



UP CLOSE

Bidisha Singha

bidisha.singha@gmail.com

A student of life

US-based Assamese filmmaker RUPAM SARMAH's new film gives a much-needed impetus to disability rights.

A computer engineer by profession, Rupam Sarmah's passion, though, lies elsewhere. An Assamese living in the U.S.A. since 1992, Sarmah has dabbled extensively in the field of music and filmmaking, all the while pushing his altruistic concerns to the fore. A #1 Billboard Artist (*Together in Peace*, 2017) and Guinness World Record holder for composing and directing a symphony with 315 unique musical instruments from all over the world and over 500 performers on the stage, Sarmah has been in the news this year for his unique cinematic venture titled *One Little Finger*.

Laying bare his concerns for people with disabilities, this film has been winning accolades all over the world since its premiere at Cannes in May. In this exclusive interview, Sarmah talks about the film which he believes is a 'movement' to break the stigma around disability.

Tell us a little about yourself. How do you dabble in so many fields?

I am an artiste and a social entrepreneur. I would rather say that I'm just a student of life. The little that I know about this life, humanity and the cosmos makes me want to learn more and more in many interdisciplinary fields. I am attracted to music, the arts, philosophy, scientific exploration, spiritualism that connects to my heart, and I wish to work for the betterment of the human condition by inspiring social change. This keeps me going.

Tell us about *One Little Finger*. Will it be released in India?

One Little Finger is a narrative feature film (English) with a theme 'Ability in Disability'. It's not just a film – it's a movement to break the stigma around the word "disability". All it takes is a change in perspective, a change in our mindset! Disability is only what we perceive; ability is everything that we believe! Using film media as a platform, we are allowing differently-abled people to act in this film, alongside local and international celebrities to promote inclusion and diversity. More than 80 children and young adults with various disabilities have acted in this film.

The film will be released in India this year to celebrate UN's 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities' on December 3.