

KINO LORBER

Presents

MACHINES

A film by Rahul Jain

Festivals:

World Premiere – IDFA main competition, 2016

U.S. Premiere – Sundance Film Festival (World Cinema Documentary Competition), 2017

Awards:

Sundance Film Festival – World Cinema Documentary
Special Jury Award for Excellence in Cinematography

India, Finland, Germany

2016

71 Minutes

In English and Hindi with English subtitles

Press Materials:

www.kinolorber.com/film/machines

National Publicity:

Rodrigo Brandão – Kino Lorber

Rodrigo@kinolorber.com

212.629.6880

KINO LORBER

Logline

A visually compelling look behind the doors of a textile factory in India, exploring the meaning of modern day labor, exploitation and the human cost of mass production in our globalized world.

Synopsis

Moving through the corridors and bowels of an enormous and disorienting structure, the camera takes the viewer on a descent down to a dehumanized place of physical labor and intense hardship; a gigantic textile factory in Gujarat, India.

In his mind-provoking yet intimate portrayal, director Rahul Jain observes the life of the workers, the suffering and the environment they can hardly escape from.

With strong visual language, memorable images and carefully selected interviews of the workers themselves, Jain tells a story of inequality, oppression and the huge divide between rich, poor and the perspectives of both.

Since the 1960s the area of Sachin in western India has undergone unprecedented, unregulated industrialization, exemplified in its numerous textile factories.

MACHINES portrays one of these factories, provoking cause for thought about persistent pre-industrial working conditions and the huge divide between first world and developing countries.

The textile and garment industry in India: facts and figures

The \$40 billion Indian textile and garment industry, much of which operates in the informal sector and is poorly regulated, employs an estimated 45 million workers. More than 12 million children are engaged in child labor in India and 95% of the factories have no trade unions on their premises.

Overtime practice reaches about 70 to 80 working hours a week and is mostly not paid – or underpaid. With an average daily wage from \$2 to \$5, the workers take home between \$90 and \$150 per month.

Estimates of the number of people trapped in forced labor vary. The International Labor Organization says 21 million people are victims of forced labor globally, while the Global Slavery Index says there are 36 million slaves in the world, half of them in India.

KINO LORBER

Director's Statement - Rahul Jain:

As a five-year-old boy, I used to roam around in my grandfather's now-defunct textile mill in Surat, in India's Gujarat state. It was easy to get lost in the labyrinthine corridors. I was overwhelmed by the machines as a three-feet tall kindergartener. And it was this sensation of being minuscule in front of the gigantic processing machines that took me back to a similar factory twenty years later – this time with a camera.

I remember in fragments, getting lost in the long aisles of printing machines, enjoying the smell of coal in the factory's boiler rooms maybe because it was forbidden for me to be there in the first place.

A child's perspective is motivated by height, but as an adult the depth perception takes over. Seeing the world on an eye-to-eye level basis helped me sort my inclinations well. We forget this in our everyday existential structures because these things are hidden from our immediate field of vision, and I wish to elucidate through the camera this simple eye-to-eye perspective we sometimes choose to not acknowledge. It's easy to look away from things we that make us uncomfortable so I set out to use cinema as a curatorial device to confront some of these things with a temporal patience.

Venturing into many factories I have gotten a sense of my class, my identity among the 1.3 billion Indians I share my nationality with. A good fraction of the laborers don't reveal their stories to me, probably due my association with the owners. But most of them are able to open up past our immediate and social differences, revealing the circumstances that lead them here. Young teenagers who joined these factories when I was an infant are now middle-aged adults. Some of them seem to remember me by my first name. I have travelled the world back and forth many times over, as these workers have toiled away their complete existences in these factories of exclusion and alienation.

Food, housing and fabric are the material necessities of existence. A factory functions within these interests, built from a variety of human elements. There is one boss relative to thousands of workers. A lack of unionized labor in a densely populated, quickly accelerating economy leaves room for a lot to be left unseen, deliberately overlooking of a multitude of human beings for the interests of a few. It is not just one factory, it's a civilizational structure. The systems that allow this to happen are the ones that needs collective acknowledgement.

Director's Bio – Rahul Jain (Director, Producer)

Rahul Jain is from New Delhi but grew up in the Himalayas. He recently graduated with a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Film and Video from the California Institute of The Arts and is presently pursuing a Writing M.A in Aesthetics and Politics. He is interested in distance, otherness and the everyday.

KINO LORBER

CREDITS

Written and directed
Rahul Jain

Cinematography
Rodrigo Trejo Villanueva

Editors
Rahul Jain, Yael Bitton, Robert Fenz

Sound Design
Susmit 'Bob' Nath

Re-Recording Mixer
Adrian Baumeister

Editing by
Rahul Jain, Yaël Bitton

Digital Colorist
Gregor Pfüller

Producers
Thanassis Karathanos, Rahul Jain, Iikka Vehkalahti

Production companies
Pallas Film, Jann Pictures, IV Films