

Grand Jury Prize for 'Sonar Baran Pakhi' at IFFLA



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Prantik Deka 24 April 2017 Updated 24 Apr 13113 views

The uncompromising artistic vision and hard work of filmmaker Bobby Sarma Baruah got rewarded when her movie titled 'Sonar Baran Pakhi' (The Golden Wing) based on the life and times of [celebrated](#) Goalparia folk singer Pratima Barua Pandey, made in the Rajbangshi language, won the coveted Grand Jury Prize for Best Feature [Film](#) at the 15th Indian [Film Festival](#) of Los Angeles (IFFLA) 2017, that took place at Los Angeles, in California.

“The way Baruah skillfully weaves music into her narrative recalls the brilliant work of British director Terence Davies, where songs are used to express the deep emotional bonds of a [community](#),” the festival organisers said about the film.

Pratima Barua Pandey’s songs, popularly called the Goalporia lokageet, are a part of a cultural [community](#), largely the Rajbanshis, who have been historically scattered around a vast territory including Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Southern Nepal and even [Bangladesh](#).

“[As](#) a [film](#) lover, I intended to capture the uncommon threads of life of this gifted artiste who, despite being a girl child and being born and brought up in a royal family braved all odds, mingled with ‘mahouts’, buffalo herders and river boatmen, humming rustic ballads, in a rural ambiance,” says director Baruah, whose debut [film](#) ‘Adomya’ was adjudged the Best Feature [Film](#) in the Spiritual category at the 13th Dhaka International [Film Festival](#) in 2014, besides being screened in a number of other film festivals.

Popularly known [as](#) Hastir Kanya, Pratima Barua Pandey took part in many a elephant hunting expeditions [as](#) a child with her [father](#) Prakitish Chandra Baruah alias Lalji, who encouraged her to learn the soulful folksongs from the mahouts, in addition to giving her the strength to overcome [against](#) all odds that came her way. Fighting through personal struggles, Barua continued to dedicate her life to collecting and tuning folk songs.

[As](#) a child, she was thoroughly captivated by the lilting notes that resonated in the air around her. Intent upon carving her own path, she went on to master other forms of folk songs, and was brought to the tinsel world by none other than singing maestro Dr. [Bhupen Hazarika](#), who incorporated one of her Goalporia lokageet in his debut feature 'Era Bator Sur'. And the rest they say is history.

The period spawned a treasure trove of haunting melodies from the mesmerising voice of Pratima Barua Pandey, a number of folk songs that became resoundingly popular with the public, and are considered classics today. Her ground-breaking efforts not only popularized Goalpariya folk songs but brought it to wide acceptance and national recognition.

"The simple lyrical melodies, played with traditional instruments like dotara, sarinda, dhol and so on, are about the human experience that each of us can relate to, so that's why I believe these Goalporia folk songs are very special for us. And my intention is to preserve them through this movie," Baruah adds.

Although she was born and educated in Kolkata, Pratima Barua Pandey was forever in close touch with the people of her ancestral place. Her innocent nature, a down-to-earth personality, devoid of any artificiality, ensured that she always remained in the hearts of the common people.

Pratima Barua Pandey remained untouched by the numerous laurels and honours that she rightfully earned, including the Sangeet Natak Akademi [Award](#), the Padmashree honour conferred on her by the government and many more titles fondly bestowed on her by the cultural bodies from across the [state](#). The [celebrated](#) artiste always sang for the pure love of music, putting her whole [heart](#) into her renditions, and throughout her musical journey, was least bothered about any fame and personal gains.

The biopic had also won the Audience Choice [Award](#) in the recent Dhaka International [Film Festival](#), and has already been screened in several festivals, including the 18th Jio MAMI Mumbai [Film Festival](#), 15th Third [Eye](#) Asian [Film Festival](#) and IFFSA, Toronto. Produced by ASFFDC and co-produced by Basanta-Bobby's BB Entertainment Private Limited, the [film](#) saw off some intense competition from a number of critically acclaimed movies made by auteurs of cinema and emerging talents at the Indian [Film Festival](#) of Los Angeles. The film with its powerful imagery struck a resonant chord with the critics and culturally attuned people of Los Angeles. The recognition that Bobby Sarma Baruah has achieved is testament to her undeniable talent and dedication [as](#) a director. She also took a tour of the [city](#) and was quite mesmerized by the landmark sights and different venues around it.

The film's screenplay is written by Jiten Sarma, Bobby Sarma Baruah and Bhaskar Jyoti [Das](#). Cinematographed by Avijit Nandy with the Ari Alexa camera, the film is edited by Ratul Deka with the background music scored by Saurav Mahanta.

The unique Goalparia folk songs that Pratima Barua Pandey rendered with such unbridled passion are used to splendid effect in 'Sonar Baran Pakhi'. The filmmakers are now planning to release the film in October, at the time of [birth anniversary](#) celebration of the renowned artiste. The [film](#) has also been invited for screening in the Toronto and Turkey International [Film](#) Festivals to be held in May.

The film's production designer is Phatik Baruah, while the sound designing and mixing has been done by Debajit Gayan, and costumes are provided by Gita Rani Goswami. The film's cast of artistes include Pranami [Bora](#), Pranjali Saikia, Arati Barua, Susmita Ray, Kamal Priya [Roy](#), Jagadish Deka, Nilim Chetia, Nilimoy Pradhani, child artiste Sonali [Roy](#), etc.



Produced by The Assam State Film (Finance & Development) Corporation Limited in association with
BB Entertainment Private Limited



ASFFDC & Basanta Bobby Presents

সোনার বরন পাক্ষি

Sonar Baran Pakhi
(The Golden Wing)

A film by Bobby Sarma Baruah

2016/Sound: Stereo/Format: 16.9/India/Rajbangshi/EST/Dur: 85 min./Cinemascope/Color

PRODUCER: ASSAM STATE FILM (FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT) CORPORATION LIMITED
CO PRODUCER: BASANTA KUMAR BARUAH, BOBBY SARMA BARUAH DIRECTOR: BOBBY SARMA BARUAH
SCREENPLAY: BOBBY SARMA BARUAH & BHASKAR JYOTI DAS
SCRIPT: JITEN SARMA, BOBBY SARMA BARUAH, BHASKAR JYOTI DAS
CINEMATOGRAPHY: AVIJIT NANDY EDITOR: RATUL DEKA VFX: DEEPLYOTI HANDIQUE
SOUND DESIGN & MIXING: DEBAJIT GAYAN BACKGROUND SCORE: SAURAV MAHANTA PRODUCTION DESIGN: PHATIK BARUAH
CAST: PRANAMI BORA, ARATI BARUA, PRANJAL SAIKIA,
KAMAL PRIYA RAY, SUSHMITA RAY, JAGADISH DEKA, NILIM CHETIA

ORIGINAL SONGS SUNG BY LATE PADMASHREE PRATIMA BARUAH PANDEY HAVE BEEN USED IN THE FILM.

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Prantik Deka

Prantik Deka. Email: prantikdeka@gmail.com

BY PRANTIK DEKA

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