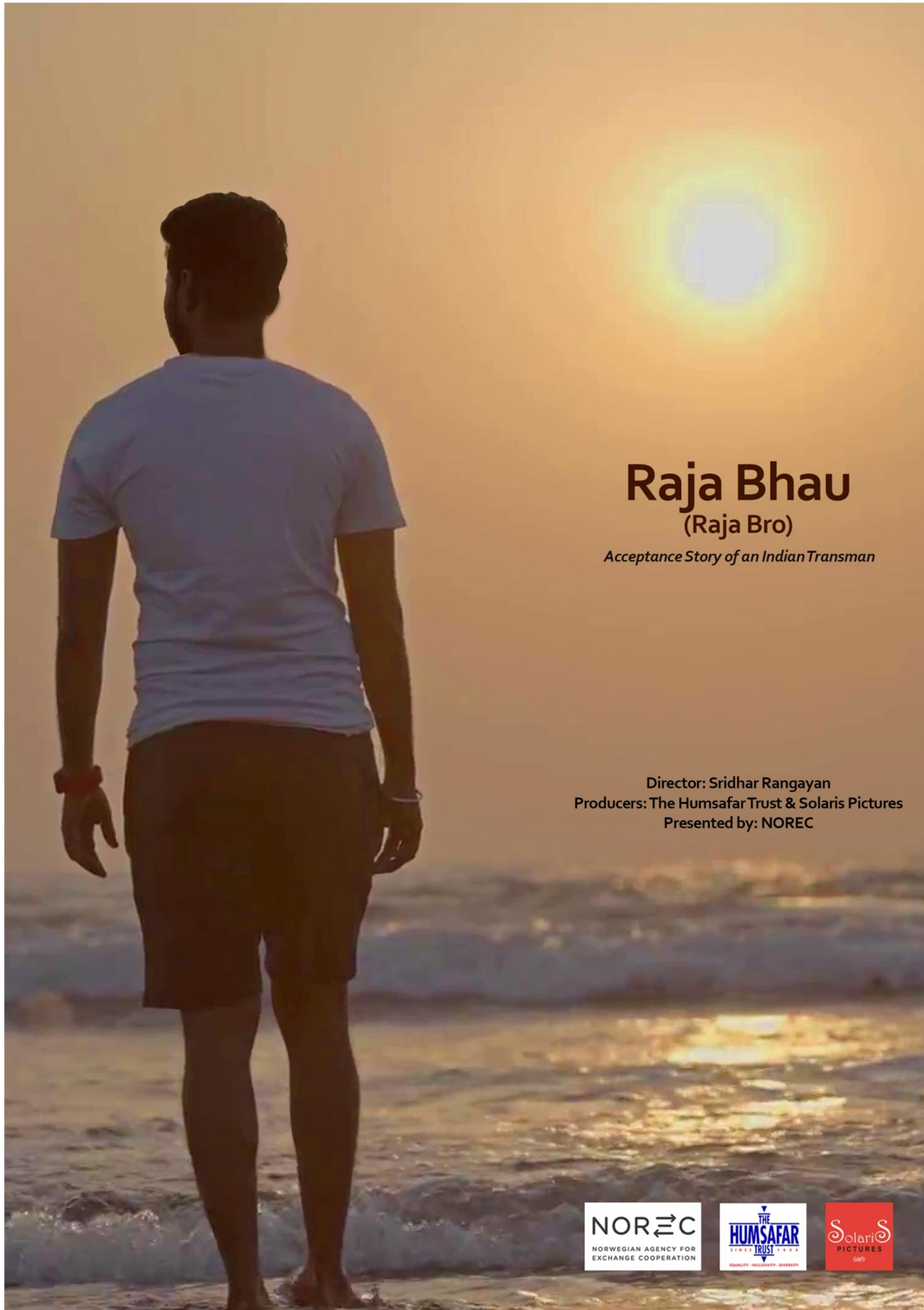




Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eORuMhGVth4>

SYNOPSIS

RAJA BHAU is a sensitive heart-warming story of an Indian transman's acceptance, by himself and his family. Merlin, born as a girl, felt right from his childhood that he was trapped in the wrong gender. But it took a lot of courage and determination for Merlin to transition to become a transman.

With unflinching support from his mother, and acceptance by his other family members, Merlin now is proud of his gender identity. He is now an inspiration to other younger persons struggling with their identity, as he advises them on the correct way to go through transition. His grandmother living on the outskirts of Ratnagiri tells with a chuckle, "I have always called him Raja Bhau (Raja Bro) right from his childhood!"

Insta: @sridharrangayan @solarispictures @thehumsafartrustofficial

Facebook: @RajaBroFilm @sridharrangayan @TheHumsafarTrustOfficial @solarispictures

AWARDS

Best Documentary Short at Vintage International Film Festival, Kolhapur, India

Best Indian Documentary Short at Yellowstone International Film Festival, New Delhi, India

Best LGBTQ Short Film at Global Bengaluru International Film Festival, India

Special Jury Mention at Girona Film Festival, Spain

FESTIVALS

1. Global Bengaluru International Film Festival, Bengaluru, India – December 17-18, 2022
2. Aks International Minorities Festival , Lahore, Karachi & Multan, Pakistan – January 14-23, 2023
3. REINCARNATE III Regional Art and Film Festival, Dhaka, Bangladesh – January 18-20, 2023
4. PrideArts Film Festival, USA – February 1-12, 2023
5. Leeds Queer Film Festival, Leeds, UK - March 23 – 26, 2023
6. Kalamata Monthly International Short Documentary Festival, Greece – April 7, 2023
7. Muskoka Queer Film Festival, Canada – May 17, 2023
8. KASHISH Mumbai International Queer Film Festival – June 7-11, 2023
9. Zorilla's Fest, Valladolid, Spain – May 27 – June 24, 2023
10. Three Fires International Film Festival, Canada – July 27 - 30, 2023
11. Bangalore Queer Film Festival, India – August 4-6, 2023
12. Reel Desires: Chennai International Queer Film Festival, India - August 18-20, 2023
13. Khush Texas, USA – August 27, 2023
14. Chicago South Asian Film Festival, USA - September 21-24, 2023
15. 100% Manusia Film Festival, Indonesia - September 30 - October 8, 2023
16. Tasveer Film Festival, USA - October 11 – 22, 2023
17. BangkokThai International Film Festival, Bangkok, Thailand – October 14, 2023
18. Yellowstone International Film Festival, New Delhi – October 22-27, 2023

19. Girona Film Festival, Spain – November 6-12, 2023
20. Yatha Katha International Film & Literature Festival, Mumbai, India – November 9, 2023
21. Merlinka International Festival, Serbia – December 7-10, 2023
22. DC South Asian Film Festival, USA – December 8-10, 2023
23. Alibag Short Film Festival, India – December 10, 2023
24. Golden Jury Film Festival, Mumbai, India –December 12- 13, 2023
25. Vintage International Film Festival, Kolhapur, India – January 21, 2024
26. K.R.Mohanan Memorial Film Festival, Palakkad, India - February 18, 2024
27. Odisha International Film Festival, Bhubaneshwar, India - February 23, 2024

DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Sridhar Rangayan wears many caps – of a filmmaker, writer, activist and festival director. His award winning films *The Pink Mirror*, *Yours Emotionally*, *Purple Skies*, *Breaking Free* and *Evening Shadows* are at the forefront of India's emergent queer cinema movement. He won the National Award for Best Editing for his film *Breaking Free*, and his film *Evening Shadows* has won 27 international awards and screened at 83 festivals. He has been a strong advocate for LGBTQ+ rights for over three decades.

He has served as Jury for prestigious film festivals such as Mardi Gras (Australia), Outfest (USA), Berlinale (Germany), Iris Prize (UK), Movies That Matter (Netherlands) and Image+Nation (Montreal).

He has figured in the list of 'Global List of LGBT Influencers' by BFI Flare; '5 most influential gay & lesbian Indians' by Pink Pages, India; and '21 heroes changing LGBTI Asia for the better' by Asia LGBT Milestone Awards, Hong Kong.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Within the LGBTQ+ spectrum, I have felt that Transmen are the most marginalized and remain largely invisible. That's the reason I decided to make a documentary on a transman, and more so focussing on acceptance of him. Finding Merlin, this bright amazing individual, was serendipity.

Myself and my team hope that the journey of Merlin will inspire other transmen to come to terms with their gender identity and go through the transition that is comfortable to each of them. But more so we hope that this film can touch the hearts of parents in general and parents of transmen in particular to embrace their child and go ahead with the journey of acceptance.

PRODUCERS' PROFILE

The Humsafar Trust (HST) is a community-based organisation (CBO) working on the health and human rights of LGBTQ+ since 1994. HST works in the field of health, advocacy, research and capacity building of LGBTQ+ communities across India. Media and especially films are a major communication tool that can initiate a healthy dialogue in society. HST strives to make message-driven films which serve as advocacy tools to sensitise various stakeholders, communities and the larger society. Under our new initiative STUDIO DHANAK (RAINBOW) we train aspiring scriptwriters/filmmakers to write their stories, which can be adapted into short films.

Solaris Pictures is an Indian media house that believes in 'Advotainment' – advocacy with entertainment. As a film production company it has consistently been making films that engage the audience and initiate dialogues on issues dealing with health and sexuality, human rights, and the LGBT community. Previous productions include: *The Pink Mirror*, *68 Pages*, *Project Bolo*, *Purple Skies*, *Breaking Free* and *Evening Shadows*. Its films have won numerous awards and been festival hits, but more importantly have been able to create awareness among mass audiences about human rights issues.

CREDITS

Director: Sridhar Rangayan

Writer: Sridhar Rangayan

Producers: The Humsafar Trust, Solaris Pictures

DOP : Subhransu Das

Editor: Mohosin Shaikh

Background Score: Suresh Iyer

Equipments Courtesy: Accord Equips

Producers (for The Humsafar Trust) : Suhail Abbasi, Vivek Raj Anand

Producers (for Solaris Pictures) : Sridhar Rangayan, Saagar Gupta

Presented by : Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation (NOREC)

Cast:

Merlin Mandavkar (Protagonist)

Devyani Mandavkar (Mother)

Ulhas Mandavkar (Father)

Juili Pawaskar (Cousin Sister)

Swapna Pawarskar (Aunt)

Anita Bhatkar (Grandmother)

Bhavesh More (Cousin Brother)

Bhagyashree More (Aunt)

Bharat More (Uncle)

Omkar More (Cousin Brother)

Yash Kota (Friend)

Kabir Husale (Friend)

Ankit Khochare (Friend)

Song: Why Do You Hide

Producer: Friends of Linger:

Lyrics & Lead Vocals: Sharif D Rangnekar

Music: Adhir Ghosh, Sharif D Rangnekar & Smiti Malik

Guitars: Adhir Ghosh

Bass: Steve Peter

Drums: Aveleon Vaz

Backing Vocals: Smiti Malik

Copyright: Sharif D Rangnekar

For festival bookings contact Sridhar Rangayan at solaris.pictures.india@gmail.com

