



ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT

BAWLA

A SLASHER FEATURE

Obsession. Illusion. Folly.
All will bleed.

JV's Films & Mark Idhar Hai Films





STORY

LOGLINE

A young military cadet hunts down her sister's killer as corpses pile around her in rapid and relentless succession.

A Film By Vishesh Mankal





Currently touring
film festivals
successfully!



SYNOPSIS

SHORT SYNOPSIS

When a vlogging team is brutally murdered after visiting reclusive actor Amit Malhotra, a determined NDA cadet named Jheel arrives to investigate. As she digs into the strange lives of the locals and forms an uneasy alliance with Amit, a chilling mystery unravels, one that blurs the line between performance and reality, and leads to a shocking confrontation with the truth.





SYNOPSIS

LONG SYNOPSIS



As the film begins, a team of vloggers comes to interview legendary method actor Amit Malhotra, famed for unwavering commitment to his craft, at his remote countryside retreat. As the team leaves after documenting Amit's life and career, they become unwitting victims of a series of grisly murders perpetrated by a mysterious masked figure. The killings shock the peaceful surroundings, leaving everyone on edge and searching for answers.

Enter Jheel, a determined NDA cadet whose sister was among the victims. Determined to uncover the truth behind the disappearances, Jheel teams up with Amit, who offers his assistance in the investigation. Together, they delve into the lives of the eccentric residents of the area, including Soham Khare, a troubled painter seeking inspiration; Kailash Dwarkadas, a struggling paleontologist investigating alleged dinosaur eggs; and Tahira Bhatt, a reclusive writer with a mysterious past.



LONG SYNOPSIS

As Jheel and Amit dig deeper, they uncover dark secrets and hidden motives, leading them to suspect that the killer may be closer than they think. As tensions rise and the body count mounts, Jheel confronts Amit, only to discover shocking revelations about his true nature and involvement in the murders. The film culminates in a gripping showdown between Jheel and Amit, as the truth behind the killings is finally revealed.

"Bawla" is a thrilling tale of obsession, deception, and the lengths people will go to in the pursuit of their desires. Set against the backdrop of lush countryside and populated by intriguing characters, the film explores themes of identity, morality, and the blurred lines between reality and performance. With its gripping plot twists and compelling characters, "Bawla" keeps audiences on the edge of their seats until the very end.





TRAILER

TRAILER

Please Click on Thumbnail to Play





Director's Note

I've always been fascinated by filmmakers who could do a lot with very little. Directors like Mario Bava, Terrence Fisher, Dario Argento, Lucio Fulci, Roger Corman, and John Carpenter (among others) have taught me as much as the more widely accepted auteurs of world cinema. And so when I was faced with challenge of making this film, I knew it would be my love and admiration for the former group that would see me through. Their wildly inventive films beckoned, and I, like a cartoon character enamored, went floating, arms outstretched, nose locked in. "Bawla" is a tribute to those directors while at the same time being a launchpad of sorts for me. It is a film made out of love, desperation, blood (both onscreen and off!) and a lot of sweat. Reflecting my influences, it's a *Giallo* film done in modern times, and reflecting my roots, it's set in the Indian countryside. It's Dario Argento meets (early) Brian DePalma, it's Lucio Fulci meets Tobe Hooper. And because I can't resist trying to punch above my weight, there are tributes to the films of Akira Kurosawa, Steven Spielberg, John McTiernan, Alfred Hitchcock, and others in there as well.

In a nutshell, "Bawla" is a slasher film with a twist, a dark psychological horror tale with comic undertones. Above all, it's a film that warrants a look, if only for the audacity of its existence! And also because we poor filmmakers need audiences to see our films...



TECH SPECS

General Information

Shot on: Sony FX-3, Sony G-Master Lenses / iPhone 14 Pro Max (some shots) / DJI Air 2S (Aerial Shots)

Technical Specs

Running time - 84 minutes, 24 seconds

Format - 2k/4k, 2.39:1

Language - Hindi, English Subtitles

Year of completion - 2025

Country of origin - India





How the story came to be

I saw a film a few years ago in which a legendary actor showed up for one scene in spite of being riddled with physical complications resulting from a debilitating disease. The scene brought tears to my eyes and made me reflect on what makes us all tick. What is it that gives our lives meaning? For a sportsperson it's their sport, for a chef the kitchen, and for artists it's their art. However, this then begs the question, when does passion turn into obsession? And when does obsession turn destructive? These are the questions that then started weighing on my mind as I thought more and more about that actor and that scene. But I couldn't be judgmental for I've come to realize that I too can be obsessive about my work.

This then led me to the conclusion that it is this love and dedication for a certain thing that brings disparate individuals together. It gives us solidarity in an increasingly fractured world. It's the invisible string that binds people who may be separated by both space and time. It is what connects a nobody like me with a somebody like John Carpenter, for example.

And so the story of "Bawla" was born from these musings. It's a reflection on the beauty and danger of living for something with your whole being. However, it's not a story that is meant to be taken seriously for what's the point of it all if we can't laugh at ourselves? Until some actor actually goes ahead and does what's depicted in this film that is. Then, we'll talk about how prescient it was!



THE MAIN CAST



Jhinal Belani stars as the fierce military cadet in 'Bawla,' her first collaboration with director Vishesh Mankal. A versatile Indian actress, she's shone in films, commercials, music videos, and TV serials, bringing depth to every role. In 'Bawla,' her gripping performance drives the film, and is majorly responsible for its success. Based in Mumbai, Jhinal's dynamic presence marks her as a rising talent in the film industry. She has also dabbled in directing and producing.

IMDB link: https://www.imdb.com/name/nm7864509/?ref_=tt_ov_st_1



Aniket Tank is a professional actor based in Mumbai, with a degree in Theatre Arts from M.S. University of Baroda. Since 2008, he has been actively involved in commercial theatre and has appeared in numerous films and television shows. Aniket is passionate about the craft of acting across all mediums and is deeply committed to character building and cultural exploration. Among his notable roles, he portrayed the popular deity Shri Krishna in the television series "Bhakt Gora Kumbhar".

IMDB link: https://www.imdb.com/name/nm13276601/?ref_=tt_cst_t_2



Vishesh Mankal, Writer-Director



Vishesh Mankal is a filmmaker whose journey began with short films during his college years. His early works, such as *Suicide* (2006), *Peacock* (2008), and *Not Born Heroes* (2010), garnered attention on the festival circuit. He went on to work as a video editor and cameraman at Yash Raj Films, one of India's leading production houses, before directing a range of commercials, corporate films, and training videos. His short film *Harmless* (2018) received multiple festival selections. His debut feature film *Bawla* (2025) is also performing well in the festival circuit and has already played in the UK and the USA, and is slated to open in Canada soon. Like many independent filmmakers, he donned various hats on this film, including that of the writer, director, editor, cinematographer, VFX artist, and sound designer.

Imdb link: https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3837567/?ref_=tt_ov_dr_1



PRAISE FOR BAWLA

"... a visually striking and tightly crafted horror feature that delivers on both atmosphere and narrative tension."

"... a cleverly plotted psychological horror that keeps its clues hidden in plain sight."

"The real strength... is how it balances style with substance."

"The cinematography is consistently impressive... with a strong sense of visual storytelling from the very first frame."



- Andrew Hannon
13horror Contest Director,
Author





PRAISE FOR BAWLA

“Everything that happens here is part of the plot.”

“... more technically solid than most at the price.”

“... this did a better job of holding my attention than many.”

“... it's all quite fun.”

“... giallo-esque sexual tension...”

- Jim McLennan, Film Blitz





PRAISE FOR BAWLA

"... masterfully blends
Giallo suspense, slasher
tension, and
psychological horror."

"... A haunting journey..."

"... shocks, unsettles..."

"... lingers after the credits..."

"... a cinematic experience
that dares to disturb..."

"... A must-watch..."

"... a haunting
exploration of darkness,
obsession, and the
human psyche."

**- Jagran Film Festival,
Dainik Jagran**





FILM FESTIVAL RECORD - BAWLA

FILM FESTIVAL RECORD SO FAR (PREMIERES)



North American / World Premiere
3rd May
Award Winner - Best Action Feature



Indian Premiere
To be screened in multiple
cities



Canadian Premiere - 23rd May



UK Premiere - 11th May
Award Winner - Best Scream



FILM FESTIVAL RECORD - BAWLA

FILM FESTIVAL RECORD SO FAR (SCREENINGS & AWARDS)



Screening Date - TBA
Toronto, Canada



Screening Date - 3rd May - USA



Phoenix FearCon - Honorable
Mention - USA



Screening Date - TBA
Los Angeles, USA



FILM FESTIVAL RECORD - BAWLA

FILM FESTIVAL RECORD SO FAR (SCREENINGS & AWARDS)



Nominated - Best Feature Film



Special Festival Mention



Honorable Mention - USA



FILM FESTIVAL RECORD - BAWLA

FILM FESTIVAL RECORD SO FAR (SCREENINGS & AWARDS)



Award Winner - Best Director



Best Film Editing -
Turkiye



Screening Date - April 25
Award Winner - Best Concept



FILM FESTIVAL – MONTHLY RUN

**PLEASE NOTE: THE FILM WILL
BE PLAYING AT THE ANNUAL
EVENTS OF SEVERAL OF THESE
FESTIVALS**

Tuesday of Horror	Selected
Los Angeles Film Awards	Semi-Finalist
POOMBUKAR INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL	Award Winner
East Village New York Film Festival	Selected
FIVE CONTINENTS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL	Award Winner
Asian Independent Film Festival	Finalist
Silverlens Film Awards	Award Winner
Rohip International Film Festival	Award Winner
Pageant Film Festival	Award Winner
American Golden Picture International Film Festival	Honorable Mention
Eastern Europe Film Festival	Award Winner



FILM FESTIVAL – MONTHLY RUN

**PLEASE NOTE: THE FILM WILL
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FESTIVALS**

CKF International Film Festival

Award Winner

Mokkho International Film Festival

Award Winner

American Golden Picture International Film Festival

Honorable Mention

Cinematic European Film Festival

Selected

Purgatory Film Festival

Award Winner

Sweden Film Awards

Finalist

Bloody Hats Film Festival

Award Winner

The Dunwich Horror Fest

Award Winner

Indian Independent Film Festival

Award Winner

Bharat International Film Festival

Selected

Stockholm City Film Festival

Finalist



DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION



DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION

All Distribution Rights **Available**

Worldwide Rights **Available**

Available Rights:

Theatrical
Streaming
TV
VOD
DVD/Blu-ray



CONTACT INFORMATION

THANK YOU!
GET IN TOUCH!

