

Long Bios

Anand Gandhi

"Call him a filmmaker, a science thinker, or a philosopher, it's all the same for him - he is here to ask the big questions, share his insights with the world, and hopefully leave his mark on the future. Of which, film is only one tool."

- Bangalore Mirror

Anand Gandhi is a filmmaker, media investor and a systems thinker. He ushered in a new wave of Indian cinema with his seminal *Ship of Theseus*. He introduced a paradigm shift in genre cinema with *Tumbbad* and transformed the documentary cinema landscape with *An Insignificant Man*. He produced the groundbreaking tabletop games SHASN and SHASN:AZADI, now played in more than seventy-five countries. He created ElseVR, one of the world's first Virtual Reality journalism channels. He produced the hard science fiction comedy series *OK Computer* for Disney+. Anand's work has elicited measurable positive behavior impact and progressive legal precedent in the region. It has also inspired hundreds of academic commentaries and papers.

His films have premiered and been awarded at the Toronto International Film Festival and the Venice International Film Festival. They have also been awarded at the international film festivals of Transilvania, Tokyo, Hong Kong, London BFI, Dubai, SITGES, and Mumbai, among several others. They have been released by Disney, Netflix, PrimeVideo, and Channel4. His social impact films made in collaboration with big brands have won multiple awards at Cannes Lions, Spikes, Andes, Adfest, and D&AD. Anand also won the highest award in Indian cinema for *Ship of Theseus* - the National Award for Best Picture. The Critics' Circle, UK included *Ship of Theseus* in their centenary celebration of the 15 "life-changing" films of the century. The Indian Critics' publication *Film Companion* included all three of Anand's films in their list of "25 Best Films of the Decade". SHASN has been awarded the IndieCade Social Impact Prize.

Deeply invested in the communication of scientific humanism, Anand has been awarded the 'Contribution to Indian Philosophy Prize' by the Jainology department, at Mumbai University. He has also been a mentor at the XPrize Visioneers forum and a keynote speaker at Singularity University-INK. Anand is the founder of SAFER (The Scientific Advisory Forum for Emergent Risks) - an informal network of scientists and doctors brought together during the COVID-19 pandemic to assist the state governments.

He is the founder and CEO of the contemporary culture powerhouse Memesys Studios, focused on producing games, films, and new media with the intention of "making complex intuitive". He is also the

founder of Department of Lore - a studio at the forefront of a storytelling renaissance, pioneering the crafting of neo-mythologies—interconnected, multi-format, large-scale IPs that resonate with global communities.

Zain Memon

"I try hard to stay in my lane and focus on making my own stuff, but I have extreme professional jealousy over Zain's game, it rules so much and I wish I made something that cool."

- Max Temkin, Creator of 'Cards against Humanity'

Zain Memon is a visionary game designer. His award-winning political strategy board games 'SHASN' and 'AZADI' have become India's most successful tabletop IP. Zain has earned some of the industry's highest honors, including the 'Games For Change' and 'IndieCade' awards.

In 2019, Zain created **SHASN** - the award winning political strategy board game, now played in over 70 countries. He also created its internationally acclaimed sequel, **SHASN: AZADI**, which was hailed as the "blueprint for semi-cooperative game design".

Zain is recognized as the leading Indian authority on game design and is actively driving the tabletop ecosystem in the region. His work has introduced India to modern board gaming, and created a new tabletop culture.

He produced the critically acclaimed **An Insignificant Man**, Disney+Hotstar's **OK Computer**, ran the three largest crowdfunding campaigns out of India, as well as the world's largest open source film project for **Ship of Theseus**. Zain also launched India's first VR journalism platform with **ElseVR**.

He is now co-creating a massive transmedia narrative universe, where he is producing films, graphic novels, board games, as well as a digital gaming platform.

Medium Bios

Anand Gandhi

Anand Gandhi is widely regarded as the film auteur who ushered in a new wave of Indian cinema. His first film, **Ship of Theseus**, won the National Award for Best Picture - the Indian equivalent of an Academy Award. It was also on The Critics' Circle, UK's list of 15 "life-changing" films of the past century. His next film, **Tumbbad** - a genre film which used horror as an allegory - became the region's most-watched genre film of the last two decades. His non-fiction production, **An Insignificant Man**, was India's most commercially successful documentary film. Anand's films have won the highest honors at the international film festivals of Toronto, Venice, Transylvania, Tokyo, Hong Kong, and have been globally distributed by Disney, Netflix, PrimeVideo, and Channel4.

Zain Memon

Zain Memon is a visionary game designer, who has created **SHASN** and **AZADI** - the award-winning political strategy board games that have become India's most successful tabletop IP. Zain's games and authorship have introduced India to modern board games and created a new culture of tabletop gaming in the country. SHASN is now played in over 70 countries across the globe. SHASN and AZADI have also won some of the highest honors in the industry, including the 'Games For Change' award and the 'IndieCade Award for Social Impact'.

Short Bios

Anand Gandhi has ushered in a new wave of Indian cinema. Ship of Theseus won the National Award for Best Film (Academy Award equivalent), and Tumbbad became the region's most-watched genre film. His work has won honors at the international film festivals of Toronto, Venice, Transylvania, Tokyo and Hong Kong.

Zain Memon is a celebrated game designer. His bestselling boardgames SHASN and AZADI are played in over 70 countries. His work has won the prestigious Games For Change and IndieCade awards.

Together, Anand and Zain have produced films, games, VR experiences, documentaries and shows. Many of them were acquired or distributed by Disney, Netflix, Prime Video, BBC and Channel4. Their work draws from game theory and cognitive biology to reimagine how stories can shape beliefs, rewire behaviors and impact change.

Testimonials and Press About Anand and Zain

"At the intersection of science, philosophy and culture, (Anand and Zain) are dedicated to crafting high concept, experimentally rich work in cinema and new media."

- Homegrown

"Anand Gandhi is one of those remarkable people who seem to know nearly everything and yet doesn't boast about it or try to make you feel small."

- E Nina Roth, Huffington Post

"Anand Gandhi is a cultural scientist of a different kind... in his aspiration to find stars where only darkness existed before. As the face of a new wave of Indian cinema, Gandhi has worked towards expanding the paradigm of culture in this region with his films Tumbbad, Ship of Theseus and An Insignificant Man. As the founder and producer at Memesys Culture Gandhi's ambitions are astronomical - nothing short of moonshots at culture will suffice."

- Adgully

"(Anand and Zain) are doing all kinds of amazing things to turn 2017 into 2027 sooner than you can say 'terraform Mars.'"

- BrownPaperBag

"(Ship of Theseus) is a profound and fearless film. It is fearlessly contemporary, fearlessly un-noisy, and utterly beautifully observed."

- Arundhati Roy

"SHASN is the best thing to come out of American politics in a very long time. They nailed American politics better than any other game I can think of."

- Everything Board Games

"(Ship of Theseus is) a hypnotic blend of stunning visuals and gripping dialogues. Anand Gandhi's astonishingly brilliant debut Ship of Theseus stops being a motion picture and becomes a dialogue with yourself."

- The Telegraph

"Azadi should be the blueprint for how to create and play a semi-cooperative game."

- Board Game Quest

"Anand Gandhi's 'Ship of Theseus' is Kislowskian in scope and delivery, playing between serendipity and causality, but it took me that crucial step further in its rediscovery of the human."

- Anand Patwardhan.

"An Insignificant Man is a true masterpiece, a must-see spectacle that could easily be described as flawless."

- Panos Kotzathanasis, Asian Movie Pulse.

"Sophisticated... Intelligent... Unexpected grandeur. (Ship of Theseus) demonstrates an assured grasp of philosophy as well as the intricacies of cinematic language."

- Variety

"A tonally complex game, swerving between political comedy, political shabbiness, and political assholery. Unhinged, Outlandish, Timely, Perceptive."

- Space Biff

"(Ship of Theseus is) consistently gripping, strikingly intelligent and occasionally laced with surprising humour."

- Senses of Cinema

"Contemplative and densely layered. Gandhi and cinematographer Pankaj Kumar's breathtaking visual poetry gives us a sense of Mumbai as an entity unto itself, further blurring the line between the individual and the environment."

- Hollywood Reporter

"(SHASN has) all of the intrigue, plotting, backstabbing, and strategy of an actual cutthroat election."

- Board Game Brawl