

Even When I Fall

Cert 12A Nepal/UK 2018 93 mins

Crew

Directors Kate McLarnon
& Sky Neal
Cinematographer Ben Marshall
Film Editor Alice Powell
Original music Jerry Lane



Cast

Saraswoti (*Hula-hoop, Aerial Trapeze, Slack Rope, Juggling, Unicycle, Group acrobatics*)
Sheetal (*Aerial silk, Contortion, Aerial hoop, Web spin, Juggling, Group acrobatics*)
....and other members of Circus Kathmandu
www.circuskathmandu.com

Synopsis

Nepal, the recent past. Saraswoti and Sheetal meet as teenagers in a Kathmandu refuge, survivors of child trafficking to corrupt Indian circuses. They have come back to a Nepal they can barely remember. The film traces their journey over 6 years as they confront the families that sold them, seek acceptance within their own country and begin to build a future.

Struggling against the odds and without education, these girls were left with a secret weapon by their captors - their breathtaking skills as circus artists



Booking Information

Distributor: Hakawati

DVD bookings:

0780 055 82 56

fleur@hakawati.co.uk

www.hakawati.co.uk

Available: now



Reviews

....No film will break your heart and then raise your spirits quite like this affecting depiction of exploitation. Some of the survivors have lost years: one is uncertain of her age and original caste. But this is not a documentary about slavery. It's an uplifting tale of recovery, resilience and reintegration.

By the time they are rescued, Saraswoti and Sheetal, two women who were sold to the circus as children, are incredibly skilful performers. As young adults, now returned to Nepal, they are members of Circus Kathmandu, an advocacy group made up of men, women and children who have been similarly rescued from circus servitude in India. As a collective, they perform and educate others and themselves with workshopped drama, storytelling and acrobatics. Circus has seldom seemed so magical on screen.

Performances that depend on the skills inherited from their captors is but one of the film's complexities. Families who sent their children away must deal with the guilt. The survivors must face prejudices and assumptions - many simply presume that they must be prostitutes....

Tara Brady, Irish Times, June 2018

....The circus became a huge success, performing around the world from Dubai to Glastonbury, but directors Sky Neal and Kate McLarnon resist the temptation to tug at the heartstrings and glory in this triumph against all the odds. Their film is so understated and immersed in the daily lives of the women that it would almost feel a betrayal to extract easy sentiment from their story.

In the end, what matters in *Even When I Fall* is what the women do with their success, using the circus to entertain small communities and then informing them about the dangers of human trafficking and the advantages in educating a child rather than selling them for short term gain.

You suspect that Neal and McLarnon must have shot a huge amount of material over the years of production but the final result finds a clear path through everything that has happened to the women and quietly celebrates the sense of fresh hope they have been able to create.

Allan Hunter, Screen International, April 2018

FILM FACTS...

- ☆ The film premiered at Sheffield Doc/Fest in June 2017. Its Nepalese premiere was at the film South Asia Festival in Kathmandu in November 2017.
- ☆ Co-director Sky Neal (a film-maker since 2006) has a background in performing arts and used to work as an aerialist in contemporary circus.
- ☆ Film production was supported by BFI Film Fund and the Sundance Documentary Film Programme among others. The final £30,000 for film editing and post-production was raised by Kickstarter crowd-funding.