

First Runner-Up
Dancing Lens

BISFF
BENGALURU INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL
2026

GODDESS

Press Kit

RAMAYA
PRODUCTIONS



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

Logline

During a Bharatanatyam performance, a dancer slips into a trance where personal trauma merges with the fury of Goddess Kali—unleashing the collective awakening of women pushed to their breaking point.

Specs

Runtime: 14 minutes | Dialogue: Minimal | Language: No Dialogue

Synopsis

GODDESS is a 14-minute Indo-Canadian short in which a Bharatanatyam dancer slips into a trance during performance, her consciousness fracturing into three parallel lives — each a different face of contemporary gender-based violence.

With minimal dialogue and Bharatanatyam as its cinematic language rather than cultural decoration, the film offers a mythic vocabulary for collective feminine awakening that transcends cultural and linguistic borders. Produced in Canada with an accomplished India-based creative team, GODDESS brings together classical Indian dance, contemporary trauma, and the fury of Goddess Kali in a form-driven short film that intersects dance, feminist, South Asian and art-house cinema.

Early Responses

“I could not look away. From the very first scene there was so much tension percolating beneath the surface... My western background wasn't a bar to entry—you welcomed me in and guided my understanding.”
— Jill Golick, Screenwriter

“With almost no dialogue, GODDESS speaks powerfully across language and culture through silence, music, and dance — revealing the truths that shape so many women's lives. The film reframes women not as victims, but as carriers of courage and resilience.”
— Katrina Chen
Former BC MLA & Cabinet Minister

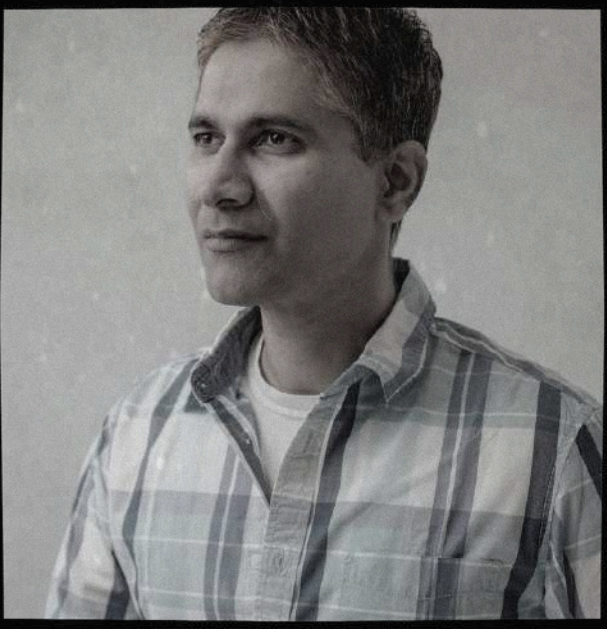
“GODDESS reminds us that we are more than victims and even beyond survivors — we are goddesses. Through dance, mythology, and storytelling, the film transforms pain into awareness, healing, and empowerment.”
— Mariat Jibril
Founder, Better Not Bitter Society

Production Support

GODDESS was developed with the support of the Canada Council for the Arts through its Explore and Create program. The filmmakers are also grateful for the invaluable support of community impact organizations including NEVR, BC Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH), GELP Foundation, Empower Community Services Society, and IWI.



Ram Rajagopalan – Writer/Director/Producer



Ram Rajagopalan is a Tamil-Canadian filmmaker based between Vancouver, Toronto, and Pune. His work explores identity, displacement, and embodied storytelling through genre cinema, socially conscious drama, and movement-driven narratives. A graduate of Vancouver Film School, with additional training at Toronto Metropolitan University and The Second City, Ram has written, directed, and produced films across Canada and India. His directorial debut, *MANNEQUIN* (2024), a restrained horror-drama exploring passive racism, screened at more than ten international film festivals and was nominated for Best Canadian Short at the Canadian Screen Award—qualifying Silver Wave Film Festival. As a producer, he has supported emerging filmmakers on projects including *BAGMAN* (2026), premiering at Fantasia International Film Festival, and *ALIA* (2025), which premiered at the Oscar-qualifying Tasveer Film Festival. *GODDESS* marks the culmination of his ongoing exploration of cinema, mythology, and performance, using Bharatanatyam as cinematic language to examine feminine power, trauma, and collective awakening.

Vision Statement

GODDESS emerged from a contradiction I have witnessed throughout my life: women are revered as goddesses across cultures and within mythology, yet continue to navigate fear, constraint, and violence in everyday life.

The film uses Bharatanatyam not as cultural decoration, but as cinematic language. Through movement, rhythm, silence, and repetition, it explores how trauma, humiliation, endurance, and awakening are carried within the body across generations. Rather than telling a singular story, *GODDESS* moves between multiple women, blurring the boundaries between realism, memory, trance, and collective experience. The invocation of Goddess Kali became a way to transform internalized fear into something mythic, embodied, and communal.

Developed through close collaboration with dancer and co-producer Niyati Vishal, the film seeks to create a space for reflection on the systems and silences that continue to shape women's lives across cultures.

Why now?

Across cultures, women continue to live with normalized fear—on streets, in homes, and in institutions meant to protect them. *GODDESS* does not seek justice through punishment, but through recognition and solidarity. By translating trauma into a mythic, embodied language rooted in Bharatanatyam and Goddess Kali, the film offers a distinct cinematic vocabulary for empowerment. The film asks what happens when generations of silence finally give way to collective voice.





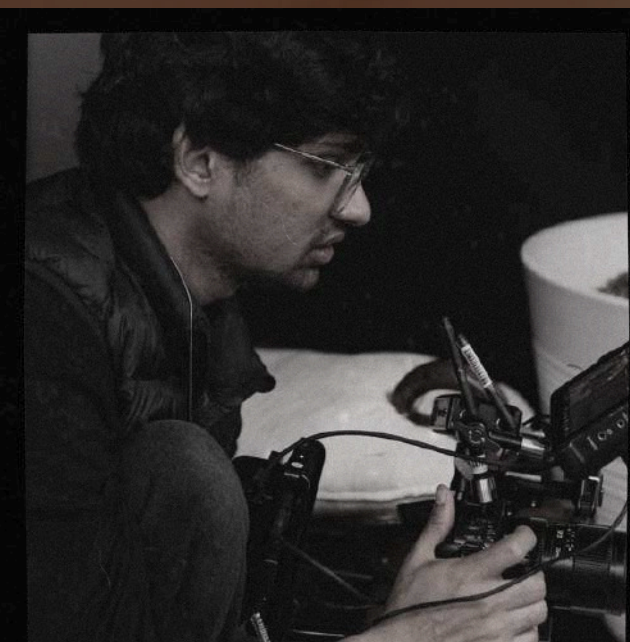
Niyati Vishal – Lead Actor/Choreographer/Co-Producer

Niyati Visal is a Bharatanatyam dancer, choreographer, and actor based in Pune, India. Trained for over two decades under renowned gurus including Dr. Saroja Vaidyanathan, Shri Pavitra Bhat, and Dr. Parimal Phadke, she holds a Gold Medal in MA Dance from Lalit Kala Kendra and is a graded artist of Doordarshan. Her performances span major cultural festivals across India, including the India International Dance Festival, Natyanjali, and NCPA Mumbai. A multifaceted artist, Niyati has also acted in music videos, theatre, and FTII films. In GODDESS, she plays Meera — merging her classical artistry with raw, emotional truth.



Sobhana Jaya Madhavan – Co-Producer

Sobhana Jaya Madhavan holds a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy from Calicut University and a Master's degree in Social Work from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). An internationally recognized leader in education, anti-violence initiatives, and social impact, she is based in Vancouver, Canada. As an Impact Producer of GODDESS, she is helping build partnerships with educators, community leaders, and advocacy organizations to extend the film's conversations beyond the screen.



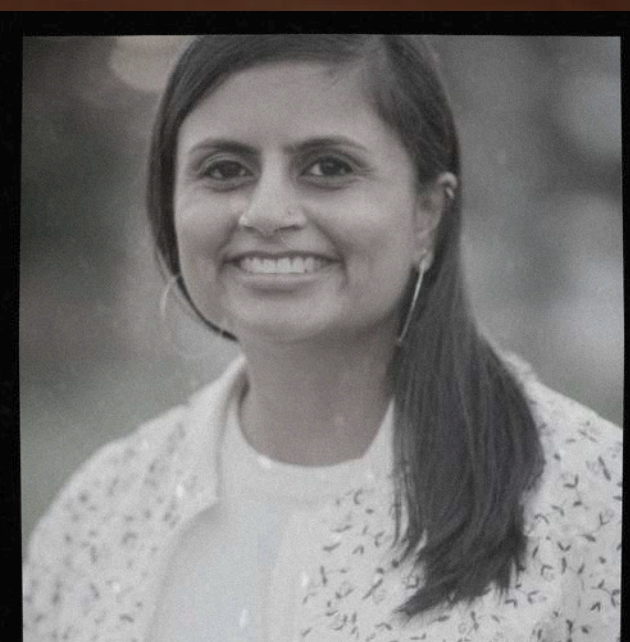
Madhav Nandivdekar – Cinematographer

Madhav Nandivdekar is a Mumbai-based cinematographer and graduate of the Vancouver Film School. His work on the award-winning short Blackhole — winner at MAMI Mumbai and an official selection at Tasveer — established him as a striking visual storyteller. With experience across narrative films, music videos, and commercials, Madhav's style blends realism with expressive, atmospheric lighting. His cinematography often explores the tension between the internal and external world. In GODDESS, his lens captures the film's duality — the sacred and the profane, the stage and the street — through a visual language that is both intimate and mythic.



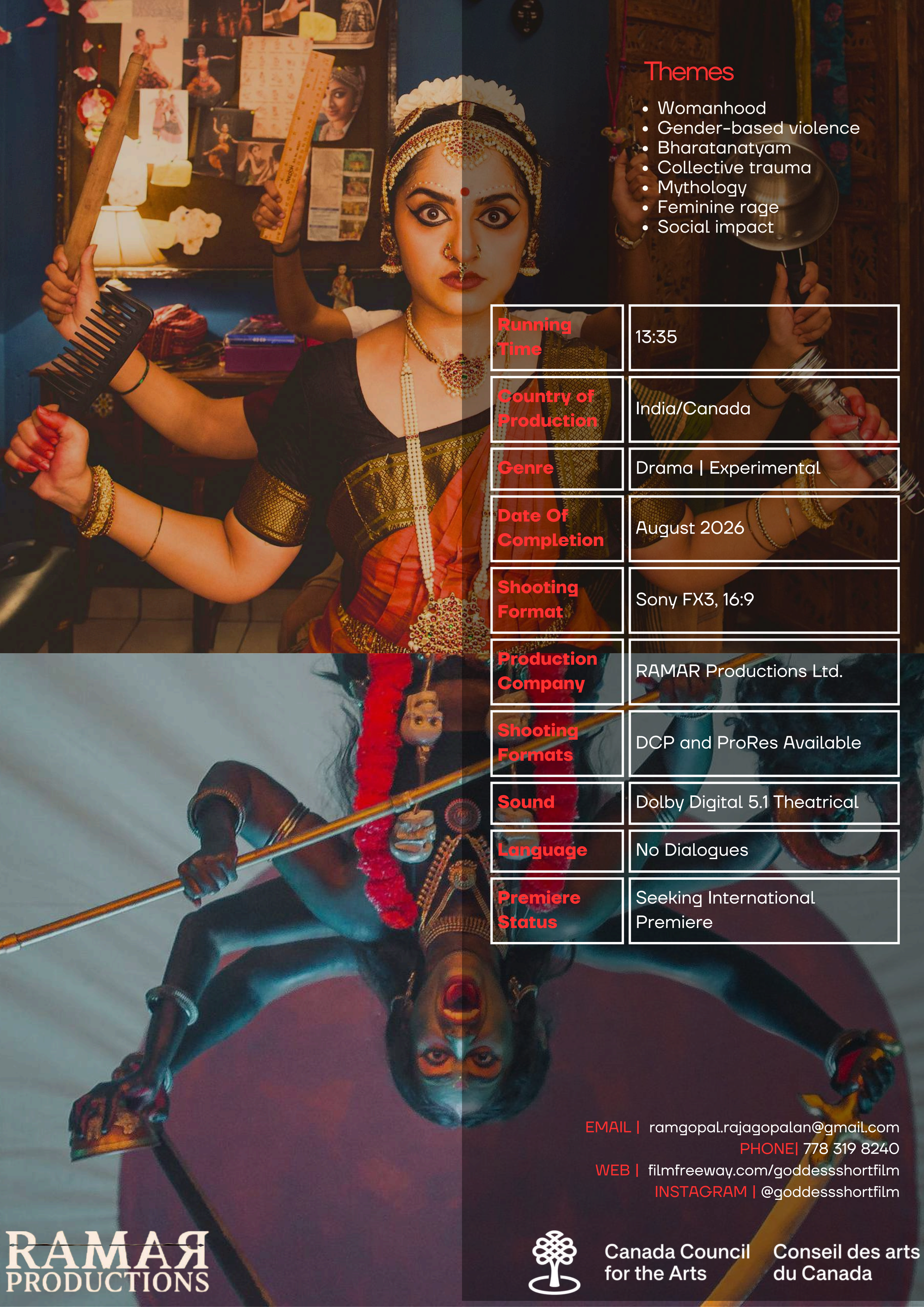
Arpit Nag & Sanjuli Khare – Production Design/Art

Arpit Nag and Sanjuli Khare lead the Production Design and Art direction for the project. Both are graduates of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune, with strong foundations in visual storytelling and spatial design. Arpit holds a Fine Art degree specializing in Applied Art and brings a sensitivity to texture, composition, and atmosphere, alongside a practice in photography. Sanjuli, trained in Art Direction and Production Design, also has a design background from NIFT Mumbai and academic exposure at the Royal College of Art, London. Together, they approach design as a research-led, collaborative process, shaping spaces and objects to deepen character, culture, and emotion within the narrative.



Shetu Modi – Editor

Shetu Modi is a picture editor with over 10 years of experience cutting factual content in Toronto newsrooms. As she forges a new path in narrative film, she often edits character-driven comedies and dramas, as well as her own shorts centered around anxious and immature South Asian women. Her dramedy “The Pits” screened at 15 festivals worldwide and won three audience choice awards; and her latest film, “Fan Girl,” is currently streaming on CBC Gem. A 2025 graduate of the Canadian Film Centre's Editors' Lab, Shetu is drawn to GODDESS for its embodied, non-verbal exploration of women's lived experiences and its mythic approach to collective female awakening.



Themes

- Womanhood
- Gender-based violence
- Bharatanatyam
- Collective trauma
- Mythology
- Feminine rage
- Social impact

Running Time	13:35
Country of Production	India/Canada
Genre	Drama Experimental
Date Of Completion	August 2026
Shooting Format	Sony FX3, 16:9
Production Company	RAMAR Productions Ltd.
Shooting Formats	DCP and ProRes Available
Sound	Dolby Digital 5.1 Theatrical
Language	No Dialogues
Premiere Status	Seeking International Premiere

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MANY WOMEN, ONE SCREAM. THE GODDESS AWAKENS.



GODDESS

WRITTEN, PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY:

RAM RAJAGOPALAN

STARRING:

NIYATI V, PRERNA MOHOD, SHIRIN BARVE

CINEMATOGRAPHY BY:
MADHAV NANDIVDEKAR

EDITED BY:
SHETU MODI

VFX BY:
AYUSH YADAV

PRODUCTION DESIGN BY:
ARPIT NAG, SANJULI KHARE

HAIR & MAKEUP BY:
SHEETAL SHETE

COSTUMES BY:
SAVANI DIVEKAR

CO-PRODUCED BY:
NIYATI V,
SOBHANA JAYA MADHAVAN

LINE PRODUCERS:
MIHIR OAK,
MAYURESH JOSHI

1ST AD:
ROHAN RANAWADE

CHOREOGRAPHY BY:
NIYATI V

MUSIC BY:
AMAN WARKHEDKAR

SOUND BY:
SWARUP JOSHI

PRODUCTION COMPANY:
RAMAR PRODUCTIONS LTD.

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