



# enlightenment productions

in association with DO Productions

## THE WORLD UNSEEN



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A REGENT RELEASE OF AN ENLIGHTENMENT FILMS PRESENTATION OF AN ENLIGHTENMENT PRODUCTIONS PRODUCTION  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH DO PRODUCTIONS "THE WORLD UNSEEN" LISA RAY SHEETAL SHETH PARVIN DABAS  
NANDANA SEN GRETHE FOX DAVID DENNIS COLIN MOSS BASED ON THE NOVEL BY SHAMIM SARIF  
CASTING BY HANAN KATTAN & MITO SKELLERN MUSIC BY RICHARD BLACKFORD EDITOR DAVID MARTIN  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER TANYA VAN TONDER WARDROBE DANIELLE KNOX CINEMATOGRAPHER MICHAEL DOWNIE  
COLLABORATING CINEMATOGRAPHER ASEEM BAJAJ LINE PRODUCER CAROLE PRENTICE ASSOCIATE PRODUCER DAISY  
ALLSOP

CO-PRODUCER BRIGID OLÉN EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS KATHERINE PRIESTLEY & LISA TCHENGUIZ-IMERMAN

PRODUCER HANAN KATTAN WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY SHAMIM SARIF

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# The World Unseen

## Nothing Can Stop You From Falling In Love..

A moving and passionate love story set against a backdrop of 1950's apartheid



"...An engaging and beautifully executed story..."  
Jasmyne Cannick, PAFF Los Angeles

"...A sincere, beautifully realized vision of love and resistance in an intolerant world..."  
Afterellen.com

"...a rare combination of intricate character study and engaging narrative."  
British Film Institute

"Subtle and rather beautiful ... a touching, likeable human story."  
Notcoming.com

"... one-of-a-kind new voices that have a youthful energized flair."  
Official Film Schedule / Toronto International Film Festival

"...The film speaks in an electrifying voice..."  
International Women's Film Festival in Seoul

"...a truly multifaceted approach going beyond sexuality and beyond politics making the heart and essence of the story valuable for everybody – regardless of race, sexuality or wider background."  
Juliane Kaden, New York Times, reader's review

"The World Unseen contains not one but two of this year's steamiest screen kisses."  
Cameron Bailey / Film Programmer / Toronto International Film Festival

## **Short Synopsis**

In 1950's South Africa, apartheid is just beginning. Free-spirited Amina (Sheetal Sheth) has broken all the rules of her own conventional Indian community, and the new apartheid-led government, by running a café with Jacob, her 'colored' business partner. When she meets Miriam (Lisa Ray), a young traditional wife and mother, their unexpected attraction pushes Miriam to question the rules that bind her. As Amina helps Miriam's sister-in-law to hide from the police, a chain of events is set in motion that changes both women forever.

In a system that divides white from black and women from men, what chance is there for an unexpected love to survive?

From overcoming oppression to finding personal freedom, from the hardships of a loveless marriage to the hesitant joy of an unexpected love affair, "The World Unseen" transports the viewer to a vibrant, colorful world that is universal in its themes.

## **Long Synopsis**

Free-spirited Amina has broken all the rules of her own conventional Indian community in South Africa by running a café, a safe haven of laughter, music and home-cooked food; a 'grey area' for those who fall outside the strict 'black and white' rules of the apartheid-led government.

Café regulars include Amina's feisty waitress Doris, her gentle 'Colored' business partner Jacob and the sparky White local postmistress Madeleine. Long accustomed to the racial barriers of the country and its new laws, Madeleine and Jacob nevertheless share a budding attraction.

Miriam, on the other hand, is a doting mother to her children and a demure and subservient wife to her chauvinistic, frustrated husband, Omar. Quietly intelligent, Miriam has never assumed that she may have choices in life.

When Miriam meets Amina, their unexpected attraction throws them both off balance. Although Miriam manages to subdue her fascination with unconventional Amina, she finds herself slowly inspired to confront familiar and familial constraints. Shortly after their encounter Miriam moves to an isolated life in the country, but even here apartheid is placing its cruel footprint on society, and these injustices bring the two women together again, cementing the basis of their growing feelings.

Meanwhile Jacob decides to pursue a love affair of his own and he and Madeleine begin a tentative, touching relationship. But the best intentions of both are overcome by practical challenges and indignities of simply spending time together.

Even the fearless Amina, faced with the strength of her feelings and with the reality of Miriam's situation, starts doubting herself. And Miriam finds herself making some courageous choices that will change her own life forever.

Using the stunning South African landscape and jazz tunes of the time, The World Unseen explores a system that divides white from black and women from men, but one that might just allow an unexpected love to survive.

## **The Film**

Shamim Sarif has brought to the screen the motion picture adaptation of her critically acclaimed and award winning debut novel, "The World Unseen." The human drama is inspired by stories of her grandmother's life in South Africa during the 1950's when the root of Apartheid began its treacherous grip on the country, leaving individuals to deal with a long fight for independence and identity.

The early apartheid setting "forms the backdrop for a story of very universal human emotions," says producer Hanan Kattan.

The international cast is headed up by Canadian actress Lisa Ray (Deepa Mehta's "Water" – which garnered a Best Foreign Picture Academy Award® nomination in 2007). Her performance in "Water" earned her the Best Actress Award from the Vancouver Film Critics Circle.

Other cast includes Sheetal Sheth ("Looking for Comedy in the Moslem World"), Parvin Dabas ("Monsoon Wedding"), Bernard White ("The Matrix") and Nandana Sen ("Black"). Among the stellar South African cast are Grethe Fox, David Dennis, Natalie Becker, Rajesh Gopie and Colin Moss.

## **Production and Financing**

Written, directed, financed and produced entirely by women, the motion picture is an Enlightenment Productions film, in association with DO Productions. Producer Hanan Kattan (co-founder of UK's Enlightenment Productions with Shamim Sarif), and co-producer Brigid Olen (co-founder of South Africa's DO Productions with Marlow de Mardt) have teamed up on this project along with associate producer Daisy Allsop.

Many of the heads of department are also women, including Carole Prentice (line producer), Tanya Van Tonder (production designer) and Danielle Knox (wardrobe designer).

"The strong female presence on this movie wasn't something we actively sought out," explains Sarif, "but there was a passion for the story and its themes that has driven everyone who's chosen to be involved with 'The World Unseen' and that has helped the movie to surpass even our high expectations for it."

The production is independently financed by private equity, and Katherine Priestley and Lisa Tchenguiz-Imerman serve as Executive Producers. Says Priestley, "I believe that, like the book, the film will reach out to a very wide audience. It's about individualism, about integrity, about believing in yourself."

Enlightenment Productions' mandate is to achieve higher than expected production value for the budgets involved, by tapping into the excitement and creativity of cast and crew who are passionate about their projects. By combining manageable budgets with excellent quality scripts and top class execution, Enlightenment is dedicated to growing their slate organically and found a like-minded partner in DO Productions.

"Since we founded DO Productions we have consistently sought out quality stories, with edge, in which to invest time and energy," says Olen, who this year, was also the South African co-

producer on “Disgrace” starring John Malkovich.

This film was made with the assistance of the National Film and Video Foundation of South Africa.

## THE NOVEL

NOTE: A new release of the novel will display cover art that will match the theatrical poster.

When Sarif’s novel, “The World Unseen,” first hit the shelves it took the publishing world by storm and went on to win the Pendleton May First Novel Award and the prestigious Betty Trask Award, garnering significant acclaim from the critics.

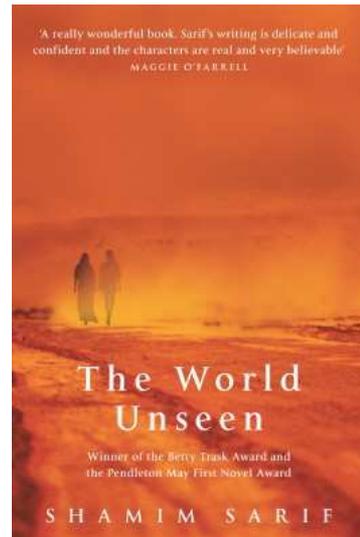
“An impressive debut, Sarif’s story brings together the descriptive power of the novelist with the screenwriter’s mastery of dialogue.” (The Times, London)

“I read The World Unseen at a gulp, so entrancing is its style, so complete its tale of love and betrayal, and so accurate its depiction of the physical, social and political scene.” (The Star, South Africa – Book of the Week)

“The characters shine with the beauty of Sarif’s deceptively skilful prose which keeps your eyes skating along the narrative in sheer enjoyment. I read this book in two long sittings, unable to put it down.” (Dyverse)

“Like the novel, The World Unseen cannot be boxed into any category,” assert Kattan. “It embraces timeless themes of love, prejudice, finding your voice and lessons of the heart and has a firm place in world cinema. It is a passionate & provocative story that embodies Enlightenment Productions’ ethos of developing stories that challenge convention.”

The World Unseen marks the second motion picture directed by Sarif. Her directorial debut “I Can’t Think Straight”, which she also wrote and directed, will be completed this year and released in 2008.



## Writer/ Director – Shamim Sarif



Acclaimed novelist Shamim Sarif has deep roots in South Africa, where her parents and grandparents were born and raised - a heritage that inspired her first, award-winning novel, “The World Unseen”.

“The World Unseen” won the Pendleton May First Novel Award, and then the prestigious Betty Trask Award. It was selected for inclusion at all the major UK book festivals, including Hay-on-Wye,

Cheltenham and Edinburgh and sold out of its initial print runs.

Johannesburg's leading newspaper, The Star, voted the book one of their books of the year. The Times in London called it "an impressive debut. Sarif's story brings together the descriptive power of the novelist with the screenwriter's mastery of dialogue."

Her second novel, "Despite the Falling Snow" was published in London by Hodder Headline in May 2004 and received overwhelmingly excellent reviews. In the autumn of 2005, the novel was released by American publisher St Martin's Press. Shamim has adapted this moving tale set in cold war Russia and present day United States into a screenplay. The picture will be helmed by Sarif and produced by Hanan Kattan next winter.

Shamim began her studies in directing at Raindance in London. "I Can't Think Straight" marked Shamim's debut feature film as a director. Starring Lisa Ray and Sheetal Sheth, and based on Shamim's forthcoming third novel, the movie is a touching, romantic comedy which follows the improbable love affair between two women of very differing cultures. Theatrical release is slated for mid 2008, after debut at festivals.

#### **"The World Unseen" – Director's Statement**

The World Unseen is about integrity, about finding your strength, about passion. I've been incredibly fortunate to work with my producer, Hanan Kattan, and Executive Producers Katherine Priestley and Lisa Tchenguiz-Imerman, who all embody those qualities themselves. It made the making of this film as smooth a process as it ever can be.

The events of the story are set in a very specific time and place – South Africa, in the 1950s, within the subtle hierarchies of the Indian community – but the tribulations and triumphs of its characters are universal. All of us have fallen in love; we have all experienced injustice of a sort, whether within political systems or within our own families; we have all understood integrity and aspired to it.

This is a world where the desires of women are not traditionally seen or heard; but the story uncovers them, hesitantly at first, and then proudly. This delicacy of emotion has been beautifully portrayed by Lisa Ray and the rest of the cast.

The setting of the film provided a rich tapestry of images and sound – from the breathtaking yet oppressively vast landscape around Miriam's solitary shop, to the vibrant colors and jazz music of Amina's cafe.

I hope that, like all the stories we remember and love the most, "The World Unseen" evokes our longings and ultimately satisfies them – for it is an exuberant story, full of hope and triumph that are all the more meaningful for the obstacles that our characters have needed to overcome.

#### **Q&A with director Shamim Sarif:**

**The World Unseen is based on your book of the same name. How did you go about turning your own book into a movie?**

Stylistically, I tried to disassociate as a novelist, and keep in mind that a screenplay is a very different form. I had written screenplays before, so that wasn't new to me. In terms of adapting the story, I tried to identify the main themes and stay true to those rather than worrying about transposing exact scenes from the book. The exhilarating thing about then moving into directing

from writing, is the collaboration. Being able to draw on the talents of so many passionate and brilliant people.

### **What is *The World Unseen* about fundamentally?**

It's about discovering your voice and then using that voice. Miriam spends much of the early part of the film and the book saying very little, but it is clear she has intelligence and a spark. What makes her heroic for me is that when Amina opens the door to another world, just a crack of light, Miriam has the courage to pull it open and walk through. Small changes can have a huge impact on the course of a life, and I wanted Miriam's story to be about that. Daring to challenge rules and traditions that people generally do not question, that are accepted just because they have existed for a long time.

### **What inspired you to write/direct a love story taking place in 1950's Indian community in South Africa during the rise of Apartheid?**

The specifics of that come from my family history. My parents left South Africa in the early 1960's because of apartheid. My parents and three grandparents were born and raised in South Africa. My great grandparents immigrated to South Africa from India. So the day to day indignities of that system were very real to me from my family's stories.

### **Tell us more about the process of casting the lead characters.**

Lisa Ray was an early choice for me. I was lucky that she loved *The World Unseen* as a project. She never made any demands about the role that she wanted, she just wanted to be part of it and see it made. I think we work well together. Our ways of approaching characterization are similar – or at least complementary. And Sheetal is an accomplished actress who I felt could bring a youth and earnestness to Amina. Parvin Dabas I had seen in *Monsoon Wedding*, and he and I shared the view that Omar was frustrated more than nasty. Most of the rest of the casting took place in South Africa, and our biggest issue there was casting from a pool of Indian talent that was very good, but not vast. I ended up casting my son Ethan as Lisa's son!

### **Where was the movie shot?**

It was shot entirely in South Africa, in and around Cape Town. Hanan and I never really considered anywhere else. We had been working with Brigid Olen on *The World Unseen* for some time, and she helped bring together a wonderful, passion-driven crew. Tanya Van Tonder (Production Design) and Danielle Knox (Wardrobe) were stand-outs. And I think the locations we found lend a real authenticity to the piece. I fell in love with Miriam's shop and the landscape. Those sunsets and sunrises were all real, and not scheduled to be shot, but we could not be in that place with a camera without trying to capture them.

### **The film features some classic music and few new unknown voices. Tell us more about that.**

I think music can capture a sense of period instantly. And at that time, American jazz was very popular, as was South African jazz. Listening to those genres at that time was an implication of slight rebelliousness, coolness. So it was a natural choice for Amina's café, and had been so since the novel. I tend to have a 'soundtrack' which I build on while I am actually writing to create a sense of place and time for me while writing both novels and scripts. I chose the tracks myself,

often having to widen my search for the right feel when certain recordings were too expensive. But to have Nina Simone, Dinah Washington, Billie Holiday on the soundtrack is a thrill.

The end credit song was written specially for the film by an incredibly talented singer-songwriter, Leonie Casanova, who also agreed to play Doris, the dancing, feisty waitress in the movie. I haven't had an audience who weren't enraptured by that song, 'Broken'.

**Many lesbian movies of recent years has been claimed to be 'lesbian Brokeback Mountain'. It has been associated with your film as well. What do you think of that?**

While it is flattering – both the book and movie of Brokeback are beautifully crafted – I certainly did not set out to emulate it. In fact I read Brokeback long after I published the book of The World Unseen.

There are a few similarities. I think mainstream audiences relate to The World Unseen because the love between the characters is overwhelming. You feel for them, in a world which won't sanction them. And that perhaps recalls Brokeback. Also the period setting and the sweeping landscapes lend a certain familiarity.

**It is a nice change to see on screen positive lesbian characters, that are (very) pleasing to the eye, don't end up killed, committing suicide or in jail, and might even have a happy ending lined-up. Was that a conscious choice?**

It was not conscious. But I did want to create a world in which a character like Amina just happens to be lesbian. Where it is simply a fact, and not the raison d'être of the character. And as a result, Miriam's journey was never about finding her sexuality, but finding her voice. The person who most inspired and encouraged that process in her happens to be gay, and so the feelings between them spill over into the romantic. Like the novel, which was never categorized as a 'lesbian' novel but sold well as a mainstream book, I hope the movie will reach a very varied audience because at it's heart it is about universal themes of self-discovery and change that almost anyone can relate to.

**Apartheid and Indian minority in South Africa**

Apartheid (meaning separateness in Afrikaans, cognate to English apart and -hood) was a system of legalized racial segregation enforced by the National Party government of South Africa between 1948 and 1994. Apartheid had its roots in the history of colonization and settlement of southern Africa, with the development of practices and policies of separation along racial lines and domination by European settlers and their descendents. Following the general election of 1948, the National Party set in place its program of Apartheid, with the formalization and expansion of existing policies and practices into a system of institutionalized racism, and incidental Afrikaner domination. Apartheid was dismantled in a series of negotiations from 1990 to 1993, culminating in elections in 1994, the first in South Africa with universal suffrage. The legacies of apartheid still shape South African politics and society.

**Colored classification**

The population was classified into four groups: Black, White, Indian, and Colored. (These terms are capitalized to denote their legal definitions in South African law).

**South African Blacks** were stripped of their citizenship, legally becoming citizens of one of ten

tribally based and nominally self-governing bantustans (tribal homelands), four of which became nominally independent states. The homelands occupied relatively small and economically unproductive areas of the country. The government based the homelands on the territory of Black Reserves founded during the British Empire period, akin to the US Indian Reservation, Canadian First Nations reserves, or Australian aboriginal reserves. Many black South Africans, however, never resided in their identified "homelands". The homeland system disenfranchised black people residing in "white South Africa" by restricting their voting rights to their own identified black homeland. The government segregated education, medical care, and other public services; black people ended up with services greatly inferior to those of whites, and, to a lesser extent, to those of Indians and coloreds. The black education system was designed to prepare blacks for lives as a laboring class. There was a deliberate policy in "white South Africa" of making services for black people inferior to those of whites, to try to "encourage" black people to move into the black homelands.

**The Colored group** included people of mixed Bantu, Khoisan, and European descent (with some Malay ancestry, especially in the Western Cape). The Apartheid bureaucracy devised complex (and often arbitrary) criteria at the time that the Population Registration Act was implemented to determine who was 'Colored.' Minor officials would administer tests to determine if someone should be categorized either Colored or Black, or if another person should be categorized either Colored or White. Different members of the same family found themselves in different race groups. Further tests determined membership of the various sub-racial groups of the Coloreds. Many of those who formerly belonged to this racial group are opposed to the continuing use of the term "colored" in the post-apartheid era, though the term no longer signifies any legal meaning. The expressions 'so-called Colored' (Afrikaans sogenaamde Kleurlinge) and 'brown people' (*bruin mense*) acquired a wide usage in the 1980s.

Coloreds were as a matter of state policy forced to live in separate townships — in some cases leaving homes their families had occupied for generations — and received an inferior education, though better than that provided to Black South Africans. They played an important role in the struggle against apartheid: for example the African Political Organization established in 1902 had an exclusively colored membership.

Voting rights were denied to Coloreds in the same way that they were denied to blacks from 1950 to 1983.

### **Indian South Africans**

Indian South African is a term for people who arrived in South Africa from colonial India. The first batch of Indians came on board the Truro in 1860. They were followed by others who were also imported as indentured laborers to work on the Sugarcane plantations of Natal. The rest are descended from Indian traders who migrated to South Africa shortly afterwards, many from the Gujarat and Rajasthan area. KwaZuluNatal's largest city, Durban, has the largest Asian population in sub-Saharan Africa. South Africa as a whole has one of the largest population of Indian descent. Indian independence leader Mahatma Gandhi worked from 1893 as a lawyer in South Africa in the then Colony of Natal, and the Transvaal Republic, where the city of Pretoria is located.

### **Life during Apartheid**

Discriminated against by Apartheid legislation like the Group Areas Act, applied in 1950, Indians were forcibly moved into Indian townships, and had their movements restricted. They were not allowed to reside in the Orange Free State, and needed special permission to enter that province.

They were also, as a matter of state policy, given an inferior education compared to white South Africans. The Asiatic Land Tenure and the Indian Representative Act of 1946 were repealed.

In 1961, the Department of Indian Affairs was established, with a white minister in charge. In 1968, the South African Indian Council came into being, serving as a link between the government and the Indian people.

The University of Durban-Westville (now part of the University of KwaZulu-Natal) was built with a dollar-for-dollar or Rand-for-Rand contribution from Indians and the government in the 1970s, so that Indian students would not have to brave the waters by taking a ferry to Salisbury Island's abandoned prison that served as their university until then.

Indians in South Africa were (and sometimes still are) referred to by the racial epithet 'coolie' by racists. In cricket, for example, a ball which fails to bounce is known as a "coolie creeper".

In 1983, the Constitution was reformed to allow the Colored and Indian minorities a limited participation in separate and subordinate Houses of a tricameral Parliament, a development which enjoyed limited support. The Indian house was called the House of Delegates. Some aspects of Indian life were regulated by this house, including education. The theory was that the Indian minority could be allowed limited rights, but the Black majority was to become citizens of independent homelands. These separate arrangements were removed by the negotiations which took place from 1990 to provide all South Africans with the vote.

### **Notable Indian South Africans**

\* Mahatma Gandhi\* started his career in law and also the freedom struggle against the British rule while living in South Africa. While Gandhi began his career in law while living in South Africa, he was born and spent his formative years in India and spent a majority of his life fighting the British rule in India. Therefore, he would be considered an Indian with an exposure to South Africa.

\* Frene Ginwala the first Speaker of the National Assembly of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

\* Saleem Mukuddem - Cricket player who represented Bermuda in the 2007 Cricket World Cup

\* Fatima Meer (28 August 1928 - ) is a South African writer and academic, a screenwriter, and was a prominent anti-apartheid activist

\* Ahmed Deedat - Revered Muslim mullah, known throughout the Muslim world and the west.

\* Ahmed Kathrada - Nelson Mandela's fellow inmate at Robben Island for 27 years and confidante. Kathrada was one of the Rivonia Trial defendants.

\* Hashim Amla - first player of East Indian descent to play Test Cricket for South Africa.

\* Gulam Bodi - represented South Africa's Cricket team in the ICC World T20

### **Women under apartheid**

Colonialism and apartheid had a major impact on women since they suffered both racial and gender discrimination. Oppression against African women was different from discrimination against men. Indeed, they had very few or no legal rights, no access to education and no right to own property. Jobs were often hard to find but many African women worked as agricultural or domestic workers though wages were extremely low if not non-existent. Children suffered from diseases caused by malnutrition and sanitary problems, and mortality rates were therefore high. The controlled movement of African workers within the country through the Natives Urban Areas Act of 1923 and the pass-laws, separated family members from one another as men usually

worked in urban centers, while women were forced to stay in rural areas. Marriage law and births were also controlled by the government and the pro-apartheid Dutch Reformed Church, who tried to restrict African birth rates.

### **Lisa Ray – ‘Miriam’**



An international talent with cross-cultural appeal, Lisa Ray is quickly emerging as a talent on the rise. Named “Star of the Future” at the 2002 Toronto International Film Festival for her role in *Bollywood/Hollywood*, Lisa Ray is not only one of the most successful cover models in Asia, but she is also an acclaimed actress whose film, *Water*, was nominated for a Best Foreign Language Film Oscar in 2007.

Lisa has a number of exciting projects in the works. She is currently reuniting with Deepa Mehta to shoot her latest film *What’s Cooking* with her *Water* co-Star Seema Biswas. She also just finished the CBC mini-series *The Summit* opposite Bruce Greenwood, Christopher Plummer and James Purefoy. Lisa had two films premiering at The Toronto International Film Festival in 2007, the drama *All Hat* directed by Leonard Farlinger as well as a most compelling performance in *World Unseen* directed by Shamim Sarif.

Other projects include *Kill Kill Faster Faster*, a Gareth Roberts project based on the novel by Joel Rose, the ThinkFilm production, *A Stone’s Throw* directed by Camelia Frieberg, the thriller *Seeking Fear*, the romantic comedy *Quarterlife Crisis*, and the starring role in the romance *I Can’t Think Straight*.

A self-described gypsy, Lisa Ray is a product of a mixed cultures and globe-trotting experiences. Born and raised in Toronto, her earliest influences were an unusual combination of perogies and fish curry (her mother is Polish, her father is Bengali). This colorful and varied background has contributed to her chameleon-like ability to adapt to any surrounding—a skill put to good use both in her acting and personal life. Lisa frequently finds herself shuttling between homes in Toronto, London and Mumbai.

### **Sheetal Sheth – ‘Amina’**



Sheetal Sheth burst onto the scene with raves in her debut film, playing the lead in "ABCD"- a risky, memorable, and controversial role as a promiscuous young girl struggling with the ties of family and tradition. She paved uncharted territory by being at the forefront of a film revolution starring in five festival-winning films by and starring first generation South Asian Americans. She broke out as the female lead in Shangri-La Entertainment’s film, “Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World,” starring, written and directed by Albert Brooks, released by Warner Independent. Sheetal won the role after an extensive international casting search. She next stars in features “The World Unseen” (Official Selection- Toronto International Film Festival 2007) and “I Can’t Think Straight” both currently slated for release later this year.

Sheetal, an NYU TISCH grad, has developed a reputation as a consummate professional with an unmatched work ethic and critical eye when choosing projects. She won the Best Actress Award at the Cinevue Film Festival for her work in "Wings of Hope", and "American Chai" won the Audience Award at the Slamdance Film Festival and Best Film at the Philadelphia Festival. She was brought on to play opposite Kal Penn and Mimi Rogers in "Dancing in Twilight" and joined a stellar ensemble in the film "The Trouble with Romance." Sundance director Gene Rhee directed this provocative, sexy and insightful exploration of relationships...Sheetal played a high class call girl looking for love in this wonderful cast including Kip Pardue, Josie Davis, David Eigenberg, and Jen Siebel. She recently completed the adventure thriller "First Fear" (opposite Sean Patrick Flanery and Shannon Elizabeth), and the romantic comedy "Why am I Doing This?".

Sheetal's career is not limited to feature film- she loves theater and has also charmed with voice-overs, music videos, TV pilots and many guest spots.

Sheetal was raised with a strong ethic of community service and while at Tisch, she was selected to be a part of Americorps, President Clinton's National Service program. Through Americorps, she worked at an inner-city high school, developing progressive lesson plans, tutoring, and dealing with conflict resolution. While at NYU, Sheetal had the distinctive honor of being a Tisch scholar and graduated with honors. Sheetal continues to speak at panels and conferences for students and currently works with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Los Angeles.

### **Parvin Dabas – ‘Omar’**

Parvin was selected by his drama teacher to play the lead in the annual school play, thus beginning his tryst with drama. He studied Dramatic Arts at the American Academy in New York, where he spent a year at HBO Studios and performed in off-off Broadway plays such as Edward Albee's "The Zoo Story," and Harold Pinter's "The Dumb Waiter," before returning to New Delhi to start a theatre group called Urban Theatre Society.



After directing and performing in a few plays, Parvin moved to Mumbai to pursue an acting career. Following a stint in commercials and television dramas, he made his feature film debut in the Hindi language film "Dillagi". Though the film did modest business it landed him the lead role in the film "Tapish", which brought him to the attention of the casting director of "Monsoon Wedding". He was awarded the role of the bridegroom, and its worldwide success launched his film career.

Following this Parvin landed roles in greater Bollywood productions such as "The Hero," and "Muskaan," some international productions such as "The Memsahib" and "King Tut's Tomb" and offbeat Hindi films such as "Maine Gandhi Ko Nahin Maara" and "Kuch Meetha Ho Jaaye." He tasted commercial success with the huge 2006 Indie hit "Khosla Ka Ghosla" and has since finished three films which are lined up for release; "Breaking News," "Sirf" and "Via Darjeeling".

## David Dennis – ‘Jacob’



A graduate with distinction from the University of Cape Town, David has been described as one of the most distinguished and prolific South African actors, and has performed lead roles in over 90 professional theatre productions.

Awards in theatre and musical theatre productions include five prestigious Fleur du Cap Theatre Awards, four for Shakespearean roles in “Twelfth Night,” “The Taming of the Shrew,” “The Merry Wives of Windsor” and “Two Gentlemen of Verona”. He has also received awards for his performances in “The Ride Across Lake Constance,” “Loot,” “Frank ’n Stein,” “The Rocky Horror Show” and the musical adaptation of “Far from the Madding Crowd.”

Television series credits include: “Soul City” (TV Series currently in 8th season), “Soul Buddyz;” “Sterk Skemer;” “Rhodes-Colossus of Africa” (for BBC 1); “Behind the Badge;” “Isidingo;” “Justice For All” (TV series 1 & 3); “It Rained Last Night;” “Thetha Msawawa;” and the locally shot Canadian sci-fi series “Charlie Jade.” He also appeared in the BBC television film/docu-drama “Krakatoa” directed by Sam Miller starring Rupert Penry-Jones.

Feature film credits include: “Red Dust” directed by Tom Hooper starring Hillary Swank; “Coup!” directed by Simon-Cellan Jones; “10000BC” directed by Roland Emmerich; and “Disgrace,” directed by Steve Jacobs starring John Malkovich.

David also participates in several social outreach, education and awareness programs and has attending various conferences including “The Impact of HIV/Aids on Education in Southern Africa” (CCETSA, at London University), and the “8th Annual Entertainment Summit – Entertainment / AIDS” (Columbia University, New York).

He is a patron of the Themba Interactive Theatre - HIV/AIDS Awareness and Education, and also teaches acting at the Tshwane University of Technology in the Musical Theatre department.

## Grethe Fox – ‘Madeleine Smith’



Grethe Fox has worked as a leading actress in over 60 theatre productions, 10 television dramas, 18 television series and 10 feature films. She studied at the University of Cape Town’s Drama School and the Jacques le Coq Theatre and Mime School in Paris.

She has received over 16 nominations for theatre performances and won a Vita Award for her role in “Women in the Wings.” Grethe has been awarded six Best Actress Awards for her work in film and television including an Avanti Television Award for her performance in “Onder Draai Die Duiwel Rond,” and an Artes, Tonight and M-Net Award for her performance in Erna Dorfmann’s “The Fourth Reich.”

Grethe most memorable theatre productions include “Boklied,” Reza de Wet’s “Drie Susters II,” and more recently “Die Goue Seun.”

She has appeared in the popular local television series' as Karen in "Soul City" and Harriet in "Isidingo." Her film credits include "Merlin the Return," "Malundi," "Platinum" and most recently "Nothing but the Truth" with John Kani.

### **Colin Moss – 'De Witt'**



Colin Moss studied drama and music at the University of Natal, Durban and is an accomplished stand-up comedian, film and television performer.

Stand up comedy gigs include: Jongluers, The Comedy Store (London), The International, The Ha'penny Bridge Inn, Murphy's Laughter Lounge (Ireland), and The Comedy Warehouse, Hurricanes, The Funny Farm, Hysterixs, Comedy Showcase, The East Coast Radio HAHA Comedy Festival, The Smirnoff International Comedy Festival (South Africa).

Film credits include "Big Fellas" for Rogue Star Films; "Cryptid" for Richtrau Productions; "Number 10" for Gold Studios; "Straight Out Of Benoni" for DV8 Productions; "Charlie" for Midas Films; "Blast;" "Citizen Verdict" and "Red Phone" for Philo Films; "Othello" for The Little Theatre; and "Berzerker" for Peak Viewing.

Colin is a well-known local television personality and has presented numerous productions including: "Idols SA" (2003, 2005 and 2007 seasons), "Top Billing" (2004), "Fear Factor" and "City Life." His television credits include: "Cave Girl" for Two Hats Productions/ BBC 1, and the popular series "Backstage" and "Isidingo."

### **Producer – Hanan Kattan**



Hanan has a unique talent for combining a deep passion for her projects with the ability to thrive in a highly competitive environment. She gets things done, and she always gets others as excited about her ideas as she is - qualities which make her a success in her role as a film producer.

Hanan created Enlightenment Productions in partnership with Shamim Sarif solidifying the intense creative partnership between the two. The company is dedicated to producing entertaining, low to medium budget features that have integrity and individuality.

Enlightenment's current projects include two other works by Shamim. "The Reader," a period drama about a young American boy at Oxford and the relationship he forms with a blind Englishwoman, is being structured as a British production. "Despite The Falling Snow" is a tale of passion and betrayal in Cold War Russia.

Hanan's debut film as a producer, "I Can't Think Straight," wrapped filming in August 2006. She successfully shepherded the project through the script stage and into financing before attaching a talented cast and crew and running the project through production.

Hanan Kattan began her career in marketing, primarily in the toiletries and hair care field. After building a successful distribution company, she moved into creating, marketing and promoting her own brands. In a saturated marketplace dominated by global conglomerates, Hanan

personally created an entirely new product category – that of holistic premium mass-market products. Te Tao (the first ever mass brand based on Chinese herbal therapy) is now in full distribution in drugstores and supermarkets in the UK and US as well as Europe. One of her later brands, the hair care range Tibet, prompted Marie Claire magazine to label her method of work “beauty with a conscience”.

### **Executive Producer – Katherine Priestley**



Katherine Priestley is the co-founder of the alternative asset investment firm Lincoln Vale that is based in London and Boston, with five hedge and private equity funds currently within the firm.

Ms Priestley is also a director of KP Productions that has created and produced a number of theatrical works over the last 10 years, enjoying audiences in the UK, Europe and Japan. Productions have included staging a dramatic showing of the internationally recognized artist Enrique Martinez Celaya in London, but more typically focuses on productions around the incredible talents of Helena Kaut Howson (artistic director), and Kathryn Hunter and Marcello Magni (performers). Shows include Full Moon, King Lear, Yerma and Faithful Ruslan, which have all been highly acclaimed critically. Ms. Priestley also played a significant role in the

showing of the Gryphon Trio’s Constantinople recently at the Royal Opera House, Lindbury Studio.

For the past nine years, Ms Priestley has headed up her Family Investment Office based in the UK. She has extensive experience in portfolio construction, especially alternative investments such as hedge funds and private equity. From 1991 through 1998, Ms. Priestley served as CFO of a family business in the mineral extraction industry. Earlier in her career, Ms. Priestley provided merger and acquisition tax consulting for Chuo Coopers in Tokyo, Japan from 1988 through 1990; and prior to this she worked in corporate finance for National Westminster Bank International in London from 1986 through 1988.

She currently serves as a Board Director of the Pitblado Foundation, which makes annual donations in support of medical charities and the arts. She also awards a Fellowship For Research in Cancer to St. Barts Hospital in London.

Ms Priestley received her BA from Newcastle-Upon-Tyne University in the UK and her MBA from Columbia University, USA. She holds the UK IMC certificate.

### **Executive Producer – Lisa Tchenguiz Imerman**



Lisa lives in London with her husband and her six-year old daughter Ariella.

Her husband, Vivian Imerman, is a successful South African businessman whose thriving business investments in previous years included Del Monte and Whyte & Mackay whiskey company.

Her brothers are the renowned and colorful property magnates Vincent and Robert Tchenguiz.

Lisa is a strong supporter of Children and Cancer Charities and sits on the board of several charities in the UK.

An active investor in her own right, “The World Unseen” marks the first of her two collaborations

with Enlightenment Productions (the romantic comedy 'I Can't Think Straight' being the other) and her focus as Executive Producer for both films has been the sales and marketing to which she brings a unique flair.

### **Co-Producer – Brigid Olen**



Brigid was recently instrumental in bringing to screen Nobel Literature Prize Winner, J.M Coetzee's, much coveted movie adaptation of the Booker Prize novel, "Disgrace". For nearly a decade some of South Africa's top producers have jostled for the opportunity to make the picture. Olen was the co-producer on the movie starring two time Academy Award® nominee, John Malkovich.

With an entertainment career that spans more than two decades, in 1995 Brigid and Marlow de Maridt formalized DO Productions which has played an instrumental role in the development of the South African feature film industry. They began by producing commercials but soon returned to their passion, feature films.

In 2000, Brigid broke new ground with DO Productions' first international co-production on the feature "Diamond Cut Diamond" directed by Oscar nominee acclaimed director, Darrell J Roodt. This was followed by the features, "Malunde" and "What Boys Like" and the docudrama "A Species Odyssey." "Sumuru," their second co-production in 2002, was followed by the co-production "The Ring of the Nibelungs," directed by Uli Edel in 2003.

In 2004, Brigid was the South African producer on "Tara Road" starring Andie Mac Dowell. In 2005, she teamed up with Spier Films (U-Carmen E-Khayalitsha) to produce "Son of Man". The film won Best Feature at the Pan African Film Festival in Los Angeles, and Best Cinematography for a Narrative Feature, Best Director for a Narrative Feature, and the Special Jury Prize for Original Creative Vision at the River Run International Film Festival in Carolina, USA.

The short film "And There in the Dust" produced in 2004 has been screened locally and internationally at over 35 festivals and won 10 awards to date. A full-length feature of the short film is currently in development and received a writer's fellowship from Sundance earlier this year. Features and television films completed since 2005 by DO Productions include: "Mercenary" starring Steven Seagal, "Follow Your Heart King Otto," "Traumhotel: Afrika," "To Be First," "Sinking The Lusitania" and "Punch."

Brigid and Marlow have developed a unique professional signature as hands-on producers, capitalizing on their creative, conceptual and leadership qualities. DO Productions has built a solid reputation and earned enviable praise in providing its partners with exceptional service and expertise.

## **Associate Producer – Daisy Allsop**



Daisy studied Philosophy at Cambridge University where she was immersed in student drama, helped found a new theatre in her college grounds, produced a number of plays and sent a production to Edinburgh. In her summers she worked on television documentaries, on Channel 4 News, as a producer's assistant on two features, and as a freelance script reader for Intermedia and Working Title. After graduating she spent a year as Acquisitions Assistant at Downtown Pictures, an independent UK distributor.

In early 2001 she joined Capitol Films, a leading UK sales, production and financing company where she spent three years as Development & Acquisitions Executive. She was heavily involved in the acquisition and development of her favorite project "Five Children & It," and moved across to work for producer Nick Hirschhorn, on the production.

She now remains at Feel Films as Head of Development, managing their slate of projects to see them through to production and beyond. Feel Films are one of the UK Film Council "Superslate" companies and are developing a number of projects including two adaptations of Whitbread prize winning books, and working with some highly acclaimed writers and directors.

Daisy was a founder of Stellar Network UK, a membership organization that connects professionals in film, television and theatre. For Stellar she developed relationships with BAFTA, the Film Council, BFI and key UK organizations and distributors. In her spare time she is also a screen-writer, and has representation for her recently completed script. She has a regular slot as a "film pundit" on the national radio station Classic Gold reviewing new releases and reporting from film festivals. She has served on a number of panels and short film jury's, given script development workshops for the BFI and is on this year's the jury for the Rushes Soho Shorts Festival.

## **Director of Photography – Michael Downie**



Mike Downie S.A.S.C. is one of South Africa's most prolific cinematographers. His vast career in film and television has covered just about every discipline of film and video photography, from under water and aerial photography, to focus puller. Mike has worked in feature films, short films, television series, movies of the week, entertainment programs and shows, documentaries, docudramas, and local and international commercials for some of the world's top brands, as well as music videos.

His motion picture credits include "Price of a Daughter;" "A Boy called Twist" (which garnered a Gold Award at the 2004 SASC Awards); "Sinking the Lusitania;" "Scream;" "Ailys;" "Ultimatum" and "Twist."

His short film credits are "Dashing Diner" and "Out on a Limb," the latter garnering a Best Actress award for Julianne White at the Cherbourg Film Festival, and Best Comedy at the Wine Country Film Festival (Francis Ford Copolla Wine Farm).

His television work includes: "Sinbad" (Season 1); "Flood;" "Feast Fit For a King" (BBC1 and BBC2); "The Syndicate;" "Living the Blues;" "Fear Factor;" the hit show "Pop Idol;" the drama

series “Zero Tolerance;” “Tsha-Tsha 3;” “Tsha-Tsha 4” which received a Bronze Award at the SASC Awards in 2004, and the Zulu series “Gazlam 4.”

His documentaries include “The Lions of Njombe;” “The Anglo Zulu Boer Wars” (for Canadian Broadcast Group); “Ear to the Ground” (AGTEL Communications Ireland), and “HTV Wales Rugby” (HTV Wales).

Mike has amassed an impressive list of commercials for numerous top international brands such as Mercedes, McCains, Powerade (Athletics Challenge) Electrolux, Hansa, Ribena, Mastercard, Oil of Olay, Canadian Club Rye, Bosch and Orange. His commercials for local brands include Boardmans, Supa Quick, Bridgestone, Caltex Star Wars, Shoprite, Frasers International, ABSA, KFC, Pronutro, Goodyear, Truworths, Engen, Woolworths, First National Bank, and Telkom Mother Earth.

## **Cast**

Miriam	Lisa Ray
Amina	Sheetal Sheth
Omar	Parvin Dabas
Rehmat	Nandana Sen
Jacob	David Dennis
Madeleine Smith	Grethe Fox
De Witt	Colin Moss
Stewart	Roderick Priestley
Farah	Natalie Becker
Sadru	Rajesh Gopie
Begum	Amber Rose Revah
Mr. Harjan	Bernard White
Mrs. Harjan	Avantika Akerkar
Doris	Leonie Casanova
Sam	Ethan Sarif-Kattan
Yasmin	Keziah Robinson
Grandmother	Usha Khan
James	Scott Cooper
Robert	Sibusiso Menziwa
Sadru’s Son	Luca Sarif-Kattan
Sadru’s Daughter	Saadia Saban
John	Sivuyile Ngesi
Young Ali	Mukhtaar Pathan

## **Crew**

Director	Shamim Sarif
Producer	Hanan Kattan
Executive Producer	Katherine Priestley
Executive Producer	Lisa Tchenguiz-Imerman
Co-Producer	Brigid Olen
Associate Producer	Daisy Allsop
Line Producer	Carol Prentice
Editor	David Martin
Composer	Richard Blackford
DP	Mike Downie
Production Designer	Tanya van Tonder
Wardrobe	Danielle Knox
Casting Directors	Hanan Kattan Mito Skellern