



KotlaWALKS performing locality

CREDITS

Writer & Researcher, **Sanjay Srivastava**

Director, Cinematography and Editor, **Simon Wilmot**

Narrator, **Sanjay Srivastava**

Producers, **Simon Wilmot** and **Sanjay Srivastava**.

Distributed in Australia and New Zealand by **Ronin Films**

Made with the Financial Assistance of the Japan Foundation, Asia Centre and Deakin University.

“Srivastava and Wilmot's film is an intimate and lovingly-shot exploration of the meaning of locality for the inhabitants of one of the older enclaves of New Delhi. Many films show us neighbourhoods, but Kotla Walks is unique in its evocation of the varieties of attachment people have both to their local spaces and to their visions of the wider world. The close relationship that the filmmakers established with the main family filmed is evident throughout.”

David MacDougall

SYNOPSIS

This film tells the story of the residents of Kotla Mubarakpur, an 'urban village' in South Delhi through focusing on the family of Sarita and Raman Bhardwaj, their friends and neighbours. Raman's family came to Kotla in the wake of the Partition, Sarita moved from Nainital after marrying. Raman is concerned about the effects of television on his children, and prefers 'chatting' on the internet, whereas Sarita battles to have the recently disconnected 'cable TV' restored. The Bhardwaj's acquaintances include, Jaidev, who is an aspiring musician, Arnima, who wants to be a film-star, and the local policewoman, Satish Bhati who is as friendly with fellow members of her Gujar community as she is with the local 'Bad Character'.

The film tracks the imagination of the unofficial city forever in the process of breaking the topographic skin of the 'official' city of the Master Plan. It explores the ways in which the texture of urban spaces is woven into ideas of belonging, intimacy, friendship, ambition, and the desire to be 'here' but also somewhere else.

SHORT (50 WORD) SYNOPSIS

This is a story about Sarita and Raman Bhardwaj, their friends and neighbours in the 'urban village' of Kotla Mubarakpur, South Delhi. It explores the way the texture of urban spaces is woven into ideas of belonging, intimacy, friendship, ambition, and the desire to be 'here' but also somewhere else.



STATEMENT

The exploration of urban life has recently emerged as a key area of study within the social sciences. This interest has been sparked by the growing complexity of the effects of globalisation upon previously isolated urban spaces. Within this context, of particular significance is the meaning of locality and neighbourhood in a time of transnational flows. How do people make meanings regarding belonging and place at such a time of dislocation and change? This film seeks to explore these issues through focusing on a specific neighbourhood of Delhi, and upon a specific group of people who live there. The film is a collaboration between a filmmaker (Simon Wilmot) and an anthropologist (Sanjay Srivastava) and reflects their joint interests in the aesthetics of urban spaces and the production of meaning that attaches to them. The locality chosen is one where Srivastava has worked over a number of years and has developed rapport with the key characters whose lives are explored.

The film engages with metropolitan meanings in India through wandering the streets, footpaths, courtyards, bedrooms and sitting rooms of the ‘urban village’ of Kotla Mubarakpur. Through focusing on the family of Sarita and Raman Bhardwaj, their friends, and, neighbours, it explores the ways in which the texture of urban spaces is woven into ideas of belonging, intimacy, friendship, ambition, and the desire to be ‘here’ but also somewhere else. In the process, it constitutes locality as a series of performances.

The film will appeal to a wide range of audiences. Firstly, it will be of interest to those studying urban cultures. Anthropologists, sociologists, and those interested in globalisation and urbanization will find it interesting for the connections it makes between the local and the global, and its focus on the politics of gender and intimacy. Its exploration of the social meaning of space will also resonate with the current interest in the topic. Finally, it will also have a viewership outside the university in as much as its central concerns – belonging, intimacy, desire, and keeping and losing control – are of universal interest.

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PRODUCTION

Year and month of completion of production: **July 2005**

Country of Production: **Australia**

Filmed in Delhi, **India**, November and December 2003.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Running Length: **92.23 mins**

Mastered Format: **DigiBecam, Colour**

Aspect Ratio: **16:9 Anamorphic**

Originally shot on: **MiniDV**

Languages: **Hindi and English**

Subtitles: **English**

DISTRIBUTION AND FESTIVAL SCREENING FORMATS

Digital Becam PAL, 16:9 Anamorphic

BetaSP NTSC, letterboxed

DVD PAL MultiZone

VHS PAL Letterboxed



BIOGRAPHIES

Sanjay Srivastava is an anthropologist with research interests and publications in the areas of schooling and modernity; sexuality, masculinity and popular culture; the social meaning of space; and, urban cultures and transnational processes. He teaches in the School of Communication and Creative Arts, Deakin University, Melbourne. His publications include *Constructing Post-colonial India. National Character and the Doon School* (Routledge 1998); *Asia. Cultural Politics in the Global Age* (co-author, Allen and Unwin, 2001); *Sexual Sites, Seminal Attitudes. Sexualities, Masculinities and Culture in South Asia* (contributing editor, Sage, 2004); and, 'An 'Education of the Passions'. *Sexuality, Gender, Consumption, and Class in India* (forthcoming, Routledge 2006)

Simon Wilmot is a film-maker and teaches documentary film-making and media arts in the School of Communication and Creative Arts, Deakin University, Melbourne. He is a visiting lecturer at St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, Indraprastha College New Delhi University and Amity University, New Delhi. He has worked in television and film production and produced films for governments and corporations. This is his first feature length production.



DISTRIBUTION

Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Island nations, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau.

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