

Not an ayurvedic trip !



CURRY WESTERN

BY KAMAL MUSALE



PRESS KIT



CREDITS

FORMAT	Feature film, 105', cinemascope
GENRE	Dark comedy
LANGUAGE	English, French and German Subtitles
LOCATION	London (UK), Hampi, Karnataka (India)
DIRECTED BY	Kamal Musale
WRITTEN BY	Kamal Musale, Sylvain Reymond, Rob Appleby, Cédric Basso
CASTING	Gia Sandhu, Christopher Shyer, Sylvain Reymond
ART DIRECTOR	Rekha Musale
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	Piotr Jaxa
SOUND RECORDIST	Eric Ghersinu
MAKE UP ARTIST	Connie Sacchi
SOUND MIXING AND EDITING	François Musy, Gabriel Hafner and Renaud Musy
MUSIC BY	Laurence Crevoisier and Annick Rody
PRODUCERS	Heinz Dill, Sheena Morjaria, Kamal Musale
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Louise Productions (Switzerland)
COPRODUCERS	Flick The Switch (UK), Curry Western (India), Les Films du Lotus (Switzerland)
UK LINE PRODUCTION	Pinch Media London
WITH THE SUPPORT OF	Swiss Ministry of Culture, Cinéforum and Loterie Romande, Suissimage and the British Film Institute



PITCH

Following her father's sudden death, Sheela and her husband Simon fly to India in order to sell the property she has inherited. But on arrival, they come across a white hippie, Bindu, a squatter who presents himself as the "spiritual son" of the deceased father, and who's claiming rather violently his right to the property.

SYNOPSIS

Sheela, an English activist of Indian origin, learns that her father has suddenly died in the jungle - devoured by a tiger!

Despite her dislike for her father and his Indian culture, Sheela and her aspiring writer husband Simon go to India to sell the property she inherited. They hope that this unexpected promising income will change their lives.

When they arrive, they encounter Bindu, a white hippie, who declares himself to be her father's "spiritual son", and who claims rather violently his right to the property.

These three people trapped by their own basest natures come unhinged in the Indian jungle, with darkly comic results...and where civilization never seemed so far away.



ABOUT THE FILM

Curry Western is a funny tale about the fight for property, probably the most basic human conflict in all cultures since the beginning of time. It shows that when both sides believe that their end justifies any means, then everyone can be caught fighting to their death.

To expose this conflict, the author chooses to oppose a British woman of Indian origin against a white European hippie in India. As both of them have turned their back to the culture of their origin, these characters exacerbate the deep link between property and culture, and the sense of belonging that entitles them the right to fight for it.

This movie has its own personal voice, and yet one can sense the influence of classic films from The Coen brothers, Monty Python, even Blake Edwards, and with a pinch of Edward Albee's *Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf*.

The story theme of property and the visual style are reminiscent of the classic American Western in cinemascope. The protagonists also use old style dynamite, barbed wire, horses are swooped for elephants, and Native Americans by... Indians... A beautiful music score echoes the great performances of the cast, in the stunning and beautiful landscapes of Hampi in India. In short, a truly original *Curry Western* movie !



THE DIRECTOR

The Swiss-Indian KAMAL MUSALE is a talented and atypical author and director, a born filmmaker, permanently on a quest for new forms in his rich and varied film career, that included art movies for European broadcasters, documentaries and fiction features, commercials, stage and even radio feature plays.

Kamal's previous feature, *Bumbai Bird*, a movie in Hindi, co-produced between India and Switzerland, has won the Best Indie Film at the European Cinematography Awards 2017, and the Best Screenplay at the Indian Cine Film Festival 2017.

His latest feature documentary, *Millions Can Walk*, co-directed with Christoph Schaub, about the Yan Satagraha March which saw 100'000 landless Indian farmers marching for their rights, has been distributed across cinemas in Europe, and won the Best Documentary Award at the Stuttgart Indian Film Festival 2014.

Kamal is now preparing his new movie *Teresa & Kavita*, a contemporary drama and a biopic of Mother Teresa, to be shot in English in India and UK in 2019.

Born in Switzerland, with a mixed background from India, Kamal has always been inspired by British humour. A graduate of the National Film School in England, he developed his own very personal brand of humour, with the constant care to be easily understood across cultures.

In making *Curry Western*, his first international feature shot in English, Kamal Musale has created a delightful, cheeky, personal film.



FILMOGRAPHY

BUMBAI BIRD, feature film, drama, 84', 2017

MILLIONS CAN WALK, documentary, co-director : Christoph Schaub, 88', 2014

CELEBRATING CORN, documentary, 54', 2010

EMILE GARDAZ, THE VOICE OF THE POET, documentary, 54', 2008

PROPERTY RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS, documentary, 20', 2007

STATE OF THINGS, documentary, 52', 2006

ALINE, feature film, contemporary opera, 60', 2003, Festival International du Film de Locarno,

Zé - HEALERS FROM BRASIL, documentary, 90', 2001

MUMMENSCHANZ, documentary, 60', 2000

RACLETTE CURRY, short feature, 1999

AI-AMOUR, documentary, 40', 1994, FIPA silver prize in 1995

THE THREE SOLDIERS, short feature film, comedy, 14', Director's Fortnight Cannes 1989



INTERVIEW OF THE DIRECTOR

Q : How was the film born?

KAMAL MUSALE : My initial idea for this movie was to make a black comedy on the theme of property. Or more precisely from its resulting conflicts, as I have always thought that property conflicts are the primary source for almost every human conflict. When looking into them, whether it is a politicized or emotional conflict, one notices that the notion of property is always at stake. To defend one's property is also to claim one's identity. As soon as the place to which one belongs is endangered, one must defend it in order to exist.

Q : Why comedy?

KM : Comedy is a unique way of describing the particularities and flaws of the human race. Comedy amuses us while looking down at our human condition. It is apt to show the absurdities of life. And it helps us to deal with them.

In *Curry Western*, the humour is in line with the Commedia dell'arte, developed in the Italian comedy films of the 50s and the 60s, and it is also something I see in the work of Black Edwards, the performances of Peter Sellers, and in the English humour in general. I try to bring into the movie that smile, that sweetness, that subtle caricature that avoids cynicism. Despite the disintegration of human relationships, I try to stay hopeful and always look at the characters with a smile.

We observe them with benevolence, but without concessions. Their hopes, their frustrations, their lies, their generosity, all these aspects of the characters are treated in scenes where dialogues or situations allow us to grasp the absurdity of their extreme behaviour. Sometimes even slapstick is used to defuse the violent potential of certain scenes.

Q : Can you tell me more about the characters of Sheela, Simon and Bindu?

KM : I always like to write female leading roles, because I identify with the feminine rather than the masculine psyche, at least with regard to the traditional social roles that shape it. As I am half Swiss and half Indian, I can say that Sheela carries a few of my own identity questions.

But otherwise she has her own character and problems: she seeks to find her place in a world that does not seem to accept her needs. She seeks to be accepted for who she is and for her convictions, which are extreme and unrealistic. She still suffers from the abandonment of her father when she was a child. Her desire for recognition will finally be fulfilled in India, in some tragic-comic scenes.

Simon represents a type of man who does not assume, who does not see his ideas through to the end, who does not dare to fulfil himself. Confronted with his fears and desires, he will eventually dare to shake his fears to realize himself fully.

Bindu is a psychopath who does not evolve, who always follows his own logic. Filled with raw animal power, he represents the danger of extremism and refusal to compromise. He acts as a catalyst for Sheela and Simon. If Sheela would like to discuss and quell the conflict, Simon discovers he's looking for it. These three will face a merciless struggle.

I tend to love characters that are both beautiful and deplorable all at once. Nobody is perfect, we all have weaknesses, which I like to exacerbate with humour. That's what makes them human, and I love this humanity.

Q : Have you had a strong hand in directing actors, or did you allow them to compose on their own?

KM : In some scenes it's quite easy to let the actors follow their intuition and proposals in relation to the screenplay - when a scene is simple and quite explicit. There are other scenes where it's much more delicate, when I want to make sure that we can understand the subtext.

In casting, we tried to choose an actor who will bring something to the character that we wrote. Either the actor marries the character perfectly, or creates an interesting counterpoint. But I find that directing actors is a bit like doing judo, you need to use the strength of your opponent to take him with you; and so, to a certain extent, one must lean on the personality of the actor in order to make pirouettes with him or her.

Q : How was it shooting with the goat that played the role of Maya in the movie?

KM : It was after a long casting that we found Maya. She knew how to seduce us with her gifts for improvisation, for example by always being where we did not want her, or often absent when we were looking for her ...!

Eventually everything went very well, especially as soon as we found that it reacted perfectly to the crumpling sound of cookie wrappers. From that moment on, our professional relations improved.

Q : Can you explain how the artistic approach of the film was defined?

KM : The film's artistic approach revealed itself while writing the story of the couple, which is at the centre of the conflict. It seemed appropriate to find a reclusive spot for them to be forced to confront the fact that they needed to break free from each other, and find the courage to do what they really want in life.

As I thought back to the Indian scenery I had visited in Hampi years back, which is made up of big red rocks in a somewhat deserted landscape, it reminded me of John Ford's classic westerns, in which you find stories of Indians dispossessed of their territories by White Cowboys. Indians in India too have been exploited by the White; first by the colonisers, and after them came post-industrial companies from the West. And Indians also use violence to safeguard their territories and identity.

The thematic of property really fit the classic western genre, so I used this as a basic artistic approach to shoot the movie, with a camera constantly on tripods and tracks, and not on the shoulder, and with elements of the traditional western.

Q : How was the musical choice made for the composition of the soundtrack?

KM : Just as the story is built as a closed-door study of 3 characters - or 4 if you take the goat into account - the idea of a jazz trio or quartet quickly imposed itself. I looked for composers in Switzerland, Germany, England, until a friend made me listen to the music of Barbouze de chez Fior. These four women from Lausanne (Switzerland) formed a quartet to perform their own compositions. Two composers seemed perfect for *Curry Western*: Laurence Crevoisier and Annick Rody. They embarked with passion on the journey of writing very beautiful original compositions, between jazz, western classic music and even, thanks to Laurence's experience in India, the classic Indian viola style.

Q : What kind of a film is *Curry Western*?

KM : It's not a defined genre, but a mixture of genres. It's a Western without Americans, which takes place in India... There are no horses, but an elephant. There are all the ingredients of the archetypal Western: a rifle, barbed wire, dynamite... And even some Indians! If you mix these ingredients into this magnificent, lunar landscape, in which our characters are fighting for property, and if you shake it with some black humour, there you are: it's a *Curry Western* !



CASTING

CHRISTOPHER SHYER (Simon)



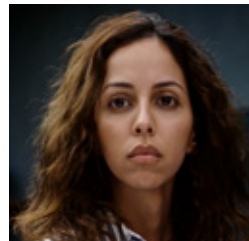
Christopher Shyer has guest starred on numerous hit television shows on most of the major networks, including CSI, The Practice and NCIS, had regular roles on

CTV's hit series [Whistler](#), ABC's [The Days](#) and [V](#). He played the leading role aside Alec Baldwin and Jill Hennessy in the Emmy and Golden Globe winning miniseries [Nuremburg](#).

His favorite starring role was in the ABC TV Movie [Phenomenon 2](#). Christopher Shyer was a series regular on Gemini Award winning writer/director Ken Finkelman's [Good Dog](#).

His film credits include a co-starring role aside Diane Lane and Donald Sutherland in [Fierce People](#) directed by Griffin Dunne, and supporting roles with Andy Garcia in [Lazarus Child](#), and alongside Angelina Jolie in [Life or Something Like It](#). He played Richard Nixon in the Clint Eastwood's [J. Edgar](#), alongside Leonardo DiCaprio

GIA SANDHU (Sheela)



GIA SANDHU, a Canadian and British actress of Indian origin, and is a graduate of The National Theatre School of Canada and of Canadian Film Center.

Her film acting credits include [Beeba Boys](#) by Deepa Mehta and [The Moth Diaries](#) by Mary Harron, and her TV acting credits include a leading role on [Dr.Bob's House](#), as well as guest appearances on several television series including [Saving Hope](#) and [Bloodletting](#) and [Miraculous Cures](#). She completed [A Simple Favour](#), a new film from Paul Feig with Blake Lively and Anna Kendrick.



SYLVAIN REYMOND (Bindu)



Actor, author and scriptwriter, Sylvain Reymond went to learn his craft as a comedian first at the Conservatoire de Lausanne in Switzerland, then in

Paris. He develops his inimitable comedy talent in leading roles in theatre plays and in secondary characters in cinema and television in Switzerland.

Some of his screen Swiss credits include: [Bukowski](#) by Alain Wirth, [Les Epouvantails](#) by Laurent Gachoud, [L'improbable Odyssée](#) by Pascal Forney, [Sauvetage](#), TV serial, episodes 1 and 3, by Jacques Malaterre, [L'Enfant et les Loups](#), TV TSR feature by Pierre-Antoine Hiroz, [The Three Soldiers and Human Rights](#) by Kamal Musale.

MAYA (Maya)



Maya is a goat from Karnataka with a very strong character. She has an innate gift for playing comedy. When she is not grazing in her preferred meadow, she

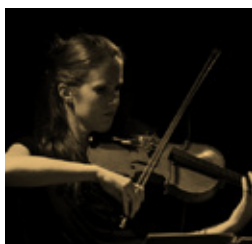
is playing for cinema films. When she is on a set, the shooting is always quite epic. She sometimes goes in the canteen to finish the food in the pans instead of acting.



CREW

MUSIC

ANNICK RODY, composer and performer



Annick Rody completes her studies at the Geneva Superior Conservatory under Margarita Karafilova. From 1998, she plays as a soloist with the Lausanne Sinfonietta, the Hamburg

Youth Orchestra and the Philharmonic Orchestra of Lublin (Poland). Between 2001 and 2005 she is a member of the Lausanne Sinfonietta and of the Michel Corboz Ensemble.

LAURENCE CREVOISIER, composer and performer



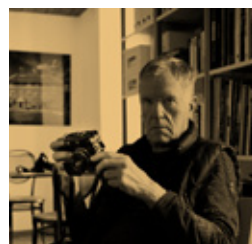
Laurence Crevoisier obtained her violin diploma at the Lausanne Superior Conservatory in 1997 in the class of Jean Jaquerod.

She joined the viola class of Christine Soerensen and obtained in 2000 the first prize with honours in virtuosity. She participates in various orchestras: Neuchâtel Symphonic Ensemble, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, Geneva Chamber Orchestra, Avenches.

She is a member of the Eustache Company.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

PIOTR JAXA, scs



Piotr Jaxa is a cinematographer and photographer born in Poland and living in Switzerland since 1982. He graduated from the Polish National Film School in Lodz and has

worked as Director of Photography on fictional and documentary films worldwide, notably with old school masters Wadja, Kiewskowski and Zanussi. His work has been shown at festivals such as Cannes, Mannheim, Krakow, Los Angeles and Berlin.

Piotr Jaxa has been extensively exploring the creative possibilities of digital cinematography in independent European productions for the cinema *Going Private* by Stina Werenfels, *Hello Goodbye* by Stefan Jaeger, *The War Is Over* by Mitko Panov, combining his profound experience of the 35 mm film camera with a passion for the new aesthetic possibilities offered by digital technology.



PRODUCTION DESIGN

REKHA MUSALE



Rekha Musale has been working on more than 40 feature films, mostly produced or co-produced with Switzerland.

She started working in the property dpt, and

has since become one of the most sought after Art Director in Switzerland.

Apart from her collaborations with her brother Kamal (*Aline*, selected by the Locarno International Film Festival, *Curry Raclette*, *Looking for Rosamunde*), she has been working with a great array of films and directors, Swiss and foreign. Amongst them: *Agents-secrets* by Frédéric Schoendoerffer, *Aime ton père* and *Une journée* by Jacob Berger, *Home* and *L'Enfant d'en haut*, by Ursula Meier.

EDITOR

LOREDANA CRISTELLI



Loredana Cristelli is Swiss and Italian and has been working steadily as an editor with the best Swiss directors. She is totally dedicated to her craft and share an equal inter-

est in fiction and documentaries. Amongst the feature films she has been involved with, one can mention: *Vollmond* by Fredi Murer, (Grand prix des Amériques, Montréal 1998), *Namibia Crossings*, documentary by Peter Liechti, *La dame du Capitole*, documentary by Jacqueline Veuve, *Luftbusiness*, by Dominique de Rivaz, *Der Kameramörder* by Robert Adrian Pejo, *Le livre de cristal* by Patricia Plattner (in Competition, Locarno 1994), *Yaaba* by Idrissa Ouedraogo, (Special Prize Cannes Fortnight 1989).

She is a member of the Swiss Cinema.



SOUND MIXING AND EDITING

FRANÇOIS MUSY



François Musy is the sound mixer of *Curry Western*.

He worked on more than 175 movies, from directors as diverse as Manoel de Oliveira,

Olivier Assayas, Tony Gatlif, Claire Simon, Cristi Puiu, Elie Chouraqui, Barbet Schroeder, and Jean-Jacques Annaud.

His collaboration with Jean-Luc Godard, the doyen of the Nouvelle Vague, spans over two decades and more than twenty films, including *Passion* (1981), *For Ever Mozart* (1996), and *Film Socialisme* (2010).

GABRIEL HAFNER



Gabriel Hafner is the sound editor of *Curry Western*. With his partner François Musy, they won two French Cesar, for *Quand j'étais chanteur* (2007),

and for *Marguerite* (2016), both films by French director Giannoli. They have been nominated 4 other times. One of their last gig for sound recording and design is the Spanish blockbuster *La Reina de España* (2016) by Fernando Trueba with Penélope Cruz.

RENAUD MUSY



Renaud Musy first assisted during 14 years François Musy by Nos Sons Mix before he started working as sound mixer and editor for NSM. He has been

involved in several films from Swiss and foreign directors as for example: *La Reina de España* (2016) by Fernando Trueba, *La séparation des traces*, documentary by Francis Reusser (2018) and *Titeuf le film* by Zep (2011).

SOUND RECORDING

ERIC GHERSINU



Eric Gherzinu is a sound engineer who worked with several well known Swiss directors. He is known for his work in: *L'enfance d'Icare* by Alex Iordachescu, *Romans*

d'ado by Béatrice and Nasser Bakhti, *La traductrice* by Elena Hazanov, *Anomalie* (TV serie by Pilar Anguita-MacKay) and recently *Docteur Jack* by Pierre-Antoine Hiroz and Benoît Lange.



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