

The bitter and the sweet of temporary things.

ཆང་ཏུབ་ཐེངས་གཅིག་གི་འཁྱུལ་སྤང

Travellers Magicians

a film by

Khyentse Norbu

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Travellers & Magicians
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Synopsis

Two men, two women, two journeys are woven into an intricate tapestry of desires as Travellers & Magicians takes us on an adventurous emotional tour through the heartland of Bhutanese Buddhist culture.

Set amidst the pristine beauty of the tiny Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, our story follows the footsteps of Dondup, a handsome young government officer stationed in a rural outpost. But instead of revelling in the dignity of his position, Dondup has attitude. Rather than embracing the kindness and generosity of his village neighbours or appreciating the beauty of his surroundings he's far more excited about "picking apples in the USA". He is convinced that leaving Bhutan for the western world will satisfy all that he craves.

When opportunity knocks, it comes with a deadline. Dondup seizes the moment, lies to his senior officer, throws his suitcase out the window and hastily departs -- unfortunately a touch too late. He misses his bus to Thimphu and, to his dismay, is left stranded on the road with two other travellers heading in the same direction -- a Buddhist monk and a simple apple seller. Dondup's fear of spending a dark night under the stars alone subdues his arrogant display towards his fellow travellers and he joins them for a night around their fire on the roadside.

"Be careful with dreamlands..." the monk tells Dondup upon hearing of his plans to go to America, "...when you wake up, it might be unpleasant."

To pass the night away the good natured monk begins to tell the tale of Tashi, a lazy, disinterested student of sorcery who dreams of distant 'greener pastures' inhabited by beautiful women. One day his younger brother gives Tashi a magic potion that transports him through distant mountains and forests where he is unceremoniously dumped. In blinding rain the exhausted traveller stumbles upon an isolated hut where a cantankerous old man Agay and his beautiful young wife Deki offer him shelter...

The monk's tale continues throughout the journey as they make their way along the majestic mountain roads. Getting a lift for all of them becomes a mission and walking to Thimphu seems to be their destiny. Along the way they meet a series of colourful local characters but it is when Dondup meets a local beauty, Sonam, that his world starts to alter and his footsteps begin to falter. Will the monk's playful teasing change Dondup's view of his 'primitive' homeland, or will it be Sonam's beguiling smile?

...Meanwhile, despite his efforts to return home, Tashi cannot find his way back and is seduced by Deki. Time becomes meaningless as their passion overheats. The rhythmic sound of Deki's loom as she weaves an intricate dress fabric reflects the heartbeat of the two lovers...

continued

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Travellers
& Magicians

PRAYER FLAG PICTURES PRESENTS A FILM BY KHYENTSE NORBU
INTRODUCING TSHEWANG DENDUP LHAQPA DORJI SONAM KINGA SONAM LHAMO DEKI YANGZOM
MUSIC BY DECHEN DORJEE SONAM DORJI JIGME DRUKPA BEN FINK DAVID HYNES MICHAEL THE GIRL
EDITED BY JOHN SCOTT & LISA-ANNE MORRIS DIRECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHY ALAN KOZLOWSKI EXECUTIVE PRODUCER JEREMY THOMAS
PRODUCED BY RAYMOND STEINER & MALCOLM WATSON WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY KHYENTSE NORBU



Noa Jones



Catherine Ryan



Claudia Bahls



Alan Kozlowski

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Alan Kozlowski, DOP, for his cinematography

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Dendup, Jigme Drukpa, Francoise Pommaret, Isaiah Seret,
Eric Blair, Dasho Kado, Dr Tenzin Penjor, Felden Dorji,
Choing Tshomo, Dechen Dorjee, Cristina Ochagavia,
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design | studio

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