



Lost Songs of Sundari

Directed By **Sudarshan Sawant**

Produced by **Charles Correa Foundation and Sudarshan Sawant**



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LOGLINE

The story of the mythical ferryboat, Sundari, reveals the fading connections that once bound the indigenous people of Mumbai to its sea and history, as the centuries-old ferry system is rendered obsolete by the arrival of modern bridges.

SYNOPSIS

Mumbai—once a cluster of villages connected by the sea—is being reshaped by modern bridges and land reclamation. This development comes at a cost: the erasure of the old world and its indigenous people, the Kolis, who lived in deep harmony with the sea. Their way of life—their fishing traditions and ferry transport linking these villages—is fading into obscurity.

Lost Songs of Sundari follows the Koli myth of a legendary ferryboat, and its ferrywoman— who guided people across creeks, long before these monstrous bridges existed. Through the perspectives of a woman recounting Sundari’s tale, an aging ferry operator who runs the Versova-Madh ferry, and a young child witnessing the changes, the film explores how progress, while practical, has disconnected a community bound by tradition and the sea. Now, Sundari lives on only in songs and stories, her memory overshadowed by urbanization, and soon that fate awaits the Koli community itself.

DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Mumbai, a city often defined by its relentless pace and towering skylines, was once an island city connected by the sea. This film, *Lost Songs of Sundari*, is my attempt to explore the forgotten narratives that shaped its identity. Sundari, the legendary ferryboat, is more than a vessel; she is a symbol of connection, resilience, and the human relationship with water—relationships that are slowly dissolving amidst the city’s rapid transformation.

I wanted to narrate this story as if a family were telling it to us, weaving together the past, present, and future. Through the perspectives of three characters—a woman who holds Sundari’s myth close to her heart, a man who is an ageing ferry operator fighting to keep a dwindling tradition alive, and a young child growing up amidst the chaos of development—the story unfolds like a generational tale, reflecting shared memory and loss.

Through *Lost Songs of Sundari*, I wanted to shed light on how the very progress that builds bridges can also create distances—disconnecting us from our roots, our stories, and even each other. This is not just a story about Mumbai; it is a story of urbanization and the quiet losses it brings, seen through the lens of a community once united by the sea.

I hope *Sundari* stirs a sense of reflection about the spaces we inhabit and the histories we leave behind.

KEY CREW BIOS

Sudarshan Sawant

|| Writer || Director || Cinematographer || Sound Recordist and Designer

After earning a Master's in Signal Processing Engineering and working six years in manufacturing, I pursued my passion for storytelling at FTII, Pune, specializing in Sound Recording and Design. As a Multilingual Sound Designer, my work has been featured at festivals like VdR, IDFA, Venice IFF, and IFFI, earning recognition for excellence in sound. Transitioning into filmmaking, my debut documentary *Lost Songs of Sundari* explores Mumbai's fading connections with its waters and history. I strive to craft emotionally resonant narratives, blending technical expertise with artistic vision to tell meaningful stories.

Dhanesh Gopal || Editor & Director's Assistant

Dhanesh Gopal is an acclaimed film editor whose films have been celebrated at prestigious festivals including IDFA, Vision du Réel, UNICEF, DIFF, MAMI, and MIFF. A graduate of the Film & Television Institute of India (FTII), his work spans a diverse portfolio that includes the Marathi feature "Khadmod" (2024), and narrative shorts "Pochamma (Wet Black Leaf)" (2023) and "Saray (The Shelter)" (2022). His documentaries, notably "Mahalle's School" and "Kambadwane," have drawn international attention for their insightful portrayals of education, community, and cultural transformation.

Dhanesh's films, recognized for their evocative storytelling and meticulous craftsmanship, continue to captivate festival audiences worldwide, establishing him as a significant creative force on the global cinematic stage.

Maan Chandravanshi || Director's Assistant

Born 1987, in Bhopal, MP., India. The print maker turned filmmaker, has over 10 years of experience in experimental Documentary and fiction Film making. His documentary Ankai-Tankai(20') and Fiction film Unknown Enemy(20') Selected in the EMAMI Art Experimental Film Festival, in the year 2023 & 2024.

Adwait Walujkar || Mixing Engineer

Born on September 14, 1988, I am a film sound mixer with over a decade of experience in sound design, mixing, and recording. My work spans Marathi films, music projects, advertisements, and jingles, where I focus on delivering high-quality audio experiences.

In addition to my work in film, I have also served as a professor at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), sharing my knowledge with aspiring sound professionals. I specialize in Pro Tools, constantly exploring innovative techniques to enhance the cinematic soundscape. My goal is to bring clarity, depth, and emotion to every project I work on.

Vivek Suradkar || Colorist

Vivek Suradkar, born 11th Sept 1993, a graduate of the Film and Television Institute of India, is an award-winning cinematographer. His short film "Feather"(2023), shot during his visit to Australia, won Best Kolperi Film at the Vision Splendid Outback Film Festival. Notable works include "Arabian Nights" (NYIFF, Narrative Short Winner), "Anniversary" (2024), "Ghumya" (2022), and "Shimga" (2022). Known for his cheerful and constructive presence on set, Vivek carefully oversees the visual details of his films from pre-production to color grading, bringing stories to life through his lens.

Sneha Sundar || Singer

Sneha Sundar is a Sound Recordist, Designer and a Vocalist currently based out of Mumbai. She has graduated from FTII Pune. Over the last few years she has worked on multiple projects - films & commercials as a location sound recordist, sound designer, music producer & a vocalist. To name a few, the documentaries 'In the Lap of the Mountain' premiered at the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen & at MAMI in 2023, & 'Umbro' won the reel focus award at the Beijing International Film Festival and won second place at IDSFFK 24.