

List of Films Screened

Himal Associations, based in Kathmandu, was sub-contracted to plan for, mobilise for, and organise a film festival on mountain women during the four-day conference in Paro, Bhutan. On the basis of subject matter, relevance, and film quality and duration, the following films were chosen for screening at the Celebrating Mountain Women Film Festival.

Ten films were shown in total during the event to an enthusiastic crowd. This added to the richness of this unique gathering and focused on the various issues relevant to mountain women. The films that were shown are as follows:

Afghan Women, Afghanistan

Kham Zam Yodan (Be Happy), India, 22 minutes
Director: Biyot Projna Tripathy
Producer: Biyot Projna Tripathy

The film speaks about the fear and pain of a seventy-five-year-old Ladakhi mother who is a victim of the border problem between India and Pakistan. Is the peace of the Himalayan valley vanishing?

The Dragon Bride, Nepal, 45 minutes
Producer: BBC/National Geographic
Director: Joanna Head

Among the Nyinba of Humla in north-west Nepal, no bride is more desired than a woman born in the year of the dragon. Tsering Kangzun is a Dragon Bride, and at 15 years, it is time for her to marry. Reluctant to leave home, Tsering Kangzum has a greater challenge in marriage than most. She will marry not just one husband, but, according to tradition, will be shared by four brothers. Intimate and emotionally revealing, this is a vivid portrayal of the sacrifices that must be made for survival in the harsh hills of Humla.

Faces of Eve, Pakistan, 25 minutes
Director: Shireen Pasha
Producer: The Filmmakers

This film deals with a group of women in the mountain areas of Pakistan who changed their lives by organising themselves and learning income-generating skills. The film was sent to the Beijing Conference by the Family Planning Association of Pakistan, which commissioned the film.

Garhwal: A Home in the Himalayas, India, 22 minutes
Producer: Cyril R. Raphael
Director: Ramon Chibb and Anku Pande

In the mountain villages of Garhwal in northern India, the men have migrated to the cities in search of jobs since the produce from their fields is hardly enough to feed the family for half the year. As such, women are managers and planners. The women leave home for the jungles at dawn in search of firewood and fodder. But they also plant trees because the jungles are also the source of water they need for irrigation. Natural resource management is not just a concept for them, but a way of life.

Inheritance, India, 57 minutes
Director: Ananya Chatterjee
Producer: Ananya Chatterjee

Uttaradhikar is a personalised documentary on the Uttarakhand movement as seen through the eyes of five women of Kumaon and Garhwal. The women belong to three different generations and their points of view establish the changing perspective to the movement that time imparts to each successive generation.

Rather than narrating the history of the movement through the beaten track of a historian, the

documentary allows the story of the movement to unfold itself through the eyes of these women.

Mask of Desire, (Mukundo), Nepal, 105 min
Producer: Tsering Rhitar Sherpa
Director: Tsering Rhitar Sherpa

Dipak and Swarswati are a happily married couple with two daughters, but long for a boy. The sadhu (holy man) tells Swarswati that only the goddess Tripura at a small brick shrine by the riverbank can answer her prayers for a son. The pregnant Swarswati gives birth to a boy but he soon dies, causing great sorrow, anger, and guilt. The sadhu then suggests that she be treated by particular 'mata', the vehicle of the goddess.

Paradise on a River of Hell, India

Thirst for Knowledge, China

A Tale Unfolds, Pakistan

Taller than the Mountains, Pakistan, 33 minutes
Director: Huma Mustafa Beg and Dr. Farooq Beg
Producer: Huma Mustafa Beg and Dr. Farooq Beg

In northern Pakistan, women play a dominant and crucial role in running the household and are the source of all indigenous knowledge. In the absence of men who migrate to the cities in search of jobs, women are responsible for bringing up the children and managing the household. But women are treated "like dirt" by the men. However, with social mobilisation and emerging role models among women, their lives are changing, however slow this process may be. Men and women today are seen sitting together and planning the future. Traditional taboos are beginning to crumble.

The Women in Yazhe Village, China, 50 minutes
Director: Zhang Shengyong
Producers: Sun Jianying and Lu Liang

The women of Baima, Tibet, don't worry about their family's economic situation. They have little say on

family issues. Villagers here make their living from the mountains. Lumbering was once their main source of income, but this has now changed to pasturing and planting grain. When the government issued the order to stop cutting down the natural forest, the women of Yazhe village worked together to find new ways for their village to develop and prosper.

A Woman's Place, Switzerland/ Bhutan, 58 minutes
Director: Marianne Pletscher
Producer: Swiss Television/ DOK

This film tells the story of farming women in a valley in Bhutan, a valley with a matrilineal culture, where women own the house and the land and their daughters inherit it, a place where women have more rights than men, but only in certain matters. Tina, a farming woman from Switzerland, visits this magic and remote place and makes friends, especially with one woman, Dorje Lama. They get to know each other and develop a deep friendship. Half a year later, Dorje Lama visits her Swiss friend and is exposed to Swiss life, Swiss culture, a rich, abundant world with very different values.

The Winter at Elevation of 3000 Metres, China, 62 minutes
Director: Leng Shan
Producers: Sun Jianying and Lu Liang

Cong Huan is a 9-year-old girl who lives in a mountain village at an altitude of 3000 metres to which no roads lead. There are nearly 100 households together in this village, all descendants of one of China's oldest ethnic groups, the Qiang. Within this group, the language is spoken but not written. Cong Huan cannot speak it. Her father takes her to the elders to listen to the Qiang stories and learn the Qiang language. Her mother teaches her Qiang women's virtues and skills, as well as songs and dances. She must adapt to her living environment.