



*The journey from  
Films to Mobilecinema*

**HISTORY OF NAVODAYA**

1910s. Just before the First World War **Manichacko Maliampurackal** from *Pulincunoo village* came and setup his coir factory at the port town of *Alappuzha*. For a person belonging to generations of rice farmers in the backwater-locked region named *Kuttanad*, this was an unprecedented venture. He was competing directly with the British companies *William Goodacre* and *Harrisons* whose factories held monopoly in exporting coir products to the United Kingdom. But then; people of *Kuttanad* have always been an adventurous lot.



In 1947, it was here in *Alappuzha* that two of Manichacko's sons - **Kunchacko & Appachan**, started the very first film studio and film distribution company in the state of *Kerala*. It was called **UDAYA**. And in the next 30 years they went on to produce 100 feature films in the native language *Malayalam*. Those 30 years saw the sprouting of hundreds of cinema halls in this small state. Also came a plethora of award-winning actors, musicians, technicians and a highly literate audience with a *film going culture* - all these contributing to the economic strength of the Malayalam film industry.

While Kunchacko was the creative head at UDAYA and directed more than half its films, Appachan headed the distribution wing. In his ability to organize the affairs of the film industry, Appachan was elected to hold office as president of the trade bodies - *Kerala Film Chamber of Commerce* and *South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce*, for many a terms.



Brothers *Kunchacko & Appachan*

Udaya family members visit during a shoot with dozens of elephants. 1962 film *Palatukoman*.



*Maliampurackal house at Pulincunoo village*



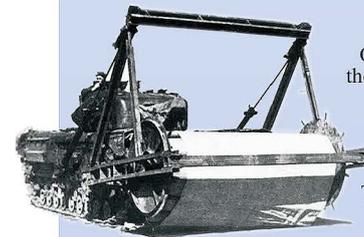
Fields 10 feet Below bund level

Everyday life was once a challenge in *Kuttanad*-this highly fertile 1000 square miles marshlands into which 6 of Kerala's rivers empty. As in the Dutch dykes and New Orleans levees, all paddy fields of *Kuttanad* exist 6 to 10 feet below the waterline. It was their earthen bunds that prevented water from swallowing up vast tracts of the farmers' paddy. One single breach in a bund would wash away thousands of acres of crop.



**Boat race in Kuttanad.**

Till 1960 there was no road connection into this watery world.

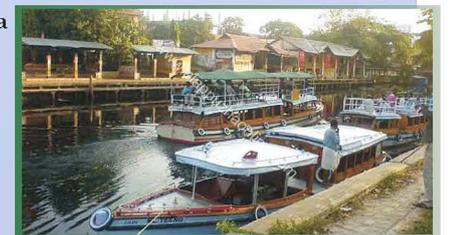


On D Day of World War II, the intended landing beaches at Normandy would not have supported heavy armored vehicles.

The *Churchill Bobbin Tank Carpet Device* utilized specially woven mat rolls from the Coir Mills of Alappuzha.

**Alappuzha**

Due to its many canals the town is referred to as the *Venice of the East*.



Malayalees, numbering 31million, constitute only about 3% of the Indian population. And Kerala, *1/4th the size of Florida but with twice its population*, is one among the smallest states in the Indian Union. Yet both creatively and financially the impact and influence of Malayalam films on the national scene has always been disproportionately large. The 1980s boom in the Arabian Gulf and the catering of films to an overseas market of Malayalee expatriate population also helped. This is in great measure due to the foundation of a film industry laid by the institution called *Udaya Studios, Alappuzha*.

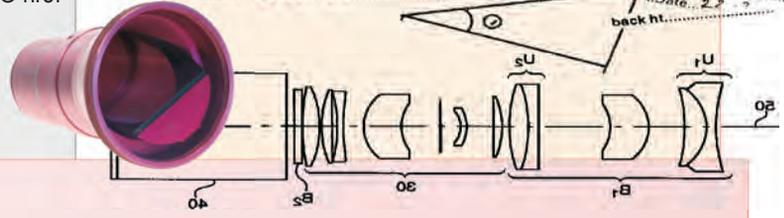
②

In 1977 after the demise of his elder brother Kunchacko, Appachan started his own studio NAVODAYA on a 30 acre campus in the harbour town of Kochi - the commercial capital of Kerala. Fresh out of college his son Jijo - a physics graduate, took over as the creative and technical head of Navodaya. After a study-survey of Kerala's cinema theaters, Jijo proposed the implementation of Cinemascope (anamorphic) as a format for Malayalam films. The Navodaya film **Thacholi Ambu** (1978) - the first cinemascope film in Malayalam, was a big success.



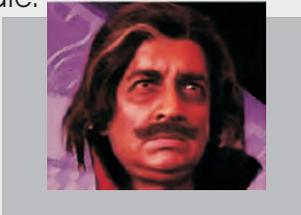
A folklore starring Sivaji & Nazeer, *Thacholi Ambu* celebrates a silver jubilee at Apsara theater, Calicut.

Handwritten 'THEATRE DATA' form for 'SIVAJI' cinema. Fields include Station (K.P.L.E.S. - Mahaveer Nagar), Total capacity (476), Auditorium width (65 feet), Existing screen size (52 x 21), and various technical specifications for projection and lenses.



**Thacholi Ambu** cinemascope (1978) was so huge a hit that within one year all theaters (about 1100, average capacity 800 seats) in Kerala had converted themselves to anamorphic projection systems. For the initial set of releases, Navodaya had to supply lenses to the theaters. But by 1982, every single Malayalam film (average 120 films annually) was being made as cinemascope. Navodaya had not only revolutionized the production machinery, but also the theater circuits.

Jijo then directed the first 70mm film of South India - **Padayottam** (1982) made in a 6track stereo surround sound format. This was not a commercial success, and due to its limited regional appeal it barely broke-even in the home state.

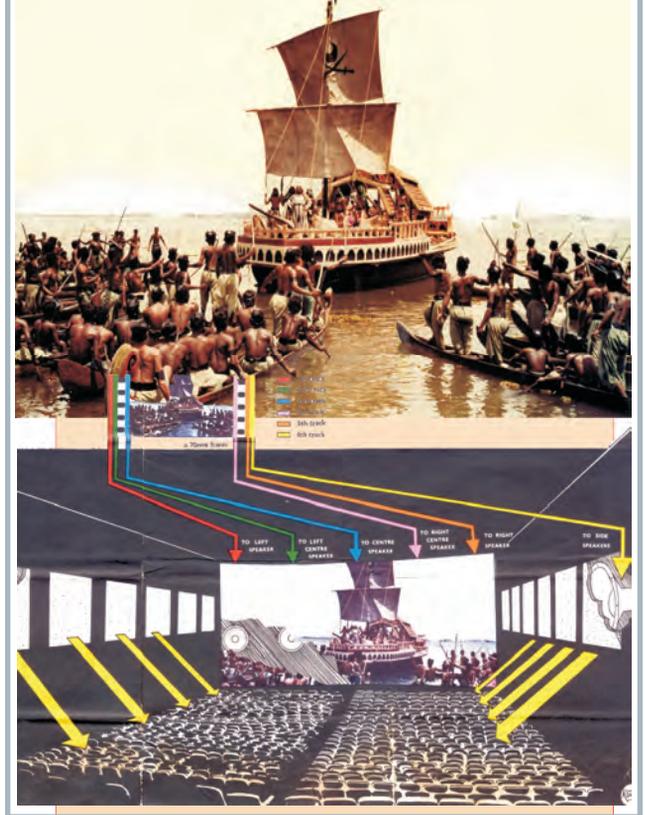


Hence in 1984 Navodaya went nationwide by making the first 3D film in India *My Dear Kuttichathan* (**Chota Chetan** in hindi). On contract with Chris Condon - an optical physicist & lensmaker in Hollywood, Navodaya adopted his **35mm single filmstrip Stereovision system** for their production of a 3D film. The film dubbed into major Indian languages was also released to worldwide Indian diaspora.



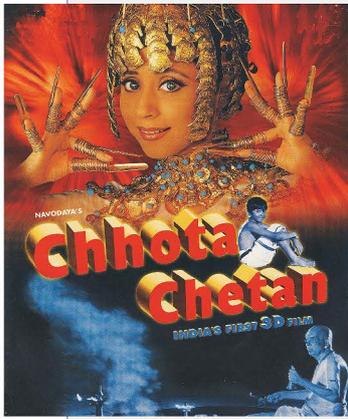
This gravity defying sequence in 3D was shot inside a specially fabricated giant steel treadmill - an idea mooted by artdirector K. Sheker.

A naval encounter in **Padayottam** - with a 70mm format illustration for the Kerala public.



**1994.** While 3D production was proceeding with new imaging devices, teams of technicians armed with projection lenses & tools were trained at Navodaya to convert cinemahall screens and replace them with silverscreens *overnight!* -for the duration of the 3D screening. Also developed was a service system that provided polariser glasses to every customer. During the 20 years (from 1985 to 2005) of their 3D screenings, Navodaya had directly handled each of its silverscreen at the theaters and every one of the 3D glasses given to the viewers. From the thatched auditoriums with their carbon arc lamps in India/ Indonesia/ West Indies, to the automated platter system driven multiplexes at KAL/ Dubai/ Birmingham/ Montreal, this today adds up to a staggering 85000 screenings and 43million 3D glasses!





**3-D in India**  
by Christopher James

India produces more feature films than any other country. Indeed the State of Madras alone with a yearly output of approximately 450 films out-produces even the USA. Yet this populous Asian nation had never produced a stereoscopic motion picture until August 1984 when its first full-length 3D motion picture *Kutichathen* was released and became India's number one grossing film by January 1985.

This event was the fulfilment of a 20-year dream for industrial film producer Thomas Easaw, formerly of Kanara, India, now residing in Denver, Colorado, Easaw trained with Chris Condon, president of Stereovision, in the use of their 3-D camera lens system. Simultaneously Mr. Appachen, chief executive of Navodaya Studios, India was in touch with Stereovision regarding the possibility of such a project. What was needed, however, was someone who could



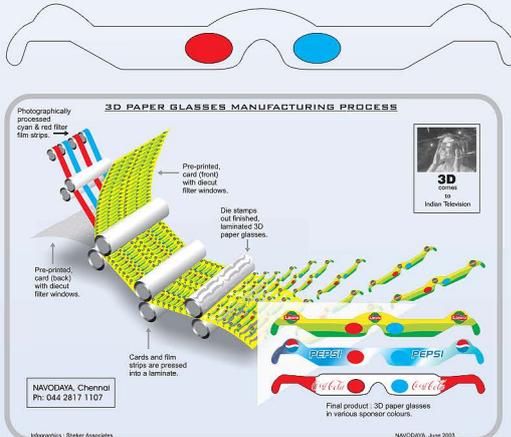
ghost! Critics in India acclaim the consistent use of the stereoscopic 'off the screen' process. All age groups are flocking to see it. Playing to full houses in over 40 cities at the date of this article, it has broken many 'house records'.

Filming of the story, which was on \$294. High key lighting was used whenever possible to enable maximum depth of field sharpness. Fill light and reflectors were used for good shadow detail. The optics used on this film were the 20mm, 32mm and 50mm focal length, and were supplied in BNC/R mount.

One of the many successes of the screen effects. The features are clearly projected into theater space.

Filming of the story, which was

*American Cinematographer* article sept 85



3D Glass manufacturing process. 2002



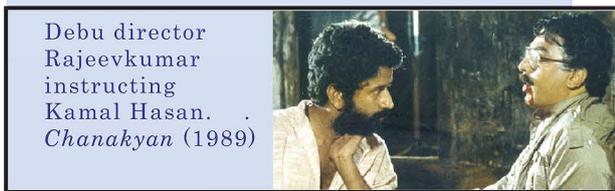
3D Beamsplitter Rig. *Whirlpool 3D Ad.* Feb 2010

*Chota Chetan* was revised with digital surround audio in 1998. In 2004 Jijo's team with in-house R&D had developed a Digital 3D Imaging system for the production & projection of Stereoscopic programs in diverse venues\* This technology was used in **Reallimage QUBE** to digitally re-master *Chota Chetan*, and yet again re-release it in 2010 as digital 3D prints.

\* (for more on this, please refer [www.netmoviebank.com](http://www.netmoviebank.com))



Fazil directing Baby Shalini in *Ente Mamattikuttiyamaku* (1983). This story about the pains and passions of adopting an orphan child made debuting Shalini a star overnight.



Debu director Rajeevkumar instructing Kamal Hasan. *Chanakyan* (1989)

During 1980 to 1990 with the help of his brother Jos, in many of Navodaya's offbeat ventures Jijo had brought in a new generation of fresh filmmaking talents to the Industry. Some of them have later attained superstardom. *Directors* - Fazil, Priyadarsan, Siby Malayil, Rajeevkumar, Mathew Paul, *Actors* - Mohanlal, Mammooty, Urmila Mandotkar, *Musicians* - Sharret, Sreenivas, etc., are a few to be named.

**Stories From The Bible**

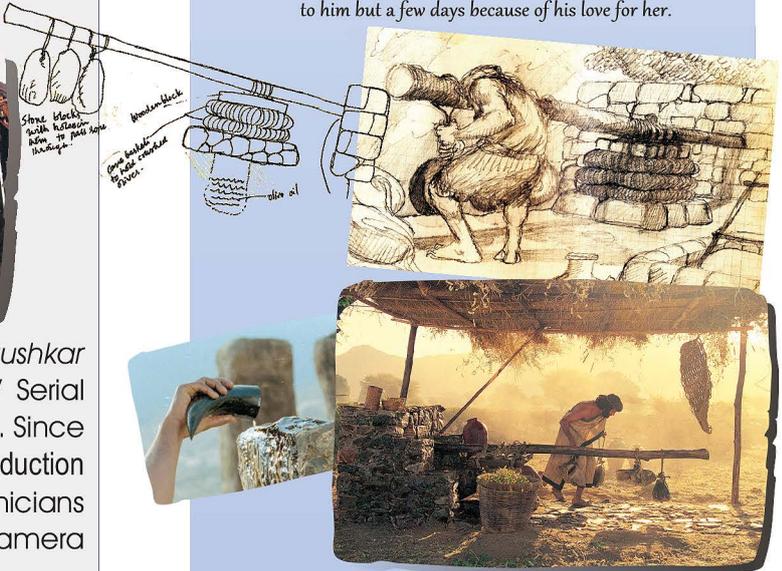


Picturised on sets constructed in and around *Pushkar* deserts, one other landmark project was the TV Serial **Stories from the Bible** (1993). This was shot on film. Since there was no precedent then to do 'video-post-production for media shot on film', Jijo collaborated with the technicians at *Arri Munich* and *Skotel Toronto* to develop a camera interface and a digital workflow for *AVID*\*

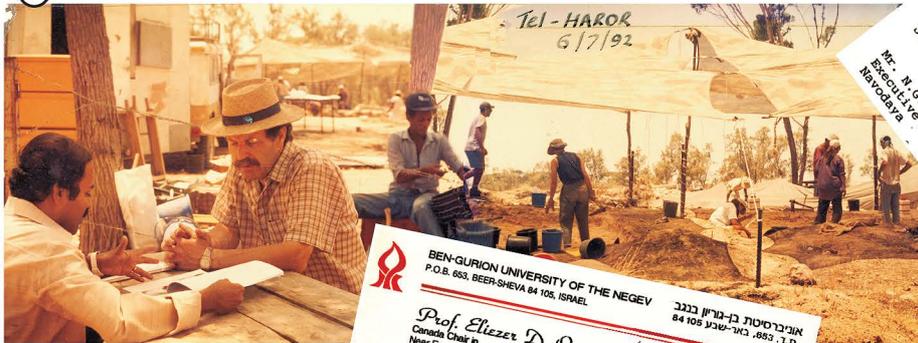
*Genesis. Chapter 29.*  
26. 'It is not the custom in our country' Laban replied, 'to marry off a younger daughter before the older one ...'



*Genesis. Chapter 29.*  
20. So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, yet they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.



Illustrations by Prakash Moorthy, film animator



TEL - HAROR  
6/7/92

BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV  
P.O.B. 653, BEER-SHEVA 84 105, ISRAEL

Prof. Eliezer D. Oren  
Canada Chair in  
Near Eastern Archaeology

To Prof. Dr. Silvio Schreiber  
Institut für Biblischwissenschaft

מחברת אורן  
תודות רבות לראיון  
המרתק והמרתק  
המרתק

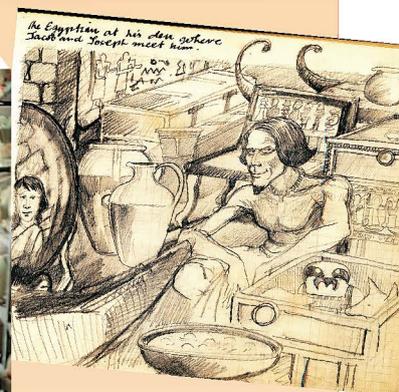
30.9.92

It was indeed good to meet you at Tel Haror

Navodaya team at Mount Tabor, with Galilee behind them.



\* Also, it is Bible Project which ushered-in computer based film production to India. Navodaya purchased the very first Avid NLE system to be sold outside the U.S. Subsequently, by offering free training to independent film editors at Chennai & Mumbai, Jos of Navodaya & Senthil of ReallImage popularised Avid & Protocols in the Indian Film Industry even before Hollywood started doing films on desktop systems.



**Stories from the Bible** was a project that involved intensive project research that spanned many continents. Art Directors and Cinematographers were deputed along with Research scholars and Script writers to the archaeological sites at Tel-Aviv, Negeb & Luxor and to Museums & Universities at Jerusalem, Cairo & Geneva. These efforts have helped develop a process in Navodaya whereby systematic collating, cataloguing and disseminating of story research data go hand-in-hand with the visual treatment & development of a script. A systemisation now being put to use in **MOBCINEMA**, aptly. ★★

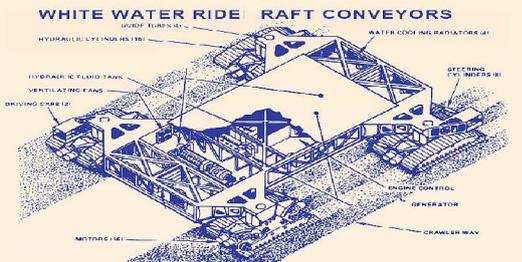
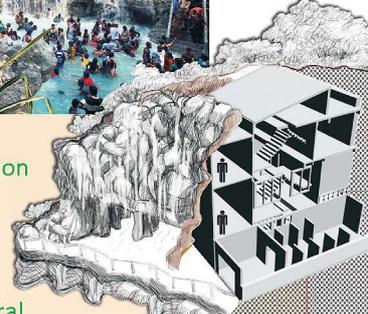


**kishkinta**



After concealing the pumps, tanks & change rooms of this giant bathing falls inside a manmade hill, the architect had them covered with cultured rockfaces.

Started in collaboration with **Berjaya of Malaysia**, Kishkinta sprawls over 120 acres. Staff strength is 600. An architectural genius of this park is the harvesting of rain water in a flood-prone area and utilising it year round for water rides. Kishkinta has 30 acres of manmade waterbodies. More than 7000 full grown trees were transplanted here under an army of horticulturists & gardeners.



Year 1995 saw the opening of **KISHKINTA** - India's first themed amusement park at the Chennai suburbs. A project by NAME - Navodaya Mass Entertainments Ltd., It took 5 years of creative efforts by a number of Artists, Architects, Program designers, Engineers, Environment scientists and City planners. Before the indigenous design and fabrication of every one of Kishkinta's ride could happen, a team comprising of Jijo, Artdirector Sheker, Architect Jayachandran & Ride designer Balakrishnan, under the leadership of Project Engineer Imbichammad did make numerous factfinding trips. Applying Murphy's Law to component designs and TUV standards in operational procedures, Jijo was in charge of **Safety**. Sheker was in charge of **Ergonomics**.



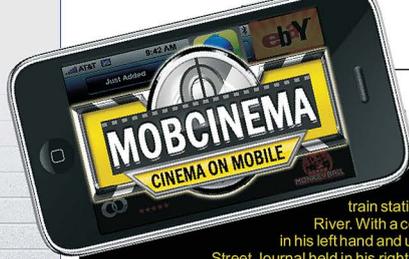
- L to R
- 1) Father of steel rollercoasters - The legendary Anton Schwarzkopf,
  - 2) His son - Wieland Schwarzkopf,
  - 3) Jijo and
  - 4) Structural engineer Werner Stengel - whose name is an institution.

snapped by Imbichammad. Munich February '89





After having completed a full circle from cinema hall Navodaya is back to where it all had started - filmmaking. But now in the age of personalised entertainment, it is MOBCINEMA.



Empathy, belated. streamtime 1minute



Winter day at the Scarborough train station on the Hudson River. With a coffee mug poised in his left hand and unfolding the Wall Street Journal held in his right the businessman walked into the train chair car.

& Line Producer Emily Mayer at New York. The NY crew covered the photos



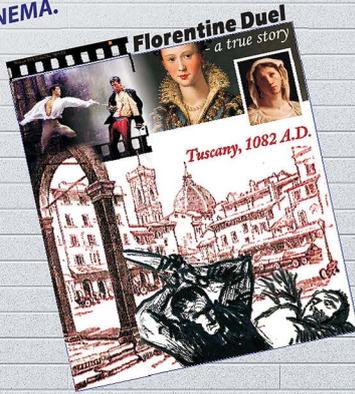
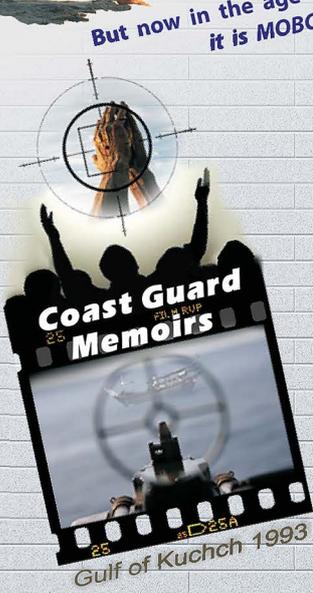
an outburst from the man "Isn't there somebody who can rein these brats!" The place suddenly became very quiet!



... there was somebody... their mother!

... We are on way back from her funeral services....." Touched, the businessman looked at the kids. They were now staring back with apology written large on their faces.

ONE MINUTE mobilecinema Location - New York. Language - English Execution - Background plates shooting NY crew. Character enactments on bluescreen sets at Chennai



Language

Czech & Slovak

English subtitles

Australia Region

East Europe

Europe

Middle East

South America

Albania

Bulgaria

Croatia

Czech

Story

Malý Fable (3mins)

The Gift (75secs)

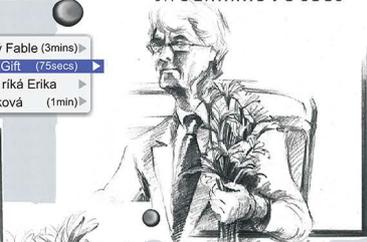
Dite ríká Erika

Dárková (1min)

The Gift. streamtime 75 secs



story narrative post Velvet Revolution



visual treatment by Shalini Nair Prague Film School

ONE MIN FIFTEEN SECS mobilecinema Location - Prague. Language - Czech. Execution - Background plates shot on location at Prague. Character enactments on bluescreen sets at 3LTV.De, Munich.

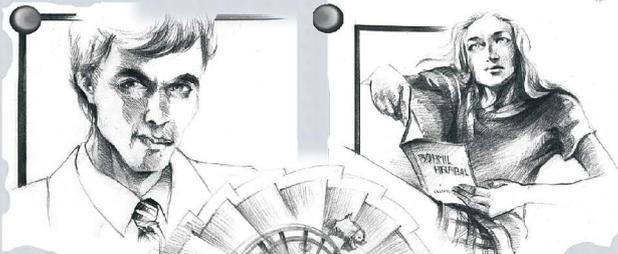
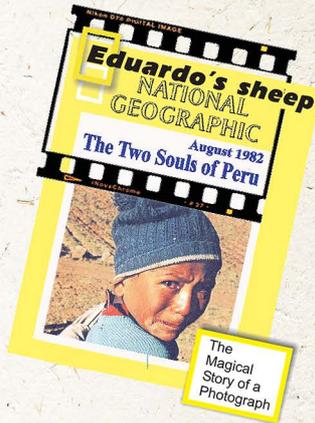


Illustration by Alice Cheevel

In one seat of a bus, an old man sat holding a bunch of fresh flowers. A young girl whose eyes came back again and again to his flowers. The time came for the old man to get off. Impulsively he thrust the flowers into the girl's lap. "I can see you love the flowers," he explained, "and I think my wife would like for you to have them. I'll tell her I gave them to you." The girl accepted the flowers, then watched the old man get off the bus and walk through the gate of a small cemetery.



The Magical Story of a Photograph



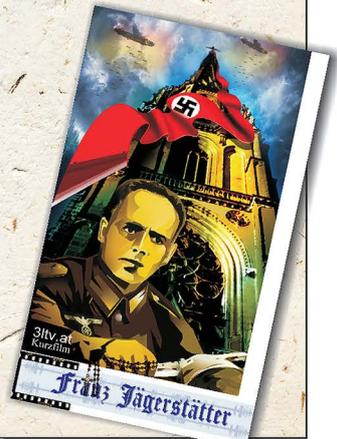
streamtime 5minutes

A true incident @ British Cancer Society



CHICAGO, 1927 DEPRESSION ERA

Commemorative 2004 U.S. Postage





## SHORTFILM PROJECTS

## The Runaway

\* FICTION

A *child left behind* comes to the city in search of it's parents. A *chengguan* officer deputed to keep out entrants to the city, finds himself helping her.



duration 4 minutes  
 native language Mandarin  
 location Xinjiang, China  
 period present day  
 narrative style Documentary

Tian Mi (10) awaiting her parents. Lee Yuk San's documentary

## The Best Birthday Gift

\* FICTION

The efforts of a 'Richie Rich' boy's parents to deliver him the best of birthday gifts evoke a question "How many ipods, G3 phones, nikes and playstations added up... can equal mom & dad?"



duration 4 minutes  
 language Korean  
 location Seoul, S Korea  
 period present day  
 narrative style montages

## A Forgiveness, crossborder

46 years after he had shot down a civilian plane that had strayed across the border, a Pakistani fighter pilot in Lahore locates the downed Indian pilot's daughter on the internet. He apologizes. The lady in Mumbai graciously accepts.



\* REAL LIFE Qais Hussain, Lahore. Farida Singh, Mumbai  
 duration 4 minutes  
 language English & Urdu  
 locations Lahore & Delhi  
 period 1965 & present day

## Une Caissiere

\* REAL LIFE

This supermarket 'checkout girl' always smiled at shoppers who were rude ... and then she wrote a book about it. Her writing produced more results than her smiles. Anna Sam's memoirs *Tribulations d'une Caissiere* became a bestseller. And suddenly in stores across France, customer behaviour became polite at the checkout counters !!



duration 6 minutes  
 native language French

location Calais, Paris. period 2008

## The Last Train

\* REAL LIFE

Boy meets Girl. But wait; this is a drama in real life caused by a miscommunication. A true story 50 years old, now re-told against the backdrop of Mumbai's railway.



duration 5 minutes  
 native language Hindi  
 location Mumbai, India  
 period present day  
 style real-time. realistic

## Hussam Abdu Surrenders

\* REAL LIFE

On March 24, 2004, fifteen year old Palestinian Hussam Abdu was stopped at Israeli Huwarra border checkpoint with live explosives strapped around his waist. Instead of detonating the bomb, Hussam voluntarily gave himself up.



The larger drama was in the responses. The Antagonists called him a failed martyr. Protagonists claimed he was 'busted'. And it highlighted everybody else's attitude more than Hussam's own. "He just told us he didn't want to die" said Lt. Milrad, one of the guards.

native language Arabic, Hebrew  
 narrative style documentary

## A Bushfire

\* FICTION

It takes a fire warning for Carlo to realize how kind life is to him. The fire also brings up his past to make him realize that he had not been a kind person himself. He decides to make amends.



duration 5 minutes  
 native language English  
 location Melbourne, Australia  
 period present day  
 narrative style non-linear



.... Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, ... Bambara, Belarusian, ... Chokwe, ... Hebru, Hiligaynon, ... Lezgian, ... Quechua, ... Turkmen, ... Uyghur, ... Zulu, ... and also in all other world languages.  
 The list here is only a small start.