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# On loev, love and other things: A conversation with Sudhanshu Saria - Part 1/2

An interview on his film premiere at Tallin's Black Nights 2015 and more.



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A still from Loev- starring Dhruv Ganesh and Shiv Pandit. Sudhanshu Saria

made him realize that 'love' actually had so many "rules and descriptors and conventions" that it made him look for something more real and relatable.

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And so 'Loev' was born. Getting to know this phenomenon was so full of revelations that Sudhanshu decided to etch its story, paving way to the eponymous film that is now all set to premiere at [Tallinn's Black Nights \(Pimedate Ööde Film Festival or POFF 2015\)](#). A [crowd-funded film](#), exploring 'loev'- spiced, with its ups and downs, yet as powerful as its true form- the film has been handpicked to be featured in the

[Sudhanshu Saria](#), like most of us raised in India, formed his first impressions on love based on [Indian Cinema](#). The butterflies, the amazing song and dance sequences, the unflinching trust and the happily ever-after imprinted themselves so strongly in his mind that when he saw love in real life, he was a bit shaken. Life and experience

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Parisian company called [Wide Management](#). Because I have had some experience in that world, I know how it works. There are no fairy tales. They (sales companies) look for films that can sell, and usually that means films that have stars or films that have a [big budget](#), are of a known director or films that have gone to [Cannes](#) or some big festival.

And so my producers were at [Berlin](#) and they called me saying that this guy wants to see the film.

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reaction is “This is a scam!” Which everyone else thought was really funny.

Anyway, we didn’t do anything right then. I spoke to them, took my time. And honestly, I just wanted to see if this is a ‘hook-up’ or is it a ‘relationship’. Are they actually interested? This is a terrific, very well respected company but I wanted to make sure they would handle the film with care. We closed the deal around Cannes and they wanted to start by doing a small screening for festivals to see where we place the film.

#### So, the screening was in the film market section?

Yeah, it was at the film market section of Cannes. They had a very focused small private screening for the festival heads. And at that screening, Tallinn (Black Nights Film Festival) came to [Wide](#) and said they wanted to place the film in the [Tridens Competition](#)

festival’s Tridens Competition Section.

Read about the director's journey to Tallinn, his take on 'loev' and more in this two part interview. The second part can be read [here](#).

#### How did the journey of Loev to Tallinn’s happen?

Even before the film was done, a programmer at [Berlinale](#) had recommended the film to a sales agent, the head of this

I was like, “That’s insane! Why does he want to see the film?” I am a nobody making a film, with Indian actors, that has gotten into no festival and that isn’t even finished yet!

But what have I got to lose? We liked his passion so we sent the film. And he watches it overnight and makes an offer right then and there.

And I was like “This is a scam!” Anytime something good happens to me, my first



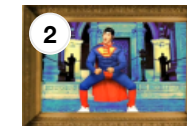
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[Section](#). The festival is in November and I said “I don't know. Let me finish!” But Wide (Management) was really set on them. They wanted to go a different way and wanted to give the film a real chance to shine.

Usually, festivals go through your sales agency. But I remember getting a direct e-mail from their programmer. It was passionate, really emotional – and I got the feeling that they just really GOT us. It was incredibly humbling and that's when I was like “Sure! Ok! Alright! Great!”

I think I was just like everybody else - you need to know you are loved.

### Tell us more about the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival.

It's an incredible festival. Very exclusive and tasteful, and with a real focus on discovering world talent. Besides the usual best-of films from the [other festivals](#), they work really hard to unveil films that have never played anywhere else in the world. And filmmakers love their stamp because of what it means to other programmers and buyers. It's different from [Busan](#), for example, which is more South-Asian in focus. I think there were 12 Indian films that were played there this year – so we love that Tallinn didn't think of us as an Indian film or a South Asian film. I love being accorded that respect of being looked at as ‘a [story](#) in [world cinema](#)'.

Besides, I love the idea of [Tallinn](#), the actual setting of this city. It is cold and the sun sets there very early. The festival is called ‘Black Nights’ because it gets dark around 5 pm. And this is a cinema crazy city and everybody goes to these screenings. I am looking forward to discovering films I have never heard of.

We are going to have the world premiere (of Loev) today (19th of November). They've scheduled a second screening at the island of [Tartu](#) which is about two hours away. There is this majestic single-screen theater where they are going to do the second screening on the 23rd. And then there is a third follow-up screening on the 25th. They anticipated the film being quite popular and they were right: our little Indian movie is already sold out. I wanted to invite some folks yesterday and was told there were no more tickets to give.

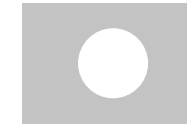
*Continue reading the second part of this interview [here](#).*

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