

भूक न मरना है?

UTV MOTION PICTURES presents

AAMIR KHAN PRODUCTIONS'

PEEPLI

[Live]

written & directed by **ANUSHA RIZVI**

co-director **MAHMOOD FAROOQUI**

produced by **AAMIR KHAN** and **KIRAN RAO**

co-producer **RONNIE SCREWVALA**



प्रेसर कुकर की भाप है

WORLD CINEMA DRAMATIC COMPETITION
Sundance Film Festival 2010

जाने यसा... के मेरा

BERLINALE SPECIAL
Berlin International Film Festival 2010



theFilm

Natha a poor farmer from Peepli village in the heart of rural India is about to lose his plot of land due to an unpaid government loan. A quick fix to the problem is the very same government's program that aids the families of indebted farmers who have committed suicide. As a means of survival Farmer Natha can choose to die!!! His brother is happy to push him towards this unique 'honor' but Natha is reluctant. Local elections are around the corner and what might've been another unnoticed event turns into a 'cause célèbre' with everyone wanting a piece of the action. Political bigwigs, high-ranking bureaucrats, local henchmen and the ever-zealous media descend upon sleepy Peepli to stake their claim. The question on everyone's lips - "Will he or Won't he?" As the mania escalates what will be the fate of Farmer Natha; nobody seems to care how he really feels?



theCast



The cast of *Peepli Live* was selected after an extensive and exhaustive casting process that lasted over 4 months. About 900 actors were auditioned in several cities in India. In the event, legendary Indian theatre director Habib Tanvir's Naya Theatre repertory which comprises mainly rural folk actors provided the mainstay. This is the first feature film for most of the actors who appear in *Peepli Live* but several have a background in theatre. The huge cast of the film and their tremendous hard work makes this truly an actors' film.

OMKAR DAS MANIKPURI NATHA

Omkar Das Manikpuri belongs to the state of Chattisgarh, in Central India. He started his career as a performer in the local form of folk theatre called *Nacha*. Performing often in makeshift and open air stages, he honed his skills as a singer, dancer, mimic and a stand-up comic. He then joined Naya Theatre as an actor. With them he has performed in India and abroad such timeless classics as *Agra Bazaar*, *Charandas Chor* and *Sadak*. *Peepli Live* is his first feature film.

RAGHUBIR YADAV BUDHIA

Raghubir Yadav is one of India's leading arthouse actors and a highly gifted musician. At the age of 15 he ran away from home and joined the Parsi Theatre Company, Bombay. He later moved to Delhi, where he joined the National School of Drama (NSD). In his stage career as an actor and singer he has performed in over 70 plays and about 2500 shows. *Massey Sahib* (1985) was his first feature film for which he won the Fipresci Critic's Award, Venice Film Festival, 1986, and the Best Actor Silver Peacock, IIFI, 1987. Three films that he has acted in have received Academy Award nominations for Best Foreign Language Film (*Salaam Bombay*, *Lagaan* and *Water*). He was the first actor to be cast in *Peepli Live*. He has also sung for the film.

MALAIIKA SHENOY NANDITA MALLIK

Malaika is a Mumbai-based model, actor, and voice-over artiste. She has anchored and hosted many programs on Indian television and has appeared in a number of advertisements. She won the Best Actress Abby at the 2003 Indian Advertising Awards for Toshiba. Her experience as a TV presenter came in very handy for this film where she appears as a star reporter and presenter. She is also a part of the vibrant English theatre movement in Mumbai. She has appeared in two independent feature films before *Peepli Live*.



SHALINI VATSA DHANIYA

Shalini Vatsa holds an M. Phil degree in Political Science from the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. As an actor she has worked with various acclaimed Indian theatre directors such as Habib Tanvir, Barry John, B.V. Karanth and has performed all over India and abroad. She also trained with Barry John for Theater in Education and worked with children across sections of society including those with physical and learning disabilities, and still continues to do so. She is a full time member of Habib Tanvir's Naya Theatre repertory and essays leading roles in plays like *Zahreeli Hawa*, *Charandas Chor* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. *Peepli Live* is her first feature film.

**NAWAZUDDIN SIDDIQUI
RAKESH**

Nawaz is a graduate from The National School of Drama, New Delhi, India. He did theatre for many years before he started working in films. He has worked with several acclaimed and award-winning directors in India. *Peepli Live* is his first lead role in a film. Hailing from a small town in Northern India, he was able to pitch the character nearly perfectly.

FARRUKH JAFFER AMMA

Farrukh Jaffer has been a radio actor, announcer, and film and television actor in a career that has spanned over 5 decades. She started her career at Lucknow, in Northern India, with radio plays and diversified into broadcasting, writing and compering radio programs. She has appeared in two feature films before *Peepli Live*. An Urdu scholar as well as an expert on proverbs, idioms and phrases of rustic speech, Ms. Jaffer proved to be a great asset for Amma's role. She was the final lead actor to be cast for the film and was selected after nearly a hundred auditions in many different cities.

VISHAL O SHARMA KUMAR DEEPAK

Vishal is a Mumbai-based television and film actor who has appeared in a number of mainstream Hindi films. A self-trained actor, he was born in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, and moved to Kota in Rajasthan. Vishal's gift for improvisation proved very useful for his role of an ambitious and unscrupulous reporter in the film. Kumar Deepak in *Peepli Live* is his first major role in films.

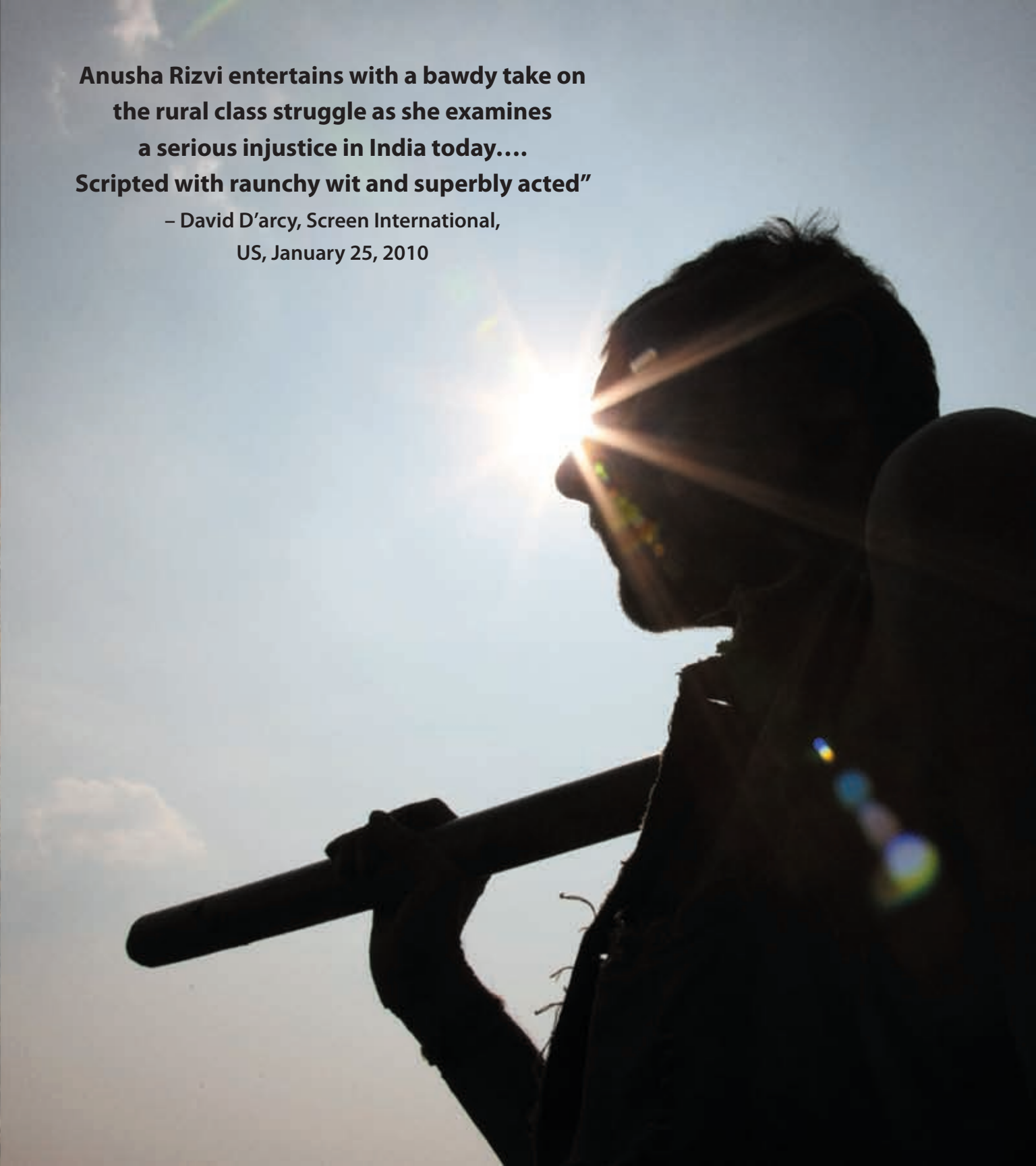




**Anusha Rizvi entertains with a bawdy take on
the rural class struggle as she examines
a serious injustice in India today....**

Scripted with raunchy wit and superbly acted”

– David D’arcy, Screen International,
US, January 25, 2010





ANUSHA RIZVI

DIRECTOR

Anusha Rizvi studied history at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and Human Rights at the Jamia University, Delhi. She has worked as a television producer for four years at New Delhi Television (NDTV). Over the last five years she has helped revive *Dastangoi*, the dead art form of storytelling in Urdu. *Peepli Live* is her first essay as a feature writer and director.



MAHMOOD FAROOQUI

CO- DIRECTOR AND CASTING DIRECTOR

Mahmood Farooqui is a Delhi-based historian, writer and performer. After graduating from the Universities of Oxford, U.K ('96), and Cambridge, U.K ('99), as a Rhodes scholar from India, he started his own theater group called Dastak. Over the last five years, he has been working to revive a lost form of storytelling in Urdu called *Dastangoi*. His first book, *Besieged: Voices from Delhi 1857*, will be out in May 2010 by Penguin India.



SHANKER RAMAN

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Shanker Raman is a Writer, Producer and Cinematographer. He graduated from the Cinematography program at the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. He has worked professionally over the last 14 years on several documentaries, shorts, feature films and TV commercials. His second feature, *Frozen*, won him the Indian National Award for Best Cinematography and the Best Cinematography Award at the Durban International Film Festival as well as a nomination at the Asian Film Awards in Hong Kong in 2008. *Frozen* was also his first venture as a writer and executive producer. He is currently filming his fifth feature called *Harud* (Autumn), which is an internal account of the Kashmir conflict.



HEMANTI SARKAR

EDITOR

Hemanti Sarkar is a Mumbai-based freelance film editor. She holds a post graduate diploma in film and video editing from the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. She has been an associate editor to Renu Saluja, who was one of the earliest women editors in India and a pioneer in the New Age Cinema Movement. Hemanti has edited several feature films including *Parineeta* and *Barah Anna*.



HARI KUMAR PILLAI

SOUND RECORDIST AND DESIGNER

Hari Kumar was born in Kolkata, India. He studied sound recording and sound engineering at the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. He has been associated with a number of award-winning documentaries like *Shipbreakers* (NatGeo, CNBC), *Four Seasons* (CNBC), *Third Sex* and *Mohua Memoirs*, among others. *Peepli Live* is his first venture as an independent sound recordist and designer.



SUMAN ROY MAHAPATRA

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Sumon Roy is a 28-year-old production designer based in Mumbai. After studying architecture from Jadavpur University in Calcutta, he went to the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, to study art direction and production design. He has been an assistant art director on a number of films and commercials. *Peepli Live* is his first feature film.





theMusic

MATHIAS DUPLESSY

BACKGROUND MUSIC COMPOSER

Mathias Duplessy is a music composer and a multi-instrumentalist, and shuttles between Paris and Mumbai. Mathias has composed music for a number of films including *Ze film*, *Mona Saber*, *Hymne à la Gazellea* and *Bombay Summer*, among others. He performs year-round on the international jazz and world music forums along with Sophia Charai, Bevinda, Monica Passos, Ameth Male, and Sara Alexander. Mathias specializes in Guitar, the “Morin Khuur” (Mongolian Cello), and Throat-singing.

INDIAN OCEAN

SONG COMPOSER / PERFORMER, *DES MERA*

19 years and five albums later, Indian Ocean is a band which is the true voice of contemporary India. With a rich mix of folk, jazz and contemporary world music, this versatile group of four truly connects to every citizen of the world using the language which is universal and knows no boundary, the language of music. The band has performed in over fifty countries in all five continents. Known for creating political music, they have worked sporadically in films and are proud to be associated with *Peepli Live*.



NAGEEN TANVEER

SONG COMPOSER / SINGER, *CHOLA MATI KE*

(*Original Gond tribal tune of Mandala Dist. M.P., India*)

Daughter of Indian theatre stalwarts Habib and Moneeka Tanvir, Nageen Tanvir has trained extensively in Hindustani classical vocal music. Her music experience also spans a practical knowledge of the folk and tribal traditions of North and Central India, specifically the musically rich region of Chattisgarh. As a member of the famed Naya Theatre, she has been involved in creating music for many of their internationally known productions.

BADWAI VILLAGE ARTISTES

SONG COMPOSERS / PERFORMERS, *SAKHI SAIYYAN*

The village musicians of Badwai are part-timers who make music during festive or ritual occasions. A motley group of school teachers, farmers and other servicemen, they create music by using basic instruments and simple, traditional folk tunes. The song they present in the film was a truly homespun take on the plight of poor farmers set against international inflation. The song was recorded live on location in one night and no changes have been made to it since. This is the first time they have appeared in a film.



ANUSHA RIZVI

I am an accidental filmmaker. I neither trained nor ever wished to make films before the story of *Peepli Live* came to me in a flash. Some stories have a tendency to appear in the most unlikely places, this one appeared when I was watching a TV news capsule on farmers in India, some five years ago. It is a different matter that it took me one whole year to write and rewrite the script and to decide whether I wanted to direct it! But there it was in its entirety and something needed to be done about that. I was immensely fortunate therefore that Aamir Khan took this unconventional film on board without any hesitation and has supported it to the hilt.

I was clear from the beginning that the film had to grow outwards from the people and the village rather than being an imposition of an outsider's vision. I wanted to capture reality rather than to create it. I am overwhelmed and humbled by the hard work that the entire unit, including all the background artists, put into achieving that. The lightmen who stood for hours as policemen, to the media extras who ran for hours

director'sNote

on end for that perfect shot, the set decorators who fed the animals, this film is their achievement and I am proud of being part of their team. And this to my mind will always remain the strength of this film, the people in it and behind it.

Peepli Live is a personal film. And I say this with full recognition of the fact that the script that was written and the film that was made is from an outsider's point of view. Born and brought up in New Delhi, I am an outsider to the rural scene. Yet the characters are people who I have known and interacted with, laughed with or laughed at, eaten, observed and sang with. These are people that I have known in a deeply personal sense and in that sense this film is almost a sum total of my politics, personal and professional.

None of this would have been possible without Mahmood, my husband and co-director and key collaborator from the first stage to the last, in what has been a very long journey for us both.

producer'sNote

AAMIR KHAN

In the year 2004–5, I was shooting for a film called *Mangal Pandey*, also called *The Rising*. While I was working on this film, I kept being pestered by some girl called Anusha Rizvi to read her script called *The Falling*. At first I thought that someone was just trying to be cheeky. But the requests kept coming and were very sincere. While I am in the middle of something I don't usually like to look at scripts but this time for some unknown reason I decided to give it a shot. So I called her and she read out her script to me.

From the time that the narration began I was drawn into it. I found it to be very funny and at the same

time very heartbreaking. Very engaging, entertaining and enlightening, but a very unusual script for Indian cinema. In other words, it was right up my street.

Anusha and her team have done a superb job of putting on screen what was on paper. And I am very happy and proud to be associated with such a fine film.

Only now it's called '*PEEPLI LIVE*'.

This is the first of the films that I have produced with the hope of entertaining a world audience. It's a world that I am unfamiliar with... and scary. Let's see how it goes.



Both funny and sobering...

All aspects to the production from the mobile 35mm camera to the realistic sets and costumes make 'Peepli Live' a satisfying comic gem.

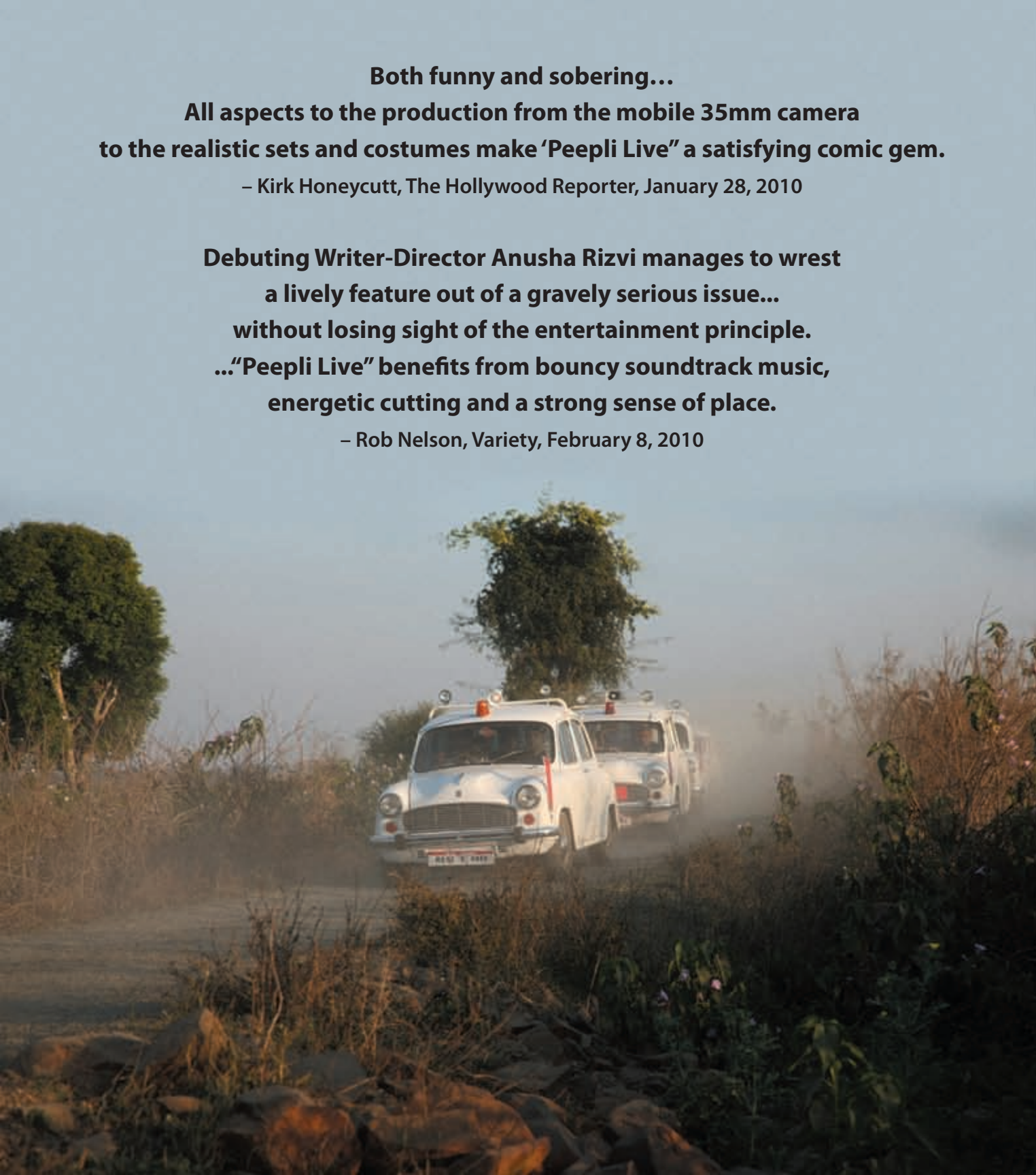
– Kirk Honeycutt, The Hollywood Reporter, January 28, 2010

Debuting Writer-Director Anusha Rizvi manages to wrest a lively feature out of a gravely serious issue...

without losing sight of the entertainment principle.

..."Peepli Live" benefits from bouncy soundtrack music, energetic cutting and a strong sense of place.

– Rob Nelson, Variety, February 8, 2010



Credits



WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY Anusha Rizvi
PRODUCED BY Aamir Khan
Kiran Rao
CO-PRODUCER Ronnie Screwvala
ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS Zarina Mehta
Deven Khote
Siddharth Roy Kapur
CO-DIRECTOR & CASTING DIRECTOR Mahmood Farooqui
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Shanker Raman
EDITOR Hemanti Sarkar
SOUND DESIGNER Hari Kumar Pillai
SOUND MIXING ENGINEER Anup Dev
PRODUCTION DESIGNER Suman Roy Mahapatra
COSTUME DESIGNER Maxima Basu
MAKE-UP Vikram Gaikwad
PUBLICITY DESIGNER Sukanya Ghosh
BACKGROUND MUSIC COMPOSER Mathias Duplessy
MUSIC COMPOSER *DES MERA* Indian Ocean
SONG COMPOSER *CHOLA MATI KE* Nageen Tanvir
(Gond Tribal tune of
Mandala District M.P.)
SONG COMPOSER *SAKHI SAIYYAN* Badwai Village Artistes
LYRICS *DES MERA* Sanjeev Sharma
ADDITIONAL LYRICS *DES MERA* Swanand Kirkire
LYRICS *CHOLA MATI KE* Gangaram Sakhet
LYRICS *SAKHI SAIYYAN* Badwai Village Artistes
LINE PRODUCER Alan McAlex
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER B. Shrinivas Rao
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS Bimal Parekh & Co.

CAST
NATHA Omkar Das Manikpuri
BUDHIA Raghubir Yadav
RAKESH Nawazuddin Siddiqui
DHANIYA Shalini Vatsa
AMMA Farrukh Jaffer
NANDITA Malaika Shenoy
DEEPAK Vishal Sharma

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