

FILAMENT PICTURES PRESENTS



FROM THE SHADOWS

A FILM BY MIRIAM CHANDY MENACHERRY

#MISSINGGIRLS

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER MIRIAM CHANDY MENACHERRY
CO PRODUCER ALIYA FURNITUREWALA, SHEENA MATHEIKEN, ANAND RAMAYYA, GARY BYUNGSEOK KAM
DOP RANU GHOSH EDITOR IRENE DHAR MALIK ASSOCIATE EDITOR ANUJA THAKAR MUSIC PARVATHY BAUL
SCREENPLAY WRITER MIRIAM CHANDY MENACHERRY, TRIPARNA BANERJEE PRODUCTION CONTROLLER SHARON D'HELLO
RESEARCHER/AD NANDINI DHAR CONSULTING PRODUCERS CLAIRE AGUILAR, ALYSA NAHMAS, NILOTPAL MAJUMDAR
IMPACT ADVISERS REBECCA LICHTENFELD, RAGNHILD EK SOUND DESIGNER MOHAMMED FIBIN LOCATION SOUND SOURAV GUPTA, AMIT GHOSH
IMPACT PRODUCER TRIPARNA BANERJEE ANIMATION AMAR SEN, ARKO SEN GFX INKBLING POSTER DESIGN ELEMENTS OF POETRY STUDIO
MISSING GIRL STENCIL DESIGN COURTESY LEENA KEJRIWAL





Logline

Every 8 minutes in India, a child goes missing. Countless are victims of sex trafficking. This film follows two women working against this status quo. One, an artist, relentlessly sprays silhouettes of girls on public walls tagged #missing, calling attention to the loss. The second, a human rights defender, accompanies rescued girls across international borders. These parallel narratives intersect, revealing glimmers of hope, as these women imaginatively challenge a powerful human trafficking nexus in their country.



The film is a testimony to the collaborative effort of women to bring to the screen a difficult and hard-hitting story of our times.

We hope the film stirs up a dialogue so that more areas of trafficking are heard and addressed. It is not enough to 'rescue' a girl after she is trafficked; it is as important to find ways to prosecute and get convictions. Survivors deserve to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into our society with dignity and livelihood options.

[Watch Trailer](#)

Awards

- Docaviv Award
- Yes Foundation's Social Documentary Award
- Global Film and Media Initiative Award (Switzerland)
- Global Media Makers microgrant (USA)
- Production grant from InMaat Foundation (USA)
- EIDF South Korea (2021) Industry Choice Award
- Shortlisted for Breaking Through the Lens, Cannes (2022)
- Hatched 2023 grant for social impact by Chicken & Egg Pictures (USA)

The film was selected for 12 international forums including platforms like DocEdge and Global Media Makers among others



Film Festival Selections

International Premiere – South Asian House program at Austin, USA alongside **SXSW Film Festival**.

India premiere – International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala (IDSFFK), selected in Competition. August 2022

Headlining the Beyond the Borders Feminist Film Festival in a special screening on 30th Nov 2022 recognised as South Asian Women's Day

Nominated at the Toronto International Women's Film Festival, March 2022,

Nominated for One World Media Awards (UK) Feature documentary section

International Social Change Film Festival (USA) – Official Selection

Semi-finalist at Angeles Docs, USA

Tasveer Film Festival (USA) – Official Selection

International Social Justice Film Festival, Chennai – Official Selection

Indian Documentary Festival of Bhubaneswar – Official Selection

Madurai International Film Festival – Winner

Market participations – **IDFA market Docs for Sale Nov 2023**,

Agora Doc Market Thessaloniki March 2023,

Vision du Reel Market, April 2023

Director's statement

Child sex trafficking seems a distant reality from our lives. Yet in a single image, the shadow of a girl on a wall disrupts my sense of normalcy with the message #missing. Can shadows speak?

I relate to Leena spreading a powerful message through art but when she steps into uncharted waters to support a survivor in a prosecution case, the story takes a series of twists. Samina is from a family of fisher folk without Leena's support, she stands little chance of enduring the trauma of a relentless battle that raises uncomfortable questions.

Hasina provides answers. A veteran activist who learns courage from survivor Ella. Together they convict a political kingpin and repatriate cross-border trafficking survivors.

From the Shadows is different because it shuns sensationalism for a dignified approach. After most of the filming Samina wanted her face concealed as the verdict was nowhere in sight. As a woman I understand her but as a filmmaker, I enter the editing room conflicted. Samina's expressive face is edited to become a form much like the shadow whose story one must dig deep to discover. A new canvas emerges forcing the audience to listen hard to layer the story with what is 'unseen'. If we respect the constraints that define the world of survivors we can navigate the legal minefield around cases of sexual violence to construct important narratives. The film does not point fingers but allows viewers to join the dots to reveal a canvas of traffickers with friendly faces - a family member, neighbour, policeman or NGO worker. Exploring the intersection of art and activism, the film refrains from a final verdict.

Instead, like millions of survivors waiting for justice, it leaves the audience uncomfortable in an eight-year fight ridden with systemic delays. Constructed through observational footage and rare conversations, the film sensitively handles stories from the shadows gently placing them in the spotlight.

Team

From the Shadows #missinggirls, has been backed by an almost completely all-woman team who bring to the table strong skill sets in every facet of filmmaking.

Director, Writer & Producer: Miriam Chandy
Menacherry

Co-Producer: Aliya Furniturewala, Sheena Matheiken,
Anand Ramayya, Gary Byungseok KAM

Cinematographer: Ranu Ghosh

Writer & Impact Producer: Triparna Banerjee

Editor: Irene Dhar Mallik

Associate Editor: Anuja Thakar

Production Controller: Sharon D'Mello

Researcher: Nandini Dhar

Consulting Producers: Claire Aguilar, Alysa Nahmias,
Nilotpall Majumdar

Impact advisers : Rebecca Lichtenfeld, Ragnhild EK,
Meera Sethi

Music: Parvathy Baul

Sound Designer: Mohammed Fibin

Animation : Amar Sen, Arko Sen

GFX: Inkbling

Poster design: Elements of Poetry studio



Miriam Chandy Menacherry

Director/ Producer



Miriam is the Founder and Director of Filament Pictures, dedicated to creating a brand of social documentaries that have won acclaim in India and internationally. Her award-winning films are about everyday heroes, *From the Shadows* (2022), *The Leopard's Tribe* (2022), *Lyari Notes* (2015), *The Rat Race* (2011), *Robot Jockey* (2007), *Stuntmen of Bollywood* (2005) and a 7 part series *Back to the Floor* (Indian CEOs) on BBC World. Her previous films have premiered at the International Documentary Festival of Amsterdam IDFA, the biggest documentary festival in the world and she is an alumnus of the IDFA Academy. Her most recent feature documentary *From the Shadows* won the Industry Choice Award at EIDF Korea, had a special Women's Day screening in the run-up to SXSW (USA) and is one of 10 global films that won the Chicken & Egg Pictures Hatched 2023 grant (USA) for Impact screenings. *The Leopard's Tribe* won the One World Media Awards (UK) recognizing underreported stories from the Global South as well as the All Living Things Environmental Film Festival.

Her films have been broadcast on channels like National Geographic Channel, BBC, Al Jazeera, TV2 Denmark, Arte France and Netflix. She served as a jury member on the International Documentary Association IDA awards (USA), Kashish LGBTQ Festival and Indian Documentary Producers Association (IDPA) Awards. She is one of 18 fellows selected in the first cohort of the Global Media Makers Fellowship by Film Independent and the US State Department of Education and Cultural Affairs. Miriam has been chosen as a BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) Breakthrough Talent from India 2023-2024 that supports UK collaborations.

Triparna Banerjee

Impact Producer/ Writer



Triparna Banerjee is a scriptwriter and independent filmmaker from India, committed to bringing stories from fringes to the fore that appeal across borders. Triparna's foray into professional screenwriting began as a scriptwriter for the renowned children's program Sesame Street. She then made her mark as an Associate Producer for the critically acclaimed feature film 'FROZEN' (2009), which premiered at the prestigious Toronto International Film Festival and garnered international recognition with over 30 festival selections and 18 awards, including 2 National Awards in India.

As a scriptwriter, Triparna has worked with production houses and networks such as Miditech, Hotstar, Citoc Motion Pictures, CinePlay, Zee5 and SVF Entertainment. Her work has been acknowledged with selections at renowned film forums, including L'atelier Cinéfondation at the Cannes Film Festival 2012, and HAF at the Hong Kong Film Festival 2015. She is a Film Independent's Global Media Makers fellow, supported by the US State Department Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. Her most recent work 'From the Shadows', has been awarded the prestigious Hatched grant by Chicken & Egg Pictures for its Impact work. Triparna is currently developing her feature directorial debut, selected for the Asian Project Market 2021 at Busan International Film Festival.

In addition to her filmmaking endeavours, she works as a visiting faculty for film schools and media institutes. Through her role, she empowers young minds to utilize the transformative potential of film, photography, and storytelling to drive change.

Characters



Leena Kejriwal

Artist

Leena Kejriwal is a photographer and social artist based in Mumbai and Kolkata. A brand ambassador for Fuji India, in 2014 she founded The Missing Project, a campaign against sex trafficking and slavery with the single purpose of creating mass awareness. Her approach to creating social impact by making the public a catalyst against trafficking through art and (inter)active technology makes The Missing Project a game-changer in the anti-trafficking domain.



Hasina Kharbhih

Activist

Hasina is the Founder and Chairperson of Impulse NGO Network. Having spent over two decades in this sector, Hasina is considered one of the leading figures in the fight against human trafficking in India, as well as South and South East Asia.

Hasina and her team developed the Impulse Model, a single-window approach to address human trafficking. The Impulse Model is today considered the ultimate guide for processes and best practices in the battle against human trafficking.

Hasina has won many awards for her crusade against human traffickers. She is a part of various boards and committees of government and non-government organisations involved in social welfare, development and human rights.

She is an Ashoka Fellow, a Fulbright Scholar, and a Fellow of the Aspen India Leadership Initiative.

Impact GOALS

- To discuss and mitigate the role of middlemen in the trafficking nexus. Institutionalised trafficking often presents middlemen proposing child marriage or with job offers to young girls, this results in girls not completing their education to being trapped into cycles of dependency with no escape. Screening of the film will enable the vulnerable group to identify these middlemen.
- To accept and embrace survivors and their stories for change, so they no longer face stigma and shame for having been trafficked but find their unique way to work in the anti-trafficking space.
- To involve anti-trafficking stakeholders like the Border Security Force, Police and judiciary in interventional community initiatives by sharing inspiring stories.
- To address the youth who are the biggest agents of change through the testimonies of interventions of youngsters in their communities
- To use the film as a medium of discussion with government and non-government agencies who can impact and enable discussions on the slow justice system that results in the notorious conviction rate for traffickers, which presently stands at less than 10 per cent. We would also use the film to lobby for survivor protection as Samina, Ella and Hasina testify how they are constantly at risk and threat.

Impact SCREENINGS



Screenings with vulnerable communities and stakeholders

- Border Security Force at North Bengal Frontier HQ - Fulbari Indo-Bangladesh border
- The American Centre - Kolkata
- Hingolganj village, Sundarban - West Bengal
- Saatkhira village, Sundarban - Bangladesh
- Child in Need Institute - Siliguri
- Dr. Rajendra Prasad Girls High School - Siliguri
- NCPA - Mumbai
- Women's Day event of the Canadian High Commission - Mumbai
- Bangalore International Centre - Bangalore
- Carpe Diem Gallery - Goa
- PVR Cinemas - Mumbai
- Screening in partnership with MAVA (Men against Violence & Abuse) in various centres across India



Screenings at Educational Institutes and cultural forums

- Madras School of Social Work - Chennai
- Mount Carmel College - Bangalore
- National Law School - Bangalore
- Ashoka University - Haryana
- Jindal Global University - Haryana
- Shiv Nadar University - Greater Noida
- India Habitat Centre - New Delhi
- Kali Basti, Uttam Nagar - New Delhi
- International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad
- Indian Photo Festival - Hyderabad
- Arthshila - Shantiniketan
- Emami Art Gallery - Kolkata
- IIT - Chennai & Mumbai
- MCRC - Jamia Milia University

Impact PARTNER



Impulse NGO Network (INGON), originating from the vibrant landscapes of North-East India, was founded in 1993 by Hasina Kharbhih. With a mission addressing challenges of people on the move unsafe migration, and human trafficking, INGON has since expanded its reach, bridging interventions across the eight North-Eastern states of India and North Bengal and scale out Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Thailand.

The Impulse Model at the heart of INGON's approach is globally recognized for its innovative response to human trafficking. The Impulse Case Management Centre (ICMC) aids in resolving cross-border cases swiftly.



Fact File

- Every 8 minutes a girl goes missing in India
- The average age of a missing girl is 12
- National Crime Records Bureau reports 108234 missing children in India in 2020
- Conviction rate of trafficking in India is less than 10%
- The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the problem of child trafficking. The Child Helpline 1098 received over 3.9 million calls from March to June 2020



Press Links

The Telegraph, May 2023

[Film on anti-trafficking creates awareness and starts a conversation](#)

Cinema Express, March 2022

[Cinema Without Borders: The Lost Girls- Miriam Chandy Menacherry's From The Shadows](#)

Time of India, August 2022

[A shaft of light on a shadowy world](#)

Variety May, 2022

[Indian Child Sex Trafficking Doc 'From the Shadows' Selected for Cannes Market Initiative](#)

[Miriam Chandy's new documentary follows child trafficking survivors seeking justice](#)

[The News Minute, July 2021](#)

The Deccan Herald, July 2021

[Scream from the Shadows](#)

Filament

P I C T U R E S

WEBSITE

<https://www.thefilmfromtheshadows.com/>