

The Humsafar Trust PRESENTS



## FIVE LIVES

DIRECTED BY  
Sridhar Rangayan  
PRODUCERS  
The Humsafar Trust  
Solaris Pictures



## MARKED BY PAIN



## BOUND BY HOPE

# PRESS KIT



# 68 Pages

92mins, India, 2007

Hindi with English subtitles

[www.humsafar.org/68pages.htm](http://www.humsafar.org/68pages.htm)

A film by  
Sridhar Rangayan

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### TECHNICAL DETAILS

Title : 68 Pages

Original Title: 68 Pages

Duration: 1:32:00 (92 minutes)

Language: Hindi

Subtitles: English

Format of  
Production: Digital (Digibeta)

Sound: Stereo (Digital)

Aspect Ratio: 16:9 (1.78)

Censor certificate: V/A  
Date: 7/12/2007  
Place: Mumbai

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[www.68pages.blogspot.com](http://www.68pages.blogspot.com)

## **OUTLINE**

A compelling film about five lives marked by pain and bound by hope - in 68 Pages of a HIV/AIDS counselor's diary. A transsexual dancer, a sex worker, a gay couple - share their stories of pain & trauma, of happiness & hope – of being HIV+

## **SYNOPSIS**

A searingly honest film about five lives marked by pain and bound by hope - in 68 Pages of a counselor's diary. A transsexual bar dancer, a prostitute, a gay couple - characters often ignored by Bollywood take center stage to tell their stories of pain and trauma, of happiness and hope, of stories never dealt with sensitively.

Coming from a country like India that is still in denial, '68 Pages' rips open the underbelly of its society to reveal how it stigmatizes and shuns those who are HIV+ or even those who just want to be what they are.

While these stories expose the shallowness of the system, it also offers hope and healing by trying to bring about a better understanding of their fight to live with dignity.

## **STORY**

A counselor's ethics demand that she maintain confidentiality, be objective and not get emotional. But is it possible for a sensitive young woman like Mansi to remain unaffected? Her true feelings are reflected in the pages of her diary, in 68 Pages.

Through these pages we see the stories of Paayal, a sex worker; Nishit, an ID user; Kiran, a gay man and Umrao, a transsexual bar dancer – stories of being marginalized and discriminated before and after becoming HIV+. These stories have the capacity to touch, heal, change lives and hopefully bring about a better understanding of their fight to live with dignity.

The film is a tribute to the human spirit of optimism and survival.

## CREDITS

*Cast:*

Mouli Ganguly, Joy Sengupta, Jayati Bhatia, Zafar Karachiwala,  
Abhay Kulkarni, Uday Sonawane, Ikhlq Khan, Mangal Kenkre, Ajay Rohilla,  
Bakul Thakkar, Roopal Patel, Prateek Gandhi, etc.

*Cinematography:*

Shubranshu Das

*Editing:*

Preveen Angre

*Sound:*

Santosh Sawant

*“Chal mere Sang” OST performed by: xen@bob*

*Lyrics: Saagar Gupta*

*Singers: Narayani Shastri and Band of Boys*

*Script:*

Vivek Anand, Sridhar Rangayan

*Associate Producer & Worldwide Distributor:*

Solaris Pictures

*Producer:*

The Humsafar Trust

*Director:*

Sridhar Rangayan

## FESTIVALS

International Film Festival of Kerala, India (December 2007)

Pune International Film Festival, India (January 2008)

Montage International, Kerala, India (February, 2008)

Worldfest, Houston, USA (April 2008) – Winner: **Silver Remi Award**

Ethnoculture-Catharsis, Montreal, Canada (May, 2008)

Bollywood & Beyond, Germany (July 2008)

Nigah Queerfest, New Delhi (August 2008)

Q! Film Festival, Indonesia (August 2008)

Tasveer – Seattle Independent Film Festival (September 2008)

A Million Different Loves, Poland (September 2008)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Director: Sridhar Rangayan**

Sridhar Rangayan is an Indian writer/director with growing international recognition for consistently combining entertainment with social issues to make sensible cinema. He was recently awarded the 'South Asian & Foreign Achievers Award' by Triangle Media, UK, which chose 50 achievers from around the globe who have made an outstanding mark and contribution in the global mainstream media. His debut short Gulabi Aaina (The Pink Mirror) about Indian drag queens was banned in India, but became a huge festival success, winning several awards. His feature 'Yours Emotionally!' pushed the boundaries even further by being one of the few films to 'give a clear and concise picture of gay Indian life with great emotion and honesty' (Amos Lassen on Amazon).

#### *Filmography:*

The Pink Mirror - Gulabi Aaina (2003), Chakkad Bakkad Bumble Bo (2004)  
Yours Emotionally! (2006), 68 Pages (2007)

#### *Awards:*

- \* South Asian & Foreign Achievers Award by Triangle Media, UK
- \* Bronze Remi Award at WorldFest 2004, Houston, USA
- \* Jury Award for Best Film at 'Fire Island Film Festival 2004, USA
- \* Best Film of the Festival award at 'Question de Genre' 2003, France
- \* RAPA award for Best Comedy Episode, 1999
- \* RAPA award for Best Telefilm, 2000

### **Producer: The Humsafar Trust**

The Humsafar Trust works with sexual minorities providing counselling, HIV testing and treatment facilities. Its Center for Excellence (CEFE) emphasizes on research, capacity building of communities and media advocacy. The Advocacy unit of Humsafar works on creating awareness and sensitization on issues of sexuality and HIV/AIDS through street plays, IEC materials and films. It has recently produced "Bridges of Hope" a 28 minute educational film on issues of homosexuality and TG issues for health care providers and State AIDS Control Societies in India.

*Contacts:* email: [humsafar@vsnl.com](mailto:humsafar@vsnl.com) | url: [www.humsafar.org](http://www.humsafar.org)

**Distributor / Associate Producer: Solaris Pictures**

An Indian film production company that has achieved international recognition for its bold and path-breaking films. It produces films that go beyond mere entertainment, to emotionally engage the audience and initiate dialogues about underserved issues like health and sexuality, human rights, gay and transgender issues. Their films 'Gulabi Aaina (The Pink Mirror)' and 'Yours Emotionally' have made visible Indian queer characters and issues to a global audience, through a unique style that combines Bollywood melodrama with international avant-garde film techniques.

Solaris Pictures has now venturing into co-production and distribution of Indian queer films, with the latest DVD release of Ashish Sawhney's film on Indian male sex workers – 'Happy Hookers' and the Queer Shorts in this DVD.

*Contacts:* email: [solaris.pictures.india@gmail.com](mailto:solaris.pictures.india@gmail.com) | url: [www.solarispictures.com](http://www.solarispictures.com)

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

Making this film has been a cathartic process and also a realization of one's own shortcomings.

We are all so caught up in the whirligig of our careers, relationships and life in general that we have forgotten to pause and look at the person next to us - at an airport or café or on the streets – or for that matter even paused to see ourselves. A line in this film's song sums it up tragically – 'Everyone is so distant nowadays; one's own shadow seems a stranger'.

So it's no surprise that we hardly know or care about those who are stigmatised and marginalized - a transsexual, a commercial sex worker or just a street sweeper outside our house. We know nothing about them, apart from stereotypical notions.

We have tried, in this film, to give a voice to some of the people ignored by the society or misunderstood by us around. We felt it was perhaps time to listen to them, peep into their world of tears and trauma and discover their happiness and hopes.

This film is certainly made with a purpose – of bringing some of the stories that we have not cared to stop by and look, into focus. It is not a bugle call for action, but just a soft reminder to pause and reflect and make an effort to understand.

Maybe we can all wipe a tear, hold a hand... or maybe write the next 68 Pages.

~ Sridhar Rangayan, 2007

## **PRODUCER'S NOTE**

The Humsafar Trust is an NGO working for the cause of HIV positive people from the marginalized groups. We run three clinics in Mumbai and Thane that provide facilities of free HIV testing and care, support and treatment facilities to HIV positive people.

Our organization with support from department for International Development (DFID) – UK Govt has produced this film which deals with the issues of stigma and discrimination faced by HIV positive people from marginalized groups.

This film has been made as an advocacy effort to support National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) in National AIDS Control Programme – Phase III. In Phase III of the national programme it has been decided that the female sex workers, intravenous drug users, homosexuals and transgender will be considered core group and HIV projects will start up at a rapid scale in the next five years with these groups.

In the next five years of NACP-III, our film will be screened all over the country to various people who affect the lives of the HIV positive people and general populations and will make an effort to bring a change in the attitude of the people towards people living with HIV.

~ Vivek Anand, 2007

## AUDIENCE REACTIONS

“The storylines were all very compelling, and kept me intrigued right till the end. The cinematography and editing were both first-rate. Congratulations again on such an excellent and important film.”

Paul Lee | Producer, Curator, Toronto

“I screen hundreds of films in this preview theatre but hardly watch them. Today, I just started watching and saw the entire film and had tears in my eyes.”

~ *Projectionist, Star preview theatre, Mumbai*

“Your film is a slap on the face of society.”

~ *Gitanjali Dhulekar, a viewer*

“Never realized people like Umrao exist in society. Umrao’s character is amazing.”

~ *Avinash Mehto, Head of Avi Creations, an edit set-up*

“This film has inspired me and I want to become a counsellor.”

~ *Umang Sheth, a viewer*

“It is an eye-opener to the kind of good work being done with HIV positive people.”

~ *Rekha Shah, a viewer*

“It should be made mandatory viewing for all youth in the country.”

~ *a student of SNDT University*

“There are many times when I have gone home from work and cried for the pain of my counselees. And this film reflects my feelings.”

~ *Rajashree, a counsellor*

“Four years of my life flashed in front of my eyes. I thought I was reliving my life at Humsafar once again.”

~ *Vrushali Deshmukh, ex-counselling head at The Humsafar Trust, Mumbai, the woman on whose experiences the film is based.*

## PROFESSIONAL VOICES

“The film is a sensitive and touching portrayal of marginalized communities.”

~ *Dr. Rajeev Jerajani, psychiatrist*

“The discrimination shown in the film is so real. We have seen it all and lived it all.”

~ *Dr. Hemangi Jerajani, HOD, Skin and Dermatology, LTMG Hospital, Mumbai*

“In one stroke, you have made counsellors more important than doctors and destroyed the myth that only doctors can help”

~ *Dr. Maninder Setia, Ph.D. student at McGill University, Montreal*

“A sensitive portrayal of a real-life counsellor and a true profile of a TISS student.”  
~ *Brinelle D'Souza, professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai*

“Extremely touching and sensitive, the film deals with issues of HIV positive people in a real manner.”  
~ *Rita Sonawat, HOD, Human Development, SNDT University, Mumbai*

“A landmark film. The deeply touching way in which the film spools out and the characters bring to life real issues being faced by people, the human dimensions, the message of hope and the way it leaves you moved, yet hopeful at the end is beyond description.”  
~ *Dr.Sanjeev Singh Gaekwad, Director-Maharashtra, Family Health International*

“The film beautifully shows a relationship between 2 men as it truly is and most importantly, without sensationalization. You leave the film with an understanding of the issues involved but with a clear sense of hope”  
~ *Amrita Bhende, Programme Officer, Family Health International*

“It truly illustrated how a counsellor goes beyond her/ his duty and becomes a friend-in-need to those who are rejected by the society. The film will not just be praised by NGO sector or marginalized communities but will definitely be liked by general people as well.”  
~ *Anjali Singh, Training Officer, Family Health International*

“Personally after ages I have seen a film that touches a chord in my soul. For me this wasn't just another viewing of a film but an experience that I would always cherish... breathtaking, captivating, motivating emotional saga is my only reaction to 68 Pages.”  
~ *Dr.Sachin Gupte, Senior Technical Officer, Family Health International*

“It seems that I am exhausted with my limited knowledge of words to describe the penetration and impact of the film on me. I am still speechless and in discomfort.”  
~ *Sanjeev Jain, Senior Programme Manager, Family Health International*

“The movie inspires us to do more. It's all about how our efforts and gestures can bring a change in others' life. I was touched.”  
~ *Seema Sayyed, Programme Officer, FPA India, Aastha Project*

“Excellent. Life changing, attitude changing towards High Risk Groups. It should be published to all the communities. It should released in theatres”  
~ *Gaikwad, Project Coordinator, Hope Foundation*

"A good film which can be used to sensitize the mass about HIV issues."  
~ *Rama Bhawe, Documentation Officer, Family Health International*

" I was deeply touched by the sensitivities in the film and the near perfect portrayal of characters by the mainstream actors."  
~ *Riji Nair, Programme Officer, Family Planning Association of India*

**Screening of ‘68 Pages’ at Larsen & Toubro ( 12/1/2008)**

N.J.Palan	Excellent film and counselors role remarkably brought forth.
G.Dasgupta	Great film, <u>not</u> lacking any in any information even if it is low budget movie.
V.P.Malgud	It was excellent movie messages are given in perfect manner.
R.S.Bhatia	One of the most powerful movies ever seen by me. Movie has given very much meaningful message.
P.N.Murgand	Very inspiring.
L.Mukesh Bhargava-	A very moving film with a powerful message. Must see for all who care humans and lives.
S.Ranganathan	For me it has made me understand, appreciate and thus more little forward.
Bharti M.	An absolutely powerful film for the modern generation.
K. Ravindranath	You have inspired us to take up counseling in whatever way we can contribute.
B.K.Kalra	A powerful message delivered in a simple and yet a wonderful way.

**Screening of ‘68 Pages’ at AMERICAN CONSULATE (30/5/2008)**

Deepa Mehta, Karishma K.	Excellent film and thank you for making such a wonderful attempt.
Veena Dave	Thank you very much
Meena	Very provocative and beautifully done. Thanks so much
Rajshree K,Soumya Salian	Great job guys. Thank you very much
Nazneen M.	Nice film.Please keep the good work with condom awareness and other employment issues for eunuchs.Thanks
Swati Patel.	I want to congratulate and commend on your efforts. Hopefully the knowledge spreads.

## **68 Pages – Press Kit**

- Deep Chandran I really commend you for making such a sensitive film and I am sure the message will get across if it can be distributed properly. A sensitivity made in this film is indeed.
- Katy Irane Thank you for a very good film and spreading the knowledge of HIV
- Tamanna It has to start somewhere so this is the beginning I think, keep it up, great job.

### **Screening of ‘68 Pages’ at India International Center, New Delhi (10/7/2008)**

- Dr.Himedin  
Sarhani  
Chaudhary  
Vasdev J. Amazing scripts and dialogues, overall it is heart touching  
Revealing a true insight of prevailing social problem
- A great insight into a part of Indian culture that has made beautifully to see.
- Radhika K.Jung Different treatment on the issues of HIV/AIDS. What was noteworthy was that all issues regarding vulnerable groups was highlighted in a balanced way..
- Auhana Wonderful script and screenplay
- Sujata Chatterjee I think your film has touched a lot of hearts and brought many important issues on one screen.
- Jermasine Lewis Congratulations for a great and important film. You are doing a great work.

### **Screening of ‘68 Pages’ in Washington DC, USA (16/8/2008)**

- Sameer Shah High point for me in the movie was when Payal confesses to Mansi that she wants her daughter to be social worker instead of a doctor. It is high time social workers contribution against HIV/AIDS gets recognized in developing countries like India!!!
- Fabricio Solrzand I think that the diversity of society members dealing with some issues shows that when it comes to survival we should all gather as people and help each other. Also actors and actresses did a great job in the performance. Excellent job!!!
- Edga Elsdon  
D’Souza The movie has definitely made an impact on me. My perception of sex workers, IDUs have changed completely for the better. The

film had touching moments in parts but I think if an element of human would be added it would lend lighter moments on screen and would not make it very depressing. Overall the movie was good and splendid job on the performance.

**Screening of ‘68 Pages’ in New York, USA (19/8/2008)**

- Viraj Patel            The film was very engaging and meaningful. It is wonderful to see serious film addressing marginalized groups in sensitive manner. An excellent movie!!!
- Sapana Pandya        ‘68 pages’ brings to light in an ongoing and human way the complex emotional and sociopolitical realities of HIV among marginalized groups in Bombay. I appreciated the opportunity to journey through the difficult experiences of Mansi, Karan, Mohit, Umrao, Payal and Nishit and yet walk away with a sense of hope and strength.
- Sahar S.                ‘68 Pages’ was a beautiful film that humanizes the marginalized face of HIV/AIDS. The film is very well made-I loved it!!!
- Ayaz Ahmad            A brilliant film. I loved it. I look forward to your next movie too.

**Screening of ‘68 Pages’ in Bhopal (20/9/2008)**

- Majid Khan            I found a new way to live life.
- Rajiv S.                It was very motivating and got inspiration for how to face difficulties in life.
- Waji Mohmmad        Very nicely shown how to live life with own HIV+ positive status and new ways to live life.

**Screening of ‘68 Pages’ at MAQUINIZ PALACE – PANAJI, Goa (17/10/2008)**

- Jitendra Jadhav        A great attempt!!!Cheers!!!
- Ms.Anita Mathew      To make all start to think!
- Vasudev                The movie really touched my heart.
- Sanyoj M.              Very touching movie showing very true aspects of life.

## 68 Pages – Press Kit

E.M.Samant	The film has done very wonderful job and very thought provoking film.
Jaime Rebello	The film was excellent.
Sandeep Lawande	Excellent film for creating awareness among those affected with HIV/AIDS. All ray of Hope!!!
Anna C.	Superb film.
Pravin S.	Stands tall as a film and needs to be taken around for screening I would love to do so!!
Mahesh G.	It touched our hearts. Great keep going!!!
Libel S R Vas	Thanks it was a place for reflection.
Victor N. Mendes.	Very good and informative.
Sagar Desai	Your film gave me courage to admit that I am gay !
Ethel Dacosta	For more humane society this is my commitment to my creator. Great film!

