

DR. SWARNJIT SINGH
Presents
AN ECLECTIC FILMS PRODUCTION

1947: BREXIT INDIA

A FILM BY SANJIVAN LAL

OFFICIAL SELECTION
INTERNATIONAL FILM
FESTIVAL OF INDIA
2023



ANCHORED & NARRATED BY
BOMAN IRANI

FEATURING

DR. SHASHI THAROOR, WILLIAM DALRYMPLE, COMMODORE UDAY BHASKAR, M. RAJIVLOCHAN,
DR. ALLISTER HINDS, PROF. TOM TOMLINSON, DR. DAVID OMISSI, DR. GURHARPAL SINGH & DR. ISHTIAQ AHMED

WRITTEN BY SHAMA ZAIDI

CO-PRODUCER SANJIVAN LAL DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JOGENDRA PANDA, DEB BURMAN EDITOR PRASHANT NAIK, NAVNITA SEN SOUND DESIGN MANAS CHOUDHURY
MUSIC RAJA NARAYAN DEB ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR ARJUN LAL VFX & MOTION GRAPHIC SUPERVISOR NONIDH YADAV RE-RECORDING MIXER SUBIR KUMAR DAS
ON-SET VFX SUPERVISOR BIJU DHANAPALAN DIGITAL INTERMEDIATE MALAY RAY LINE PRODUCER AAKRITI BHATNAGAR (UK), AMIT SINGH (DELHI) & ANAND MALVIYA (MUMBAI)



LOGLINE

"How did Britain, with a population never exceeding 0.05% of India's managed to rule for 190 years but suddenly they made an abrupt and hasty exit, preponing India's independence by nearly a year resulting into one of the worse man-made disasters in the world?"

SYNOPSIS

The East India Company, granted permission by Emperor Jehangir to establish factories for procuring and storing Indian goods, initially hired local guards for their protection. However, as their operations expanded, they transformed these guards into soldiers of the Company.

By 1764, after defeating three Indian rulers at the Battle of Buxar, the Company secured the Diwani of Bengal, granting them the right to collect land revenue. With these land revenues, they could purchase Indian goods and ship them to Britain without investing their own capital. This economic shift significantly impacted India, propelling Britain to become the world's financial superpower.

The Company evolved from traders to rulers of native states, often using force and guile to conquer them. As they prospered, their attitude towards Indians turned exploitative, eventually leading to the Great Uprising of 1857.

Subsequently, the East India Company was disbanded, and Queen Victoria assumed the title of Empress of India.

The Indian National Congress was formed and they began demanding a role in governing the country, but British authorities resisted and employed the "Divide and Rule" policy, encouraging the formation of the Muslim League.

With the outbreak of World War I in 1914, Indians were induced to fight for the British as part of the British Indian Army. Resources were diverted to the war effort, imposing a heavy cost on India. Gandhi arrived in India, supporting the British in the hope of securing independence after the war, but he was disappointed.

The "Divide and Rule" policy further fragmented Indian electorates. When World War II began in 1939, India was once again asked to support the British, but the Congress refused, leading to the rise of the Muslim League, which advocated for a separate country - Pakistan.

As Britain faced financial bankruptcy at the end of the Second World War, they sought aid from the USA. The USA provided a loan with stringent conditions: repayment in dollars and investment in British reconstruction, not in colonies. This indirectly forced Britain to abandon its colonies, as they had become a liability in helping them repay the American loans in dollars.

Britain had accrued a significant debt to India, totalling 1500 million pounds, for the use of Indian resources and manpower. To retain India

further as a colony, substantial investments would be required. However, Britain's financial crisis and American demands led to decolonization.

They initiated the process prompted by their financial crisis by granting rapid decolonization to non-dollar producing countries like Jordan, India, Palestine and Ceylon from 1946 to 1948.

Lord Mountbatten was appointed and sent to India in the February of 1947 to oversee the transfer of power to Indians within 18 months by June 30, 1948 and was provided 65 million Pounds for the same.

However, upon arrival, he witnessed a volatile communal situation. With a lack of resources to control it. He decided to divide India into two dominions, expedite the independence process, leading to a hasty and tumultuous exit, resulting in one of the worst man-made disasters in history - all within six months of his arrival in India.

The outstanding sterling debt of 1500 million pounds was written off in exchange for independence.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

When Dr. Swarnjit Singh offered me the film, the first thing that crossed my mind was not the content, but how I was going to make it appealing for the youth and the Indian audience, who often prefer fiction shows over non-fiction ones or feature films. It was neither a human drama nor a crime story, but a human tragedy. Above all, it was a historical narrative where nothing could be fictionalised. I took it up as a challenge and decided that the film had to be visually engaging and fast-paced. It had to appear youthful and vibrant.

As I delved deeper into the research and discussed the project with my producer and writer, I became increasingly obsessed with it. I felt a personal mission to bring this story to life. It was a story that many, including myself, were unfamiliar with. As I uncovered the depth and relevance of the subject and the narrative, I realised I had been given an opportunity to do something that might not be told again anytime soon by someone else. Therefore, I decided to take ownership of this film.

I dedicated myself to this project for the next five years, embracing the challenges of the pandemic and the complexities that come with a project of this magnitude and scale. I did it all for the sake of future generations who seek to understand the genuine story behind India's independence without any political bias.

THE JOURNEY

As mentioned above, the idea for this film came from Dr. Swarnjit Singh, a US-based gastroenterologist by profession. Originally hailing from Chandigarh but having lived abroad for a significant period, he was struck by the question of how a tiny country managed to rule India for 190 years and what prompted them to quit abruptly, resulting in a catastrophic departure in 1947. This curiosity led him to delve into



deeper research and engage in regular interactions with historians within the Commonwealth. As a clear picture emerged, he decided to create a documentary film to share this historical narrative with the world.

In 2017, Dr. Swarnjit Singh came across my debut feature film, "BUBBLE GUM," and contacted me through a mutual friend. Intrigued by the idea, I decided to get involved, as history had been one of my favourite subjects too. I immediately brought Shama Zaidi on board as the writer, as I couldn't think of anyone with such vast experience and knowledge.

Shama Zaidi and I spent almost a year conducting extensive research, undergoing several rewrites, and trying to find a focus and structure for the film. We made a conscious decision to keep it pure and free from any element of fiction since we were dealing with history. We opted not to present it as a docu-drama. Furthermore, we were determined to stay true to our research and the historical facts, so we reached out to historians, academic experts and authorities.

Given that our story is set in the era from 1609 to 1947, we realised that we would have to rely primarily on still images, as the movie camera was not invented until the late 19th century. Therefore, we expected to have less film footage to work with, which presented a challenge in making the film visually appealing and engaging. However, we embraced this challenge.

In 2018, we initiated the shooting process in London. We interviewed experts such as Dr. Gurharpal, Prof. Tom Tomlinson (both professors at SOAS London, UK), Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmed, a Pakistan-origin political scientist from Oslo, and Dr. Allister Hinds, the economist, who travelled from the West Indies for an interview. We also interviewed Dr. David Omissi in Hull, which was around four hours away from London. However, the most significant visit was to Powis Castle in Wales, which was once the home of Robert Clive and has now been turned into a museum. It housed the loot brought from India to Britain by Clive, and it was a somber sight to witness our heritage stored there. Nevertheless, it was reassuring to see that these artefacts were being well-maintained even after centuries. Another memorable experience was the visit to Britain's oldest bar, the East India Arms, which has been in existence since 1630. This was a place where British Parliament members used to network with East India Company representatives. Last but not least, I had the overwhelming experience of visiting the Tower of London to see the famous Kohinoor diamond, still shining with all its glitter.

Upon returning to India, the second schedule took place in Delhi and Chandigarh. We interviewed prominent figures such as Dr. Shashi Tharoor, William Dalrymple, and Commodore Uday Bhaskar. The Chandigarh schedule primarily focused on Dr. Rajivlochan, a history professor and regular columnist on Indian military matters for various publications. Back in Mumbai, the post-production phase began, only to be interrupted by the severe pandemic crisis that affected the world. However, once the rough cut was completed, we started looking for an anchor. After considering several names, we chose Boman Irani, a talented actor with a remarkable voice. His involvement added a fresh and star-studded appeal to the documentary.

At the end of this journey, I believe that this film possesses significant archival value for future generations. While we acknowledge the contributions of nationalist leaders and freedom fighters who consistently pressured the British throughout the struggle years, it's important to note that the British initially came to India for business, and when the business took a downturn, they decided to depart abruptly.

DIRECTOR & CO-PRODUCER - SANJIVAN LAL



Sanjivan Lal, an FTII, Pune alumnus specializing in Film Direction (1993), gained critical acclaim with his diploma film 'The Second Page' screened at Indian Panorama, IFFI 1994. His Hindi debut feature film 'BUBBLE GUM' (2011) unanimously garnered rave reviews from all over.

Previously, Sanjivan was associated with Late Gul Anand, Kamlesh Pandey, and Deepak Tijori, directing episodic Telefilms like Rishtey, Saturday Suspense and Star

Bestsellers.

His documentary film "Is God Deaf?" made it to International Festival of Documentary and Reality Films at New Delhi and IFFI 2004, as part of the Indian Panorama. He also was a jury member for the Indian Panorama at IFFI 2005.

Beside Directing/Co-producing '1947: BREXIT INDIA' he is set to helm his next with an A-Lister.

PRODUCER, CONCEPT & RESEARCH - DR. SWARNJIT SINGH



Dr. Swarnjit Singh, is an American citizen based in USA. He is a doctor by profession but is also a huge history buff. While his friends spent time playing golf- he devoured books on History.

It was he who came up with the subject on which this documentary is based. He started the research process much before he even initiated the idea of this documentary.

He has lived with this subject for more than 10 years finally sees his dream coming true.

RESEARCH & SCRIPT - SHAMA ZAIDI



Shama Zaidi is an Indian screenplay writer, costume designer, art director, theatre person, art critic, and documentary filmmaker.

She has written scripts/dialogues for documentaries and feature films with Satyajit Ray, Shyam Benegal, M. S. Sathyu and others. She is praised for her excellent screen writing in T.V serial "Bharat Ek Khoj".

She wrote the screenplay of Charandas Chor (1975), Garam Hava (1974), The Making of Mahatma (1996) and Mujib: The Making of a Nation (2023) among many others.

She is associated with movies like Umrao Jaan (1981), The Seventh Horse of the Sun (1992), Sardari Begum (1996), Hari-Bari (2000), Devi Ahilya Bai (2002), Garam Hava (2014) and Jaanisaar (2015).

She was honored with Lifetime Achievement Award at ICA - International Cultural Artifact Film Festival in 2021.

ANCHOR & NARRATOR - BOMAN IRANI



He is an Indian actor, voice artist, screenplay mentor and photographer.

As an actor, he works primarily in Hindi cinema and theatre. He joined theatre in his late 30's and moved to on-screen acting in 2000.

Irani gained attention for his role in the 2003 comedy-drama, Munna Bhai M.B.B.S and has not looked back ever since.

He received several awards and tremendous acclaim for his performance in blockbusters such as Lage Raho Munna Bhai, 3 Idiots, Main Hoon Na, House full, Don 2, Happy New Year and more.

He recently launched his production house Irani Movietone and he mentors budding writers under his writing workshop, Spiral Bound.

HISTORIANS / SPEAKERS

Dr. Shashi Tharoor



Dr. Tharoor is an Indian politician and a Member of Parliament (MP) from the Thiruvananthapuram constituency in Kerala. He also currently serves as Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs.

'He previously served as the United Nations Under-Secretary General for Communications and Public Information and as the Minister of State for the Ministry of External Affairs.

Until 2007, he was a career official at the United Nations, rising to the rank of Under-Secretary General for Communications and Public Information in 2001.

He is also a prolific author, columnist, journalist and a human rights advocate. He has authored 16 bestselling works of fiction and non-fiction since 1981, all of which are centered on India and its history, culture, film, politics, society and foreign policy.

William Dalrymple



William Dalrymple is a Scottish historian and writer, art historian and curator, as well as a prominent broadcaster and critic.

His books have won numerous awards and prizes, including the Duff Cooper Memorial Prize, the Thomas Cook Travel Book Award, the Sunday Times Young British Writer of the Year Award, the Hemingway, the Kapuściński and the Wolfson Prizes.

He has been four times long listed and once shortlisted for the Samuel Johnson Prize for non-fiction.

He is also one of the co-founders and co-directors of the annual Jaipur Literature Festival.

In 2012 he was appointed a Whitney J. Oates Visiting Fellow in the Humanities by Princeton University. In the Spring of 2015 he was appointed the OP Jindal Distinguished Lecturer at Brown University.

His book "The Anarchy" is currently being adapted into an international series by Jeremy Brock ("The Last King of Scotland"). The series will be co-produced by Wiip and Roy Kapur Films.

Commodore Uday Bhaskar



Retiring from the Indian Navy in early 2007 after 37 years' service, Commodore Bhaskar is a New Delhi-based security analyst and a noted columnist and author.

He is currently Convener, India International Centre (IIC) Study Group on Strategic and Security Issues. He was formerly associated with the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) where he served as the Deputy Director (1996-2004) and later headed the Institute until late 2005.

Subsequently he was appointed Member-Secretary of the GOI Task Force on 'Global Strategic Developments', a report submitted to the Prime Minister of India.

M. Rajivlochan



Dr. M Rajivlochan is affiliated to History, Panjab University, where he is currently working as Professor.

He has authored and co-authored several national and international publications and also working as a reviewer for reputed professional journals.

He is having an active association with different societies and academies around the world. He made his mark in the scientific community with the contributions and widely recognition from honourable subject experts around the world.

He has received several awards for the contributions to the scientific community. His major research interest involves Contemporary Indian History, the religio-moral undercurrent in social innovation, social and cultural history of India, popularising history and history teaching and sensitising a society to be more self-reflective in a scientific manner.

Dr. Allister Hinds



Dr. Allister Hinds is a retired, former Director of Human Resources at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. He holds a PhD and Masters of Arts in History from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada and a Masters of Arts in Industrial Relations and Managing Human Resources from Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, UK.

As a historian he was a Senior Lecturer in African history at the said Campus. He is the author of 'Britain's Sterling Colonial Policy and Decolonization 1939-1958' and has also published a number of articles and book chapters.

Prof. Tom Tomlinson



Professor Tom Tomlinson is Emeritus Professor at SOAS University of London and an Associate Member in the Centre for Business History - his latest research interest is a project entitled 'The Empire of Enterprise: Scottish business networks in Asian Trade, 1765-1832'.

His work include The Political Economy of the Raj, 1914-1947: The Economics of Decolonization in India; The Indian National Congress and the Raj, 1929-1942: The Penultimate Phase; The Economy of Modern India ; The Third World in the Twentieth Century among others.

Dr. David Omissi

Dr Omissi is an English writer, educator and historian. Now freelance, previously Dr David Omissi was a Senior lecturer in Modern History, Imperial and Military History at the University of Hull.

Before moving to Hull he was a lecturer in British Empire History at the University of Edinburgh and Prize Research Fellow at Nuffield College, Oxford.

His works include *The Sepoy and the Raj: Indian Army, 1860-1940*, *Indian Voices of the Great War* and *Air Power and Colonial Control: The Royal Air Force 1919-1939* and of scholarly articles on the military history of the British Empire.

Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmed

Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmed is a Swedish political scientist and author of Pakistani descent. He obtained a PhD in Political Science from Stockholm University, where he is currently Professor Emeritus, having retired in 2010.

During 2015-2019 he was a Visiting Professor at the Government College University, Lahore, and in 2013-2015 he was Visiting Professor at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS).

He is an Honorary Senior Fellow of the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) at the National University of Singapore and was Visiting Research Professor at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS).

He was also Visiting Professor at the South Asian Studies Programme, the National University of Singapore from June 2007 to June 2010.

He is an Editor-in-General of the "Liberal Arts & Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)"; a member of the editorial advisory boards of "Asian Ethnicity"; "Journal of Punjab Studies"; "IPRI Journal, Islamabad"; and "PIPS Research Journal of Conflict and Peace Studies, Islamabad.

Dr. Gurharpal Singh

Emeritus Professor Gurharpal Singh was the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, SOAS, from 2011 to 2017.

He is a political scientist who completed his undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at the LSE. Previously, he was the Deputy Director of the Religions and Development Research Programme (DFID) and held the Nadir Dinshaw Chair in the School of Philosophy, Theology and Religion at the University of Birmingham.

He has also been the C.R.Parekh Chair in Indian politics at the University of Hull.

Professor Singh was a member of the RAE 2014 (sub-panel 27, Area Studies) and the RAE 2008 (sub-panel 49, Asian Studies). He was a member of the Commissioning Panel of the AHRC and ESRC Religion and Society Research Programme and of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (2002-07).

PRODUCTION HOUSE

Eclectic Films Private Limited is an Indian production company established by Sanjivan Lal in June 2017. Based in Mumbai, it mainly produces films and documentaries.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

ORIGINAL TITLE	1947: BREXIT INDIA
ENGLISH TITLE	1947: BREXIT INDIA
GENRE	DOCUMENTARY
LANGUAGE	ENGLISH
SUBTITLES	ENGLISH
DURATION	119 MINS
DATE OF COMPLETION	OCTOBER 2023
COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION	INDIA, US
SHOOTING FORMAT	DIGITAL
SCREENING FORMAT	2K DCP
ASPECT RATIO	16:9
SOUND	5.1 MIX (.WAV FILE)

CREW

Director & Co-Producer	Sanjivan Lal
Producer	Dr. Swarnjit Singh
Writer	Shama Zaidi
Research	Dr. Swarnjit Singh, Shama Zaidi
Director of Photography	Jogendra Panda, Deb Burman
Editor	Prashant Naik, Navnita Sen
Music	Raja Narayan Deb
Sound Designer	Manas Choudhury
Associate Director	Arjun Lal
VFX & Motion Graphics	Nonidh Yadav
On-Set VFX Supervisor	Biju Dhanapalan
Digital Intermediate	Malay Ray
Re-Recording Mixer	Subir Kumar Das
Dialogue Editor	Abinash Mishra
Sound Effects Editors	Aakash Chaudhary, Tony Tom, Caster Rinoy Gomez
Sound Recordist	Declan Chew, Vinod Kumar
Research Assistant	Kanika Makhija
Assistant Director	Pratik Narayanan Kutty
Line Producers	Aakriti Bhatnagar (UK), Amit Singh (Delhi), Anand Malviya (Mumbai)
DIT	Neil Sadwelkar (Digital Dada)



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INTERNATIONAL SALES

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