



The Ultimate Motion Pictures
Presents

HATTI

W e E x i s t

a film by
VIVECK TEWARI

Tale of a fading tribe in India



The Film

Overview

Genre: Documentary

Running time: 58 minutes

Languages: Hindi (with English subtitles)

Foreign version: Voice Over in Hindi with English subtitles

Format: HD

Producer & Director: Viveck Tewari

Narrator: Vinayak Kudva

Production Company: The Ultimate Motion Pictures

Website: www.theultimatemotionpictures.com

Country of Origin: India

Year: 2021

Viveck began his career as an assistant director to Mr. Anupam Kher's directorial Debut Om Jai Jagadish and since then have been part of some major award winning Indian and International projects including 'Shabd', 'Mastang Mama', 'Parched', 'TE3N', 'Bahatar Hooren', 'Tum Milo toh Sahee' as well as directed and produced his own series "Melodious Eight" under The Ultimate Motion Pictures on National TV Doordarshan. He was the Chief Executive Officer of Blue Waters Motion Pictures which is the production house for the film called TE3N, with an ensemble cast of Mr. Amitabh Bachchan, Nawazzudin Siddhique and Vidya Balan.

As a supervisor producer, he has been associated with many international projects. His film called 'Parched' that had academy award winners Mr. Russell Carpenter and Mr. Kevin Tent, won the prestigious Stockholm Impact Award for outstanding film and was released in Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF).

Having worked in many films, he was also involved in many Television serials including Sanjeevani, Goonj, Khauf, Say na Something to Anupam Uncle, Milte Hain Break Ke Baad, Hansi ka Tadka etc. as writer and co-director.

An alumnus of New York Film Academy, New York City Viveck has been active in the Indian Film Industry for more than 18 Years.

As the director and producer of 'Melodious Eight', Viveck set the show as a travelogue which was based on the musical bands of North-East India. The 13 Episode series was shot in the 8 states of North East India and was telecasted on the National TV Doordarshan in 2020.



Producer/Director

Viveck Tewari



Hatti, we exist

Synopsis

Himachal Pradesh is home of several distinguished tribal communities. One of the Tribal communities that prevail in the district Sirmour in the lower part of Himachal Pradesh is 'Hatti'. The community is named after their age-old professional practice of selling their home grown crops at small markets called 'Haat' in nearby cities. The Hatti community is divided from Sirmour by the 'Giri' river which surrounds Hatti with another river called 'Tons'. Tons river marks the natural border between Sirmour district and Jaunsar-Bawar area of Uttarakhand. The latter used to have the Trans-Giri area of Sirmour district under its territory. Both Jaunsar-Bawar and Trans-Giri areas used to be part of the royal former Sirmour state until the separation of Jaunsar-Bawar in 1815. This shared history fact makes these clans of lower Himachal Pradesh to exhibit similar culture and common occurrences of inter-clan marriages.

The Trans-Giri area displays the social divisions in terms of economy and education from the people living across the Tons River. Over the years Jaunsar-Bawar has produced a significant number of government officials and civil servants. On the other hand people across Trans-Giri River live a rather hard life full of struggle and toil.

The film provides a glimpse of the life and culture of Hatti Community. The film commences with a traditional wedding set up in a small village called 'Mohrad' situated on the banks of Tons river. The filming picks up its pace with a local girl's marriage celebrations and follows through the fascinating experience of the rich heritage, culture, traditions and festivals of the Hatti community. The filming covers the wedding that takes place between the girl from Mohrad village and a boy from a village in Jaunsar-Bawar from across the river. Throughout the filming, the life of Hatti people is also depicted which is significantly not an easy one.

Nevertheless, the whole village joins hands together and help the bride's family in wedding arrangements. The groom who is from across the river has to cross a bridgeless river on a makeshift trolley in order to enter the marriage venue. The journey by road would take whole 6 hours which makes it an unpopular option. After the wedding is over, the film shows departure of the bride and groom on the same trolley.

The film also incorporates some political issue where the caste status of Jaunsar-Bawar's Hatti community is observed to be Scheduled Tribe, which was granted to them in 1967. However, the people of Trans-Giri area do-not have the same status despite belonging to the same category as of Jaunsar-Bawar's Hatti people. This has lead to a series of their ongoing demand for the same.

The ST status comes with added benefits for the needy and unfortunate in the area. The dedicated funds are granted under the tribal sub-plan which makes acquisition of ST status vital to these people. In terms of education, more reservations might open up in the ST category in institutions. With such initiation, employment rate will definitely get the much needed boost that will improve the lives of people of Hatti.

To be able to work on this project has been more of a childhood dream to me. Back when I was a child, I got the opportunity to have a close glimpse into the lives of Hatti people. My father played a huge role in it as he used to be closely associated with them and take me to attend their weddings. I remember it was a very welcoming experience since although I didn't belong to their community I always felt somehow attracted to their culture and yearned to know more about them.

I was from Paonta Sahib, at about 20 km far from the Trans-Giri area. The distance was not that much but to my surprise not many people from my area knew about Hatti community not were too keen to know about the kind and shy people of Hatti.

After becoming a filmmaker, I decided to pursue my childhood objective. After visiting the area I pitched my idea of a film on the Hatti community to Sh. Kundan Singh Shastri and Pt. Chuhi Ram Sharma who supported the idea completely. I then decided to propose this project to international Television Channels and met with few producers but to no avail. Unfortunately, nobody showed interest in it.

A few years later in 2016, I decided to take a break from work and quit my job as a CEO of a production house. I went to Paonta Sahib and was told about a wedding in Mohrad by Sh. Kundan Singh Shastri. This came as a great opportunity for me to rekindle my past uneventful venture. Another challenge that hit me was that I was lacking a helping hand. All that I had on me was a Nikon D 5200 camera, a Dictaphone and a tripod.

I really wanted to document the wedding so I contacted a local videographer to join me as a crew member. He agreed but on the D day couldn't make it due to an emergency. I decided to go on with the plan on my own and went to film two weddings over duration of 3 days, in the remote part of the area, only accompanied by my camera, Dictaphone (Yes, the sound was captured on a Dictaphone not on a professional equipment) and tripod.

Regardless the circumstances, I was able to shoot the weddings with much delight. I was quite satisfied with the footages but felt the need of shooting more in order to make a film out of it. I learned that as long as I am motivated enough, worries over money and funds seem irrelevant. I had to get more footage.

My passion drove me to the remote part of Shillai area to shoot Diwali at night. This time around I wanted to go well equipped hence I asked my friend Sibtain Shahidi to accompany me. Both of us went to shoot some interviews in different villages. Over the next few years I took several trips to Himachal Pradesh to shoot for my film, had to take a break due to lack of funds, had to wait for few more additional months before continuing the editing process. After another setback caused by work commitments, I was finally able to finish the editing and arranged a screening for some esteemed Hatti people in March 2020. I got positive feedback and some suggestions from them but then yet again I had to halt the project due to COVID-19.

I admire Carlos Nakai's work and used it as the background music for the film after getting license from Grand Canyon Records. They asked to see a part of the film and later wards gave me permission to use the music score at no charge. I am deeply grateful to them.

This whole journey has been a roller coaster for me and the experience will stay with me forever. One major realisation that struck me while making this film was that all it takes for a film to be made is undeterred determination, nothing else!

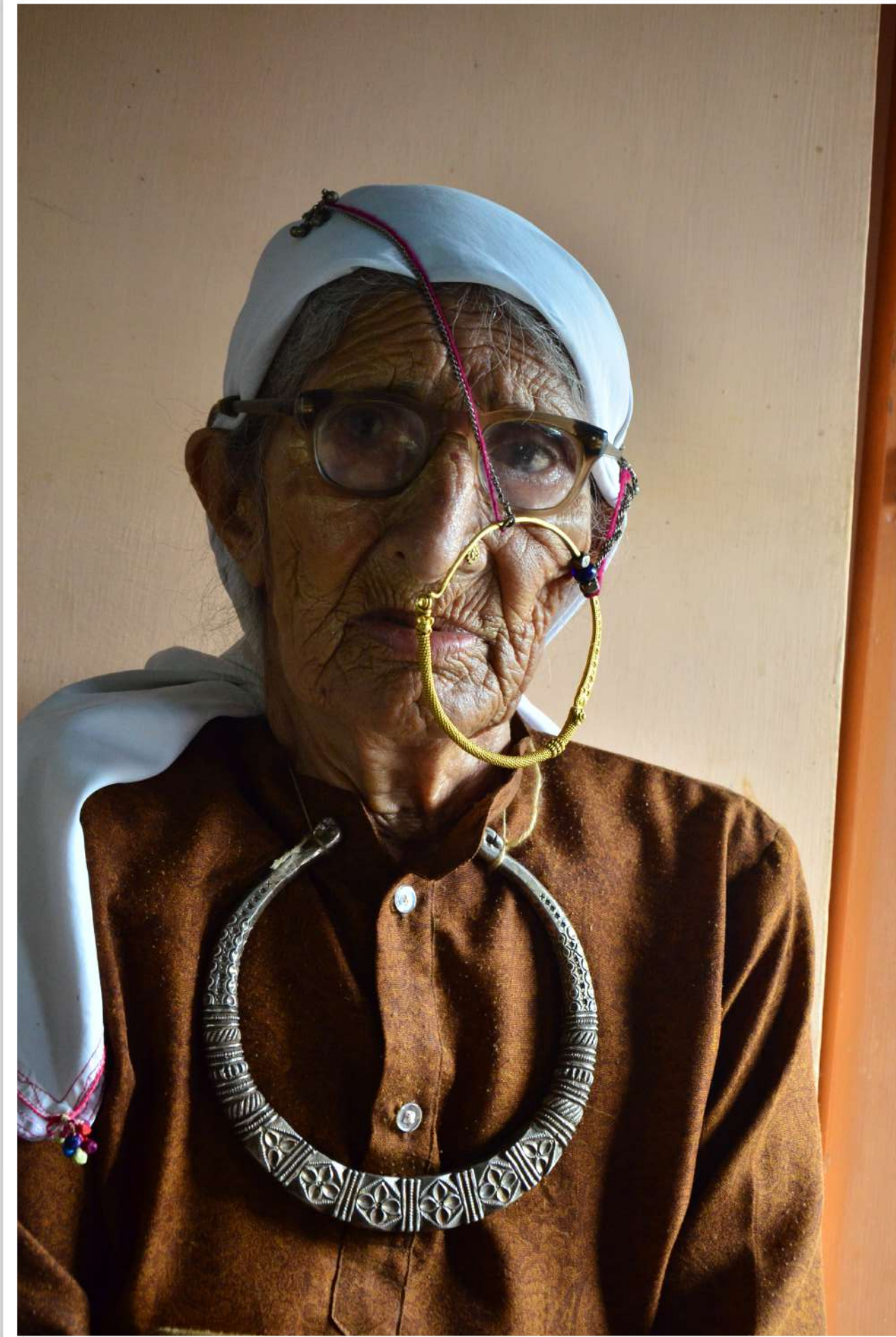


Hatti, we exist

About the film

Media

Photographs

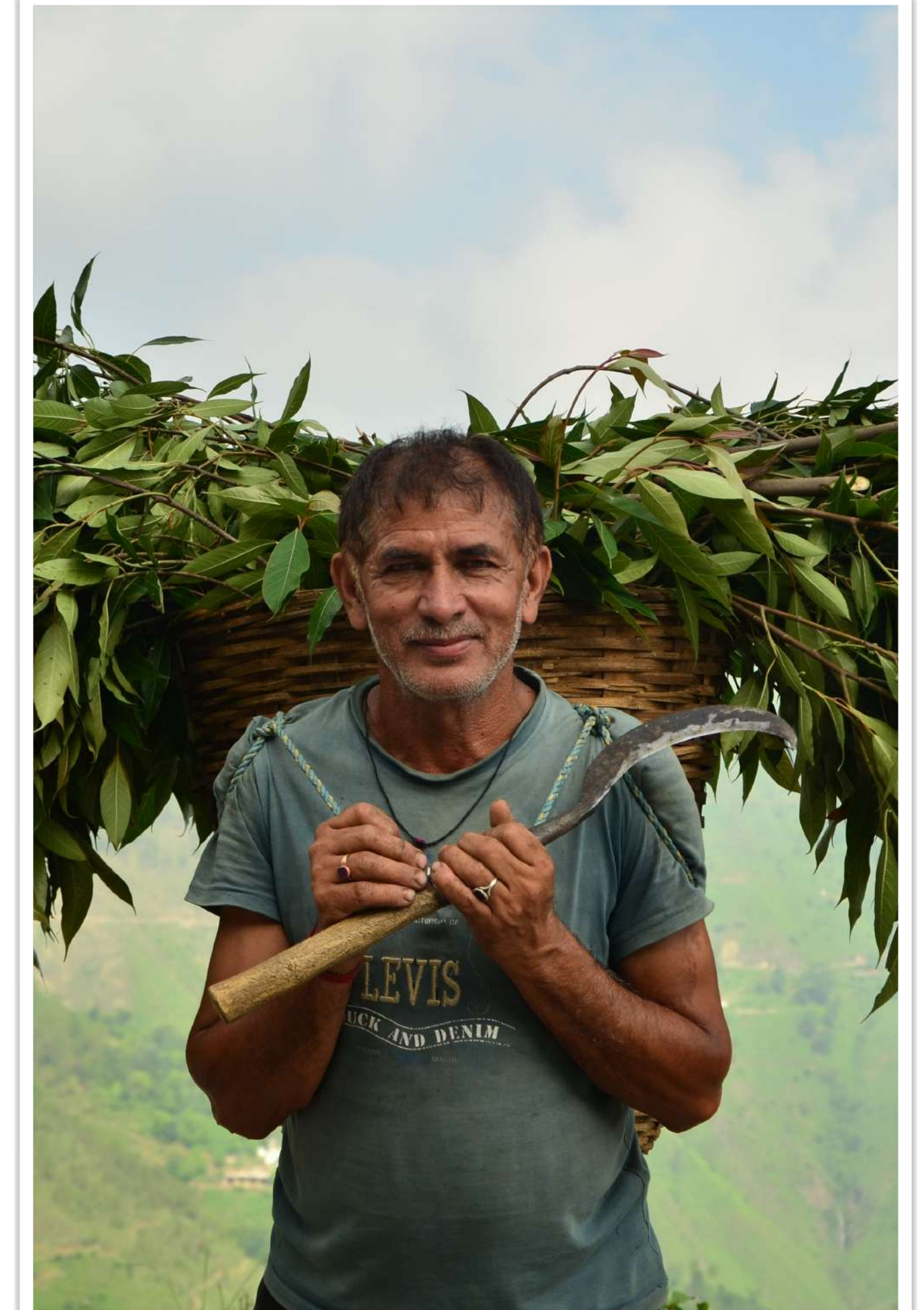


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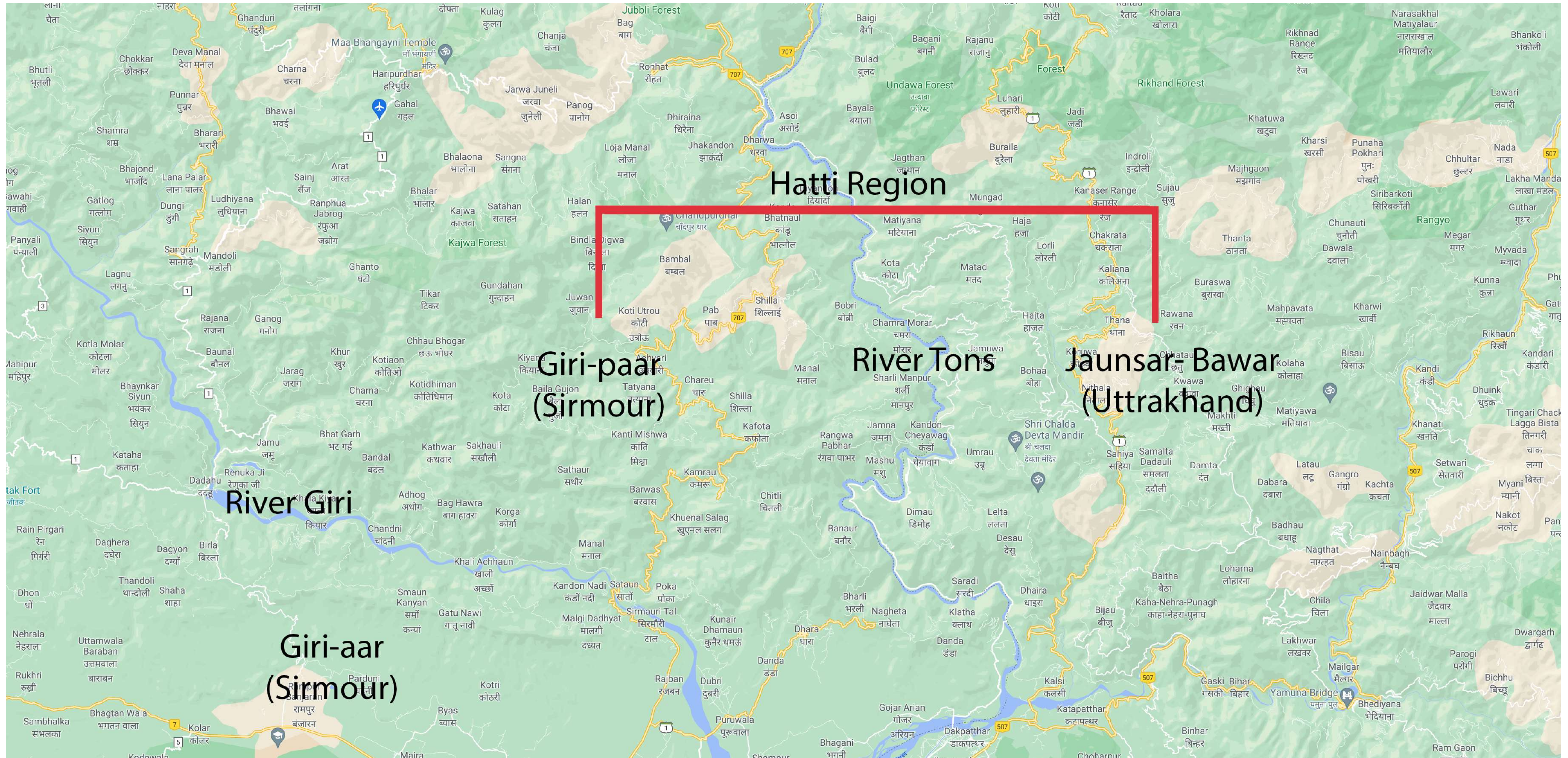
Terminology

Some Notes to understand the premises

1. **Hatti:** The community that uses to sell their cash crops in these local Haat or market. Irrespective of their cast or economic states people live in this region are called Hattis
2. **Haat:** A local market in a small town
3. **Himachal Pradesh:** Himachal is one of the 28 states of India. It lies in the northern part of India
4. **Sirmour:** Sirmour is one of the 12 Districts of Himachal Pradesh. It was a princely state once upon a time and was ruled by a King before the monarchy was abolished in India.
5. **Uttarakhand:** Uttarakhand is a neighbouring state of Himachal Pradesh. it's one of the 28 states in India
6. **River Giri:** A river in Himachal Pradesh that divides Sirmour into 2 parts, Giri-Aar and Giri-Paar (Trans Giri). The Hatti's lives on the other side of the river in the region of Giri-Paar (Trans Giri)
7. **River Tons:** Tons River is a natural border between 2 states, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Hattis lives on both sides of this river. A tribe living between River Giri and Tons are called Hattis from Himachal Pradesh and Hattis Living on the other side of River Tons are called Hattis from Uttarakhand
8. **Jaunsar-Bawar:** Its the region where Hattis lives on the Uttrakhand side of the river Tons
9. **Mohrad:** one of the villages in Himachal where the Hattis live
10. **Sharlie:** one of the villages in Himachal where the Hattis live
11. **Scheduled Tribe:** or (ST Status) is given by the Government of India where they acknowledge the existence of any Tribe and help them preserve their culture by grants, packages, monetary support, reservations, etc it helps the tribe in developing and preserving their culture. The help is granted on the ground of Education, infrastructure, healthcare, etc. Hattis of Uttarakhand got this ST status but Hattis from Himachal Pradesh did not get any status

Hatti, we exist

Geography



I have been in love with the art of filmmaking throughout my life. I believe films signify the mirrored version of life. I adore and respect this platform that portrays a story with much conviction and holds the power to bring potential change. I find myself rather grateful to have been given the opportunity to tell many untold beautiful stories via my films throughout my filmmaking career.

Stories like 'Hatti We Exist' deserve to be told and heard. The story of a kind and ingenuous tribe with a prolific cultural history but sadly been ignored for ages. Plagued with hardships, dearth of resources and daily struggles, Hatti communities are in dire need of economic aid. The progressive generations of Hatti have so much to offer to the modern society but seem to have stuck on the wrong side of the river. They deserve to be saved, they deserve to be known.

People need to know that Hatti exists!



Hatti, we exist

Director's Note

Hatti, we exist

CREW

Background Score

“Earth Spirit” from the album Earth Spirit (CR-612)
by R. Carlos Nakai courtesy Canyon Records License 2019-080.
All rights reserved. www.CanyonRecords.com.

Voice Over

Vinayak Kudva (Hindi)

Camera & Editing

Viveck Tewari

Stills

Sibtain Shahidi

Script

Sibtain Shahidi & Viveck Tewari

Color Grading

Asit Biswas

Sound Design & Mix Engineer

Shubhojit Ghosh (Kolkata)

Drone Shots

Viren Thakur (Jamna) TCPL Digital Studio
Mukesh Sharma (Kamrao)

Hatti, we exist

Cast

(In order of appearance)

Prof. Virender Thakur

Pt. C.R. Sharma

Late Kanwar Singh Negi 'Nanaji'

Sh. Kundan Singh Shastri

Sh. T.R. Sharma

Sh. Ramlal

Sh. Kapil Negi

Miss. Dimple Chauhan

Smt. Tara Chauhan

Sh. Kunwar Singta

Sh. Baldev Tomar

Late Jagat Singh Negi

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