



Mother Teresa & Me

A film by Kamal Musale

With Banita Sandhu

Jacqueline Fritschi-Cornaz

Deepti Naval



Summary

Pitch	4
Synopsis	7
Cast	8
Director	14
Distribution	18
Where do the film revenues go ?	22
Zaira Foundation	24
Production	26
Music - Four Composers	28
All Female Heads of Departements	30
Contact	34

ZARIYA FOUNDATION AND MYRIAD PICTURES PRESENT A LES FILM DU LOTUS/CURRY WESTERN MOVIES/KAVITA TERESA FILM PRODUCTION
A KAMAL MUSALE FILM „MOTHER TERESA AND ME“ WITH BANITA SANDU JACQUELINE FRITSCHI-CORNAZ DEEPTI NAVAL
CASTING BY SHAKYRA DOWLING AND MAYANK DIXIT DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY KEIKO NAKAHARA PRODUCTION DESIGNER REHKA MUSALE
ORIGINAL SCORE BY LAURENCE CREVOISIER WALTER MAIR ANNICK RODDY PETER SCHERER ASSOCIATE PRODUCER ANAITA DARUVALA
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS RICHARD FRITSCHI MICHELE CARATSCH THIERRY CAGIANUT PRODUCED BY KAMAL MUSALE AND JACQUELINE FRITSCHI-CORNAZ
STORY BY KAMAL MUSALE WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY KAMAL MUSALE



Pitch

Teresa and Kavita: two women's lives - passionate and uncompromising - woven over generations by two intertwined stories. Both women achieve their vocation in spite of serious personal doubts.

We discover Mother Teresa as the woman behind the myth in a new dimension. Her loss of faith inspires the wild Kavita, a young British woman of Indian origin, to discover true love and compassion in today's Kolkata.



Synopsis

For Kavita, a British modern young woman of Indian origin living in London, love is an illusion. Between an unsatisfying romantic relationship, the plans of her parents to wed her according to Indian tradition, and an unexpected pregnancy, Kavita is torn by inner conflicts. Should she abort her baby or not?

Unable to take the radical medical step, Kavita decides to return to her birthplace, in order to find solace in the arms of Deepali – her now old nanny – who took care of her as a child.

Deepali had herself been adopted as a child by Mother Teresa when she started working in the slums, in 1948. As Deepali narrates the stories of her past, Kavita starts to relive the beginnings of Teresa's life in the slums of Calcutta.

For the young Mother Teresa, her life dramatically changes when she hears the voice of Jesus: he orders her to go work for the poor in the slums. She doesn't question this ordeal, as her love for Jesus and her compassion for the disabled and the poor mean everything. Following the call, she turns her back on her previous life and devotes herself to the poor in the slums of Calcutta.

But soon after creating her new order, the "Missionaries of Charity", Teresa can't hear the voice of her beloved Jesus anymore. She feels more and more abandoned by her lover, her husband, her guide...

She doubts the very existence of God.
She loses faith.

Hiding her torment behind the smiling face of the faithful, Teresa was in doubt for the rest of her life; but she continued her work nevertheless, with total dedication to the poorest of the poor. An act of faith in itself. She only shared her loss by writing to a couple of confessors, letters that were made public only after her death, letters that Kavita learns about in the present time.

The real human story of Mother Teresa inspires Kavita positively about how to go on with her pregnancy, her life, her lovers, and her family. She discovers compassion.
She finds happiness.

Banita Sandhu (as Kavita)

Banita Sandhu is a British actress. She was born and raised in Caerleon, South Wales and is of Punjabi descent.

Banita began acting as a child in local stage and film productions when she signed her first agent at just 11 years old. She began her professional acting career whilst attending King's College London, in Shoojit Sircar's Hindi feature film *October* (2018) alongside Varun Dhawan. She received major critical acclaim for her "outstanding debut" with *Vogue India* naming her the 2018 Face to Watch Out For. Following the film's release, she returned to university to complete her degree.

Upon graduating with honors, she went back to work with Craig Robert's feature film *Eternal Beauty* (2019), followed by a Tamil remake of *Arjun Reddy* titled *Adithya Varma* (2019) and The CW's summer show, *Pandora* (2019). Her last film releases includes *Sardar Udham Singh* (2021), co-starring Vicky Kaushal.

Jacqueline Fritschi-Cornaz

(as Teresa)

An actress and producer of Swiss origin with over thirty years of acting experience, Jacqueline has appeared in theatre productions, television soaps, commercials and short films. She has worked with Klaus Maria Brandauer, M.K. Lewis, John Costopoulos, Elisabeth Kemp, Susan Batson and Bettina Lohmeyer. She is multilingual and has had extensive training in method acting, dance and vocals.

The confrontation with poverty during her first visit to India was shocking for Jacqueline. She initiated the *Mother Teresa & Me* charity film and is significantly involved in the movie's development and fundraising.



Deepti Naval (as Deepali)

is an American Indian actress, very famous in India, who made her debut in the year 1980 with Ek Baar Phir, for which she won her first Best Actor award, and has since appeared in more than 90 films, the most recent one being the acclaimed Oscar nominated 'Lion' and the BBC tv movie 'The Boy With The Topknot'.

Deepti's major contribution has been in the area of art cinema, winning critical acclaim for her sensitive and close to life characters that emphasised the changing role of women in India.



Note from Kamal Musale (Writer-director)

This story is about compassion.

Our story of Mother Teresa concentrates on a period of 12 years: from the first time when she hears the voice of Jesus and starts her work in the slums of Kolkata in 1948, up to the moment when, feeling abandoned by him, she is losing faith in God.

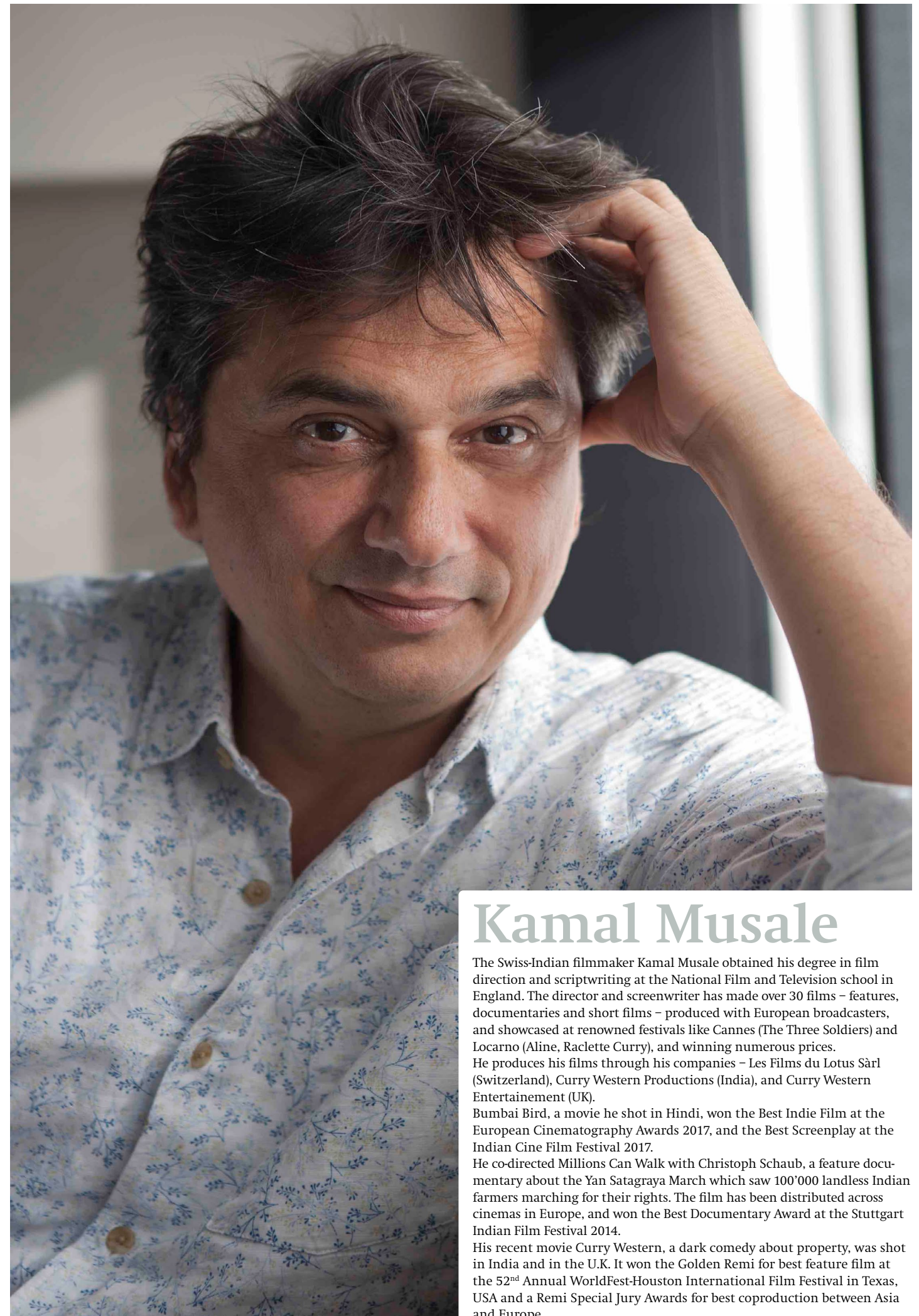
In this epochal drama, we don't meet a Saint but a real and vulnerable woman who is struggling with the feeling of abandonment. She lost faith for the rest of her life and decided to hide this from everyone except for a few of her confessors. We know this through the confidential letters she sent them, letters which eventually were published after her death. What drives you to work for the poor for so long when you have lost faith? Her confessions have provided a unique way to understand her passion.

To make Teresa's example relevant today, I chose to discover her through the eyes of a modern young woman living in today's western society who represents a younger generation's vibrant quest for meaning. Thus, Kavita's character was created.

She is going through a similar pain in her life - the abandonment of her boyfriend while she's getting pregnant - and therefore relates to Teresa's life, which she can help us connect with.

Kavita's story also conveys the controversial and actual theme of abortion and how one can deal with it. Therefore, it was essential to portray Kavita's dilemma subtly to avoid engaging in a political narrative. I wanted to leave the character to make her own choice instead of script what is best for her.

Kavita is confronted with another reality with the poor in Kolkata, which casts doubts about what she should do with her pregnancy. But, whatever the outcome, this experience nevertheless allows her to accept and love herself and opens the door for compassion in her life. In that way, our movie has no political nor religious agenda. Instead, it aims to touch and help the audience to form their questions about these delicate issues.



Kamal Musale

The Swiss-Indian filmmaker Kamal Musale obtained his degree in film direction and scriptwriting at the National Film and Television school in England. The director and screenwriter has made over 30 films – features, documentaries and short films – produced with European broadcasters, and showcased at renowned festivals like Cannes (The Three Soldiers) and Locarno (Aline, Raclette Curry), and winning numerous prizes.

He produces his films through his companies – Les Films du Lotus Sàrl (Switzerland), Curry Western Productions (India), and Curry Western Entertainment (UK).

Bumbai Bird, a movie he shot in Hindi, won the Best Indie Film at the European Cinematography Awards 2017, and the Best Screenplay at the Indian Cine Film Festival 2017.

He co-directed Millions Can Walk with Christoph Schaub, a feature documentary about the Yan Satagraha March which saw 100'000 landless Indian farmers marching for their rights. The film has been distributed across cinemas in Europe, and won the Best Documentary Award at the Stuttgart Indian Film Festival 2014.

His recent movie Curry Western, a dark comedy about property, was shot in India and in the U.K. It won the Golden Remi for best feature film at the 52nd Annual WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival in Texas, USA and a Remi Special Jury Awards for best coproduction between Asia and Europe.



Production Notes

Recreating an authentic atmosphere of the 1950s in Kolkata was also a challenge.

For the casting, for instance, it was essential to find extras that looked famished, as there was a famine these days. So we got a special team to hunt for thin-looking farmers in more than 20 villages near Mumbai. Our casting team prepared a selection that went through training to be ready to appear natural in front of the camera. In addition, we had to build a slum with the look of the 1950s, as today's slums are too modern, and in Kolkata, they even look more like country villages than slums.

The House of the Dying, the Nirmal Hriday, was also built in the studio. It is a replica of the original in Kolkata that is still in use. Therefore, we could recreate an authentic atmosphere and populate it with characters and extras that look real.

The train sequence is also interesting, as it shows when Teresa hears Jesus' voice telling her to help the poor in the slums. I needed to create the illusion of another dimension, a suspension of reality as she enters another level of consciousness. This impression could be recreated by moving lights and sets in the studio.

For this production, all the Heads Of Departments were female, which is no small feat while shooting in India, where equality between women and men is non-existent. The male crew had to learn to be directed by a team of women, which included the director of photography, the production designer, the line producer and the first assistant director. This eventually made for a great shooting atmosphere for our large crew.

This melodrama has different layers and themes: from love to abandonment, from adoption to abortion, from the belief in yourself to the capacity for compassion that it creates. I hope it will touch the audience as much as it touched me making it.

Kamal Musale, 2022

Distribution

The official theatrical release is planned for October 2022 in Switzerland, and will be followed by an international release through Myriad Pictures (U.S.), which is in charge of worldwide sales, by the beginning of 2023.

Specific events and screenings are planned in various U.S., Europe and Indian cities to launch the movie.

The theatrical release will be followed by distribution on streaming platforms.

Online audiences will be able to donate more after watching the film.

A campaign on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube) will attract different communities and associations worldwide interested in the movie's various topics and values.

*“If you can’t feed
a hundred people,
then feed just one.”*

Mother Teresa





Where do the film revenues go?

The vision of the film is to inspire audiences around the world to live with more compassion and love and to support poorest children in education and health care.

The film proceeds go to the following organisations:

Deepalaya, Delhi

Deepalaya strongly believes that differently abled children can learn to lead a normal life if they have effective access to services like early identification, intervention, education, vocational training, employment opportunities and the availability of aids and appliances.

Genesis Foundation, Gurgaon

The Genesis Foundation facilitates medical treatment for critically ill under-privileged children suffering from Congenital Heart Defects. The support required in the said critical illness varies from specific surgeries, Cath Lab Interventions along with recovery and recuperation post-surgery. We save little hearts.

Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences, (KISS) Bhubaneswar

Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences is an organization dedicated to providing holistic quality education to 27000 tribal children to eliminate poverty and hunger.

Spread a Smile India, Delhi

Spread A Smile India strives towards the overall improvement of one of the most vulnerable sections of our society; with approximately 350 destitute children between 3 and 17, who live on the streets and beg at traffic lights in Delhi.

Zariya Foundation

The idea to make this film about Mother Teresa came from Jacqueline Fritschi-Cornaz, when she visited India in 2010 and was shocked to see the poor in the street. She came across a portrait of Mother Teresa in a film production office, and it started her journey in this character.

Soon after Richard Fritschi founded The Zariya Foundation to finance the making of a feature film based on the vision and messages of Mother Teresa. The foundation aims to inspire audiences worldwide with positive values such as compassion, kindness, respect and love, in contrast with the increasing examples of war and crime worldwide.

This production is unique as it is entirely financed with donations, and the film's profits will be donated to charitable institutions and foundations that work for the destitute, the sick, the disabled and the abandoned children. They will be supported in their education and health care. The simple act of each donation to the production of this movie is enough to affect the lives of thousands constantly and continuously.

www.zariyafoundation.org





Swiss-Indian-UK Co-Production

The film is a coproduction between India, Switzerland and the U.K.

Kamal Musale production companies, Curry Western Movies (Pvt Ltd) in India, Les Films du Lotus (Sàrl) in Switzerland and Kavita Teresa Film (Ltd) in United Kingdom, have ensured that the movie was produced with production values of international standard.

[Les Films du Lotus](#) is a 30 years old Swiss production company that focuses on developing and coproducing English-language feature films co-produced with European, UK, Canadian, US & Indian partners. It previously produced about a dozen films for European broadcasters, and numerous commercial shorts. The film owns the certificate of origin of the Swiss Federal Office of Culture.

[Curry Western Movies](#) is an Indian company created in 2007 to cook Indian movies for Western taste. It has produced 3 feature films and one feature documentary, as well as documentaries and short commercials.

In India, the film has UA certification from the Central Board of Film Certification (UA = «Unrestricted with Caution»). Parental supervision is required for viewers under 12 years of age.

[Kavita Teresa Film \(Ltd\)](#) Kavita Teresa Film (Ltd) was responsible for the shooting, supervision of British actors and technicians, as a significant part of the plot is set in London.

The British Film Institute (BFI) has officially registered this film as a British film.

The movie has been entirely financed by various donations of private individuals and foundations, all channeled through the [Zariya Foundation](#), a non-profit organisation created in 2010 on the occasion of Mother Teresa's birth centenary.





Music - Four Composers



Laurence Crevoisier
Born in Delémont (Switzerland), Laurence studied at Lausanne Superior Conservatory. She obtained first prize in virtuosity with honours. She is a member of the Eustache company and teaches violin and viola at the Lausanne Conservatory of music. She was the violist of the Barbouze de chez Fior quartet, who won the 2015 Vaudoise Foundation Music Award for Culture and has worked with artists such as The Young Gods, Christophe Calpini, Pascal Auberson, and Hemlock Smith. She also co-signed the music for Kamal Musale’s films « Curry Western » and « Mother Teresa & Me ». She also had the chance to benefit from the teaching of Dr N. Rajam, India, for Hindustani violin.



Walter Mair
Based in London, Walter is an Ivor Novello-nominated and Telly Award-winning film composer. He scored the 2021 thriller Till Death, directed by S.K. Dale with Megan Fox, and the psychological horror film The Unfamiliar, which won the 2021 Telly Award for Best Original Music and an Award for Best Music Score at the 2020 NOLAHFF. Then worked for the drama Iceland is Best and the action-thriller Knuckledust, directed by James Kermack with Moe Dunford (Vikings), which won the 2021 Telly Award for Best Original Music. Next, he scored Oliver Hirschbiegel’s International cold war mini-series for Netflix and ZDF, The Same Sky, which premiered at the 2017 Berlin Film Festival, followed by Ryan Gosling’s directorial debut Lost River, starring Saoirse Ronan, Matt Smith, Christina Hendricks, and Eva Mendes.

Why four composers?

As I imagined the soundtrack for this movie, my thoughts took me in different directions. I needed to hear the various depths and layers of these two stories, which are intricate and essential to each other. I thought that each character needed to transmit some inside and outside impressions.

It became clear that some violin solo and string quartet would convey the inner nuances of each character, so I proposed to Annick to create the inner world of Kavita, and to Laurence the one of Mother Teresa. Then, to reinforce the dramatic reality of the real outside world in which the stories take place, I proposed to Walter to raise the emotions and help nourish some of the scene’s epic characters. But I also needed to touch the invisible worlds, where poetry introduces us to eternity. Peter Scherer and his magic, blending orchestra with subtle electronic, came beautifully to link us to this poetic space.

Although these musicians were not all used to sharing a film composition, they eventually found the space to follow their inspiration, and their personalities could taint this multi-layered story with a perfect match. From the character’s inner life, passing through the real world, and touching the invisible, the result is magnificent.

Kamal Musale, producer, director



Annick Roddy
Annick was born in Fribourg and began playing the violin at eight. She completed her professional studies at the Geneva Superior Conservatory under Margarita Karafilova. Since 1998, she has played as a soloist with the Lausanne Sinfonietta, the Hamburg Youth Orchestra and the Philharmonic Orchestra of Lublin (Poland). Between 2001 and 2005, she was a member of the Lausanne Sinfonietta and the Michel Corboz Ensemble. She contributes to numerous musical projects, notably the Eustache company, K, Velma, François Vé, etc. She has played at festivals like the Montreux Jazz Festival, the Cully Jazz Festival, de la Cité in Lausanne, the Paléo Festival in Nyon, and the Belluard Festival in Fribourg. She also co-signed the music for Kamal Musale’s films Curry Western and Mother Teresa & Me.



Peter Scherer
Born in Zürich, Switzerland, Peter studied piano, composition, theory and orchestration, along with György Ligeti and Terry Riley. He then spent some decades working in New York for film music such as ‘Never Again, Forever’ and ‘Another Road Home’ for Israeli filmmaker Danae Elon; the Wim Wenders produced ‘Voodoo, Mounted By The Gods’, directed by Alberto Venzago; the Brazilian film ‘Sobras em Obras’ about Geraldo de Barros, directed by Michel Favre; and ‘Aline’ by Swiss/Indian filmmaker Kamal Musale. At the same time, Scherer began working as a producer with such artists as Caetano Veloso, Laurie Anderson, Bill Frisell, World Saxophone Quartet, Corin Curschellas, Ute Lemper and Nana Vasconcelos, and musician or arranger with artists such as Marc Ribot, David Byrne, Marisa Monte, Arto Lindsay, John Zorn, Cameo, Al Jeareau, Rebekka Bakken, Cyro Baptista, Kip Hanrahan, Nana Vasconcelos, Jun Miyake, Vinicius Cantuaria, and many others.



All female Heads of Departments

Keiko Nakahara, Director of Photography

Keiko Nakahara is a Japanese-born Cinematographer now working in India. In an interview, she told the reporter that the Japanese film industry was male-dominated that's why she came to America to start her career. After studying films in the San Diego Film School in California, a friend recommended her to an Indian producer, and this is how she earned her first project. Nakahara moved base to India where she has worked as a DOP. She has now been involved in over 15 films to date, including some of India's biggest productions like Tanhaji, Total Dhamaal, Shakuntala Devi (2020).

Rekha Musale, Production Designer

Rekha Musale has been working on more than 40 feature films, mostly produced or co-produced with Switzerland. She started working in the property dpt, and has since become one of the most sought after Art Director in Switzerland. Apart from her collaborations with her brother Kamal (Aline, selected by the Locarno International Film Festival, Curry Raclette, Looking for Rosamunde), she has been working with a great array of films and directors, Swiss and foreign. Amongst them: Frédéric Schoendoer er, Jacob Berger, Ursula Meier, Nicolas Wadimoff, Alain Tanner, Claude Chabrol, Michel Piccoli, Olivier Assayas.

Nupoor Kajbaje, Line Producer

Nupoor Kajbaje has been associated with Curry Western for the past 12 years. She began her journey as a First Assistant Director and then she took over as the Line Producer. She has a A+ post graduate diploma in film and tv from Mumbai University and graduated in Bachelor of Mass Media (BMM) speciali- zation in Advertising from Jai Hind College, Mumbai in April 2009. Nupoor managed our feature documentary Millions Can Walk (2015), a co-production with Switzerland, as well our other international coproductions with the U.K. and Switzerland: Curry Western (2019), Bumbai Bird (2019), and now Kavita & Teresa. She is a partner of Curry Western Movies Pvt Ltd since 2018.



Namrata Anap, Costume Designer India

Narmata Anap has taken the enormous task of recreating all costumes from the epoch, not only for the cast but for all extras in both the shooting in Mumbai and Kolkata. Her team has worked wonders to make all of this happen. She is known for Dheet Patangey (2020), Atkan Chatkan (2020), Ascharyachakit! (2018), Bonus (2020).



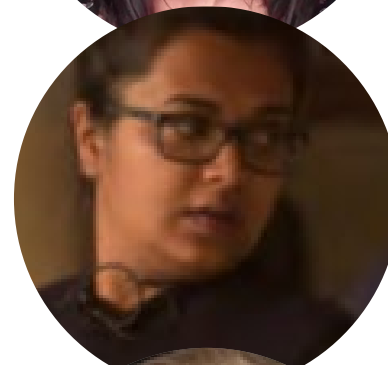
Camille Adomakoh, Costume Designer UK

Camille Adomakoh is known for Aladdin (2019), Artemis Fowl (2020), We Are Tourists (2017), Bridgerton (2020).



Sophia Knight, Make-Up & Hair Supervisor, UK

Known for Crazy Rich Asians (2018), Guardians of the Galaxy (2014), Doctor Strange (2016), The Legend of Tarzan (2016). She won the Hollywood Guild award for "Crazy Rich Asians" in the Feature motion picture "Contemporary Hair Styling Award" category. Starting off in fashion, Sophia then worked in theatre before moving into TV and film. She has traveled around the world working with various teams over her 15-year career so far.



Ananya Chatterjee, 1st Assistant Director

Ananya completed her Master's degree in Audiovisual Communication from COMMITTS, Bangalore. She has polished herself over the years by working in various audiovisual formats such as ad films, feature films, music videos and web series and has worked both in the production team and in the directorial team. Some of her known works are Black Widows (2020), Bansuri (2020), Chippa (2019), Byomkesh Gowtro (2018). Ananya has produced tremendous working organisation for our shooting in India, before and after the Covid situation.



Carol Salisbury, Script Supervisor

Carole Salisbury is a highly regarded Script Supervisor with worldwide experience working on all formats and slating systems. She is known for Submarine (2010), Eurovision Song Contest: The Story of Fire Saga(2020), Close (2019), Lucky Man (2018), The Crown (Season 2), Prometheus (2012).



Shakyra Dowling, Casting Director

Shakyra Dowling knows the film and television industry inside out. Having trained and worked as an actor, she spent several years in production before establishing herself as a casting director in 2009. A fierce champion of new and emerging talent, SDC has carved out a niche specialising in independent British feature films and European co-productions alongside television and commercials – many of which have been internationally recognised and gone on to be nominated for multiple awards including BAFTAs and BIFAs, and at festivals from Sundance to TIFF. **She is known for Wolf (2021), Tigers (2020), Band of Brothers (2001), The 100-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared (2013).**





Mother Teresa & Me

www.mother-teresa-and-me.film

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