



மண்ணல்

SAND | MUNNEL

by
VISAKESA CHANDRASEKARAM



2023 | Sri Lanka | 102 min | Tamil



LOGLINE

A former rebel returns home from military detention searching for his missing lover whose plight was yet to be revealed by the rebel's soothsaying mother.

SYNOPSIS

Rudran, an ex-Tamil militant returns home from military detention, looking for his lover Vaani who had disappeared during the war. Rudran's mother, Sellamma who is gifted with a 'boon' of soothsaying, tells the locals whether their kith and kin are alive or dead, but she refuses to say the same about Vaani. While men and women defeated in the war find solace in massive Hindu temples, Rudran initially refuses to pray, but later in an act of desperation, he joins a month-long pilgrimage seeking help from God Ayyappa, hoping to unite with his lover.

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVALS

2023 International Film Festival of Rotterdam (Tiger Jury Award)
2023 Bengaluru International Film Festival (Second Best Film)

TRAILER





BACKGROUND

THE THREE DECADE LONG ETHNIC WAR IN SRI LANKA ENDED IN 2009 BY SINGHALESE DOMINANT GOVERNMENT FORCES DEFEATING THE TAMIL TIGER REBELS.

As the Sinhalese majoritarian government continued to celebrate the victory, neither the government forces nor the pro-Tamil Tiger groups showed willingness to be accountable for the crimes they have committed against civilians during the war. Thousands of Tamil men and women were taken into military custody at the end of the war but only some of them like our protagonist Rudran returned home alive, and they too maintained a code of silence about what happened in detention. *Munnel* is based on real life events and the screenwriter/Director Visakesa Chandrasekaram's experiences of working as a human rights lawyer in Sri Lanka. Some of the cast and crew members are survivors of the war.

Munnel probably is the only Sri Lankan film came out of the recent political and economic crisis in Sri Lanka. During chaotic power cuts, fuel shortage and tremendously rising cost of living, the cast and crew worked hard against all odds to complete the film. While the film was shot in the North of the island, the Southern part was trembled by the occupied movement in Colombo and the subsequent violence. *Munnel* is probably the first home-grown Tamil film of which most the cast and crew members came from the Tamil speaking North and East. Also, the film introduces several debut artists: Director of Photography Rishi Selvam; Music Composer Pathmayan Sivananthan, and several actors including Sivakumar Lingeswaran (Rudran) and Thurkka Magendran (Vaani).



SCREENWRITER/DIRECTOR
VISAKESA CHANDRASEKARAM

VISAKESA CHANDRASEKARAM IS A LAWYER,
ACADEMIC AND AN ARTIST.

He has made two feature films – Sayapethi Kusuma (Frangipani) and Paangshu (Earth) which won many local and international awards. He has published two novels – Tigers Don't Confess and The King and the Assassin. He has written and directed several stage plays including Forbidden Area, which won the Gratiean Prize. Visakesa has worked in Sri Lanka as a human rights lawyer and in Australia as a consultant to the NSW Government. He has received a doctorate from the Australian National University for his research on the use of confessionary evidence under counter-terrorism laws. He currently works as a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Law in University of Colombo.







CREW

Screenwriter, Director, Producer	Visakesa Chandrasekaram
Director of Photography	Rishi Selvam
Film Editor	Sithum Samarajeewa
Music Composer	Pathmayan Sivananthan
Art Director	Channa Asanka
Costume Designer	Selvaraj Leelawathy
Makeup Artist	Julius Andrew
Sound Designer	Aruna Kaluarachchi
Digital Colourist	Ananda Bandara
Assistant Director	Jenoshan Jeyaratnam
Production Manager	Barath Panchadsaram
Associate Producers	Rishi Selvam, Jenoshan Jeyaratnam & Barath Panchadsaram

CAST

Rudran	Sivakumar Lingeswaran
Sellamma	Kamala Sri Mohan Kumar
Vaani	Thurkka Magendran
Kajan	Gowtham Sharma
Chandran	Dharu Baalan
Sivaraman	R. Rajah Mahendrasingam
Ponnamma	Francis pathma malini
Defence Lawyer	Selvaraj Leela
Betty	Svitlana Lysovska
Kaarthi	Ramsunthar Kantharuban
Judge	Amalathas Elroy
Prosecutor	Ananthakumar Vakeesan
Thambu	S. R. Thusikaran
Kalyani	Srilekka Perinbakumar
Medical Officer	Sathasivam Kalaiyukan
Shalini	Arunthavarsa Girithya
Baalan	Francis Julies Collin
Shankar	Karuppaiah Saththiyaseelan
Soldiers	Palitha Abeyrathne & Dhananjana Dinuwantha