

SHAMIM SARIF



'Shamim is intellectual, she's smart, she's funny, she's bright – and when I read her script, it was almost musical. We just clicked.'

– Rebecca Ferguson, Actress,
Despite the Falling Snow

'Shamim is an actor's director and that's relatively rare. I really love working with her.'

– Lisa Ray, Actress, *The World Unseen* &
I Can't Think Straight



Writer and director Shamim Sarif is an award-winning novelist, screenwriter and director for film and TV whose work has always focused on diversity, feminism, social impact and humanism.

Shamim has just completed her fifth feature film *Polarized*, shot in Canada. Her earlier features as writer/ director include ***Despite the Falling Snow***, starring Rebecca Ferguson and Charles Dance and based on Shamim's acclaimed second novel set in Cold War Moscow, published by St Martin's Press and Hodder. The movie garnered 13 awards.

Her first feature film as writer/director, ***I Can't Think Straight*** won 11 awards. Her follow up movie ***The World Unseen*** based on her award-winning book, debuted at the Toronto International Film Festival before garnering 23 awards internationally. Her third film, documentary *The House of Tomorrow*, was shot on location in Jerusalem.

Series directing credits include *Diggstown* (CBC/Fox), *SkyMed* (Paramount Plus) and the upcoming Season 4 of *You* (Berlanti/Netflix)

Her latest book, *The Shadow Mission*, is a feminist thriller released by HarperCollins in October 2020 and is a sequel to *The Athena Protocol*. The books are being developed as a series with Village Roadshow and Gran Via Productions (*Breaking Bad*, *Better Call Saul*).

An **accomplished speaker**, Shamim has spoken at TED events worldwide, at the INK Conference in India and DLD in Munich. Corporate speaking events have included Deloitte, Goldman Sachs, Citibank and Disney.

Shamim was invited to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Oscars) in 2019. She is also a member of BAFTA, the Writers Guild of America, the Director's Guild of Canada and the Canadian Media Producers Association. She lives in Toronto and London.

TRAILER LINKS:

[Despite the Falling Snow](#)
[The World Unseen](#)
[I Can't Think Straight](#)
[The House of Tomorrow](#)

TALK LINKS:

[Stories We Tell Ourselves](#)
[Why Art Matters](#)
[The Power of Imagination](#)



Click here for: [Shamim's Latest Showreel](#)

FEATURE FILMS



POLARIZED

WRITER/DIRECTOR



Just Completed

DESPITE THE FALLING SNOW

WRITER/DIRECTOR

'If you liked Brooklyn, you'll love this film.'

– Now Magazine



Click here for: **Despite the Falling Snow**

THE WORLD UNSEEN

WRITER/DIRECTOR

'Visual poetry'

- Variety



OFFICIAL SELECTION
TORONTO INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

23 WINNER
INTERNATIONAL AWARDS
INCLUDING
11 SAFTAS



Click here for: **The World Unseen**

I CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT

WRITER/DIRECTOR

'Sensual, witty and elegant... in exploring the eternal conflict between love and duty in a fresh, provocative way, Sarif demonstrates that she is a filmmaker of exceptional promise.'

- LA Times



11 WINNER
INTERNATIONAL
AWARDS



Click here for: **I Can't Think Straight**

TV DIRECTING

MURDOCH MYSTERIES

YOU



SKYMED BLOCK 4
TECH PACKAGE

DIGGSTOWN
A House on Fire



TV DEVELOPMENT

DEADLINE

HOME / TV / BREAKING NEWS

Village Roadshow Adapting 'The Athena Protocol' All-Female Thriller Novel For Television

By Denise Petski
December 17, 2019 10:54am



EXCLUSIVE: Village Roadshow Entertainment Group has acquired the rights to Shamim Sarif's all-female YA thriller novel *The Athena Protocol* to develop as a television series.

The *Athena Protocol* features six female protagonists, led by Jessie, a hot-headed young agent at Athena, a top secret, socially-conscious vigilante organization focused on helping women and children worldwide. When Jessie breaks protocol and assassinates a target, she's ousted from Athena just as her teammates set out to take down a human trafficker in Belgrade. Going rogue in order to prove herself, Jessie finds there's no-one to watch her back as she gets closer to the horrifying truth behind the mission.

Sarif will write the pilot and is attached to direct on the project. Along with her producing partner, Hanan Kattan, she will executive produce alongside Village Roadshow.

The book was published by HarperCollins in October to rave reviews, with a sequel, *The Shadow Mission*, coming in October 2020.

Sarif is an award-winning novelist, screenwriter and director for film and TV, whose three features as writer/director, *Despite the Falling Snow*, *I Can't Think Straight* and *The World Unseen*, all produced by Kattan, have won 47 international awards. She is repped by Adam Peck of Synchronicity Management, lawyer Jeffrey Finkelstein of Del Shaw Moonves Tanaka Finkelstein & Lezcano. Book rights are handled by Sophie Hicks in London.

NOVELIST

WINNER OF THE BETTY TRASK AWARD



Ian McEwan presents Shamim with the Betty Trask Award.

WINNER OF THE PENDLETON MAY
FIRST NOVEL AWARD



Shamim receiving a Pendleton May First Novel Award

NEW FROM HARPERCOLLINS



OCTOBER 2019

'Led by and centered on women, this high-octane thriller features a well-developed cast with distinct, varied backgrounds. An explosively exciting story that shines a light on the treatment, mistreatment, and unity of women across the globe.'

- Booklist

'A fascinating and action-packed read that features some incredible female characters with broad appeal for fans of thrillers and spy stories... a must-read.'

- YA Books Central

'...an inclusive cast, ample action, and escalating stakes...Jessie's conflicted attraction rings true, and a gratifying conclusion hints at emotional complexities to come.'

- Publisher's Weekly

NEW FROM HARPERCOLLINS



OCTOBER 2020

'This riveting, female-centered romp includes diverse characters—African American, Palestinian, South Asian British—who have layered and complex backstories. Jessie examines her privilege with occasional flippant snark and questions global power dynamics and the treatment of women around the world... Thrillingly representative female empowerment.'

– Kirkus Reviews

'Lots of edge-of-your-seat moments. A perfectly paced plot and girls with brains and Mission Impossible-style moves make this a highly engaging thriller. A breathlessly cinematic series opener.'

– School Library Journal

PREVIOUS NOVELS



'A perfectly balanced novel of love and tragedy... brutally shocking...'

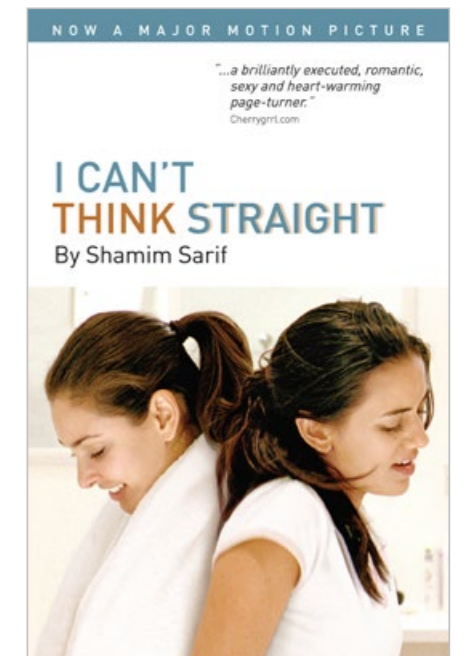
– Waterstones Magazine



WINNER OF THE BETTY TRASK AWARD AND THE PENDLETON MAY FIRST NOVEL AWARD

'Pretty perfect... An absolute must read.'

– The Citizen



'...A brilliantly executed, romantic, sexy, and heart-warming page-turner... The only thing to not like about the book is that it had to end...'

– CherryGrrl.com

SPEAKING



Watch: **The Stories We Tell Ourselves**
INK Conference, 2015



Watch: **Why Art Matters**
INK Conference, India



Watch: **The Power of Imagination**
TEDxHolyLand, Jerusalem

Speaking Engagements Include:

TedSalon, London
TEDxHolyLand, Jerusalem
INK Conference, India
DLD, Munich
Goldman Sachs, London
Viacom, New York
Citi, London
Deloitte, London
Women in Film, London
Hilton, NY
BNY Mellon, NY
Disney
Credit Suisse

'Because it's not just writers and filmmakers who create stories. We all create, every day, the stories that shape who we are.'

– Shamim Sarif, INK Conference

'Knowledge tells us more of what we already know. Imagination pushes us to create that which does not yet exist.'

– Shamim Sarif, TEDx HolyLand

'Stories can be even more than a reflection of our world and our humanity, if we let them. At their best, they can also teach us who we could be – if we dare.'

– Shamim Sarif, INK Conference

SHAMIM IN THE MEDIA

shondaland

Author Shamim Sarif on Why Writing Diversity Is Here to Stay

Confronted with the idea that diversity is only a cultural trend, the author of *The Athena Protocol* argues that portraying "otherness" actually includes us all.



Shamim Sarif is an award-winning author of the public female action thriller, *The Athena Protocol*. Sarif was faced with an unexpected challenge as she approached the public female action thriller, releasing a novel that was not simply a trend in our current...

THE ADVOCATE

Mogul in the Making

With two new films coming out in November, writer-director Shamim Sarif is one lesbian filmmaker who is enjoying being-up success.

When writing award-winning director Shamim Sarif, a blend of Indian and South African writing styles and cinematic sensibilities are at work. Sarif's new films, *The World Unseen* and *The Athena Protocol*, are a testament to her unique voice. She is not just a filmmaker; she is a storyteller who brings diverse perspectives to the screen.

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY UPDATE

Behind the scenes at Oprah's school

THE OPRAH MAGAZINE

SOUTH AFRICA

NURTURE YOUR SPIRIT

- O's practical guide to spiritual Aha! moments
- Awaken the sleeping power of your intuition
- Escape the rut race - now... FIND MEANING, CONNECTION AND HOPE

sky NEWS

THE POWER OF HEALTHY LIVING

Longevity

ARCH 2009 R27.95 (UK) (includes 12 issues)

...and director of *The World Unseen*. By Roberta Cooi

Ms.

MORE THAN A MAGAZINE, A MOVEMENT

From Fiction to Real-Life Change

10/8/2019 BY SHAMIM SARIF

My grandmother was married at age 16 to a man she had no choice about whether she might like to be meaning in her life.

These stories deeply affected me as I was growing up and were still being played out for women all over the world. *The World Unseen*, which I later directed as a film, and traditional Indian Muslim community in which my grandmother lived.

But I didn't want to document her life. I wanted to re-examine how she had no choice about whether she might like to be meaning in her life.

That story, along with my previous film, *I Can't Think Straight*, who watched them. The trickle of emails turned into a flood of requests. Experiencing the characters' journey, they often wrote to tell me they had been inspired by an abusive husband. Another, from the "unconscious marriage" and started LGBTQ support groups all over the world.

SCREENAFRICA

Looking into an UNSEEN world

In the last few years, Indian-themed films such as *East is East*, *Moonlight Wedding* and *The Gita* have slowly begun to introduce Indian culture to a wider audience. A new international feature film about an Indian community experiencing the dawn of socialism is currently preparing for production in South Africa.

SCREENAFRICA

What is the story behind the film? In an interview with the author, Shamim Sarif discusses the challenges of writing and directing a film that explores the lives of women in a traditional Indian community. She talks about the importance of research and the role of women in the film's development.

O contributors

Shamim Sarif was born to exiled South African parents and has lived in London for most of her life. She moved to Cape Town with her partner and two boys for the duration of filming the screen version of her novel, *The World Unseen*, out this month. What is your favourite quote and why does it resonate with you? "It always seems impossible until it's done." - Nelson Mandela. "When you face situations you can't imagine changing, and then you do, you realize, how true this statement is."

Ms.

It's time that we live in a world where people believe that fuels my work. As the women of don't work, shouldn't we start looking at the...

SCREENAFRICA

Shamim Sarif is an award-winning author of the public female action thriller, *The Athena Protocol*. Sarif was faced with an unexpected challenge as she approached the public female action thriller, releasing a novel that was not simply a trend in our current...



Time Out

London's living guide

Sept 26-Oct 3 2001 No. 1623 £2.20

THE MALL

London Evening Standard

Three £500 to dashes at

'The World Unseen'

Shamim Sarif Women's Press £5.99

If South Africa in the 1960s under Apartheid was a nightmare, it was compounded by traditional Indian families who made marriage a prison for women. Miriam emigrated there with her husband, the uncommunicative, authoritarian Omair, and produced three children while her husband was in general prison. Her situation in the diary is a stark and painful portrait of a woman who has been silenced.

London Evening Standard

Shamim Sarif, 39 CIVIL PARTNERSHIP WITH HANAN KATTAN, 46

A YOUNG Christian Palestinian woman born in Jordan. And a young woman born in Britain, into a Muslim Indian family. Though separated by geography and culture, it's a safe bet to say their families wanted nothing more than to see both girls safely married. But not, ideally, to each other. If that sounds like the basis for a romantic comedy then let me hint that my first feature film as a writer-director was I Can't Think Straight and it has a touch of autobiography, though perhaps with actresses just a little younger and thinner than I and Hanan are...

Our legal rights over each other's birth children were not the same although we built this family together

TIMES

Fiction

THE WORLD UNSEEN
By Shamim Sarif
The Women's Press, £9.99, 233 pp
ISBN 0 7043 4732 1
£6.99 (Free p&p) 0870 160 90 80

THE divisions of apartheid ran deep in South Africa in the 1960s—and not only between blacks and whites. Miriam is part of an Indian community living outside Pretoria, hermetically sealed against the outside world and clinging to its traditions with crushing fervour. As a wife and mother, Miriam is required to order in her husband in all things. As an Indian, she must mix with her black workers. As a woman, she is determined to defy convention. Like Miriam, she is Indian, yet through their lives of exile she has experienced early marriage and—so the denials of her community—has set up a café with a black man. Her developing friendship with Miriam, and the members of their families, form the focus of *The World Unseen*, Shamim Sarif's first novel.

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LINKS:

Shamim's Latest ShowReel
Despite the Falling Snow Trailer
The World Unseen Trailer
I Can't Think Straight Trailer
The House of Tomorrow Trailer

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TALKS:

'The Stories We Tell Ourselves' – INK Conference, 2015
'Why Art Matters' – INK Conference, India
'The Power of Imagination' – TEDxHolyLand, Jerusalem



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ShamimSarif



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