



**MEGHNA HALDAR, Vancouver, BC
WIDC 2005 Director Participant**

Meghna was born and raised in India, where she graduated with a Master's in Communication and Video from the University of Hyderabad. She worked as an associate producer on an award winning children's series, BOOKFARE, and as a media coordinator for an HIV+ advocacy group in India. In 1998, Halдар made a quantum leap from India to the University of Texas at Austin, where she pursued her MFA in Film and Television. After

graduation, she taught briefly at her alma mater and worked as a director with a film resource center in Austin, teaching workshops, and organizing the Cinemaker Super 8 International Film Festival. After waiting for two years to get Canadian permanent residency, Meghna finally moved bag and emotional baggage to Vancouver, BC where she has since devoted her energies to a film career again. Having moved across three countries over the last six years, Meghna has sworn that the next time she moves, she will travel in an urn.

Meghna has made documentaries, experimental and short fiction films dealing with issues of immigration, alienation, love, loss and the search for redemption. Her first film, IF IFS AND ANDS (1996), was shot on VHS and edited in secret on Bollywood studio equipment. Her award winning film REVIVAL was set in small town Texas and made despite doubts that a "foreigner" could capture the ethos of small town Americana. It screened twice at the DGA, won Best Student Film at Houston International, Audience and Best Actor Award at CinemaTexas, and was broadcast on public cable television in New York amongst others. She has made short documentaries and experimental films dealing with a Sri Lankan biology student who lived in a world of unicorns and elves, child sexual abuse, a love affair between a Pakistani lesbian and her Indian partner and a South Asian housewife who listens to her neighbours having sex to alleviate her loneliness. Her films have screened in Canada, U.S. and India.

Since moving to Canada in 2003, Meghna has worked on completing her Super 8 experimental film LOVE LETTERS on living in America as a non-resident alien after 9-11. She is in pre-production with the National Film Board on her long form documentary, DIRT, which is a personal journey exploring muck, manure and dirty behaviours. She is completing another draft of a second short film, TO CLIMB A TREE, a satirical look at how one young man's gesture of love and defiance turns into a media circus. She was the programming coordinator for the Vancouver Asian Film Festival, and a guest programmer for the Out on Screen Film Festival.

Meghna is known for her good taste in people, politics, cuisine and movies and mawkish reading habits. She always reads the last page first to find out if people die, spilt or kill each other before deciding whether she wants to read the book. She is a storyteller, not only because her third grade teacher called her "long-story", but also because that's the only way she knows to be. Meghna's passion for her work and openness to different ideas draws the best out in each of her collaborators, inspiring confidence and motivating a certain can-do spirit amongst people she works with.

Halдар intends to establish herself in Canada as a feature film director. For her, form is an outgrowth of story, so she will continue to make documentaries, fiction and experimental films. Once again, in a new country and a new climate, Halдар is riding the learning curve like the surfer she will never be.