

## AMISH SRIVASTAVA

Video Producer, Concept creator, Writer, Director, and Editor

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I'm an award-winning TV journalist and filmmaker working across documentaries and fiction. My recent hour-long documentary, **Jamala: Songs of Freedom**, won the Golden Dolphin at the 2024 Cannes Corporate Media & TV Awards and was showcased at the Kennedy Center's Extraordinary Cinema series and the Aspen Security Forum.

For over two decades, I've created and directed documentaries and news reports exploring conflict, resilience, and the human experience. In 2003, I covered the **Iraq War** from Iraq, Kuwait, and Turkey—becoming the only Indian journalist to report from all three fronts. I also reported from the **Kargil War** battlefield in 1999 and **post-Taliban Afghanistan**. My work spans global elections and a wide range of international stories.

**Hell and Hope** is a one-hour documentary I shot, wrote, edited, and narrated, following five Yazidi girls who escaped ISIS captivity. It was featured at several international festivals, including the Venice TV Awards, the Peloponnisos International Doc Fest in Greece, the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Awards in Tokyo, and the Social World Film Festival in Italy.

**Biscuit** is a 35-minute short film and my first work of fictional storytelling. It was picked up by the Hotstar-Disney OTT platform, where it remained top-rated for two weeks, competing against full-length feature films in India. The film tells the story of Bhoora, a poor Dalit man facing daily struggles for survival, who transforms a collective curse into a powerful catalyst for change.

**A Failed Migration** is a 28-minute short documentary that follows Afghan singer Javid Karezi, who experienced success until the Taliban took control of Afghanistan on August 15, 2021. The Taliban banned all music, prompting Javid and his family to flee to Quetta, Pakistan, where they lived for eight months. He struggled to support his family due to a language barrier and limited job opportunities, ultimately deciding to return to Kabul. Now, under Taliban rule, he faces depression.

**India's Shackled Press** follows Raihanath, wife of jailed journalist Siddique Kappan, as she raises three children alone in a small Indian town. With no income, she wages a determined fight for her husband's fair trial—arrested while on assignment to report on the rape and murder of a 19-year-old Dalit woman.

**The Last Dance of Kocho and Its Missing Girls** is a 12-minute film that tells the story of the Yazidi girls kidnapped by ISIS from the village of Kocho, Iraq, in 2014. Most remain missing. As one of the first films to explore their stories in depth, it features haunting watercolor portrayals by VOA journalist Lukman Ahmad.

Through my work, I strive to share stories of courage and humanity with honesty and sincerity.

### **Skills and Tools**

From camera to final cut, I tell stories with a visual and emotional rhythm. I write and direct with an eye for nuance, shoot intuitively with any camera, and sculpt scenes in Adobe Premiere Pro. My UCLA screenwriting background helps me shape compelling narratives, whether for a 2-minute short or a feature-length doc. I love turning raw footage into textured, cinematic experiences—balancing color, sound, and structure to draw the viewer in. I use tools like Adobe Premiere Pro, Adobe Color, DaVinci Resolve color grading, Canva, Photoshop, and Adobe Sound to enhance my production.

### **Music**

I have a deep appreciation for music and enjoy exploring and singing across genres. This sensitivity to sound helps me thoughtfully select music that enhances the mood and storytelling in my films.

### **Education**

- **2019** – Direction, New York Film Academy, New York
- **2009** – Screenwriting, UCLA Extension Program, University of California, Los Angeles, USA
- **1996** – Postgraduate Diploma in Mass Communication, Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), New Delhi
- **1993–1995** – Masters in Composite History, Lucknow University, India
- **1990–1993** – Graduation in Economics, Political Science, and History, Lucknow University, India

### **Work History**

- **March 2007** – Present - Voice of America, Washington, D.C.  
Documentary producer and journalist covering international affairs, conflict, and human rights.
- **1995 – 2007** Various News Organizations in India  
Worked as documentary producer, reporter, and executive producer across leading television networks in India, creating a wide range of current affairs and feature programming.

## **Major News Coverage:**

**Role:** Roving Correspondent, TV News Anchor, and Producer currently developing an innovative media concept.

## **Top 5 Coverage Highlights:**

1. **U.S.-Iraq War (2003):** Reported on the ground from Iraq, Kuwait, and Turkey.
2. **Post-Taliban Afghanistan (2003):** Covered the country's transition, including an exclusive interview with General Rashid Dostum at Sheberghan Fort.
3. **India-Pakistan Kargil War (1999):** Reported directly from the frontlines in Kargil, Dras, and the Mushkoh Valley.
4. **Indian General Elections:** In-depth political reporting from across India.
5. **U.S. Presidential Elections:** Covered multiple election cycles with a global perspective.

## **Work, Responsibilities, and Initiatives**

As the Lead of the VOA-India team at Voice of America, I built and led a dynamic team of reporters, producers, editors, and videographers across India. I also launched and grew the team's digital presence on YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook—establishing these platforms from the ground up to deliver globally reported news and compelling feature stories to Indian audiences.

## **Other Significant Projects:**

### **Women of India (Women India Ki)**

I am producing and directing **Women of India**, a 12-part documentary series investigating women's safety in India. The series was inspired by the tragic rape and murder of a young doctor in Kolkata. With an all-women crew, we journey through 23 cities across 10 states—capturing the lived experiences, daily challenges, and remarkable resilience of Indian women. At its core, the series poses a critical question: Are women truly safe in India today?

### **Media Lab**

In 2010, I conceptualized and launched VOA's Media Lab—a creative innovation hub that has grown into a thriving department now in its 15th year. Its original formats and storytelling approaches are now adopted by over 35 VOA language services across platforms. Notable programs developed under Media Lab include VOA-60, Red Carpet, Penalty BOX, Qubamaha, and Let's Play Elections, among many others.

### **Installing Small, Low-cost Studios**

I developed '**Necastics**', a green screen studio model designed to empower smaller VOA language services. This flexible, cost-effective setup enables teams to produce high-quality, innovative programming without the limitations of traditional broadcast infrastructure.

### **Fire in the Land of Snow**

I edited the award-winning documentary **Fire in the Land of Snow**, a deep dive into the 118 self-immolations in Tibet since 2009. Using smuggled footage, firsthand testimonies, and expert interviews, the film explores Tibet's recent history and the forces behind this unprecedented wave of political protest. It screened at eleven film festivals worldwide.

### **Awards and Achievements**

**Cannes Corporate and Media Awards**, Cannes, France – *2024*

**Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Awards**, Tokyo – *2019*

**Venice TV Awards**, Celebrating Television Masterpieces – *2019*

**Peloponnisos International Documentary Festival**, Kalamata, Greece – *2020*

**VOA Gold Medal & Equivalent Awards** – *2011 (First Indian recipient), 2015, 2017, 2019*

**Webby Awards, International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences** - Webby Honoree

**New York Festivals, USA** - Silver Medal

**Gracie's Awards, USA** -

**Calcutta International Cult Film Festival** – *2020*

**Beyond Earth Film Festival**, India – *2020*

**Social World Film Festival**, Italy – *2019*

**Eurasia International Film Festival** – *2020*

**Woodpecker International Film Festival**, India – *2020*

**Work attachments:**

Trailer - Jamala: Songs of Freedom

<https://youtu.be/YI2Oup-HimA?si=a9k0h7offODVD8PY>

Full Film - Jamala: Songs of Freedom

<https://youtu.be/82WZp2onCx4?si=3X75H12a-sdwV5ac>

Trailer :Hell & Hope

<https://vimeo.com/326671419?share=copy#t=0>

Full Film: Hell & Hope

<https://vimeo.com/343052765?share=copy#t=0>

Short Film: Biscut (Released at Hot Star-Disney OTT Platform)

[https://youtu.be/\\_HopN9PpVI8?si=SbtsEEqz3SDr6u1c](https://youtu.be/_HopN9PpVI8?si=SbtsEEqz3SDr6u1c)

Imdb Link

[https://pro.imdb.com/name/nm8851062?ref\\_=hm\\_prof\\_name](https://pro.imdb.com/name/nm8851062?ref_=hm_prof_name)

A Failed Migration

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFgZ2YdMLh8>

India's Shackled Press

<https://youtu.be/NqPNYGmzO-Q?si=G5iYUqVzCOYcvnCp>

The Last dance of Kocho and It's Missing Girls

<https://youtu.be/tS3cFF1kOsM?si=JMYlfrMAoMQyiA7H>

Thanks, and Regards!

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