



DURGA

Finding Freedom in the
Himalayas



THE STORY

In rural Nepal, a young woman wrestles doubt, discrimination and harassment to pursue her dream, guiding treks in the Himalayas.

DURGA, a short documentary, tells the story of 32-year-old Durga Rawal, the only mountain guide of any gender from her village in northern Nepal. In a country where boys receive an education, men seek employment in larger cities and girls and women are often left to work on family farms and within their homes, Durga's is a story of defying cultural, societal and familial expectations to pursue an independent life. It is a story of female empowerment and gender equality about a brave young woman who is cutting her own trail.

From Durga's childhood in the Mugu District to her early 20s in the Jumla District to her current work in Pokhara, this documentary explores and celebrates bold dreams and the unwavering strength it takes to overcome doubt, discrimination and harassment to break free from the narratives that are put before us and intentionally reach for a life that is uniquely ours.

CHARACTERS



DURGA RAWAL

32-year-old Durga is a mountain guide in the Nepalese Himalayas. Growing up in the Mugu District, she went to school for five years and then left as her mother needed help on the family farm. Durga never lost sight of her dream to receive an education, make her own income and live independently. When she was 22 years old and living with her sister in the Jumla District, Durga met Lucky Chhetri at an ecotourism training. That encounter inspired Durga to pursue a career in mountain guiding. She moved to Pokhara, studied with Empowering Women of Nepal and today works as a mountain guide—the only guide of any gender from her village. From a young age, Durga says, “I connected with nature because I always liked the solitude and quiet environment.” Today, she also finds perspective, power and happiness in the mountains.

LUCKY CHHETRI

In 1994, Lucky and her sisters, Dicky and Nicky, founded Empowering Women of Nepal (EWN) and 3 Sisters Adventure Trekking Company in Pokhara. EWN is a nonprofit organization that supports and trains local women to become mountain guides. 3 Sisters is a company that employs female mountain guides to lead treks in the Himalayas. Both the organization and the company aim to empower and improve the lives of Nepali women. It is through Lucky, EWN and 3 Sisters that Durga discovered her passion for and has pursued a career in mountain guiding. “When I met Durga, she was a quiet young woman,” Lucky says. “Durga is a progressive woman who has improved her knowledge and skills a lot.”

THE RAWAL FAMILY

From her childhood in the Mugu District to living with her sister in the Jumla District, Durga's family has undoubtedly played a role in who she is today. Of her sister, Durga says, “My sister inspired me and helped me out. I am here because of her.” This documentary will include the voices of Durga's mother (Lati Rawal) in the Mugu District as well as her sister (Maya Shahl) in the Jumla District.



PRODUCTION

DURGA is a La Cumbre Collective production. The film traces Durga Rawal's path from her childhood on a farm in the Mugu District; to her early 20s in the Jumla District, where an ecotourism training sparked her desire to become a mountain guide; to Pokhara, the gateway to the Annapurna Circuit, where Durga trained to become and now works as a mountain guide in the Himalayas.

As a character-driven documentary, DURGA is shot in a cinema vérité style, following Durga in her everyday life, mountain guiding, interacting with customers, mentoring fellow guides and returning home to visit her family. We combine interviews—with Durga, her mother, sister and Lucky Chhetri—with personal archival photos and footage of Durga before her life with EWN and 3 Sisters. We also use a drone to capture Nepal's striking scenery. The film will primarily be in English with subtitles, when needed.

Throughout this film, we see Durga's passion and determination to follow a path of independence. We see her love of learning, meeting new people, experiencing new places and living life outdoors. From Durga to her mother to her sister to Lucky and the women at EWN and 3 Sisters, we also see layers of women helping and empowering women. We see the ways in which Durga is not only working alongside other women but also encouraging other women to carve their own path.

In telling Durga's story, our goal is to inspire travelers to seek out women, organizations and companies similar to Durga, EWN and 3 Sisters as they adventure globally. We want people to see that their choices carry power to positively evolve industries, communities and individual lives.

CREW



EMILY HOPCIAN / Director & Producer

Emily is a storyteller and content producer with a focus on character-driven stories of outdoor adventure and social and environmental impact. In her four years with social good company One World Play Project, she explored, shaped and directed more than 27 videos featuring stories from Brazil, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Haiti, Italy, Kenya, Myanmar, South Africa and the United States. Throughout the past 10 years, Emily has written, directed and produced stories for National Geographic Adventure, REI Co-op Journal, She Explores, Stay Wild Magazine, RANGE Magazine, One World Play Project, Traverse Magazine and more. Currently based in Bariloche, Argentina, Emily seeks to tell the stories of everyday explorers on extraordinary adventures. She's passionate about telling truly local stories that carry universal themes to inspire global understanding and connection. emilyhopcian.com/portfolio




KERI OBERLY / Cinematographer & Photographer

Keri is a documentary cinematographer /photographer focusing on environmental- and food-related issues. Originally from Lake Tahoe, she is a graduate of Brooks Institute of Photography. She believes in immersive storytelling, following a cinema vérité style. Experienced in all aspects of production from pre-production to post, she has worked on award-winning commercials to feature-length documentaries, from The Queen of Versailles to Generation Wealth to Robin Williams: Come Inside My Mind. Keri loves being in the outdoors, volunteering, traveling and getting lost. Her work has been published in Patagonia, National Geographic Adventure, Men's Journal, Huffington Post, Intelligent Life-The Economist, ABC News, Pacific Standard, Outside Magazine, Lonely Planet, Cover Magazine, Edible Magazine and more. kerioberly.com



SARAH MENZIES / Editor

Sarah has been a freelance videographer and filmmaker since 2010, and she founded the production company Let Media in 2012. Her short documentary films, including The Mirnavator (Director/Editor, 2017), A Steelhead Quest (Director/Editor, 2017) and Catch It (Director/Producer, 2014), have screened at festivals such as Mountainfilm in Telluride, Colorado, Banff Mountain Film Festival, Port Townsend Film Festival, Wild and Scenic Film Festival and many others. Her work has allowed her to venture into wild spaces to bring back amazing stories of strength, courage and passion that highlight our common humanity. Seeking personal character-driven stories, Sarah's films showcase the good that exists in the world, illustrating to audiences that everyone is capable of creating positive change. Sarah made her feature length documentary directorial debut at the 2018 Hot Docs Film Festival with Afghan Cycles. letmedia.org



**“We could use a lot more of this female power and joy and grit, even if it's just in sport and adventure films.”
— Monica Heger, Outside**

MARKET OPPORTUNITY

The market opportunity for real, authentic stories of brave, bold and beautiful women is strong. From Always' #LikeAGirl campaign to 2017's #MeToo movement, there's a wave of individuals, organizations and companies speaking out in support of female empowerment and gender equality, in the United States and beyond.

Within the outdoor industry, companies and consumers are tapping into the powerful stories of women in the outdoors: REI's #ForceOfNature campaign; The North Face's #SheMovesMountains campaign; media companies, such as She Explores and Misadventures Magazine, that are focused on female experiences; Camber Outdoors, an organization dedicated to achieving equality for all women in the outdoors; and more.

A September 2017 article (The Adventure Film Industry's Women Problem) from Outside states, “Women constituted 46 percent of outdoor recreationists in 2016 in the United States. They make up 40 percent of U.S. athletes and 43 percent of college scholarship athletes—yet men's sports receive a whopping 96 percent of traditional media coverage. Women are also underrepresented in the film industry: Of the 100 top-grossing films in 2016, only 4 percent were directed by women, according to a yearly study from the University of Southern California ... One way to shift the narrative? Invest in women's adventure films, big-time. It's only in the past few years that any such thing has existed.”



"Women make up half the world's population. So why is it that every adventure film festival has just one token film about a woman? Despite recent strides, women are grossly underrepresented in outdoor industry storytelling, especially in film. This has an impact on young girls developing their dreams as adventurers and everyone's understanding of the capacity of females. **DURGA is a story we desperately need to produce—to shift narratives of gender and adventure and to amplify the untold stories of one of the toughest women on earth.**" — Sarah Murray, U.S. & Global Catalyze Director, Women Win

TIMELINE

**Pre-production, research
& development:** June 2017 to March 2019

Production: April & May 2019

Post-production begins: May 2019

Assembly: May to July 2019

Rough cut: July 2019

Fine cut: August 2019

Final cut: September 2019

*Timeline is contingent on funding.





DISTRIBUTION

We plan to premiere the film in Summer 2019. We will circulate the documentary through film festivals focused on stories of outdoor adventure, travel, gender equality and female empowerment—such as Mountainfilm, Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival, No Man's Land Film Festival and Women Sports Film Festival—as well as more mainstream film festivals.

In addition to festivals, we'll seek to distribute the film online with partners such as Outside TV, National Geographic Adventure and more. We will also use our relationships with publications to share this film online and through print and will look to our sponsors to share this story with their networks to reach a larger audience.

BUDGET

PRODUCTION: \$28,144.15

POST-PRODUCTION: \$25,134.38

RELEASE + DISTRIBUTION: \$5,000.00

TOTAL: \$58,278.52

Raised/donated funds: \$2,400

*A detailed budget can be provided, if needed.

SPONSORSHIP

\$20,000 Peak Sponsor Content Assets

- 1 video trailer for YouTube/Vimeo, social media and website
- 1 exclusive video for YouTube/Vimeo featuring a scene from the film
- 10 exclusive photos to promote involvement in the film on social media channels
- 3 exclusive 15-second video teasers for social media
- Behind-the-scenes photos and videos with narrative from the crew for social media
- 2x 500-word blog posts about previously-agreed-upon topic
- Logo or name included in opening and closing credits of the film and trailer
- Name included in press releases about the film

There will be 1 Peak Sponsor.

At this level, we can also discuss the potential for a private screening and Q&A with the crew.

\$10,000 Base Camp Sponsor Content Assets

- 1 video trailer for YouTube/Vimeo, social media and website
- 7 non-exclusive photos to promote involvement in the film on social media channels
- 2 non-exclusive 15-second video teasers for social media
- 1x 500-word blog post about previously-agreed-upon topic
- Logo or name included in closing credits of the film
- Name included in press releases about the film

There will be 2 Base Camp Sponsors.

*The opportunity to sponsor the entire documentary, and expand on the above assets, exists. We are also open to altering sponsorship packages to meet your needs.

\$5,000 Trailhead Sponsor Content Assets

- 5 non-exclusive photos to promote involvement in the film on social media channels
- 1 non-exclusive 15-second video teaser for social media
- Logo or name included in closing credits of the film
- Name included in press releases about the film

There will be 4 Trailhead Sponsors.





THANK YOU

Will you join us on this adventure?

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