



- » TOMORROW WE DISAPPEAR
- » A film by Jimmy Goldblum and Adam Weber
- » <http://www.twdfilm.com>
- » 82 minutes-- India/USA HD – 16:9 – 5.1
- » World Premiere: Tribeca Film Festival, Competition (2014)
- » International Premiere: Hot Docs, Competition (2014)
- » PR CONTACT
- » Sunshine Sachs
- » Brooke Blumberg; Morgan Michaels
- » o 323.822.9300
- » 18409 Santa Monica Blvd. West Hollywood, CA 90069
- » e: [blumberg@sunshinesachs.com](mailto:blumberg@sunshinesachs.com); [michaels@sunshinesachs.com](mailto:michaels@sunshinesachs.com)

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## Project Synopsis

*Logline: When their home is sold to real-estate developers, the magicians, acrobats, and puppeteers of Delhi's Kathputli Colony must find a way to unite—or splinter apart forever.*

At first glance, the Kathputli Colony looks like any other Indian slum. Flies swarm its putrid canals. Children climb on drooping electrical wires. Construction cranes and an ever-expanding Metro line loom on the horizon.

But Kathputli is a place of endangered traditions. For half a century 2,800 artist families have called its narrow alleyways home; there are jugglers and acrobats, puppeteers and painters, bards and poets, and most famously, jadugars, the street performers who preserve India's ancient tradition of magic.

In 2010 the New Delhi government sold Kathputli to developers for a fraction of its worth. The land is to be bulldozed to make room for the city's first-ever skyscraper, The Raheja Phoenix.

We follow three of Kathputli's most-talented performers as they wrangle with the reality of their approaching eviction.

Puran Bhatt learned puppetry from his late father, Manoram, the first president of the Kathputli Colony. Puran grew up to become one of India's most talented puppeteers. He's traveled to over 25 countries to perform his puppet acts, and in 2003 he won India's prestigious Akademi Award for traditional arts. But as plans for the colony's redevelopment are unveiled, Puran sets to work fighting the government's scheme. He writes letters to the government, marches a giant protest parade with 15-foot puppets through the busy streets of Delhi, and argues with poorer members of the community who want to sign away the rights to the Kathputli land in the hopes of getting allotted flats.

Rahman Shah heads to the street every morning to perform a comedic and gruesome magic show. Policemen





force bribes from him, and with his income dwindling, he wrestles with whether to pass his family's traditions onto his two young sons who idolize him. When he sees the plan for Kathputli's redevelopment, Rahman ignores the pleas of his friend Puran and thinks about a future beyond Delhi.

The acrobat Maya Pawar is a fearless performer who feels that Kathputli needs to change. She hates the colony's grime, its mistreatment of women, and her endless run-ins with artists broken from years of unfulfilled promises. Maya looks toward the relocation with optimism because she believes it'll force the artists to either modernize or move on.

Our story begins with the fate of thousands of marginalized performers in Delhi, India. The film chronicles a turning point in the lives of these performers, with the hopes of anticipating what's to come in India's future and preserving what's being left behind.



## DIRECTORS STATEMENT

When we first met Puran Bhatt, he took us on a tour of his home. “These aren’t just walls,” he said, “My father and grandfather settled this place. My grandchildren were born here. They entered the world, right here, like little angels.” In capturing Kathputli’s final days, our hope is that our audience gets to see the colony like Puran, and the many artists like him, see it: as a world with no distinction between life and art, where India’s past, present, and future blur together, a home that somehow—impossibly, incomprehensibly—still brims with possibility.

When Kathputli’s artists move into transit camps later in 2014, many will surrender their arts, modernize, try to send their kids to school, or put them in the workforce. The process is underway, and although we want to do everything in our power to ensure it happens fairly, justly, and transparently, it is not our goal to stop it. The relocation is not a Manichaeian issue, and it’s near impossible to argue that the street arts are a viable livelihood for the majority of Kathputli’s 2,800 families.

Kathputli is dying before our eyes, and our hope is that the world gets to experience it before it’s gone. In that way, we consider “Tomorrow We Disappear” as its funeral; not a Western-style funeral that laments the tragedy of loss, but an Indian funeral, which honors the uniqueness and vibrancy of its life. In the end, we ask, what happens as these artists step into the unknown: what do they dream? What do they fear? What will they take with them, and what will they leave behind?

And yet, for the many artists who will continue their traditions into the transit camps and beyond, we want this film to create new audiences and economic opportunities for them. Later this year the film will travel to festivals around the world, and when it does, we hope that some of the artists in “Tomorrow We Disappear” will travel with us. We’ve transplanted their art form to a different medium, one that can last and be preserved, and if that creates a new stage for the artists to thrive—even temporarily—we will feel like we’ve done our jobs.

# FACTS ABOUT KATHPUTLI AND THE RELOCATION

For hundreds of years roaming artists traveled the Indian countryside, creating the stories, the mythological backbone that would unite a country. Before radio, film, and television, these artists helped form what is now known as the Web of India.

In the 1950s, itinerant artists began to move into the vacant land beside a jungle in West Delhi. Their tent camp evolved into a tinsel slum called the Kathputli Colony, which translates to “The Colony of Wooden Puppets.”

Kathputli Colony is home to some of the world’s greatest street magicians, acrobats, and puppeteers. They have won national awards, performed all over the world in “Festivals of India,” and made appearances on TV.

The main government of Kathputli is called the Bhule Bisre Kalakar Samriti, or “The Cooperative of Lost and Forgotten Artists.”

According to a Bhule Bisre census, there are approximately 3,300 families living in Kathputli. Of those families, at least 1,400 are artist families.

In 2003, the president of India awarded Puran Bhatt India’s National Award for the Performing Arts. He has traveled to over 25 countries, performing as part of the Ishara Puppet Theater.

Maya Pawar and her acrobat family reached the finals of “India’s Got Talent.” She was the only traditional artist on the program.

In 2010, the New Delhi government sold the Kathputli Colony land to a private company, Raheja Developers. The land is to be bulldozed, and New Delhi’s first skyscraper and a large commercial complex will be erected on what was once the Kathputli Colony land.

According to the Times of India, the Kathputli land is worth Rs.1,043 crore, or roughly \$168 million; and the Delhi Development Authority sold the land to Raheja Developers for just Rs. 6.11 crore, or roughly \$987,000. Many people in the media point to this figure as a sign of potential illegality and corruption in the land sale.

Until the construction is complete the residents of Kathputli Colony will be moved to temporary relocation camps on the city outskirts in a neighborhood called Anand Parbat, which translates as “Joy Mountain.” The site lacks public transportation, and it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for many of the artists to travel into the city for performances.

Once construction is complete, Raheja developers has promised to provide apartments for the Kathputli artists, but it is unclear what these apartments will look like or how long the artists will have to live in the cramped relocation camp.

## CREATIVE TEAM

Jimmy Goldblum, Director/Producer – Jim began his career as an interactive director and producer. In 2008, Goldblum won the Emmy for New Approaches to Documentary for “Live Hope Love,” an interactive documentary he produced for the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting. Goldblum also wrote, filmed, and produced “The Institute for Human Continuity,” an online narrative for Sony Pictures’ film “2012,” which is widely considered one of the most successful transmedia campaigns of all time. Additionally, CNN called Goldblum’s first interactive documentary, “Yearbook 2006,” “so special...the best of the best” of all Hurricane Katrina documentaries. His projects have won an Emmy, a Webby for Best Art Project, and been featured in the New York Times, Washington Post, Time Magazine, and USA Today.

Adam Weber, Director/Producer – Adam is an editor, director, and writer who has worked for major film and TV studios in both New York and Los Angeles. Weber edited Michel Gondry’s *Is The Man Who Is Tall Happy* (IFC Films), an animated documentary about Noam Chomsky, which IndieWire named one of the top 3 documentaries of 2013. Weber was an assistant editor on Gondry’s *The Green Hornet*, and previously worked as the apprentice editor on Quentin Tarantino’s *Inglorious Basterds*.

Joshua Cogan, Co-Director of Photography, Producer – Joshua Cogan is an Emmy Award-winning photographer and anthropologist. Cogan’s photography has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *GQ*, *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times*. Explore his photography at [joshuacogan.com](http://joshuacogan.com).

Will Basanta, Director of Photography, Co-Producer – Will filmed and produced the narrative feature, *Jess + Moss*, which premiered in 2011 to rave reviews at the Sundance, Berlinale, and Hong Kong international film festivals. He also shoots award-winning music videos for The Arcade Fire, The Shins, Justin Bieber, and Bon Iver.

Guneet Monga, Executive Producer – Guneet is an Oscar-nominated producer who, alongside her partner, director Anurag Kashyap, has spearheaded the Indian independent film movement. Named one of *Hollywood Reporter’s* “12 International Women To Watch,” Guneet premiered four films produced in India at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival.

Alison Klayman, Executive Producer – *Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry* is Alison Klayman’s debut feature documentary, which she directed, produced, filmed, and co-edited. She is a 2011 Sundance Documentary Fellow, one of *Filmmaker Magazine’s* “25 New Faces of Independent Film,” and she was shortlisted for “Best Documentary” at this year’s Academy Awards.

Fazeelat Aslam, Co-Producer – Fazeelat Aslam is a documentary filmmaker and journalist who co-produced the documentary short, “Saving Face,” which won the 2012 Academy Award and 2013 Emmy for “Best Documentary.” Fazeelat has produced and hosted documentaries for international organizations such as PBS Frontline, Channel 4 UK, Al Jazeera, Dan Rather and HBO. She currently works as a producer and correspondent for VICE on HBO and VICE News.

Naveen Chaubal, Additional Cinematography, Co-Producer -- Naveen Chaubal graduated from the USC School of Cinematic Arts where he was awarded the Thomas Bush Scholarship in Cinematography. He recently shot and co-produced the short film "Chakshoo." He's an avid creator of content collaborating with fashion brands like GAP, and on music videos with the likes of Jay Z, Incubus, Wu Tang Clan, James Blake, and Frank Ocean. In 2012, Naveen participated as a cinematographer in Film Independent's prestigious Project: Involve program.

Hye Mee Na, Editor -- Hye Mee is an editor, director, and graduate of NYU Tisch School Arts with a degree in Directing. She edited Spike Lee's Red Hook Summer and is also cutting his upcoming untitled documentary on Brazil (2014). Before she was a filmmaker, Na lived another life as a well-respected neuroscientist and Parkinson's researcher at Emory University.

Isaac Hagy, Editor -- Isaac Hagy has edited nine feature films, many of which he also helped produce and write. Jess + Moss - Isaac's first narrative feature, which he co-wrote, produced and edited - premiered at Sundance in 2011. Combined, his films have played at more than 100 festivals, including Berlin, Tribeca, AFI, Hot Docs, and IDA's Docuweek. Additionally, he has edited nearly 50 music videos and commercials, which have been nominated for multiple MTV VMAs and MVPAs. Isaac recently attended the 2013 Venice Film Festival for the world premiere of Medea, a narrative feature film he edited. Currently, he resides in Los Angeles and is collaborating with David Gelb (Jiro Dreams of Sushi) on a feature documentary.

Dan Romer, Composer -- Dan is an accomplished producer, recording engineer, and film composer. The first feature Dan scored is the Academy Award-nominated Beasts of the Southern Wild, which also won the Grand Jury Prize at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival and Camera D'Or Prize at Cannes. Tomorrow We Disappear is his second feature film.

Josh Penn, Consulting Producer -- Josh is a New Orleans-based producer with Court 13, whose film Beast of the Southern Wild won the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance and Cannes Camera D'or and was nominated for "Best Picture" at the 2013 Academy Awards and the Spirit Awards. Penn was the recipient Sundance's Indian Paintbrush Producers Award.



## PRODUCTION STILLS





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## RELOCATION CAMPS - SIGNING



Raheja Developers gather the artists at the model relocation camps to sign (March 2011).



Puran Bhatt signs his name on an affidavit agreeing to move to the developers relocation camp (March 2011)



## RELOCATION CAMPS - COMPLETED



Raheja finishes construction on thousands of model homes for the colony. The units are stacked on top of each other to save space. (February 2013)



The homes, only a few weeks after completions, already show signs of dilapidation. (February 2013)