

TITLE

FROM THERE TO HERE

a dance documentary about women changing the world

SYNOPSIS

Blending dance and documentary, FROM THERE TO HERE showcases a courageous group of women moving against gender inequalities in Kolkata, India using dance movement therapy to empower themselves and other young survivors of trafficking and violence.

TECHNICAL

TRT = 18 minutes / 2.00:1 aspect ratio / ProRes 422 available for screening

Filmed in Kolkata, India — dialogue in Bengali and English, with English subtitles

Co-Directors & Producers Sydney Skov and Janique L Robillard

SCREENINGS

World Premiere | Dance on Camera Festival: DFA Global [[press](#)] / July 14, 2019 @ Lincoln Center, NYC

Soundtrack Cassette Release & Screening Party | August 18, 2019 @ Nowadays, NYC

awaiting notification from series of documentary, dance, and socially conscious festivals

MEDIA CONTACT

JANIQUE L ROBILLARD | Co-Director, Producer, Editor

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online: [FilmFreeway](#) [[pw = move](#)] / freebodyproject.org / facebook.com/freebodyproject

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

For youth who have endured trafficking or sexual violence, broader access to mental and emotional healing is urgently needed. This participatory project was created with dance therapy practitioners in India who are themselves violence survivors. They are improving access to mental health and wellbeing through movement for the most vulnerable. Blending interviews, improvisation, and choreography crafted from themes of gender inequality that have touched the dancers' lives, the project is a platform for their visceral stories and unique anti-violence advocacy.

An aerial photograph of a cityscape during sunset. The sky is a pale, hazy orange, with the sun as a bright, glowing orb in the upper right. In the center, a large, multi-story white building is under construction, its facade partially covered in scaffolding. To the left, another building is completely encased in a dense network of wooden scaffolding. The foreground and middle ground are filled with various residential buildings, some with flat roofs and others with small structures on top. The overall atmosphere is one of urban development and activity.

LEAD VOICES



PUTUL KHATOON, 24, is a healer, mover, mother, and women's rights activist. She enjoys choreographing and leading movement therapy with young women in the shelter homes of Kolkata where she herself grew up.



SABITA DEBNATH, 33, is the Coordinator for Logistics and Training with Kolkata Sanved. She is a founder member of the organization, one of 5 young women who took the risk to turn movement and healing sessions into a thriving organization that serves thousands. She has transitioned from practitioner and performer into administrator, taking on a high level leadership role.



SUCHARITA MONDOL, 26, is a mover and an English Language student pursuing higher education in Kolkata.

She believes in increasing access to mental health care through art therapy programs including dance therapy, yoga therapy, and music therapy.

A woman in a blue kurta is dancing with a man in a grey t-shirt. They are in a room with a brick wall, a sign that says "HAPPY", and stacks of blue and white blankets. Other people are visible in the background. The text "DANCE NARRATIVE" is overlaid in the center.

DANCE NARRATIVE

INCLUSIVE STORYTELLING: MOVEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Sydney Skov — co-director, producer, choreographer, and long-time partner of Kolkata Sanved — worked closely with the dance movement therapy practitioners in Kolkata, India to develop our film's guiding themes, improvisation, and group choreography for nine months before filming commenced.

Beginning with brainstorming sessions held in Kolkata Sanved's dance studio, Sydney guided an exploration of each woman's experience being a female dancer, dance therapist, and activist in Indian society. They identified unique religious, familial, and societal pressures impinging upon their access to freedom in an everyday context. From there we honed our list of ways in which female bodies are restricted, we entered the movement phase, using the list of restrictions as a guide.

Through ten intensive workshops, the practitioners experimented with choreography and improvisational tasks, finding ways to reveal and reject each restriction through authentic movement based in their dance and therapy foundation. It was this participatory, creative process that generated the group choreography and unique improvisational movement for the film.

see examples of themes on following pages



"COVERING THE BODY"

Society often teaches women to feel shameful of their bodies. It is common to cover the chest with extra fabric or to feel pressure to dress modestly in order to avoid being the subject of gossip. For women in the Muslim community, many are expected to keep their faces veiled in public.



"LACK OF ACCESS TO TRAINING & EDUCATION"

Social norms that discriminate against women sometimes lead families to invest more in boy children and male members of the community, leaving many girls and women without access to school or specialized training including dance.

"CARRYING THE BURDEN OF MISTAKES"

Often, girls who have been trafficked or sexually violated will not be accepted back into their families; they are deemed "unclean" and not welcomed. Blame is central to this issue. For example, when a woman is raped it is generally considered to be her fault. Oftentimes, survivors are sequestered to shelter homes where caretakers further stigmatize them for their experiences.





"BARRED FROM DANCING"

It is considered inappropriate by many families for women to dance as a profession. In some cases, pursuing any professional aspirations beyond caring for her family is discouraged.

A rural landscape featuring several banana trees in the foreground and middle ground. A group of people is visible in the distance, standing in a field. The sky is overcast and grey. The text "OUR TEAM" is overlaid in the center of the image.

OUR TEAM

KEY CREW BIOS



SYDNEY SKOV [co-director, producer, choreographer] was dancing professionally when she created Free Body Project, promoting dance as a global resource for healing, empowerment, and anti-violence advocacy. The project completed its first dance-documentary film, *MOVE FOR FREEDOM*, in 2013. Sydney earned a master's degree in Sustainable International Development from Brandeis University with a focus on the arts, peace building and social justice. As a Boren Fellow and subsequently a Fulbright researcher in India, Sydney returned to work with Kolkata Sanved, an NGO transforming the lives of trafficking and violence survivors through dance and movement therapy.

[\[explore Free Body Project website\]](#)

JANIQUE L ROBILLARD [co-director, producer, editor] is an independent film director and producer. Her freelance work spans many categories—live action and animation, commercials, educational series, and music videos—but her passion is documentary filmmaking. She focuses on the everyday extraordinary. Janique actively seeks opportunities to elevate women's voices in film with projects like *KNOCKOUT GIRLS* (a women's MMA documentary) which was awarded the Women in Film Production Grant in 2014 and her on-going collaboration with Sydney Skov and their Free Body Project series.

[\[watch Janique L Robillard's director's reel\]](#)

CREW BIOS cont.



PAULIUS KONTIJEVAS [cinematographer & producer] is a full-time freelance cinematographer. He moved from Lithuania to the U.S. in 2002. Influenced by architecture, culture, and people he began making films at the age of 13. He has worked on a wide variety of productions: from music videos to broadcast commercials, and two feature films in India. His true passion lays in documentary—capturing life's reality as it unfolds within the frame. Paulius' short documentary *ANEW SIGHT* was selected for the Big Sky Film Festival in 2012 and he was a cam-op on *NOT SO SQUARE*, a short documentary about square dancing that won the American Documentary | POV Award from PBS in 2011.



MAXIME L ROBILLARD [composer] is a producer and composer from Vermont, currently residing in New York City. Music for him is but one part of our ecosystem, and this guiding principle informs his productions ranging from ambient soundscapes for installations to dance music releases under his moniker *LOVE LETTERS*. He's drawn to projects involving dance and physically interactive works. Maxime also works in sculptural arts—designing and building scenography for the Danish theater company *HOTEL PRO FORMA*, and in 2016 he was a sculpture and sound art resident at the Vermont Studio Center.



MILO MCBRIDE [composer] melds organic instrumentation with analogic textures to create a sound of past and future. Drawing on his passion for *outernational* musical styles, he was recently a resident artist at *THREAD*, a cross-cultural residency program in rural Senegal run by the Josef & Anni Albers Foundation. He also works closely with longtime friend and visual artist, Rindon Johnson. Their collaborations can be experienced at the Brooklyn Museum, The Julia Stoschek Collection, and a number of other galleries. He is currently pursuing his Master's at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs in Environmental Science and Public Policy.



KATJA FLÜKIGER [graphics] is a designer, human ecologist, and hobby artist. She was born and raised in Switzerland as the daughter of cheese-makers. A modern day Heidi with the Alpine wind in her heart. She let this wind carry her around the world—discovering graphic design as the perfect tool to bring together all her random talents. Currently, she is pursuing her passion for design in Brooklyn, NY.



PRODUCTION CREDITS

produced by: Sydney Skov, Janique L Robillard, Paulius Kontijevas

co-directors: Sydney Skov & Janique L Robillard • **director of photography:** Paulius Kontijevas

editor: Janique L Robillard • **original score:** Maxime L Robillard & Milo McBride

vocalist: Somali Mukherjee • **sound design:** Grant Harold

starring: Putul Khatoon, Sabita Debnath, and Sucharita Mondol

dance movement therapy practitioners & team members (in order of appearance):

Durga Madahar, Sangeeta Naskar, Sohini Chakraborty, Soni Khatoon / Anwari Begum,
Sreeja Debnath, Tilottoma Chowdhury, Jhuma Das, Jhulan Mondol, Rangana Sengupta,
Maumita Chatterjee, Namrata Kanuga, and Samita Battacharaya

choreography by: Dance Therapy Practitioners & Kolkata Sanved Team, Sydney Skov, Matthew Bade

many thanks to: Surin Sanjay, Prateek Bose, Debaroti Chakraborti,
Debashish Sharna, Namrata Kanuga, Katja Flükiger, and Christopher Toppino

translation assistance from: Rangana Sengupta, Namrata Shah, Emdad Hossain,
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BRANDED VISUALS: LOGO & SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

FROM THERE
TO HERE

a dance documentary
about women
changing the world

FROM THERE
TO HERE

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Logo Comps: available in black or white PNG



Instagram: 400 x 400 px / RGB / PNG



Facebook Banner: 820 x 312 px / layered PSD or PNG

for access to all branded material, including film and production stills,
contact media liason: JANIQUE L ROBILLARD | [janiquette@gmail.com](mailto:janique@gmail.com) | 603.387.3891

THANK YOU

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