

INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS

(UNLOCKED)

riha

A FILM BY ARASTU ZAKIA

synopsis

Zoya Diwan, a Muslim woman and her 8 year old son are stuck in an abusive marriage with the Father Mirza Diwan, who ironically runs an NGO for Women & Children. And then, Zoya is sought out for help by Ayesha - a victim of Triple Talaq (a practice of a Muslim man saying 'Divorce, divorce, divorce' thrice resulting in an instant, verbal, unilateral divorce).

'Riha' throws light on the internal turmoil and fight for courage within a victim of domestic violence. The Story also showcases the class disparity between a rich Muslim woman and a poor Muslim woman and the prevalent persecution of a minority in a polarized Indian Society.

It is a self-produced film by first-time Director Arastu Zakia and a tribute to his Mother - the lady who rescued him from an abusive marriage and went on to lead the movement that brought the ban on Triple Talaq in India.



director's statement

Growing up as a victim of domestic violence, my only two friends in the World were my Mother and the Television set at home. My memory of that time is of my Mother silent, the two of us embracing and crying and the constant yearning to just get the hell out of there. When I was 15, my Mother and I finally left, we were unlocked, we were free. She was then 38 years old, Muslim, now a divorcee, in a communally-sensitive and traditional Indian Society, without money, without the support of family and with a 15 year old Son to now fend for. All we had on us were our clothes and IDs.

From then on, my Mother Zakia Soman went on to lead a 12 year struggle to get the practice of 'Triple Talaq' - oral, instant, unilateral divorce - banned in the Supreme Court of India, a move that impacted millions of women around the Country.

'Riha' is my tribute to my Mother and an attempt to revisit the sense of wonder I felt on the television set as a child, when I was able to successfully sneak in and catch a glimpse of the outside world.



cast

- *Indu Sharma - Theatre & Film Actor from the National School of Drama, casted 'Leila' on Netflix by Deepa Mehta, acted in Oscar-winning Director Orlando von Einsiedel's 'Into Dust'*
- *Ashwath Bhatt - The Star of mainstream Indian movies by the biggest Production Houses such as 'Leila', 'Mission Majnu', 'Raazi'*
- *Vara Raturi - Acted in Iram Haq's International Norwegian Film - 'What will people say'*
- *Naved Aslam - Acted in over 26 Films & Shows such as 'Once upon a time in Mumbai' and 'Byomkesh Bakshi'*
- *Alok Gagdekar - Actor from the International Emmy winning 'Delhi Crime', the blockbuster 'Rang De Basanti'*



Crew

- *Writer, Director, Producer - Arastu Zakia - Writer of a commissioned Hindi Film on a prominent Freedom Fighter, Creator of 'Zoya' - a Series based on the life of Triple Talaq intervenor Zakia Soman*
- *Executive Producers - Umang Sangani, Sidharth Meer - Founder of 'Bridge PostWorks' - Oscar-winning 'The Elephant Whisperers' and the Award winning 'The Lunchbox', 'Masaan'*
- *Co-Producers - Insyng Productions, Mauli Singh - Represented International-acclaimed Independent films like Jonaki (Rotterdam), Newton (Berlinale), Masaan (Cannes), Thithi (Locarno)*
- *Co-Writer, Associate Director - Anup Abraham Parackal - Filmmaker from the Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute*
- *Cinematographer - Dhruvad Shukla - Whistling Woods International - 'Li Ej Hu'*
- *Sound - Mohit Shankar, Neethu Mohandas (Sound Recordist of Netflix's International Production - 'The White Tiger')*
- *Editor - Ajay Yadav - Edit/DIT for 'Brahmastra', 'Padmaavat', 'Shivaay'*
- *Production Designer - Sheel Thakore - Best Film National Award winner 'Hellaro'*
- *Costumes - Niki Joshi - Best Film National Award winner 'Hellaro'*
- *Music - Sandesh Shandilya - Indian Blockbusters like 'K3G', 'Jab We Met'*



technical details

- *Format - Colour, Digital, 2K, 5.1 & Stereo Sound Mix, DCP/ProRes/MOV*
- *Aspect Ratio: 2.39:1*
- *Duration - 29 minutes, 59 seconds*
- *Language - Hindi & English (with English Subtitles)*
- *Country - India*
- *Year of Production - 2022-23*
- *Self-Produced, Debut Directorial*



links & contact

Trailer Link: <https://youtu.be/LQSZAi593M> (1 minute)

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