

SAHASI CHORI (BRAVE GIRL)

A Film by Erin Galey



"Sahasi Chori (Brave Girl) may be one of the more beautiful looking films I've ever seen..."

"...the film gets under your skin without you knowing, and the impact lasts."

-Mark Bell, *Film Threat*

"[Brave Girl] is a terrific 20 minute narrative that packs the punch of a feature film. Galey is a talented filmmaker who offers more than just a fascinating treatment of a difficult subject...

The short time you spend with *Brave Girl* will stay long in your memory."

-- Ray Kougell, *Voice of America*

FACTS

TITLE: “Sahasi Chori (Brave Girl)”

CAST: Albina Dahal, Jeewan Adhikary, Tillotama Shome, Sheeba Chadha, Kabita Ale, Atanu Chhetri, Anup Baral, Gopal Phuyal, Pushpa Adhikari, Ambir Gurung, Lama Dai, Bishal Ghimire

RUNNING TIME: 19:55

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SHORT SYNOPSIS:

A 13-year-old Nepali girl leaves her Himalayan village with her brother’s friend to find employment in the city. But Krishna, who promised her family he’d watch out for her, takes Bhumika across the border to India, where he intends to use her as currency in a devil’s bargain. At a life-changing crossroads, Bhumika is forced to choose what she’s willing to sacrifice for the good of both her family, and his.

LONG SYNOPSIS:

Krishna (Jeewan Adhikary) is visiting his friend Amrit (Atanu Chhetri) in a small village in Nepal. Telling a story about needing help to care for his pregnant sister (Tillotama Shome) back in the city, he convinces Amrit, with a fair amount of cash, to allow him to take Amrit's young sister Bhumika (Albina Dahal) back to the city to be a housemaid. Bhumika's Mother (Kabita Ale) protests, but the decision has been made, and anyway Bhumika cannot wait to see the big city.

At first, the adventure is a grand one. It's Bhumika's first time on a bus, and when she gets to town, Krishna immediately takes her to buy a nice dress (though the color he chooses is forbidden, as she is not married yet; Bhumika does it anyway). After a night where the two are forced to share a one-bed hotel room, the two set out again, only not to Krishna's home. Suddenly, Krishna is taking Bhumika to India, and though Bhumika is becoming more and more reluctant, she still goes along with it all, trusting that Krishna would never steer her wrong.

Unfortunately, Krishna has a hidden agenda, one that becomes clear when they arrive in Mumbai. At a life-changing crossroads, Bhumika is forced to choose what she's willing to sacrifice for the good of both her family, and Krishna's.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

On The Film Title

I began with an English title - *Brave Girl* - to represent the story of a Nepali girl who sacrifices her own spirit for the well-being of her family.

We went through several Nepali translations of the title until I landed on the one that best represents the image I was trying to capture. "*Sahasi Chori*," which translates more directly as "*Brave Daughter*," has multiple layers of meaning, as "chori" means "daughter of the people," or "everyone's daughter." This spoke to me because it echoed my intention for making this film as a cautionary tale. The title suddenly became a self-referential call to action - here is Bhumika - will you take care of her? Your daughter of Nepal?





Translating the Script

I originally wrote the script in English, but I always knew we would shoot in the local language. Additionally, I wanted the film to be more accessible to the kids who live in Nepal. The challenge of the task was that there are over 28 different dialects in Nepal, so the translation went through multiple drafts.

The first version was a more “general” Nepali dialect, but this rang as inauthentic. With the help of our acting coach, Anup Baral, the actors worked to be more specific with the language. Albina learned her lines in a western “mountain slang” specific to the Dham-pus region, and Jeewan used a blend of this mountain slang and a slightly more urban dialect as they got closer to the city.

Casting in Nepal

We began the search early in pre-production for an authentic Bhumika by visiting local village schools. When I realized the enormity of this undertaking, we instead sought out a skilled casting director from Mumbai. We were introduced to Tess Joseph, who cast *The Darjeeling Limited*, and who had just returned from Kathmandu where she cast a young role similar to ours for a film called *Sold*. After asking permission from their producers, Tess passed along some of their audition tapes. Within those tapes we found our 13-year-old star, Albina Dahal.



I always wanted to work with a non-actor for the lead role, and as there really aren’t acting classes for young girls in Nepal, this seemed serendipitous with the circumstances. Albina and Jeewan took acting lessons for three weeks with our acting coach, Anup Baral. We worked together to open up the actors with exercises before diving in to shape their characters. I applaud these two for taking a great leap of faith with me and working very hard to achieve what I feel are wonderful performances.

Cinematography



Reed Morano (*Frozen River*) recommended Frederic Menou. He didn't have a narrative reel at the time, but had loads of experience as a doc shooter. Reed told me, "he has one of the best understandings of natural light that I've ever seen." So we courted him, and he turned out to be the right man for the job.

Shooting in Nepal is an extremely specific thing. I told Frederic he would have to channel the spirit of MacGyver to create unique ways to capture the vision we were after. Along with gaffer Evans Brown, and

their Nepali G&E team, Frederic produced some beautiful results in very challenging circumstances. I could not be happier about the way the film looks. Frederic's detailed eye produced beautiful dailies.

The latitude of the Alexa really helped us capture the stunning landscapes and shoot in available light in both Kathmandu and Mumbai. (At one point Evans was lighting the actors in downtown Kathmandu with a couple of camping headlights). There are few cameras out there that can produce an image so clean with such little light. As for glass, we went with Zeiss compact primes, because I wanted a sharp, high-contrast image - that, and we needed something portable and light that could go with us into the mountains.

Shooting in the Red Light District

I wanted to capture the realism of the red light district, but the permit to shoot in Mumbai was around \$20,000 USD's. Shooting without one is punishable with jail time. The day before our shoot a well-known Bollywood director was arrested for shooting without a permit and thrown in jail. His footage and gear was confiscated, and the police smeared his name all over the papers to make an example out of him. After receiving this foreboding news, we looked for other locations that mimicked the red light are, but none were quite the same.



Despite this, Stephanie and I were on the same page about wanting to shoot authentically. I wanted Nepali girls to see what an actual red light district looked like. But as we didn't want to put the rest of the crew in danger, we sent them home and took only the small, necessary crew. With a talented location manager in whom we invested a lot of trust, we went off to Kamathipura to capture the images we needed. After two nights of filming, and two narrow escapes from the police, we managed to get away safely with the true images we needed to tell the story the proper way.

About the Ending

The ending has always been a sticking point. I went back and forth about whether or not she was going to escape, whether or not Krishna came back for her, whether or not there should be a glimmer of hope... but ultimately the story is a narrative tale that sticks closely to true stories retold to me from survivors of trafficking. There *are* stories of girls who get away or get rescued, or buy their way out. But in the end, I felt it was most important to leave the audience with the facts. This is a real thing that happens to girls in Nepal. It's gut-wrenchingly tragic.

I've found the ending sparks a lot of discussion - much more than I imagined. It seems to linger in people's minds long after they've watched it. To me, that means I have succeeded as a filmmaker.



BIOGRAPHY: ERIN GALEY (WRITER, DIRECTOR)

Having spent her college years and mid-twenties globe-hopping as a white water rafting guide, Erin Galey is an American film director and cinematographer eager to make films about adventurous characters in remote places. Born and raised in Pittsburgh, PA, Erin attended prestigious Brown University, receiving a degree in Literature and Honors in Creative Writing. Between strapping her kayak on top of her truck and working on film projects, she completed her Master's degree in Film and Television production at NYU Tisch School of the Arts Asia.



Erin executive produced, wrote, and directed *Sahasi Chori (Brave Girl)*, a narrative short exploring con artists of the sex trade, shot entirely on-location in both Nepal and India. The film has screened at numerous film festivals nationwide, including SXSW, Atlanta, Bermuda, Sarasota, Busan, and Palm Springs. It has received 2 “Best Short Film” awards from SENE Film, Music & Arts Festival, and Palm Beach International Film Festival. It was also awarded a Special Jury Prize from Bermuda Film Festival ([link to article](#)). The film was also a grand prize runner-up at the First Run Film Festival in 2012, earning supporting awards in screenwriting and producing, as well as the Carl Lerner Award for a Film With Social Significance. Erin is currently seeking distribution in the educational market for the film, and developing a feature version.

In 2013, Erin founded and is the creative head of IN THE FLICKER, a Los Angeles/Portland based production company, specializing in commercials, brand integrated content, and short form narrative media. IN THE FLICKER has multiple clients worldwide, including Rainmaking.de (authors of International best-seller *Winning Without Losing*), The University of Oregon's Sports Product Marketing Program, lead by producer Ellen Schmidt-Devlin (legendary Nike footwear product manager), and whitewater enthusiasts Tribe Rider. Erin splits her time between Los Angeles and Portland as a Director and Producer.

WRITER: ANTOINETTE MULLINS

A New York City native, Antoinette Mullins completed her undergraduate work at Vassar College, achieving a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors in her double major of Psychology and Film. She recently completed her Masters of Arts degree at NYU's Tisch Asia in Singapore (May 2010) with a concentration in Dramatic Writing: Screenwriting. She has performed duties as a reader for The NEW YORK OFFICE, a bicoastal boutique agency, and TRIBORO PICTURES, a small production company based in Manhattan. At Triboro Pictures, Ms. Mullins was brought in on multiple pro-



jects to serve as a screenplay consultant and was part of the beginning stages for a screenplay revision of a horror-western scheduled to go into production. In 2007, Ms. Mullins' screenplay, *THE HERMIT OF FAR ROCKAWAY*, was a semifinalist in The Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting. In 2009, Ms Mullins' short stage play, *LOVE AND ROBBERY*, was a finalist in Singapore's Short and Sweet, an international playwriting competition. The same play was published in an Australian textbook called *Drama: A Resource for Units 1A-1B*, aimed at promoting drama in high schools.

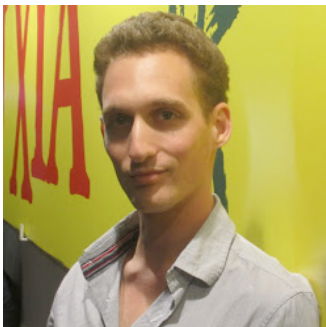
PRODUCER: STEPHANIE BOUSLEY

Stephanie Bousley recently obtained her MFA in Film and Television Production from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts Asia, in Singapore. She has produced two feature films and around ten shorts that have played at festivals all over the world, including Palm Springs International, Chicago International, and Singapore International, amongst others. She has worked on shoots in Cambodia, the Philippines, Singapore, and New York.



Stephanie delights in the challenges of shooting in logistically-complex environments, and working with directors who are telling stories both inside and out of their home countries.

Stephanie has firsthand experience working under key figures in independent film, like New York-based Producer Ted Hope during production of Todd Solondz's latest film *Dark Horse*. She worked directly under Ted on viral marketing strategies for the movie. She has also worked directly with writer/director Jon Reiss, editing his indie-cult book "The Outside the Box Office," which addresses new means of DIY and hybrid distribution in today's film market.



PRODUCER: BRETT JOFFE

Brett Joffe is a producer from Washington, D.C., he graduated with a BBA from Emory University in 2009 concentrating in finance and business law as well as double majoring in philosophy. In 2012 he received a Masters Degree in International Media Producing from NYU Tisch Asia in Singapore. Currently he is a line producer for gsmprjct media in Singapore.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: FREDERIC MENOU

Frederic is an award-winning French cinematographer. He has shot many high profile documentaries films for both French and American Television. He was nominated for an Emmy award for his camerawork in 2011 and 2012 on the show "Glada At Home." He is the lucky father of a wonderful three-year-old daughter who loves to steal ice cubes from the ice box and share them with the cat. He has traveled all over the world and believes humans can and should do a much better job at taking care of each other. He is proud to work on a film that will help raise awareness on a deeply sad issue: sex trafficking.



EDITOR: ERIC F. MARTIN



Eric F. Martin never really cared much for editing until he was forced to cut a 16mm film on a flatbed. Trim bins, razor blades, and tape caused him to fall in love with the old-school "arts & crafts" mode of cutting. He wishes all movies were still cut off workprints, but alas, he mostly works on FCP and Avid now. Films that he edited have screened at SXSW, Palm Springs Shortfest, Warsaw, and Rhode Island. He holds an MFA from UCLA's film program, and is a recipient of the prestigious Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Editing Internship.

COMPOSER: STENFERT CHARLES

Stenfert Charles (Saunder Stenfert Jurriaans and Daniel Charles Bensi) are multi-instrumentalists and classically trained musicians. They began their film scoring career with Alistair Banks Griffin's *Two Gates of Sleep* (Cannes - Director's Fortnight, 2010), and have since moved on to score various features and shorts including Sean Durkin's *Martha Marcy May Marlene* (Sundance, 2011 - winner best director, Cannes - Official Selection, 2011), Ruben Ostlund's *Play* (Cannes - Director's Fortnight, 2011), PBS American Experience *The Amish* and Antonio Campos' *Simon Killer* (Sundance, 2012).



Recently Saunder and Danny had the honor of composing a piece of music for the American Ballet Theater which was featured in the International Erik Bruhn Competition in Toronto. Other projects include editorial films for Vogue, Gravure, Crush and Flair magazines. Their band Priestbird (Kemado Records) has 5 albums, and has toured extensively in the US and internationally.

RADHA: TILLOTAMA SHOME

Screen actress Tillotama Shome is best known for her acclaimed portrayal of Alice in Mira Nair's *Monsoon Wedding*. She played a pivotal role as Deepa in director Florian Gallenberger's epic *Shadows of Time* (*Schatten der Zeit*) and appeared as Lara in Meneka Das's *Little Box of Sweets*; Jaya in Afia Nathaniel's short film *Long After*; and Miraal in Tanuj Chopra's *Butterfly*. She is currently based in Mumbai.

In addition to her on-screen acting accomplishments, Tillotama has worked as a teaching artist at CREATIVE ARTS TEAM/CUNY, an organization that uses theatre as a medium to promote social, emotional and intellectual growth in communities throughout New York City to explore a wide range of issues including peer pressure, violence, sexuality, substance abuse, parenting, and HIV/AIDS prevention. Her work also involved working with prison inmates at Rikers Island and women in domestic shelters. Shome has bachelors and masters degrees in English literature from India and a second masters from NYU in Educational Theatre. She has been involved in innovative pedagogy for the last seven years in India.



CAST AND CREW CREDITS

Written and Directed by	Erin Galey
Produced by	Stephanie Bousley, Brett Joffe
Executive Producers	Erin Galey, *whurley, Michael Rooney
Associate Producers	Binod Adhikari, Lisa Kelly
Written by	Erin Galey, Antoinette Mullins
Casting	Tess Joseph, Speaking Tree Pictures, Mumbai
Director of Photography	Frederic Menou
Production Design	Anya Leta
Unit Production Manager	Stephanie Bousley
Line Producer	Brett Joffe
Production Coordinator	Binod Adhikari
1st Assistant Director	Mary Beth Dickerson
1st Assistant Camera	Basil Mironer
2nd Assistant Camera	Roger Galey
On-set Editor / DIT	Marc Wiltshire
Chief Lighting Technician	Evans Brown
Grip / Electric	Shesh Raj
Grip / Electric	Hari Lama
Grip / Electric	Bahrat Magar
Location Sound Mix	Amala Popuri
Boom Operator	Prapul Chand
Casting, Locations, Art Dept Asst.	Julian James
Costumes	Manju Banjara
Hair & Makeup	Sangita Lama
Script Translator	Srijana Limbu
Director's Assistant & On-set Translator	Upendra Shrestha
Drivers	Binod Baniya, Ambir Gurung, Bishal Ghimire
Driver	Gopal Phuyal
Security	G4S
Production Assistant	Amrit Sharma
Production Assistant	Ravi Dai
Lodging & Transportation	Hotel Holy Himalaya, Eco-Trek International
Lighting Equipment - L.A.	SIC Lighting
Lighting Equip - Kathmandu	Eyecore Films
Lighting Equip - Singapore	FEG, Camwerkz

Mumbai Unit

Unit Production Manager

Location Manager

Camera Operator

Alexa D.I.T.

1st Assistant Camera

Stephanie Bousley

Navit Dutt

Raju Gauli

Ravi Singh

Mary Beth Dickerson

Post Production

Editor

Sound Design & Re-Recording Mixer

Original Score by

Foley Recordist

Hindi Voice Actors

Eric F. Martin

Eric Hoehn

Saunder Jurriaans, Danny Bensi

Michael Nulty

Anshu Jain, Noorali Dohia, Arpita Vaidya, Zishan Malik

Nepali Voice Actors

VFX Supervisor

Producer of Marketing

Producer of Marketing

Poster Design & Visual Identity

Digital Intermediate by

Digital Intermediate Colorist

D.I. Conform Editor

Digital Intermediate Producer

Account Executive

Executive Producer

Kriti Ghimire, Prabash Sharma

Matthew Bowyer, Mindboggler.com.au

Tasha Petty

Camila Gatos

Brandon Pidala

Lit Post

Tyler Hawes

Gustavo Mendes

Scott Purdy

Geno Tazioli

Micah Gallo

Cast

Bhumika

Krishna

Radha (sister)

Madame

Amma (mother)

Amrit (brother of Krishna)

Border Police

Tailor

Brothel Guard

Brothel John

Brothel John

Albina Dahal

Jeewan Adhikary

Tillotama Shome

Sheeba Chadha

Kabita Ale

Atanu Chhetri

Anup Baral

Gopal Phuyal

Pushpa Adhikari

Ambir Gurung

Lama Dai

SCREENING HISTORY

FIRST RUN FILM FESTIVAL, Singapore, 2012

- *RUNNER-UP* - Directing
- *CRAFT AWARD FINALIST* - Screenwriting
- *CRAFT AWARD FINALIST* - Producing
- *WINNER* - Carl Lerner Award for a Film with Social Significance

SXSW - Austin Film Society ShortCase - Austin, TX, 2013

- Official Selection

PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL SHORTFEST, Palm Springs, CA, 2013

- Featured Film, Short Film Market
- *BEST OF FEST* - Audience Nomination in Live Action Category

SENE Film, Music, & Arts Festival - Providence, RI, 2013

- *BEST SHORT FILM*

ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL OF DALLAS, Dallas, TX, 2013

- *BEST DRAMATIC SHORT*

ANGAELICA 2013 (COLUMBIA GORGE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL), Vancouver, WA, 2013

- *BEST SHORT FILM*

BERMUDA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Bermuda, 2013

- *SPECIAL JURY PRIZE*

PALM BEACH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Palm Beach, FL, 2013

- *BEST SHORT FILM*

HOLLYSHORTS FILM FESTIVAL, Hollywood, CA, 2013

- *WOMEN IN FILM DIRECTING AWARD*
- *BEST PRODUCER*

SNAKE ALLEY FESTIVAL OF FILM, Burlington, IA - 2013

- *BEST SHORT FILM*

REEL SISTERS OF THE DIASPORA, Brooklyn, NY - October 12-13, 2013

- *BEST DIRECTOR*

NYU's HAIG P. MANOOGIAN SCREENINGS, Director's Guild of America, Los Angeles, 2012

- Official Selection

MARFA FILM FESTIVAL, Marfa, TX - 2013

- Official Selection

BUSAN INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Busan, South Korea, 2013

- Official Selection

ATLANTA FILM FESTIVAL - New Mavericks: Women Directors - Atlanta, GA, 2013

- Official Selection

LITTLE ROCK FILM FESTIVAL, Little Rock, AK - 2013

- Official Selection

FIRST TAKE, Singapore - August, 2013

- Official Selection

HOBOKEN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Hoboken, NJ - 2013

- Official Selection

ONE COUNTRY ONE FILM - APCHAT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Apchat, France - 2013

- Official Selection

CENTRAL FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, Ocoee, FL, 2013

- Official Selection

ZERO FILM FESTIVAL - Los Angeles, CA, 2013

- Official Selection

RAINIER INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL - Ashford, WA, 2013

- Official Selection

NEW HOPE FILM FESTIVAL, New Hope, PA, 2013

- Official Selection

EVOLUTION INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Los Angeles, CA, 2013

- Official Selection

SARASOTA FILM FESTIVAL, Sarasota, FL, 2013

- Official Selection

REDRESS - STOP THE TRAFFIC (charity event), Ion Gallery, Singapore, 2013

- Official Exhibition Film

NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, LA EDITION, Los Angeles, CA - Sept. 18-23, 2013

- Official Selection

BRECKENRIDGE FESTIVAL OF FILM, Breckenridge, CO - September 19-22, 2013

- Official Selection

EKA DESHMA SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Kathmandu, Nepal - September 26-29, 2013

- Official Selection
- Nepal Premiere

BENDFILM, Bend, OR - October 10-13, 2013

- Official Selection

SAN FRANCISCO INT'L FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILM, San Fran, CA - October 10-12, 2013

- Official Selection

AESTHETICA SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, York, United Kingdom - November 7-10, 2013

- Official Selection