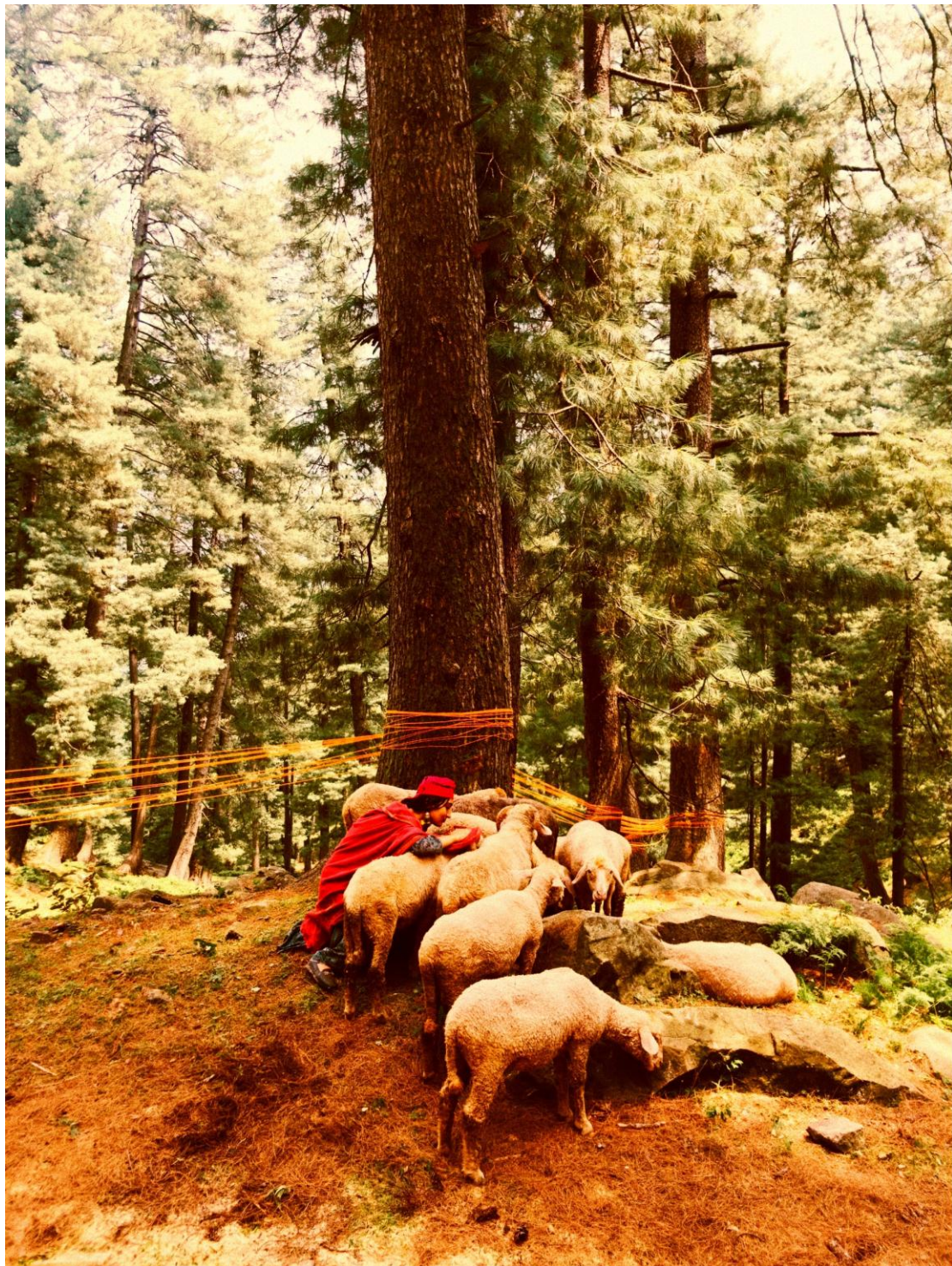


## WIP N The Shepherdess and the Seven Songs



**COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:** India

**GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME:** Drama | Digital Format | Gojri | 100 mins

**DIRECTOR:**

Pushendra SINGH

**PRODUCER:**

Pushendra SINGH

Gulab Singh TANWAR

Sanjay GULATI

Ajit Singh RATHORE

**HAF GOALS:**

Funds, Pre-sales

**BUDGET:**

US\$ 200,000

**SECURED BUDGET:**

US\$ 125,000

**DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY**

2017 *Ashwatthama*

2014 *The Honour Keeper (Lajwanti)*

**ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS**

Trapped between her cowardly husband and regular harassment by a local authority, Laila, a gypsy tribal girl, decides to break out of her old identity and chart a new path.

**SYNOPSIS**

Laila is a beautiful young girl belonging to the Gujjar-Bakarwal tribe, a community of nomadic shepherds in Kashmir. She marries Tanvir a fellow tribesman, and in the winter the couple migrates to the plains with their tribe to escape heavy snowfall in the Valley. Her beauty quickly becomes the talk of the surrounding areas. A local police officer, Rishi, and his fellow partner Mushtaq, a forest officer, raid the Bakarwal camp with the pretext of catching a glimpse of her; her beauty leaves them awestruck. A twisted game ensues between Mushtaq and Laila, wherein she must use her wits to stay clear of his blatant advances while being disillusioned by her husband, Tanvir's inaction. Laila Aur Satt Geet is part allegory, part ethnographic study, and part feminist fairytale, using the narrative device of local folk songs — seven, to describe Laila's inner and outer worlds.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Conflicts around territories in the world often make me wonder - what is our identity? Is it determined only by our nationality, region, class, caste or gender? The struggles in Kashmir in India have always reminded me of those questions; hence, I decided to adapt a folk tale where the struggles of a woman become a metaphor for the struggles of Kashmir. The story deals with the inner struggle of a married woman after her husband warns her against challenging the ruling class even if powerful men intend to molest her. While her hopes are dashed, she feels attracted towards a man who is adamant about wooing her. In the end, she realizes that she cannot find solace in others and seeks it within herself. She renounces the world and walks away as rains lash the landscape. I will be telling the story in seven chapters which will be marked by seven songs highlighting the woman's journey toward her renunciation. The seven songs are like seven stages towards the path of renunciation in Sufism. I am interested in local folk arts and will try to derive my aesthetic also from the folk arts of Kashmir as in my previous films.

## DIRECTOR

### **Pushpendra SINGH**

Pushpendra Singh studied at the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, where he is now also a visiting faculty member. His directorial debut feature, *The Honour Keeper (Lajwanti)* (2014), premiered at the Berlin Film Festival. He is also working on his documentary, *Pearl of the Desert* (a recipient of Busan's Asian Network of Documentary Fund), which tells about an extended family of low-caste Muslim musicians in the Thar Desert, Rajasthan. *Ashwatthama* (2017), his second feature (recipient of an Asian Cinema Fund - Post Production grant), premiered at the Busan International Film Festival in the New Currents Competition.



## **PRODUCER**

**Pushendra SINGH (same as director)**

**Gulab Singh TANWAR**

Gulab Singh Tanwar produced *Parched* (2015), *Rajma Chawal* (2018, dir. Leena Yadav) and *Te3n* (2016, dir. Ribhu Dasgupta) starring Amitabh Bachhan and Nawazuddin Siddiqui.

**Sanjay GULATI**

Sanjay Gulati diversified into producing low-budget independent feature films in 2014. His first co-produced feature, *Lajwanti* (2014), premiered at Berlin. *Ashwatthama* (2017) premiered at the Busan International Film Festival in the New Currents Competition. His latest feature, *Once Again* (dir. Kanwal Sethi, 2017) is an official co-production with Germany.

**Ajit Singh RATHORE**

Ajit Singh Rathore has produced *Ashwatthama* (2017) with Sanjay Gulati. This will be his second feature.

## **PRODUCTION COMPANY**

**Saarthi Entertainment, Crawling Angel Films**

Saarthi Entertainment is the films division of Saarthi Airways Pvt. Ltd. Crawling Angel Films is a division of Biogentek Pvt. Ltd. managed by Sanjay Gulati. Their objective is to tap into digital space and produce quality independent feature films which will cater to audiences worldwide.