

'SECOND CHANCE'

a film by
Subhadra Mahajan

PRESS KIT

Duration: 104 mins
Languages: Hindi, English & Kullavi
B & W, 1.66:1, DTS 5.1
A Metanormal and Latent Pictures production

World Premiere

2024 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival
Proxima Competition



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival
Proxima Competition

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MAIN CREDITS

Main Cast:

Dheera Johnson (as Nia), **Thakri Devi** (as Bhemi) & **Kanav Thakur** (as Sunny)

Additional Cast:

Rajesh Kumar (as Raju), **Ganga Ram** (as The Shepherd), **Shaurya Bastola** (as Rudra), **Tarini Sud** (as Veda), **Dr Bishan Dass Shashni** (as The Doctor) and **Yuki** (as Supercat)

Main Crew:

Writer & Director: Subhadra Mahajan

Cinematographer: Swapnil Suhas Sonawane (ISC)

Editor: Tinni Mitra

Production Designer: Namra Parikh

Sound Designer: Anirban Borthakur

Re-recording Mixer: Niladri Shekhar Roy

Sound Recordists: Vidhaat Thothathri Raman, Rinku Pathak

Music: Quan Bay

Casting Director: Dilip Shankar

Associate Cinematographer: Prewes Bora

Senior Colorist: Sidharth Meer

Colorist: Prithvi Buddharvarapu

VFX: Upam Mapu

First Assistant Director: Krithika Yegnaraman

Second Assistant Director: Karan Visit

Art Director: Deepak Thakur

Language Supervisor & Local Consultant: Sheru Baba

DIT & Onset Editor: Ajit Raj Prathi

Line Producer: Sanjeev Saklani

Associate Producers: Harsh Mahajan, Uma Mahajan

Co-producers: Bhaskar Hazarika, Sidharth Meer & Naren Chandavarkar

Executive Producers: Swapnil Suhas Sonawane, Pan Nalin

Producer: Shyam Bora

Production Company: Metanormal Motion Pictures & Latent Pictures

Log Line:

After experiencing the first major trauma of her young life, Nia retreats to her family summer home in the Himalayas where time, nature and unlikely friendships help her heal.

Synopsis:

Nia, 25, stands on a mountaintop on a winter morning wishing away the worst trauma of her young life - an illicit abortion. Visiting her family summer retreat in the Himalayas from the city, alone; she's depressed, desolate and detached.

The caretaker of the house departs on an errand, leaving his mother-in-law Bhemi, 70, in charge along with his son Sunny, 8.

Interaction is unavoidable...

A weathered mountain woman, Bhemi's days are filled with labour, but her sense of humour doesn't disguise the years of wisdom she offers; while Sunny's endless mischief force Nia back into a childhood that she had long forgotten.

As a stark, stunning winter sets in, these 3 souls find themselves bound together beyond age and class divides. Even as Nia starts to smile again, the demons of her past keep catching up on her, throwing her back into the trauma she is trying so hard to escape.

Nia faces the ultimate test of love, pain and forgiveness as she struggles to heal and give her life a 'Second Chance'.

WRITER-DIRECTOR'S NOTE

As a young woman who grew up in contemporary India between the urban cities and the rustic Himalayas; 'Second Chance' is inspired by personal experiences and encounters.

Set in the Pir Panjal range of the state of Himachal Pradesh in Northern India and in deep winter, the film is shot in Black&White, with a high contrast between light and shadow. The soundscape is authentic to its environment, yet it echoes the psychology of its lead characters. All actors are local and all locations are real.

'Second Chance' explores the theme of healing, a wondrous and inexplicable process. Be that as it may be a very intimate and internal journey, yet it is a story I feel needs to be told to the world that we live in today.

An 'instant' world of tunnel vision, where a young person can feel the weight of a personal tragedy as something that they may never recover from. A self-obsessed world which has forgotten that the eternal cycle of Mother Earth functions far beyond human control. A world where we are so constantly reminded of all things that divide us, that we have somewhere forgotten the things that unite us.

It is a story of hope in times of fractured societies, and of unlikely friendships in times of loneliness and isolation.

It is a story about light at the end of a long, dark tunnel.

My intention as the writer-director is to have the audience witness a tale set in a part of the world they have never seen before, but with an emotional crux that they can relate to, and leave renewed with the faith at their own personal 'Second Chances' in life.

MAIN CAST PROFILES

Dheera Johnson as Nia

Born and brought up in the small town of Manali in the mighty Indian Himalayas, Dheera Johnson grew up in a culturally diverse home and is of mixed heritage having Himachali, English, Malayali and Punjabi blood. A former primary school teacher, Dheera also ran a successful bar in her locality. She is a mixed medium fine artist and a freestyle dancer with a classical training in Kathak. Dheera is currently based in Los Angeles for a Full Time Professional Acting Conservatory at the Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute on a Richard Boleslawski Scholarship.

'Second Chance' is her debut feature film.

Thakri Devi as Bhemi

Thakri Devi is from Burua village in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh, where she resides with her husband and daughter. A skilled horticulturalist and a homemaker, she is also proficient at spinning wool and weaving traditional shawls known as 'pattus'. Social by nature, she can strike up a conversation as easily with her neighbors as with foreign tourists who visit the area. She never imagined she would act in a film, but when the opportunity arose, she took up the challenge and embraced the process whole heartedly.

Kanav Thakur as Sunny

Kanav Thakur is currently ten years old and studies in grade five in Himalayan Conifer Public School Burua in district Kullu, Himachal Pradesh. He enjoys playing in the outdoors with his large group of friends after school. His favourite sports are cricket & volleyball in the summer and skiing & snowboarding in the winter. He dreams of being a professional snowboarder when he grows up. He is known to be the naughtiest boy in the village.

CREW PROFILES:

Writer & Director: Subhadra Mahajan

Subhadra Mahajan was born and raised in Himachal Pradesh and currently resides in Mumbai. She has had a long collaboration with filmmaker Pan Nalin, most notably in co-writing 'Angry Indian Goddesses' (2015) which premiered at Toronto International Film Festival, was Runner Up for the Grolsch Audience Choice Award and released theatrically in over 60 countries. It won accolades for being ground-breaking in its truthful, non-apologetic depiction of womanhood in contemporary India. Other films she has worked on with Nalin include 'Faith Connections' (2013); 'Beyond The Known World' (2017); and 'Last Film Show' (2021) which opened the Spotlight Section of Tribeca Film Festival in 2021 and was India's official entry to the Oscars of 2023.

'Second Chance' is her debut feature film project.

Producer: Shyam Bora

Hailing from Assam in the north-east of India, Shyam is the co-founder of Metanormal Motion Pictures whose features include 'Kothanodi' (Busan International Film Festival 2015), 'Aamis' (Tribeca Film Festival 2019) and 'Emuthi Puthi' (2022, first feature from the northeast of India shot on phone in a collaboration with Apple India Inc). Current works include the features 'Keet' (HAF Hong Kong Film Financing Forum, NFDC Film Bazaar Co-production Market) which is a drama-fantasy and an adaptation of Franz Kafka's seminal short story *The Metamorphosis* and the horror 'Paaltu' (NAFF It Project Market Buncheon, BIF Brussels Genre Market Online Showcase).

Shyam is also an independent consultant and a resource person to industry organisations such as National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC), Assam State Film Financing & Development Corporation (ASFFDC) and Regional Film and TV Institute of Assam among others. He is a Fellow of the Busan Asian Film School (AFiS) and the Buncheon NAFF Fantastic Film School.

Executive Producer: Pan Nalin

Pan Nalin is a writer, director, and producer known for his acclaimed works including India's nomination for Oscars 2023 'Last Film Show', 'Angry Indian Goddesses', 'Faith Connections', 'Valley of Flowers' and 'Samsara'. His films have collectively won more than 70 international awards with official selection at festivals like AFI, Toronto, Sundance, Tribeca, Busan, Melbourne, Rome, Valladolid, among others. Nalin is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Oscars) in its esteemed Directors' Branch and of the French Academy of Arts and Techniques of Cinema (Cesars).

Cinematographer & Executive Producer: Swapnil Suhas Sonawane

Swapnil S. Sonawane grew up in an environment of image making; his family owned and ran a photo colour lab in the heart of Pune city in Maharashtra, where he was born and raised. A deep sensitivity towards art and aesthetics is something he contributes to his father's Influence. Swapnil started his career by shooting the groundbreaking travel documentary shows, 'Dewarists' (Bronze Lion at Cannes 2012) and 'Sound Trippin'. Pan Nalin's 'Angry Indian Goddesses' (TIFF 2015) was Swapnil's debut feature fiction film, earning him his first nomination for best cinematography at the Indian Filmfare Awards. He was nominated for a second time with 'Newton' (Berlin 2017). Post that and apart from a slew of Indian feature films, Swapnil co-shot 'Sacred Games' (2018/9), Netflix's first ever Indian series; and its season 2 earned him an OTT Indian Filmfare Award for Best Cinematography. Swapnil's recent film – 'Last Film Show', directed by Pan Nalin was India's official entry to the Oscars 2023, while his work on 'Monica Oh My Darling' directed by Vasana Bala was awarded another OTT Indian Filmfare Award for Best Cinematography.

Editor: Tinni Mitra

Tinni Mitra is an editor based out of Mumbai, India. She won Best Editing in Non-Feature category at the 58th National Film Awards for diploma film Germ. Her notable work includes 'Nazarband' which premiered in Busan International Film Festival 2020. 'Amoli' won the Best Investigative Film at the 66th National Film Awards. 'A Man Who Dwarfed The Mountains' won the Best Environment Film in 63rd National Film Awards. 'The Seventh Walk' was the Closing film of 'Cinema XXI' section at Rome Film Festival, 2013 and was in the International Film Festival of Rotterdam, 2014. Tinni holds a Master's Degree in Film Studies from Jadavpur University, and a diploma in Editing from Satyajit Ray Film & T.V. Institute, India. Tinni is an alumna of Berlinale Talents.

Production Designer: Namra Parikh

Namra Parikh is a Production Designer and Art Director for Feature Films, Television Commercials and Print Ads, based in Mumbai, India. Having previously worked as an Assistant Director on some award-winning feature films including Ang Lee's 'Life of Pi', she started working as a Set Decorator and On Set dresser in 2007. This experience helped her smoothly transition into her first role as Production Designer on the critically acclaimed Indian film 'Queen' in 2012. Since then she has production designed over 50 TV commercials, 5 feature length films and collaborated as art director and set decorator on many more.

Sound Designer: Anirban Borthakur

Anirban Borthakur is a professional Sound Designer, working in the Indian film industry for more than a decade. His profound interest in sound made him to travel various places to record the vast soundscapes which has turned into a massive audio library under the brand name "Audioscape India". Over the years, he has satisfactorily accomplished the sounds of hundreds of projects and many has won National & International Awards with films such as 'Alifa', 'Neerja', 'Article 15', 'The Disciple', 'Haanduk' and 'Hellaro' to name a few. He has

been awarded with Indian Recording Academy Awards for the film 'Tumhari Sulu' in the year 2018 by PALM powered by ABEC. He also earned Runner up for Best Sound Design for the Film 'The Disciple' organized by International Cinephile Society 2021.

Re-recording Mixer: Niladri Shekhar Roy

Niladri Shekhar Roy is a multi-faceted audio professional internationally recognised for his sound design of the feature documentary film 'All That Breathes' (2023) (Winner of Cannes and Sundance and Oscar nominated). He was also awarded the Best International Sound Design for the same film at Doc Edge Festival 2023.

Niladri is very well known for his work as an re-recording engineer for projects such as 'In Retreat' (2024. ACID section at Cannes), 'Stolen' (2023 Venice Film Festival), 'Trolley Times' (2023), 'Bay of Blood' (2023), 'Killer Soup' (Netflix Show 2023) and many more.

He hails from Assam and is currently based in Mumbai, India. He is an alumni of The Film and Television Institute of India.

Casting Director: Dilip Shankar

In cinema, Dilip is known for introducing new exceptional talent as a Casting Director. His casting credits include Ang Lee's 'Life of Pi', Mira Nair's 'Monsoon Wedding' and 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist', Wes Anderson's 'The Darjeeling Limited', Rakeysh Om Prakash Mehra's 'Delhi 6' and 'Bhaag Milkha Bhaag', Ashvin Kumar's 'The Little Terrorist' and Pan Nalin's 'Valley of Flowers', 'Angry Indian Goddesses' and 'Last Film Show'. His latest casting work include the 2024 Sundance Audience Award winning film "Girls Will Be Girls" and "Sister Midnight" which premiered at Cannes Director's Fortnight 2024.

Dilip Shankar is also an actor and director in the Delhi theatre scene. As an actor, he is known for essaying a variety of roles - Cassio in Roysten Abel's award winning William Shakespeare's 'Othello' -a play in black & white, Raju Guide in Sanjoy Roy's adaptation of R. K. Narayan's 'Guide' and Jawaharlal Nehru in Pramila Le Hunte's 'Nehru - His Inner Story'. He has worked with directors B. V. Karanth, Anamika Haksar, Abhilash Pillai and Bertina Johnson.

Music: Quan Bay

Quan Bay is a music recording duo based in Toronto, Canada. The two comprise of Aniruddha who moved to Toronto from Assam, India and Tamara, a Toronto native. Together, they have scored the National Award-winning feature film from India, 'Song of the Horned Owl' (2015), 'The Ravening (Aamis)' which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in March, 2019 and 'In the Land of Poison Women', which premiered at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in November, 2019.

Co-producer: Bhaskar Hazarika

Bhaskar Hazarika is a writer-director from Assam and the founder of Metanormal Motion Pictures. His debut feature 'Kothanodi (The River of Fables)' premiered at Busan International

Film Festival 2015 and received the “Rajat Kamal” award conferred by the National Film Awards of India for Best Assamese Film, 2016. His next feature, ‘Aamis (Ravenging)’, premiered at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival in the International Narrative Competition section. In 2022, Bhaskar co-wrote and produced the Assamese comedy film ‘Emuthi Puthi’, which was released across cinemas of Assam in June, 2022. Bhaskar has written screenplays for several TV and web series as well, the latest being Netflix’s ‘Class’. Bhaskar’s latest directorial - the satirical Hindi short film ‘Sanitized Samachar’ - is part of the anthology feature length film ‘Lantrani’, and now streaming on Zee5.

Co-producer: Sidharth Meer

Sid is an entrepreneur and M&E veteran with over two decades of experience in film. Notorious as a disruptor, his education & expertise in cinematography, visual effects, digital workflows and color has made him one of the most sought after collaborators in the country. Sid likes to explore new and efficient ways of telling a story with ambitious filmmakers. He likes taking up new challenges with directors & cinematographers to push the boundaries of cinema, technically and aesthetically.

His vision is to create an ecosystem that accommodates the needs of the best independent filmmaking talent in the country and to hopefully leave behind a legacy of the most unique films that will be studied in film schools in the years to come. An eternal student, he aims to always maintain Bridge PostWorks’ cutting edge DNA in every project undertaken. When Sid isn’t at work he’s on a quest to find inspiration through good food.

Co-producer: Naren Chandavarkar

Naren Chandavarkar is an Indian musician, film score composer and a producer. He garnered national recognition for scoring the background score for ‘Udta Punjab’, which was nominated under the Best Background Score category at Filmfare Awards 2017. Most recent works include background score for ‘Tryst with Destiny’ (Sony Liv), a fiction feature that has won best screenplay at Tribeca Film Festival 2020, Vidya Balan starrer ‘Sherni’ (Amazon Prime), ‘RAY’ directed by Abhishek Chaubey (Netflix), Karan Johar’s ‘Searching For Sheela’, and Amazon Prime series ‘Pataal Lok’. Other notable compositions include multi-award winning movie ‘Newton’ (India’s official entry to the Oscars) and for the movie ‘Sonchiriya’, that won the ‘Best Film (Critics)’ category award at Filmfare 2020. He won Filmfare Award (2021) for the best Sound Design- “The Disciple” (Marathi). Other known works include background score for ‘Laal Kaptaan’, ‘Ghoul’, ‘Black Kite’, ‘Killa’, ‘That Girl In Yellow Boots’ and more.

COMPANY PROFILES

Metanormal Motion Pictures

Metanormal's first film production, 'Kothanodi (River of Fables)', received the 2015 Asian Cinema Fund's Post-Production Grant and premiered at the Busan International Film Festival. The film was awarded the 2016 National Film Award for Best Regional Film in Assamese, had a very successful 5 week theatrical run and became the first Assamese language film globally licensed by Netflix. The company's second production, 'Aamis (Ravenging)', had its World Premiere at Tribeca Film Festival 2019 in the International Narrative Competition section. Maverick Indian film maker, Anurag Kashyap presented the film and it released across regional and metropolitan cinemas of India in Nov, 2019. Both 'Kothanodi' and 'Aamis' are now streaming worldwide on the Indian OTT platform, SonyLiv.

In 2022, 'Emuthi Puthi (A Very Fishy Trip)' which is company's third feature production, was released successfully across regional cinemas of Assam in NorthEast India. The film was shot completely on an iPhone in an official collaboration with Apple India Inc.

Besides successful regional and domestic theatrical releases, all of Metanormal's films have been licensed by major streamers and broadcasters internationally including Netflix, PrimeVideo, SonyLiv, Channel 4 and SBS among others.

Latent Pictures

Latent Pictures was founded by cinematographer / photographer Swapnil Suhas Sonawane and writer / director Subhadra Mahajan in 2021. 'Second Chance' is their first feature film project.

INDUSTRY LABS & MARKETS

Produire Au Sud Kolkata Workshop, India; Jan 2020.

NFDC Film Bazaar Co-Production Market, India; Jan 2021

Marche Du Co-Production Day (Presented by NFDC Film Bazaar); July 2021

Film Independents Global Media Maker Program, September 2022

For more details, contact:

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