with aim to create authentic and original entertainment.

### **Monsoon Films**

Monsoon Films, some twenty years ago, started its launch with co-production on a feature documentary BORN CRIMINAL by Yolande Zauberman, which premiered at Cannes and won many awards. Monsoon Films is a vision shared by internationally acclaimed filmmaker Pan Nalin and the team of brave producers, is an independent Film and Content production company based in India. Monsoon Films' productions include an array of feature films, documentaries and television with an impressive association with producers, directors and acting talents from across the world. Monsoon Films produces work across all genres, which have distinctiveness, originality and top-notch production values. Monsoon Films have produced documentaries for BBC, Canal Plus, Discovery Channel, France 2, Arte, among others. Monsoon Films' feature length documentaries AYURVEDA ART OF BEING and FAITH CONNECTIONS are global hits with theatrical release, followed by multiple broadcasts and streaming. The company takes pride in creation of original content and follows it through all stages of the filmmaking process and distribution. Monsoon Films has also produced fiction feature films such as SAMSARA (Miramax / India-Germany-Italy-France) and VALLEY OF FLOWERS (TF1 International / India-France-Germany-Japan) ANGRY INDIAN GODDESSES(Netflix) and currently in production of LAST FILM SHOW.

### **Jugaad Motion Pictures**

JUGAAD MOTION PICTURES is a fully integrated global media and communications company that produces content and stories for film, television, and digital platforms, as well as immersive experiences and events. Originally known for their work on narrative fiction films and music videos, Jugaad now produces award-winning content across all platforms of media and has worked with some of the biggest global brands, and are in the process of developing drama series' for global OTT platforms. Jugaad has produced three features in the past two years. Their first feature "THREE AND A HALF" has been co-produced by Anurag Kashyap and has been selected for 40 International Film Festivals, winning 18 awards to date and is now streaming on Netflix. Their second feature "NAMDEV BHAU" premiered at the Busan International Film Festival followed by screenings at BFI London Film Festival (UK Premiere), MAMI (India Premiere), DIFF (Opening Film), IFFI, Palm Springs (US Premiere), and Goteborg Film Festival (Swedish Premiere). The third feature, titled "LAST FILM SHOW" is an Indo-French co-production and is being distributed worldwide by France's mighty Orange Studio.

## **INTERVIEWS**

*(Interviews by Anne Magidson)*

### **WRITER & DIRECTOR: PAN NALIN**

#### **How was the Last Film Show born and what is it about?**

Let's say Last Film Show is an emotionally charged drama about a nobody in a nowhere place, with nothing. He starts dreaming of something, to be somebody. I was desperate to make a film where we celebrate lightness and innocence. Where we go back to a natural, organic and timeless way of living. A very simple story of a simple hero who owns nothing, thus he has nothing to lose. His age is tender, 8/9 years, so no one takes him seriously anyway. But when you have nothing, you often dream big or make others dream big. So when our hero Samay discovers movies, his life turns upside down –he is haunted and mesmerised by movies.

I am not bragging but I still have to meet a bigger fan of cinema than myself. I watch everything; I am capable of jumping from Tarkovksy to Teshigahara to Taiwan's blue underground quickies to Tanzania's TV movies. I ran film clubs, collected about 35000 movies on DVDs and BluRays. I have attended more than 200 film festivals either as a participant or a jury member. It is during this course of adventures and while making movies that I realised how much I was changing, and movies were changing. I slowly started going back to my roots, thinking about Kathiawad (a region in Gujarat). What was it like growing up there as a kid? And above all, my many notorious encounters dealing with movies and its magic. That introspective churning gave birth to the Last Film Show.

#### **Then would you say Last Film Show is autobiographical?**

Yes, indeed, but in parts. Samay and his gang's adventure in the movie is what I did as a kid with my gang of friends. My father sold tea on a remote railway station – a station that was nobody's destination. There was nothing except vast fields and open skies. Besides trains, there were airplanes far in the sky, and that was our only connection with the rest of the world. My mother too, was an excellent cook. My father became poorer and poorer as he saw his land, then his cows, and lastly his home being snatched away by his own brothers, leaving him with nothing but a tiny tea stall on a remote railway station. So I had never been to the movies till I was about eight. And the day I saw one, I was enlightened before I turned nine.

### **What are the conscious ‘homages’ to filmmakers in the Last Film Show?**

Being the biggest film buff in the universe; how can I hold myself back from paying a tribute or homage or as the French would say a ‘clin d’oeil’ to some of the filmmakers who have left a deep impact on my life, and my work. So it’s subtle, and integrated in the cinematic treatment of the Last Film Show, if you’re not a cinephile you might not notice anything at all. But that was the idea; I did not want people to easily notice homages to filmmakers.

### **Still, can you name some filmmakers?**

Well. Even though it will take away the magic, yes I will. The most obvious one is in the opening sequence; we see a shot of a train arriving towards us, which starts in B&W and slowly, transforms into color. So this is clearly my tribute to the Lumiere Brothers and their “Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat”, that little film changed the storyteller’s world forever. Then there is Muybridge in our hero Samay’s school lab, for a few seconds we see an image of a horse running through a praxinoscope. Muybridge pioneered photographic motion, creating the illusion of motion picture. Then we jump to Kubrick; while Samay is in the projection booth, the 2001 Space Odyssey pattern flashes on his face and evaporates. Soon after Samay is in the field, he strikes a match and contemplates its flame, that is Peter O’Toole in David Lean’s Lawrence of Arabia. The final homage is my all time favourite Tarkovsky’s Stalker, where the camera tracks along the faces of the three questing travellers as they ride a trolley along the railway track into the Zone.

### **Last Film Show, Why now?**

Years ago, it was an era of Cinema, when phones were not smart, the net was not flix, the box was not an office, and movies were not 'content'! We are living in strange times for someone who grew up loving cinema, which is now being reduced to content and commodity. It is deeply saddening. The more writers and directors we train in the film schools, the more we are flooding the world with manufactured emotions, and tricksters who master dishonestly manipulating human emotions. Content is the king, and cinema is now reduced to its sidekick. So before it is too late, I had to make the Last Film Show. However I want to send out a positive and optimistic message that the mediums of storytelling will keep evolving and the storytellers have to keep up with that evolution. They have to keep adorning new avatars if they want their voices to be heard.

### **From Samsara to Valley of Flowers to Angry Indian Goddesses, you seem to be constantly reinventing your cinematic style? What about Last Film Show?**

I have always believed that each story is born with DNA, like imprints of their own cinematic style. As a filmmaker I find that truly inspiring and exciting. I have the story, now how do I tell it? I always knew that the story of the Last Film Show couldn’t be told without celebrating

lyricism and light. With DP Swapnil Sonawane we discussed lyrical camera moves and angles. We observed light, both natural and 'manufactured'. We wanted light to become that visible-invisible character in the Last Film Show so that by the time we reach the very end of the movie there is literally a riot of colors through the vivacious visible spectrum. So the lyrical unfolding of emotions in Last Film Show has a strong bond with light.

### **How about Sound design?**

Visual and sound designs are woven around the themes of catching light to create a holistic cinematic style. I have always believed life goes on even when we are not conversing. If cinema is an imitation of life, then why do we have non-stop ping-pong dialogs in our movies? I have never understood that. I have always celebrated silences in my movies by way of organic and natural sound design. If you closely inspect my movies, there might be passages as long as 10-12 minutes where no one speaks –and till today no one has 'noticed' that because the central idea of the movies is to tell stories. Just like dialogs, we often forget that silence speaks. That too, in a much more universal language than dialogs. And once the audience is emotionally engaged and immersed in the world you have created they usually follow and flow with the emotions.

### **What were the challenges faced for the casting of Samay?**

It took screening of about 3000 kids because one thing was certain, Samay and his gang had to be from the same remote part of Gujarat where I grew up, so that I will naturally get the right body language. Also these kids have the sense of growing up against vast empty spaces and open skies. They also speak the dialect. And above all these kids come from modest families, they're used to having 'nothing.' Because of that they have an amazing sense of innovation and creation from nothing. All these qualities allowed me to focus on my characters and storytelling. Once Samay was cast, the rest of the casting fell into natural order. Playing Samay, for a nine-year kid, who has rarely been to the cinema was a challenge. Because of his tender age, my crew and I had to cultivate lots of patience. After all, nearly the burden of the entire movie rests on Samay's shoulder. So if we did not have the right cast for Samay, we simply did not have a movie.

### **What do you want the audience to take away from the Last Film Show?**

Light! Take away some light. The world is passing through terrible times, an era like we have never seen before. As a storyteller I want to share feelings of hope and refreshing air. I want to celebrate the beauty of our planet and show how much simpler our life used to be. Just in a short span of one hundred years, what have we done to this earth? What have we done to our souls? For me Last Film Show is meditation on all these concerns. A wake up call to mindfulness. It's a jubilatory story about the birth, life, death and rebirth of films. The Last Film Show is also about celebrating nature and how we can live in harmony with the rains,

lightning, lakes or lions. It's an organic experience, I want people to be moved, uplifted and by the end be drenched in a colorful world of storytellers. Last Film Show is a parable almost like OxHerder Zen story; searching for the light, sighting of the light, perceiving the light, catching the light, taming the light, projecting the light, the light transcended, both Light and Self transcended, reaching the source, and return to society.

## **PRODUCER: DHEER MOMAYA**

### **Why Last Film Show? Why be a producer of such a personal movie?**

Last Film Show is not fully autobiographical, rather it is loosely based around some of the memories and reflections that Pan Nalin had from his childhood. The richness of some of the incidents that he remembers are very vivid and intriguing. They make for effective on-screen drama, and engaging visual storytelling.

Pan Nalin's origin story was so fascinating, that I was convinced it had to be told. Most writer/directors in India come from some sort of cultural/economically endowed backgrounds, and have had access to the basics of education and exposure to film (even if it was just the ability to watch) from a very young age. For Nalin it was quite the opposite, he was watching and making movies in his head before he even knew about the existence of cinema. Moreover, while this is a personal reflection of his life experiences, the themes explored through the story are quite universal. Also, the specificity of his experiences were so fascinating, that they need to be immortalised through film.

Also, Last Film Show is a celebration of cinema, more than just a love letter. It accentuates the nostalgia that most of us feel about our relationship with the theatrical experience. It reminds me of that first time I watched a film in the cinema, and the astonished wonder I was left with. Something, we have come to take for granted in the digital age

### **What were the challenges in financing and mounting the Last Film Show?**

The primary challenge was that the Indian cinema industry is very focussed on making big ticket mainstream films with big stars. Additionally the language of the film is Gujarati, which is a regional Indian language, in which the cinema business has not matured at all. Last Film Show was an endeavour to cast real people and depict them in very realistic circumstances without the frills of "bollywood" song and dance. There is no government support or independent film fund in India. There is not even a single organisation which endeavours to aid or assist the cinematic art-form, on the contrary, even getting permissions to film on public property is a highly bureaucratic process which involves massive budget allocations.

We for one, were really lucky to find financing partners in Europe with Stranger 88 (Belgium) and Orange Studio (France), both of which fell in love with Nalin's script and were really supportive of his vision. That and the incredible support and contribution of our cast and crew, all of whom worked with immense passion and dedication without taking fees upfront, and agreeing to defer their payments into a recoupment position, essentially almost becoming like co-investors in the project.

**How did France co-production come about with French producers and Orange Studio?**

Both Nalin and I were quite sure that trying to raise finance from India would be a futile mission, and that while the story had to be authentic to the human experience in India, it would also have to speak to European partners, and spark their interest. On our very first meeting with Orange Studio at the Cannes Market in 2019, the then head of the studio David Kessler, seemed to fall in love with the story, and wanted to come on board to be a part of the project. Co-producers Virginie Lacombe and Eric Dupont boarded the project shortly after, as they too were completely sold to Pan's vision for the picture. Also, Pan and Virginie had collaborated before on a project which was both critically and commercially very successful, so there was an inherent trust which already existed between everyone.

**This is your first collaboration with Pan Nalin; how was that experience?**

While this does mark my first collaboration with Pan, it felt like we have been working together for years, I guess it's just his humorous ease coupled with his process driver rigor that makes any partnership with him super engaging and invigorating. He approaches his work with child-like enthusiasm while having a superlative command over the cinematic tools one needs to make a story come to life effectively. His deep understanding of human emotion reflects in all of his works, and he somehow can catch and represent the current collective consciousness of the human race through his films. Pan has been making films for probably as long as I have lived, so the quantum of his experience is much much larger than mine, but still, not once did he make me feel like my opinion did not matter he would more than often turn to me (and all the other young collaborators) for creative input, and always be open to ideas that came from anyone around him. While he knows exactly what he wants, he always keeps a democratic environment around him, which helps foster fresh ideas and perspectives and enriches the quality of the storytelling immensely.

**Last Film Show is a very local film, deeply rooted in a remote region of Kathiawad; how or why do you think it speaks to a global audience? What makes it universal?**

While this is a hyper-local story told from an indigenous Indian point of view, the themes explored through the story are quite universal. At its essence, the father-son story really spoke to me, and I felt that the emotions that Nalin was able to highlight in the script would translate

quite well onto the screen. The most attractive thing about the story though was the depiction of the relentless human spirit. Our protagonist gives so much sense and meaning to his life, and to the lives of the people around him, without having anything to start from. Essentially, the thought that “when you have nothing, nothing can stop you” was really the focus of my interest. So many people who live comfortably within the means of their privilege or without, find it difficult to cope with the struggles and banality of modern living, and sometimes watching films like this is a reminder that a lot can be done, and overcome even if you have very little.

Moreover, with the onset of the larger streaming platforms and their global market penetration, audiences are now much more open to consuming content in foreign languages. Apart from the effective localization of content, through subtitling and dubbing, there has been a shift in watching patterns, where audiences/moviegoers are looking for something different. They are looking to find a window into the lives and experiences of humans halfway across the planet. Last Film Show fits perfectly into that. The more locally rooted a story, the more immersive the experience for the viewer.

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## **EDITORS: PAVAN BHAT & SHREYAS BELTANGDY**

### **Why did you accept to edit the Last Film Show?**

**PB:** While narrating the step outline of LAST FILM SHOW to me during the early days of pre-production, Pan Nalin had very explicitly and passionately stated that LAST FILM SHOW is more of a love letter or an obeisance to the legacy of cinema/film. Now, as a passionate lover of cinema myself, this wasn't an offer that I could refuse under any circumstances whatsoever. Also, having worked with him before in various capacities, ranging from assistant editor to post-production coordinator on some of his earlier projects, I've witnessed the exuberant love that he displays to the art and craft of cinema. And it always feels good to associate with someone who shares the same ideologies and ethics, doesn't it?

### **What was your cinematic approach to editing the film?**

**PB:** The general approach while editing LAST FILM SHOW was 'Less is More'. After various discussions during the pre-production stage, we decided to stick to a sort-of-minimalistic approach while shooting and editing the film, as it helped highlight effectively the subtleties and nuances of the complex emotions and thoughts projected in the narrative.

I've always been an admirer of the use of poignant silences in cinema from times immemorial, and have believed that if used right it could be a very effective storytelling tool. Hence, wherever possible we did eliminate spoken lines in favour of dramatic pauses and elusive

silences. I feel that this has tremendously helped in unraveling various subtexts and layers that we would've missed otherwise.

We didn't hesitate adopting various rhythmic styles, based on the dramatic intensity of the scenes. For example - in some portions of the film with intense emotions and complexities, Pan Nalin suggested that we adopt a rhythmic editing pattern and structure akin to Maurice Ravel's musical masterpiece 'Bolero', wherein we gradually build the dramatic intensity of a scene to a point where it finally reaches a figurative 'musical' crescendo emotionally. And it worked beautifully!

### **What were the challenges involved in editing Last Film Show because there are many passages in the film without dialogue?**

**PB:** Although most of the scenes in the film were scripted, not all the dialogues in the film were. There were many unscripted/improvised scenes too that were decided based on what certain locations and actors had to offer on shoot. Therefore, maintaining the structural integrity of the narrative was challenging at times, and we took the most amount of time on the edit to arrive at a structure which made the best impact emotionally.

Most of the actors were non-professionals who had never been to the cinema before in their lives, let alone face a cinema camera. We dedicated a fair amount of time to make that jump from a 'good' performance to a 'great' performance, on the edit.

We did re-edit the film on a couple of occasions, since there were many structural redundancies in the narrative despite our best efforts. Moreover, the right pace that could captivate the viewers was also hard to find right away. Through subsequent test screenings of our edits, and thanks to the invaluable feedback we'd received from people who had watched the earlier edits, we were finally able to find the right groove for LAST FILM SHOW.

### **How was your collaboration with Pan Nalin?**

**PB:** Well, Pan Nalin is someone whom I've always admired & respected, both as a master filmmaker and as a person. His never-say-die attitude has kept me inspired through the crests and troughs of our very strong independent film ventures, time and again.

What I love about him the most though is that he's always open to new ideas and suggestions, which pushes me more to strive for creative excellence. His spiritual outlook on life in general and cinema in specific has always rubbed off on me, and it's invariably been an enlightening experience for passionate filmmakers like me.

All in all, I was super excited to be a part of this wonderful new journey in the form of LAST FILM SHOW, with his lovely team and crew yet again, as they've always been like a family to me, since my early days as a film editor.

**Pan Nalin believes there should be only ONE editor for both picture and sound, and he does not approve of separating Picture Editing and Sound Editing as it exists in the industry today, your comments?**

**PB:** I concur with him. However sometimes we, as film editors, tend to overlook the 'aural' aspect of film in favour of the visuals or vice-versa. Of course I don't mean to generalize or categorize here, but it is high-time we as 'picture' editors paid heed to a more unified approach to marry the two at the offline edit stage itself.

Many times, many sound edit ideas are lost in translation while transiting from offline 'picture' edit to 'sound' edit. True, it's no one's fault really except for the way the post-production workflow has been designed, as per the industry norms.

I'm sure this workflow was designed keeping a lot of factors in mind, including some important timeline commitments and critical commercial requirements, but it isn't always fool-proof, since it doesn't necessarily lead to the right creative coalescence of visuals and sound.

I've firmly believed that film as an aesthetic art form can successfully create the desired impact only with the right amalgamation of both visuals and sound.

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## **SOUND RECORDIST: HARIKUMAR MADHAVAN NAIR**

### **Why did you accept to do the sound on Last Film Show?**

When director Nalin called me to work on this project, it was like a dream come true for me. I knew him for a long time as a great human being, and as a great filmmaker who understands and respects sound. Moreover, he told me that the lead role will be played by a kid and there are other children in the movie; so that attracted me. In short, I had many reasons to accept the project.

### **What were the challenges?**

Challenges were many to list, most of them are common in any sync or shoot. In the Last Film Show the most unforeseen challenge for sound was catering to multiple camera perspectives. Merging of visual and sound images like body and mind was a herculean task, within the time

constraints. Being a period film set in 2010, some present day sounds were unacceptable. Unseasonal rain also played havoc in-between.

**What were your discussions with the director about sound? Because the film has some excellent and lyrical paces, and sound contributes enormously to the hero's inner struggle.**

Discussions before the film shoots always help in translating the imagination of the director in the best possible way. In Last Film Show Director Nalin shared a vision of integrating the inherent musical elements of landscapes/soundscape/architecture/railways/journeys etc. into the background music.

The richness of aural elements from the diverse range of landscapes and culture of Gujarat contributed enormously to literally build the "unmanifest" sound image along with the "manifest" visual image.

I would like to mention the magical performance by the kids, thanks to Nalin. The way he connects with them is like the parallel lines of railways- always connected to each other firmly on ground and surely meeting at an imaginary point.

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## **CASTING DIRECTOR: DILIP SHANKAR**

**How did you go about casting Last Film Show?**

When Nalin first mentioned his idea to me, I told him my first instinct - this cast cannot be city kids. It has to be children from the small towns and villages of Gujarat, who bring their unique local untouched innocence, wisdom and naughty genius. And so we started to cast local scouts, which was not easy at all. Local scouts would play the safe route, and all we saw were 'actor' children who would be fit for usual commercial cinema. I wanted to find raw genius. After some initial hiccups, we engaged an old associate of Nalin's, Nayan Bhai and along with him, Mihir Upadhyaya from Ahmedabad and Jackie from Mumbai, who understood the brief better. We searched all over Gujarat, and must have looked at least three thousand boys if not more. From this vast bank, a shortlist of twenty five boys was brought together for a four day workshop. This group was narrowed down to twelve by the second day. We knew we were close to finding our gang. Bhavin (Samay) had been shortlisted but for some reason could not come in for the first round. Finally, when he arrived, I ran some individual tests with him. With the wig he totally suited the part. However, I was curious to find the vulnerable side to him, and make Nalin feel like Bhavin was the guy. After several sessions, we knew we were

right about Bhavin. We played with photographs and arranged the possible gang. We brought the twelve together for a second round of workshops and finally arrived at our final GANG.

Some of the adult actors had to also come in to test with Bhavin, and he demonstrated a rare and innate cinematic intelligence. The casting of the adult actors was also mostly done as locally as possible. Bapuji and the projectionist were found in Ahmedabad from auditions. Ba was the only exception and we found her in Mumbai through Jackie, from amongst several who auditioned or were considered. For the rest, it was fun to find 'non actor' actors in Amreli and Dhaari - Lagra Bhai, the station master, etc are all locals. Nayan Bhai played a significant part, and Lila Mila was found through Subhadra Mahajan, our Chief AD.

**Your team screened some 3000 kids, how did you spot Samay in that crowd?**

The scouts would go around schools talking to hundreds of kids, and also made them wear the wig. Somehow Bhavin with the wig caught the attention of me and Nalin, and we did feel he had it from the start. Also because he had a peculiarly unique and individualistic attitude to life. The way he spoke, or rather chose not to speak, about his father convinced me that he had emotional energy that could be channelized.

**You have done casting for Ang Lee, Wes Anderson, Meera Nair, and many more but your longest collaboration is with Pan Nalin, so how is working with Nalin is different from working with other directors? What's the secret of this long bond?**

This is so difficult to answer. Each director has their own personal way of looking. For me, Nalin has a child-like way which I adore. He is deeply instinctive, and from the beginning he and I have not needed too many discussions or intellectual chats. Somehow, his silences will communicate when he is not fully happy, or that he is, and I seem to get him. Somehow. I guess it comes from working together for a long time and having been his Production Manager, Associate Director and Line Producer as well on a few of the movies. Or we are just plain lucky.

**Can you tell us more about 'acting retreats' with selected kids? How did you prep them?**

I did not want the children to acquire any 'acting' skills. I wanted them to retain their raw individuality. And so much of the workshop was to get them prepared for the long haul that was ahead of them. I started with simple theatre games, deep sensitisation exercises, breath work and posture work. We moved on to improvising scenarios. Gradually the group started to gain its own trust dynamics, alliances, balances and friendships. Within a week Nalin started coming in with the camera, and Subhadra was calling action. And we knew they were ready.

**And how did you prep Samay, it's a big challenge as the film rests on Samay who is barely nine years of age?**

With Bhavin, his very strong willfulness had to be considered. I could see he liked Nalin, and would respond to his gentle and quiet ways. And so I chose to prep Bhavin for a relationship where Nalin was the one he had to trust and work with. Bhavin is a natural talent. But he is also a natural leader. So my focus was to enable him to be able to keep his leadership, and yet be able to collaborate with the Director, and his co-actors. For his age, he did more than I could have imagined.

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**COSTUME DESIGNER: SIA SETH**

**How did you come on Last Film Show?**

I got on board through Dheer at Jugaad Motion Pictures. I've been grateful to be able to work with this brilliant passion-house for a few years now and collaborating with Pan Nalin on Last Film Show has been a dream.

**How did you go about costume designs?**

I think Nalin made my job easy and highly interesting. While going through the script I had goosebumps. We could see a very clear vision through our Director's eyes – who these characters were, which part of the world they came from, what languages they spoke, what their life was like. We did a little research on these local tribes around Dhari, Gujarat. It helped us to incredibly in developing each character. Not to forget – the boys (Samay and his gang), each one of them holds such a beautiful personal style, it brings out the whole mood in the most natural ways.

**The most dazzling sequences deal with bangles and dozens of women? How did you go about making a color palette for each director? Was it directly inspired by the color-schemes of their movies?**

Yes, we wanted to create color palettes that reminded us of famous movies from each director. Gujarat is full of colors. Apart from the exquisite textiles, drapes and tribal silver jewelry, you will often find women wearing bangles on their beautiful tattooed arms so we created a mega-look for this scene dedicating one bangle set to one movie.

I remember this crucial day on set when the costume department had to be everywhere and with everyone, arranging bangle palettes, dressing up dozens of women who didn't speak the same language. It was a beautiful mess.

### **How did you collaborate with Pan Nalin?**

A wise friend once told me- try your best to understand how a director envisions the film and it will turn into a beautiful craft. Well, it didn't take me too long to start the process in this case. Nalin has been always there tirelessly discussing every small idea or doubt we had. He's an incredible person to work with. He gave us the most comfortable environment to create, except for the times when we had lions and leopards around.

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### **HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGNER: SARA MENITRA**

#### **How did you come on Last Film Show?**

I have worked with Nalin before on Angry Indian Goddesses, a film that is very dear to me until today, for the experience and challenges it provided. The empowering and moving story, also led to meeting and working with an incredible crew. Since then I have always been eager to shoot again with Nalin.

When he approached me for Last Film Show, unfortunately I was on another film so I couldn't accept, but the shoot ended up being postponed and Nalin asked me again and I said a big YES.

#### **How did you go about styling the looks of Samay and the gang because it looks so real and earthy?**

Working with all our boys was an absolute dream. I love working with children. I find that most of the time, they are more professional and patient than adult actors. And they all were absolutely incredible. Every morning they would be on time in the makeup chair and always so sweet and kind.

For Samay – our brave and talented Bhavin Rabari, we had to tackle the challenge of applying a wig on a child that had never done this before. He had to wear it for long hours and at times under hot weather, rain and running scenes. We would remove the wig during the day so he could rest. Another challenge with the wig was to adapt and transform it, in order to make it look natural.

Mannu (Rahul), Tiku (Vijay), ST (Kishan), Siddi (Shoban) and Nano (Vikas) were also incredibly patient. We coordinated the cutting of their hair for continuity and I created a specific look for each one of them according to their personality and what Nalin had envisioned for them.

For makeup it was all about making them look as natural and raw as possible, whether they were clean and going to school or playing and looking more disheveled and tired.

**The most dazzling sequences involve dozens of women in a train coach or even in the cinema hall, how did you go about fixing their looks?**

It was challenging to tackle the high volume of people in some scenes but I had an incredible assistant, who was a great help in the process. In the last scene there were many women, of all ages. Most of the young women arrived with their makeup done. On some of them we could leave the way it was, for others we added some colour on their lips and nails or some kajal to their eyes.

What for me is a constant fight and I do my best to educate and talk about when I shoot in India, is the colonial thinking that lighter skin is more beautiful. Most girls had a foundation or powder on that was much lighter than their natural skin tone. They looked like ghosts when I saw them. And immediately we started to remove it so it would look realistic. In the end, they were a beautiful group of women full of colour, beautiful clothes and accessories.

**How did you collaborate with Pan Nalin?**

One of the reasons why I believe Nalin and I work so well together is because we have a very similar way of thinking. We both want to portray natural and real-looking skin. Unfortunately in India filmmakers often opt for heavy bollywood makeup in places where natural and raw skin would be required.

Nalin respects the process of collaboration and trusts my input on what is going to make a difference. Nalin explained what he had envisioned for the boys and the other characters, and I spent time researching to ensure that all the looks were real. It was fascinating to learn things about Indian, specifically, Gujarati culture. It was surreal to observe the Rabari tribe and Kalbelia Gypsies. Their tattoos, hair, makeup, feet, hands, nails and all their customs were truly fascinating. After I created the initial designs, I checked in with Nalin to align my direction with his and having his immense trust in the designs enabled me to do the best work that I could.

## **MUSIC COMPOSER: CYRIL MORIN**

### **Why did you accept to be a music composer on Last Film Show?**

We have quite a long collaboration together with “Samsara, Valley of Flowers, Faith Connection, Angry Indian Goddesses”, but this film was very special because it is inspired by Pan Nalin’s childhood in a remote village in India. I knew a few stories from that time and when Nalin asked me to compose the music for “The Last Film Show”, I felt I’d been a part of that film for a long time.

### **You must have a special bond, as some of your best music has been on Pan Nalin movies; what is this new collaboration like?**

We didn’t discuss much at first because Nalin needs a musical conversation based on first research to go in detail and express where he wants to take the music. I did many demos like always to find the right path and this time we went into a musical journey that we never experienced before. By the way, in the soundtrack, I have left one or two tracks that were part of this process.

### **How did you find the themes, and choice of instruments?**

In this film Nalin wanted to pay a tribute to the cinema masters of his adolescence, especially Andre Tarkovski who used music in a subtle way in all his movies. And like him, Nalin wanted to have the music coming from the real sounds of the film and later eventually become a melody.

We used a lot of synthetic sounds in order to bond with the sounds coming from the trains, the factory, the projector... We didn’t look for a melody at first. We looked for textures. The inspiration of the melody of Samay (the main character of the film) came from the train sounds to later reach the fascination Samay has for light and films.

Besides “sounds coming from the film”, for the melodies I’ve used a piano, flutes, a marimba, a guitar and also a saxophone, which have nothing to do with the local music. When Samay is alone I’ve used a sort of dobro guitar inspired by American blues. I’ve used it also as a sound effect. The presence of synthesizer and sequences are bigger than usual because of the seventies sounds influences and Andre Tarkovski’s choices. I’ve also used percussion the same way I did for “Samsara” to express a quest, a movement. The Bansuri flute is linked with loneliness for Baa, Samay’s mother. It is perhaps the most “Indian instrument” I’ve used in the movie.

**The normal tendency in Indian movies is to use Indian music? But you seem to have opted for a more world music style, why?**

I never tried doing Indian or local music that is always very specific and needs real roots. I'm often interweaving different cultures, using my own writing, adding instruments from every part of the world in order to express the character's feelings. I don't feel I'm making "world music". I'm a composer who has the chance to use any sound he wants. That wasn't the case 200 years ago when music was more constrained in different cultures. Today we have no limits.

**What is your feeling about the film experience described in the movie?**

I think we were very lucky, Nalin and I, to grow up watching "real films" in theatres. It is difficult to not be emotional about it, especially when you see "The Last Film Show" finished. This film is a real homage to a time whose influence is so big on us. Those movies, made with real film and reels are the reasons why I still work on movies today. I'm lucky to share this journey with Pan Nalin who is the real successor of all those masters.

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