

# **SANJHA PUNJAB**

**PRESS INFORMATION**









*Eight Stories Beyond Borders*

**AN ASIM MUKHTAR FILM**

**Sanjha  
Punjab**

**CINEMATOGRAPHY  
REWI AMOAMO & NIKO MEREDITH**

**STORYWRITER  
TEENA BROWN PULU**

A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a grey shawl over a dark shirt and light-colored trousers, stands in a park. He is leaning against a large tree trunk. The park has many other trees and a grassy area. The sky is overcast.

**EIGHT STORIES BEYOND BORDERS**

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# PROJECT INFORMATION

**Film Title**

Sanjha Punjab

**Shooting Format****Screening Format**

35mm

**Director, Producer**

Asim Mukhtar

**Screening Ratio**

1.85.1

**Cinematography**

Rewi Amoamo

Niko Meredith

**Sound Format**

Dolby Digital 5.1

**Storywriter**

Teena Brown Pulu

**Duration**

70 Minutes

**Contact**

+64 277 700 0835

asim@outlook.co.nz

**Production Company**

Punjab Films Limited, NZ

## TRAILER

*Sanjha Punjab* (2024)

Vimeo Link: [SANJHA PUNJAB – Official Trailer on Vimeo](#)

YouTube Link: [SANJHA PUNJAB – Official Trailer \(youtube.com\)](#)

# LOGLINES

- Eight stories of migrant life in South Auckland for the Punjabis, a people who have been separated into different countries, India and Pakistan, for eight decades.
- In South Auckland, the Punjabis from India and Pakistan do the one thing they cannot do back home: they come together as a people with a long history of shared heritage and culture.

# SYNOPSIS

Basharat writes a poem in the park and recites it to friends.

Friends gather to discuss Baba Najmi's poetry.

Parminder hosts a radio show of Punjabis wanting the border softened.

Gurmeet drives to Gurdwara, Ali Shah drives to Masjid.

Ajit, Billa Ji, and Rajinder meet for chai and chat.

N. V. Singh and Asim show solidarity for migrants stuck offshore.

Amrit and Amrik sing folk, Nisar and Sukhbir sing Sufi.

Asim travels home, seeing the land of Punjab in a new light.

Eight stories combined into one film about Punjabis in South Auckland. The travelling narrative shows migrant Punjabi men from India and Pakistan restoring their cultural heritage and ancestral ties after eight decades of separation in their home countries.

# STORY BACKGROUND

The characters in the film are non-actors playing themselves in everyday scenarios and settings of Punjabi migrant life in South Auckland. The eight stories evoke what *Sanjha Punjab*, a united Punjab looks and feels like twelve-thousand miles away from India and Pakistan's militarised border, which has separated the Punjabis for eight decades.

Burgeoning questions frame the stories, songs, and dances: how can we use our influence to soften the border? How can we ensure Punjabis remain forever connected to our mother tongue and motherland, and to one another. Irrespective of whether one identifies as east Punjab or west Punjab, South Auckland Punjabis feel united through their shared ancestry, language, and culture.

# DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY



Asim Mukhtar migrated in 2014 from Punjab, Pakistan to Auckland, New Zealand. From 2019 to 2024, he took up a practice-led PhD thesis in the Faculty of Māori and Indigenous Development at Auckland University of Technology, transitioning from photography to filmmaking as his artform. *Sanjha Punjab* is his doctoral film, the result of four-years creative research and screen production. Asim was awarded Muslim of the Year in 2019 at the New Zealand Muslim Awards. He has filmed and produced documentary videos in Punjabi for radio and internet. This is his first full-length film made in the style of hybrid documentary.

## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

This is a special film to me because it is grounded in my lived experience of being a migrant Punjabi male living in South Auckland. Beyond the militarised border of India and Pakistan, I have found the peace of mind and heart I have yearned for all my life. Here, Punjabis who were once divided into separate countries at the 1947 partition of British India, coexist side-by-side peacefully, respectfully, and in harmony with the shared cultural values and mother tongue (Punjabi) of their ancestors. It was important that this film not only told my personal story but the collective story of migrant Punjabi men in South Auckland repairing relationships and rekindling language and heritage. This filmmaking experience will shape my future projects because it has taught me the value of telling your story through your people's story: our lives are resilient and safer united – *Sanjha Punjab!*

# CAST



## Poetry Eek

Basharat Ali Jan

Onkar Singh

Bashir Ahmad

Amrit Pal Singh

Haseeb Arshad

Akif Rehman

## Reflections Eek

Parminder Singh

Daljit Singh

Naveed Hamid

Nasir Dhillon

## Poetry Doo

Baba Najmi

Satta Vairowalia

Farooq Chaudhry

Jasdeep Sidhu

Umar Javed Goraya

## Reflections Doo

Gurmeet Singh Sarkaria

Ali Shah

**Friends Eek**

Ajit Singh Randhawa  
Saleem Zubair (Billa Ji)  
Rajinder Bajwa

**Friends Doo**

N. V. Singh  
Asim Mukhtar  
Amrik Singh  
Amrit Jagayat  
Parminder Singh Papatoetoe  
Gagan Mangat  
Navdeep Gill  
Devinder Channa  
Jasdeep Sidhu  
Lakhdeep Sikhu  
Jasbeer Singh  
Umar Javad Goraya  
Haseeb Virk  
Vakas Ali  
Rashid Variach  
Melino Maka  
Sylvester Tonga  
Fritz Filisi

**Compositions Eek**

Nisar Mirza  
Sukhbir Singh  
Amrik Singh  
Amrit Jagayat

**Compositions Doo**

Faisal Hayat Jappa  
Govt Islamia Postgraduate College, Chiniot