

moh

a film by subhadra mahajan

'Moh' : Love / Desire / Attachment / Delusion

In the high western Himalayas, a young Indian widow and her late husband's lover, a Tibetan activist in exile, are forced to travel together to claim his life insurance. Slowly, envy gives way to friendship and grief melts into intimacy. Their journey awakens deep desires and ultimately drives them towards two radically different acts of freedom.

Tech Specs: 110 minutes / Drama / Indo-French Co-Production





The film is set in Dharamshala in the year 2007, in the mighty Dhauladhar range of the Western Himalayas of North India where the Tibetan refugee community live harmoniously but at a safe distance from the local indigenous inhabitants.

It begins with the funeral of Moh, a young taxi driver who died in a tragic, sudden car crash.





His wife Sujata, 21, a sheltered local village girl is left in deep shock, tearless, gathering her wits to survive a society where a widow is considered damaged goods. She harbors deep insecurities since her arranged marriage with Moh was unconsummated, leaving her frustrated and without any hope of having a baby of her own, something she had always dreamt of.

Mesmerized by the wildfires that rage in the near mountains, and dogged by her constant duties by the kitchen stove, she is engulfed in relentless 'Fire'.







One morning by the river near her home she is accosted by mysterious Nyima, 23, a Tibetan refugee living in the neighboring settlement, her former husband's lover. While navigating life in exile, Nyima had met and fallen into a deeply passionate, sexual affair with Moh which had deflected her Buddhist path and vow to fight for a free Tibet.

His death left her shattered, struggling to wash away her sins in rituals by the flowing river that embodies her memories. She is drowning in deep 'Water'.





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Cafe Nyima Lhasa
Jeyinara, Noland Gangi, Chakramuhala, Himachal Pradesh - 176219

NYIMA LHASA
RESTAURANT
TIBET
UP STAIRS



PANCHEN LAMA
WE MISS
YOU

VIEW CAFE JOCIBARA

PARATHA HUB
ASHU'S KITCHEN



To claim Moh's life insurance, they are forced to embark on a road trip across the mountain ranges, over a few days and nights.

Sujata learns of Nyima's escape from the inhuman Chinese occupation of her nation into exile, understanding her position in the Tibetan freedom movement. Meanwhile, Nyima discovers Sujata and Moh's marriage was unconsummated, for Sujata attributes herself as 'barren and dry'. To dispel this notion, Nyima teaches Sujata how to touch herself and gives her the first orgasm of her life. The dead man who brought them together relegates to the background, and they discover their deepest desires in a world where women are meant to have none.

Fire and Water, slowly, dangerously... closing in.







Until the revelation of Nyima bearing Moh's child and hiding it from Sujata results in an unforgivable betrayal for Sujata.

She walks out on pleading Nyima, declaring she never wants to see her again.







Fate however has her own plans.

Sujata finds herself cornered by her family into a forced re-marriage to a much older widower with two grown sons, while the March 2008 uprising in Tibet sees Nyima moved more than ever before to take action.

They find they have no one apart from each other to turn to...









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This time it is Sujata who come to Nyima.

As they reunite, a storm breaks over the valley: lightning, rain, and finally; tears. Fire and Water, realigned for good.

The film ends with Sujata far away from the mountains that constrained her all her life, with a baby she always wanted; while Nyima returns to Lhasa for the ultimate sacrifice for a Free Tibet.













Writer / Director's Statement:

“Moh” is a story whose roots lie in my background and upbringing as a woman in the present-day Western Himalayas.

It is set in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh, with the spectacular backdrop of the Dhauladhar range, whose indigenous culture respects all women as ‘Devis’ or goddesses. Influence of post Vedic Hinduism however, has vastly reduced women to merely serve the men in their lives. It is also the headquarters of the Tibetan government in exile since 1960. The community has worked hard to make their lives here, albeit nursing the dream of returning home one day. ‘Tara’, the prime female deity in their Vajrayana Buddhist tradition is said to be swiftest liberator of all.

Growing up, I have lived and witnessed the co-existence of these two seemingly different but intrinsically similar mountain folk and lore. The idea of Sujata and Nyima’s crossed destinies arose from here.

“Moh” translates simplistically as ‘love’ in Sanskrit. A deeper look however, reveals a more complex meaning; attachment, desire and delusion. The ends of the love triangle Sujata and Nyima occupy are polar opposites; one being secure but sexually deprived and the other being shifty but passionately potent. By yanking out the man and the “Moh” from the middle I free the two women to explore a new relationship that evolves. Jealousy, craving, curiosity, resentment, tenderness... emotions usually presented as opposites begin to coexist; defying categorisations of usual definition.

To take this a notch further, while developing the two characters, I took cue from eastern wisdom to give them governing elements of ‘fire’ and ‘water’, which co-exist in a careful balance, and can be well represented cinematically.

The themes of ‘home’ and ‘freedom’ run in paradoxes through the film, as Sujata is trapped in a home she never chose, while Nyima is fighting for the independence of her homeland. Between them emerges a relationship that pushes boundaries not just physical, but existential. Through Sujata and Nyima, I wanted to explore female desire not as an abstract idea, but as a disruptive force capable of transforming how a woman inhabits her body, her future and her freedom. In short, the story attempts to explore what happens when grief dissolves rivalry and turns into desire between two women shaped by different forms of oppression.

With “Moh”, I want to tell a story where intimacy becomes an act of rebellion, and where the search for personal freedom is inseparable from the search for political freedom.



A sculpture depicting 'Chamunda Ma'
DEVI



A thanka painting depicting 'Kurukulla'
TARA

Producer's Statement:

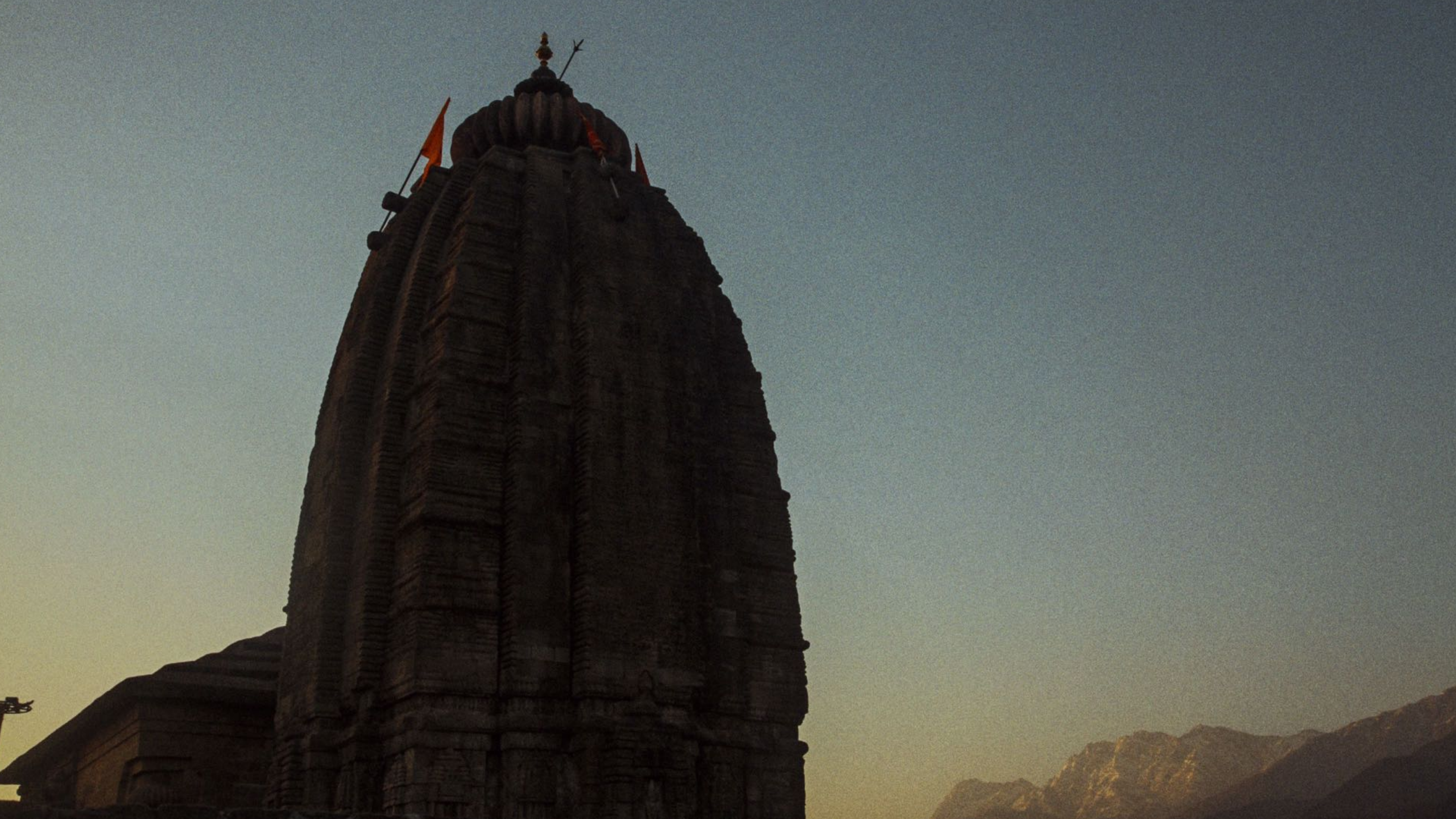
I first met Subhadra Mahajan at Berlinale 2025, thanks to Bhutanese filmmaker Dechen Roder, with whom I produced "I, the Song". My work as a producer has increasingly focused on stories driven by strong, complex and deeply embodied female characters, far removed from miserabilism.

"Moh" naturally continues my trajectory as a producer, as well as a shared vision of contemporary Asian auteur cinema. Subhadra's film explores female desire, grief, sexuality and freedom through an extremely precise geographical, social and intimate grounding, never seeking exoticism or demonstration. What immediately struck me in her writing, and what critics widely noted about the first feature "Second Chance", is her rare ability to combine great formal delicacy with an underlying emotional and political intensity. Critics highlighted the remarkable maturity of her gaze, as well as her way of filming the female body and grief without emphasis, through a cinema of duration, silence and sensation. This approach deeply resonates with my own vision of production: supporting films that trust the intelligence of the audience, remain rooted in strong social realities, and allow their themes to emerge organically through storytelling itself.

As a producer, I belong to the same generation as Subhadra, sharing a common relationship to South Asian societies undergoing rapid transformations, shaped by tensions between traditions, individual desires and emerging political imaginaries, as recently witnessed in countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh and India as well. We grew up with stories often told from centers of power, whether Western, urban or male, and instead we share the desire to bring forward more peripheral, intimate and unsettling voices. This proximity is also reflected in our shared approach to cinema: sensory films rooted in places and bodies, capable of questioning with singularity and radicality universal issues such as the place of women, intercultural and class relations, emancipation and desire. In a context where the Indian film industry leaves very little room for independent auteur cinema, especially when driven by women filmmakers, it becomes essential to build alternative and ethical production spaces capable of protecting artistic freedom.

In this perspective, "Moh" also belongs to a broader movement within contemporary Indian cinema, notably carried by women filmmakers who openly interrogate desire, intimacy and emancipation while freeing themselves from patriarchal codes.

Producing "Moh" means affirming not only an artistic continuity, but also a commitment: defending stories by women who speak through their own vision, their own bodies and their own desires, without filters, without apology, and without imposed perspectives.





About the Writer Director:

Born & raised in the small mountain state of Himachal Pradesh in north India, Subhadra currently resides in Mumbai.

She has had a long collaboration with filmmaker Pan Nalin, most notably in co-writing **ANGRY INDIAN GODDESSES** (2015) which premiered at TIFF, was Runner Up for the Audience Choice Award & released theatrically in over 60 countries. It won accolades for being ground breaking in its non-apologetic depiction of womanhood in contemporary India. Subhadra was also 2nd Unit Director on **LAST FILM SHOW**, India's official entry to the Oscars of 2023.

Subhadra's debut feature film as a writer-director; **SECOND CHANCE** (2024) premiered at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in the Proxima Competition. The film garnered rave reviews with The Hollywood Reporter praising the film for 'effortlessly blending gentle humour with poignant drama'; and Variety declaring her as one of the 'new female Indian filmmakers at the vanguard of a movement, whose movies share a certain, wise-beyond-their-years poetry.' The film travelled to more than 40 festivals in different corners of the world such as Busan International Film Festival, AFI Fest, Sao Paulo International Film Festival, Adelaide Film Festival and International Film Festival of Kerala. Platoon Distribution theatrically released the film in Indian cities in June 2025, a unique feat for an arthouse black and white indie without a star cast.

A Berlinale Talent of 2025, Subhadra is currently writing and developing feature film projects both solo and in collaboration. Her second feature script 'MOH' was selected in the Oxbelly Writing Retreat in June 2024 & Co Pro Access 2026 (By ProducerLAND, Tasveer, Institut Francais, Producers Guild of India & EAVE).

When she is not developing films in Mumbai, Subhadra regularly takes time out to travel, often escaping deep into the Himalayas, determined to stay in touch with her roots.





More about 'Second Chance' [here](#). Watch the trailer [here](#). A restricted Vimeo link to watch the film can be provided upon request.

About the Producer:

Johann Chapelan is a Paris-based producer specializing in international co-productions and Asian auteur-driven cinema. Active in the film industry since 2010 as a production manager, AD and editor, he shot films in France, Algeria, Senegal and China before joining Girelle Production in 2019 to produce emerging filmmakers across Asia and beyond.

His works as producer or coproducer include *Friday and Friday* by Sathaparanavan (2018, Sri Lanka), *Rehana Maryam Noor* by Abdullah Mohammad Saad (2021, Bangladesh), selected in *Un Certain Regard* at the Cannes Film Festival and Bangladesh's submission to the Academy Awards, *I, The Song* by Dechen Roder (2024, Bhutan), winner of Best Director at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival and Best Actress at the Osaka Asian Film Festival, and Bhutan's submission to the Academy Awards, as well as *Kurak* by Erke Dzhumakmatova and Emil Atageldijev (2025, Kyrgyzstan), recipient of the Jiseok Award at the Busan International Film Festival. He is currently producing *Picturehouse* by Minh Nguyen-Vo, a Vietnamese coming-of-age drama set around a family cinema during wartime, alongside several feature films from Asia and Eastern Europe.

Johann holds a Master's degree in Film Studies and Korean Studies and is an alumnus of the EAVE *Ties That Bind*. His work is particularly drawn to emerging voices and distinctive cinematic worlds exploring social change, popular history, subcultures, cross-cultural identities, gender dynamics and women-centered narratives. Through international collaboration, he seeks to support filmmakers from underrepresented regions and contribute to bringing new perspectives to contemporary world cinema.





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PROPHET MUHAMMED
SUNAN AL-TIRMIDHI 1162

ERKE DZHUMAKMATOVA & EMIL ATAGELDIEV

KURAK

PRODUCTION BY KYRGYZSTAN, SWITZERLAND, SERBIA, FRANCE



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