

Activity report Bhutan Film Trust 2016



still from *Prophecy*, by Zuri Rinpoche



The stories from Bhutan are worth being translated into visual arts and brought to the outside world. Although the contribution of the Bhutan film trust to the independent Bhutan film industry is modest we are happy about what we have achieved so far. The Bhutan Film Trust has been instrumental in creating international networks, has supported filmmakers and assisted in terms of advice and expertise.

The independent Bhutan film industry made a huge leap into the international film arena over the passed three years. We are grateful that the Bhutan Film Trust played its role in this development.

ACHIEVED 2016

The Bhutan Film Trust supported the following productions in 2016

- The four fold film project: 4 shorts produced by four film directors. Three young film directors work with Mr Pelden Dorji the most senior independent filmmaker in Bhutan, in this special project. All four filmmakers will respond to each other's work in progress, which is a unique learning process in Bhutan.
- Arun Bhattarai for the postproduction of the documentary, working title: *Inseparables*, in collaboration with Dorottya Zurbó (Hungary)

The Bhutan Film Trust assisted producers with advice, promotion of their films and screening material for international film festivals

- *Lo Sum Choe Sum*, by Dechen Roder - official selection: Prague International Film Festival - January 2016, International Film Festival Las Palmas and in Porto Alegre (Brazil) - March 2016, Dutch Mountain Film Festival - March 2016, New Port Beach International Film Festival - April 2016 and Petaluma Film Festival - May 2016, Asiatica filmmediale, Rome - September 2016, Festival Internacional Signos da Noite, Lisboa – October 2016 and Paris - November 2016.
- *The Red Door*, by Tashi Gyeltshen - official selection: Himalaya International Film Festival in Seattle - August 2016, Festival du Film d'Asie du Sud (FFAST) October 2016
- *Kushutara*, by Karma Deki - official selection: Dhaka International Film Festival - January 2016.
- *School Among Glaciers* (Dorji Wangchuk) - official selection for the Dutch Mountain Film Festival - March 2016.
- *Prophecy*, by Zuri Rinpoche - official selection: Asia Pacific International Filmmaker Festival in Indonesia – July 2016 (Platinum Award 2016), Spirit Film Festival Tel Aviv, Israel - November 2016, and supported with the screenings in Lugar theatre in Thimphu, Bhutan.

NETWORK ACTIVITIES 2016

The Bhutan Film Trust was represented at

- IFFR 2016 - Henk de Jong



- Dutch Mountain Film Festival, Heerlen, the Netherlands – Henk de Jong gave an introduction on the Bhutan films in general and *lo sum choe sum* and *school among glaciers* specifically.
- Open Doors International Film Programme Locarno 2016 - Henk de Jong and Erica Sluyters
- Premiere *Prophecy*, Thimphu Bhutan – Karma Luday
- Buddhist Film Festival Europe 2016, Amsterdam – Erica Sluyters

Henk de Jong travelled to Bhutan to discuss opportunities, meet film directors and producers and discuss the future of the trust with candidate board members, in May 2016. The process of transition to a Bhutan registered NGO was commenced.

OTHER ACTIVITIES 2016

Festival del Film Locarno Open Doors programme

The Bhutan Film Trust became official partner of Festival del Film Locarno Open Doors programme early 2016, after having informed the director about the film industry in Bhutan in general and independent filmmakers specifically. We encouraged filmmakers to apply for the Hub or Lab and assisted with the filmprogramme. Henk de Jong and Erica Sluyters were accredited and attended the festival and industry programme at Locarno from 6 to 10 August 2016, representing the Bhutan Film Trust, enlarging the network.

Tashi Gyeltshen, together with his producer Kinley Tshering, attended the Open Doors Hub 2016 with *The Red Phallus*. They received the Open Doors Grant (20,000 CHF). Jigme Lhendup, one of the four fold filmmakers, attended the Open Doors Lab. All three attended workshops, network meetings and gained experience through the Open Doors programme.

Henk and Erica also attended the premiere of *Hema Hema sing me song while I wait* and met with the Pawo Choyning Dorji, producer and crewmembers.

Lo Sum Choe Sum – Dechen Roder, *A forgotten story* – Tashi Gyeltshen, *Monk in the Forest* – Karma Wangchuk, were screened at the Open Doors screenings that were well attended.

The Open Doors team and workshop facilitators noted similar experiences regarding the quality of the Bhutanese films and skills of the filmmakers as encountered by the Bhutan Film Trust team over the past few years. Knowledge and experience in budgeting, pitching, preproduction development, PR, and knowledge about distribution are still at an infant stage. However, films like 'Hema Hema' and Dechen Roder's new feature 'Honeygiver among the dogs' (listed among the ten best films at the Berlinale in 2017) and Tashi Gyeltshen's new feature 'The Red Phallus' will greatly contribute to a different way of story telling in international filmmaking. (Bhutan Film Trust report Locarno 2016)

Head Open Doors Mrs Sophie Bourdon attended Beskop Tshechu, Bhutan's international film festival in November 2016 as a jury member. She conducted a one-day workshop in Thimphu: *Accessing the International Market – how best can Bhutanese filmmakers approach international film opportunities.*

Bhutan

The Bhutan film trust representative in Bhutan, Mrs Karma Luday assisted the staff in the Netherlands. She connected with the producers in Bhutan and supported Loday Chopel with the premiere of *Prophecy* in Thimphu. She also officially attended the presentation of the draft version of the Bhutan Film Commissions papers designed by the Ministry of Information and Communication and commented on the document.



Mrs Luday has been instrumental in the process of preparing for the registration of the Bhutan Film Trust as a CSO in Bhutan.

Bhutan film trust Brochure

The Bhutan film Trust brochure 2016 was printed and distributed.

Bhutan film days Zurich

The Bhutan Film Trust assisted the Society Switzerland – Bhutan in an early stage with the programme content of three Bhutan film days to be held in Zurich in January 2017. The Trust sent information about Bhutanese animations, shorts, documentaries and feature films and contact details of Bhutanese directors and producers. The Trust also followed up on screening rights for several films and sent screening formats of *Prophecy*, Zuri Rinpoche, and *The Red Door*, Tashi Gyeltshen to the festival organisers.

In August meetings were held with Marianne Frei – chair person of Society Switzerland - Bhutan, and Dieter Zurcher – chair person film days Switzerland 2017 in Uster and Kyburg, Switzerland to discuss the Bhutan film event and possibilities to create a network of support to the Bhutan Film Trust in Europe

FOCUS 2017

Bhutan film trust will focus on

- Transition of the trust administration and organization to Bhutan
- Support to postproduction phase of the fourfold project.
- Continued support to *Prophecy*: promotion

June 2016

Karma Luday, Thimphu, Bhutan

Erica Sluyters, Phnom Penh, Cambodia