



OFFICIAL PRESS KIT | 2026

JYOTI

A film by Azfar Ali. An Urdu-language psychological drama set in Karachi, Pakistan.

Genre	Psychological drama	Language	Urdu
Runtime	75 minutes	Year	2026
Setting	Karachi, Pakistan	Production	Banana Roots
Direction	Azfar Ali	Screenplay	Azfar Ali, Yasir Raza

LOGLINE

In Karachi, a reserved seamstress finds the possibility of love awakening the memories she has spent a lifetime suppressing.

SYNOPSIS

Sharmeen is a quiet seamstress caring for her bedridden father in Karachi while navigating the expectations of family, love, and identity. When she grows close to her neighbor Jahanzeb, emotions she has long suppressed begin to surface, blurring the boundaries between reality, memory, and trauma.

The presence of Jyoti emerges from inherited fear, violent fiction, and generational silence. What begins as an intimate love story becomes a psychological unraveling in the confined domestic spaces of Karachi. As Sharmeen confronts the stories that shaped her, she struggles to reclaim her sense of self.

CORE THEMES

Inherited trauma and generational silence / Protection disguised as control / Female identity within restrictive domestic spaces / Psychological fragmentation / Stories as refuge and prison / Love as possibility rather than rescue

Cast & creative team

Director / Co-writer	Azfar Ali
Co-writer / Producer / Executive Producer	Yasir Raza
Producer / Executive Producer	Cindy Bonilla
Cinematography	Nabil Hassan Rizvi
Original score	Shahbaz Ali Khan
Editing	Ehtesham Khan
Sound	Sibte Raza
Cast	Adnan Shah Tipu, Srha Asghar, Kulsoom Aftab, Muhammad Ahsan

FESTIVALS & AWARDS

Rung Film Festival, Houston, May 2026

World Premiere. Grand Jury Award for Best Narrative Feature.

Chicago South Asian Film Festival, September 2026

Official Selection.

Cross Border Film Festival, Illinois, September 2026

Best Feature Film, Best Director (Azfar Ali), and Best Actor (Adnan Shah Tipu).

PRODUCTION BACKGROUND

Produced under the Banana Roots banner, JYOTI is a fully self-financed independent feature developed through creative collaboration between Houston and Karachi. The filmmakers pursued a deliberately intimate psychological drama as their first feature, taking on both the artistic and practical responsibilities of production without studio backing.

Why this story

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT | AZFAR ALI

Jyoti began with the troubling true story of a young British Pakistani woman killed by family members after resisting an arranged marriage. Azfar Ali chose not to recreate that tragedy. Instead, he turned toward the psychological conditions that can precede such violence: obedience, silence, inherited expectations, and control that masquerades as protection.

Sharmeen's restrained domestic world shapes the film's visual language. Confined interiors and natural light mirror her containment, while her warm clothing suggests a persistent resistance. Jyoti herself is not presented as a ghost but as an internal construct of fear, resentment, violent fiction, and suppressed autonomy.

PRODUCERS' STATEMENT | YASIR RAZA & CINDY BONILLA

The filmmakers approached JYOTI as storytellers rather than as advocates issuing a manifesto. Their goal was to portray Sharmeen as a complex person navigating pressure, inheritance, and desire, without reducing her to a symbol.

Fully self-financing their first feature demanded more than creative commitment. It required the team to assume responsibility for budgets, logistics, risk, and accountability. They chose to make an intimate, difficult film because waiting for ideal conditions could have meant never making it at all.

PRESS & MEDIA

Official trailer: vimeo.com/1239119629

Press contact: info@bananaroots.com

Instagram: [@jyoti.film](https://www.instagram.com/jyoti.film) | [@banana.roots](https://www.instagram.com/banana.roots)

Company: [bananaroots.com](https://www.bananaroots.com)

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