

A FILM BY RINKU DEWRI

ANTARCTICA

FROM ANTICIPATION TO REALITY

PRESS KIT

STUDIO SNR

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ANTARCTICA

FROM ANTICIPATION TO REALITY

Directed by

Rinku Dewri

Production Company

StudioSnR LLC, Colorado, USA

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Media Assets

<https://studiosnr.com/afatr/press/afatr-media-assets.zip>

Country

USA

Date of Completion

August 14, 2024

TAGLINE

It is as close as you can get to being on another planet.

LOGLINE

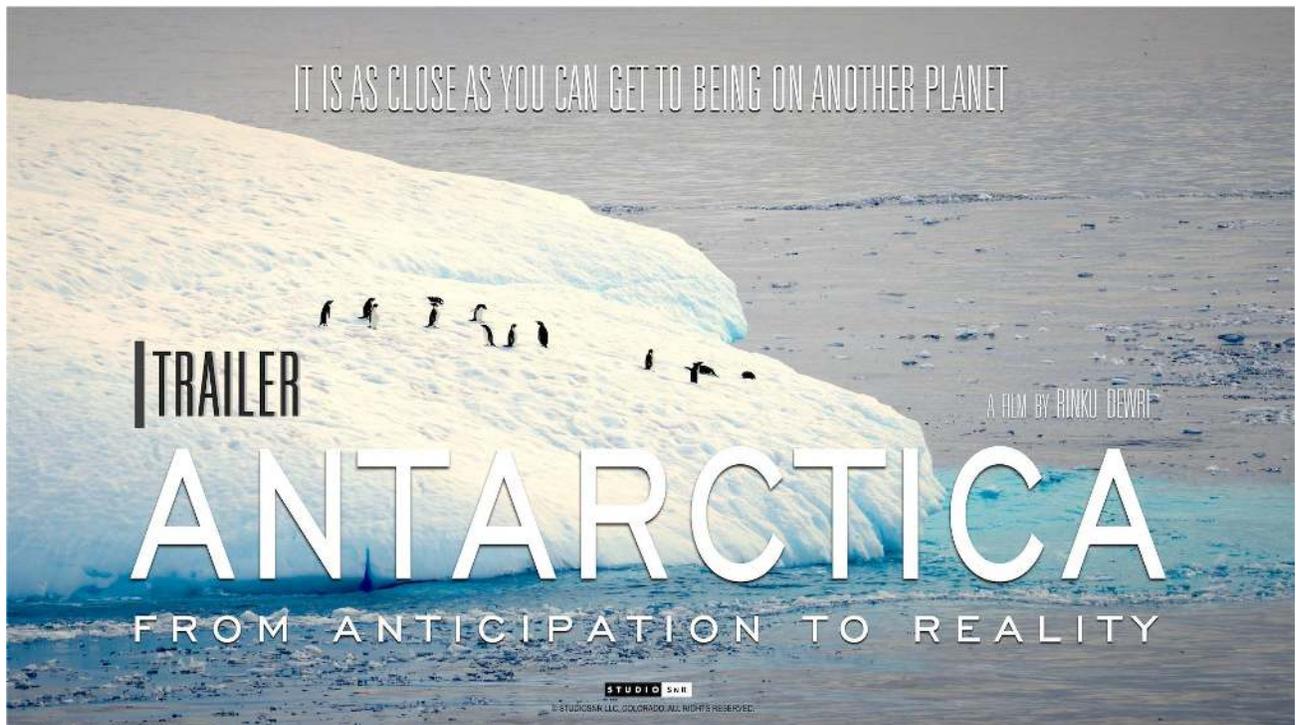
A participatory documentary following two individuals as they prepare and experience their long-awaited expedition to the white continent, Antarctica.

ACRONYM

AFATR

TRAILER

https://youtu.be/s80nmsV4L_4





SYNOPSIS

Short

Antarctica: From Anticipation To Reality is a participatory documentary following two individuals as they prepare and experience their long-awaited expedition to the white continent, Antarctica.



Medium



Antarctica is the fifth largest continent on our planet. But more than a landmass, Antarctica lives in our minds as a place of mystery. An expedition to Antarctica allowed us to give form and shape to all that we imagined the place would be like. We are here to share an intimate experience of our voyage to this mystery continent, and how it feels to set foot on one of the least visited places of the planet. We will walk through our time spent in anticipation, learning about the continent, and making preparations to travel to this extreme destination, all the while imagining what the experience would be like. Yet, the reality of being in Antarctica is just beyond anyone's imagination.

Long

Antarctica: From Anticipation To Reality is a participatory documentary following two individuals as they prepare and experience their long-awaited expedition to the white continent, Antarctica.

Antarctica is the fifth largest continent on our planet. But more than a landmass, Antarctica lives in our minds as a place of mystery. Many of us imagine Antarctica as a white landscape of ice and snow, sprawling out from the South Pole, and dotting the seas beyond the oceans with stretches of ice floes and icebergs. We think of penguins, huddled together to shield themselves from the cold and harsh weather. We project a deep underwater world of flora and fauna that is almost mythical. Antarctica in our minds, embodies what we believe a raw natural habitat would be like – unnerving and unforgiving.

An expedition to Antarctica allowed us to give form and shape to all that we imagined the place would be like. We are here to share an intimate experience of our voyage to this mystery continent, and how it feels to set foot on one of the least visited places of the planet. We will walk through our time spent in anticipation, learning about the continent, and making preparations to travel to this extreme destination, all the while imagining what the experience would be like. Yet, the reality of being in Antarctica is just beyond anyone's imagination.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



Antarctica as a travel destination has always felt very remote, often unreachable, so much that it never really comes forth as a place one could visit. Back in 2022, when we first decided that we will visit this continent, we were also in a similar state of mind. We really did not know how to take the first step. But as we started researching, the windows of

possibilities opened up; we started feeling much closer and connected to the place. That's when I decided to document our time spent preparing for the expedition, our discoveries on the way, and the final experience.

Initially, the thought was to capture moments here and there, for us to cherish at a later stage of our lives. This would be a once in a lifetime experience for us after all. But soon the idea transformed into creating something that not only can we personally attach to, but can also share with others for a source of information and inspiration. I saw this as the perfect opportunity to dig deeper into my curiosity about film making, and what an entire end-to-end process entails.

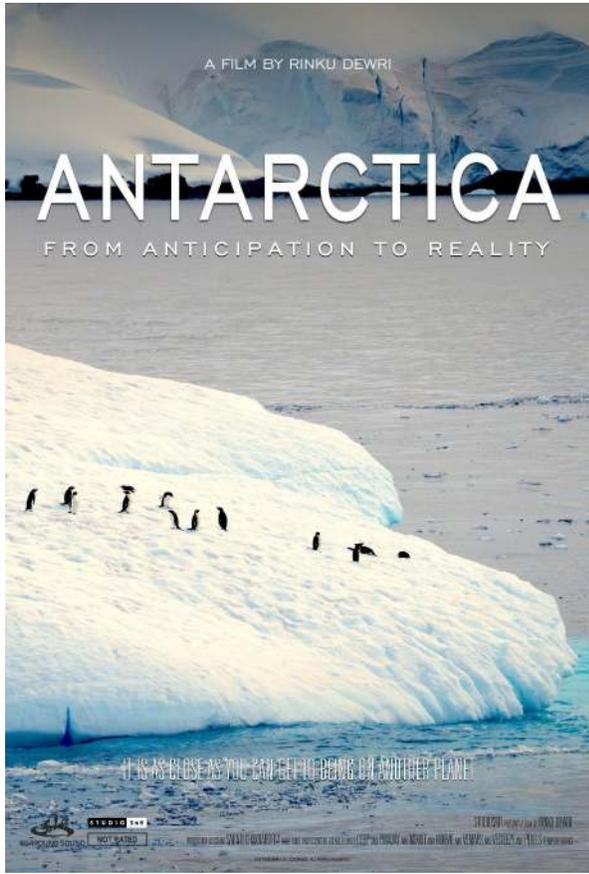
My vision in the film was to show a timeframe spent in anticipation, often buried in gathering facts and figures, attempting to imagine what Antarctica would be like; and then follow this with a timeframe spent in real Antarctica, showcasing how there is so much more intimacy in the real experience that no number, picture, or video can ever capture. I also wanted to capture visuals as we truly saw it, and capture audio as we truly heard it. As a first time filmmaker, this was a massive learning experience for me, and I am quite delighted to share this film with the outside world.

MEDIA ASSETS

High resolution media assets are available for download at:

<https://studiosnr.com/afatr/press/afatr-media-assets.zip>

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LOCATIONS

The film was primarily shot in Denver (Colorado, USA) and its suburbs, and several locations in the Antarctic Peninsula and the South Georgia island. Few shots were also filmed in Miami (Florida, USA), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Ushuaia (Argentina), the Drake passage, and the expedition ship. We were also lucky to get a few shots of the A23A iceberg while it was moving through the Southern Ocean.

Antarctic Peninsula

Locations in the Antarctic Peninsula included Penguin island, Turret point, Devil island, Vega island, the Antarctic Sound, Charcot bay, Curtiss bay and Mikkelsen harbour. It was a mix of landing opportunities as well as Zodiac excursions. Due to the ongoing Avian flu threat, we could not make landings on a few spots and had to do the exploration in Zodiacs only. Carrying a lot of filming gear was impractical, and shots had to be taken in an opportunistic manner, adhering to time restrictions we had on each site.

South Georgia Island

Locations in the South Georgia island included Drygalski fjord, Cooper bay, Gold harbour, Godthul, St. Andrews bay, Stromness, Grytviken, Salisbury plain and Rosita bay. Most of these locations were booming with wildlife and contributed to a significant portion of the wildlife footage in the film. Filming static landscapes versus living animals and birds are quite different, the former being more about composition while the latter is mostly about capturing live action. However, given the amount of wildlife in these locations, we had ample opportunities to capture some interesting shots.

ANECDOTES

A Tight Continental Landing



Landings in Antarctica usually involve having clear and safe access to solid ground, with no risk of ice calving. For every excursion, a small scout team surveyed the area and laid out a route for exploration. While we had ample opportunities to set foot on the small islands surrounding the peninsula, our expedition leader, Mario Spring, was having a hard time finding a proper spot for landing on continental

Antarctica. The spots were either covered with ice, or just did not have enough exposed land. Thankfully, he managed to execute one at Curtiss bay. There was a small stretch of rocks adjoining the sea that was clear from ice, which provided just enough space for the Zodiacs to dock, and the passengers to deboard and climb up to a small hilltop. It was a tight landing, with space for about 10 people to stand on those rocks, and we had to take turns to set foot on the continent.

A Saree Adventure



During our trip planning, Saonti had this fun idea of taking a picture in Antarctica posing in a saree. And we decided to give it a try during our landing at Mikkelsen harbour. We had to get permission from the expedition leader, get the saree thoroughly scrutinized for any non-native species, and then ensure it was zipped up in a bag for the rest of the voyage.

The temperature was at 4°C and the wind was calm, so it helped the photoshoot. Saonti dressed strategically for that specific excursion so that she could get in and out of the saree quickly. The photos turned out quite well, with her vibrant

saree against the white backdrop. We found one YouTube video of another woman having done this a month ago; so supposedly Saonti would be the second woman to pose in a saree in Antarctica.

First Hand Look At A23A



A23A is currently the world's largest iceberg, measuring about three times the size of New York city in area. It calved off from Filchner–Ronne Ice Shelf in 1986, but was stuck in the ocean floor. In 2020, it set itself free and started moving northeast in the Southern Ocean. On our way to the South Georgia island, our ship captain was kind enough to take a detour from the typical route

and give us a first hand look at this massive iceberg. A23A is so big that it does not feel like you are looking at an iceberg. There is just no end in sight. Wind currents have also curved majestic arches on the sides, with shimmering hues of cyan and blue on the inside. It was quite a windy day; we had to be careful not to let the wind slam the door of the observation lounge upon entry and exit to the deck.

Avian Flu Outbreak



An Avian flu outbreak was detected in Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic islands in October 2023, possibly carried over by migratory birds from South America. To avoid possible transfer from one site to another, we were under strict rules not to sit or place gear on the ground at any site. Anything that had possible ground contact, such as boots and walking poles, had to be disinfected before and

after every excursion. We could not make landings on a few spots because the expedition team felt that there were many dead animals on ground. From what we could see through our

binoculars, there seemed to be more dead seals than penguins. On one occasion, we saw a dead King Penguin on a rock up close, and it was heart-breaking to see how everything around just went on as usual.

No Budget To Spare



Our camera was an average DSLR; our lights were two LED panels and an emergency light; our softbox was wax paper; our boom pole was a PVC pipe; our color grading suite was a converted basement bedroom; our sound mixing room was our day-to-day television area; our set was our home. An Antarctica cruise is an expensive affair. All of our budget was exhausted just paying for the trip and a few unavoidable software tools. We had to rely on whatever gear we already had, and makeshift arrangements for everything else. Our inexperience also meant a lot of trial and error before finding a composition that we liked. At home, we had the time to do this trial and error, but in Antarctica, this meant capturing a lot of footage, with various camera settings. We have around 2.5 terabytes of footage equating to roughly 25 hours—a shooting ratio of about 30:1 for the entire film.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How would you categorize the film?

I would say it is a travelogue-style participatory documentary.

Why did you make this film?

First and foremost, I wanted to have a personal record of our voyage. But, I realized that it could be more. It could be informational, one that tries to break the common perception of Antarctica as a frigid white place, and show it as being capable of color and life. In my opinion, we do not relate well to places that we have a hard time imagining, or just doing it wrong. Antarctica is remote but it is still an important part of our ecosystem. I did not set out to make an environmental awareness film, but I am hoping that seeing more of Antarctica through the eyes of regular people will make the place more believable, bring it closer to us, and incite a sense of ownership.

Is tourism really good for a pristine place like Antarctica?

I will reiterate what the IAATO has to say about this. It seems tourism is considered to be a “driving force in Antarctic conservation.” Antarctica has no indigenous population to inform the world of its current state. Without visitors like you and me, it would only be the word-of-mouth of a few researchers in the bases, and that too from a few select countries. Limited tourism provides the opportunity for visitors from different nationalities to obtain a first-hand experience of Antarctica, and return home as “ambassadors of goodwill, guardianship and peace.” The IAATO and similar organizations, cruise operators, and visitors have a big responsibility here in ensuring that tourism leaves minimal impact on Antarctica. I am not familiar with all the regulations, but we did have to follow strict biosecurity protocols, and everyone was respectfully abiding by all the rules of interaction.

What do you expect viewers to learn from the film?

Besides being able to connect with Antarctica as any other habited place on the planet, I would be happy if viewers perceive the film as a celebration of the human spirit, which in my opinion, inherently likes to be nomadic. Even when fed with just the possibility of travel and wander, it gives us back in joy and satisfaction. But many of us do not engage much with the process of anticipation. It does not have to be some place like Antarctica; as long as it is something you are looking forward to, I think it can be transformed to a healthy dose of happiness. There are also

facts, figures and tips on how to prepare for an Antarctica trip, but all of that, and the making of this film itself, was actually us staying connected to a wonderful moment to come in the future.

What made you choose the specific tagline for the film?

The very first day I disembarked from the ship into the Antarctic waters, through a Zodiac, I was instantly reminded of the depicted scenery in James Cameron's Avatar-The Way of Water, blue-cyan water all around, white froth trails, tall mountains, wildlife, and busy with activities. I think it was the low, close to water, perspective you get from a Zodiac that makes it feel out of the world.

What was the biggest challenge making the film?

With no background in film-making, my biggest challenge was learning the process itself. Every step meant reading up on the basics, understanding the technicalities, and then thinking about how I would approach it in this project. It was quite difficult to do while maintaining a day job, but fortunately I had almost a year to make it through.

What is your day job?

I am a professor of computer science at a university. The job entails teaching, conducting research and mentoring students. I must say that my background in computer science was quite helpful in navigating the technical aspects of film making, especially the software tools available to aid the process.

What does "end-to-end" mean that you refer to in your statement?

End-to-end means starting at a story draft and ending at a final deliverable. This for me began with a tentative arrangement of how I want to present the film, moving on to shot planning, scheduling, budget, lighting, cinematography, music selection, editing and sound mixing, motion graphics, and color grading. Following this were the deliverables - online streaming, DCP and Bluray authoring, cover art and posters, and the website. It was overwhelming, but fun at the same time.

How was it like filming in Antarctica?

Awesome! It is unlike any other place I had seen, possibly a film maker's paradise. You would want to keep the camera rolling at all times. It does however come with its own challenges. We were part of a commercially run expedition, and had to abide by all rules and regulations set

forth by the IAATO. There was an ongoing Avian flu threat at the time, so we were not allowed to place any equipment on the ground, or sit on the ground. Shooting from a zodiac is difficult too since it is always wobbling. I had to meticulously stabilize every such shot to make it viewable. But it was an amazing experience and a very rewarding visit.

How did you decide what to film?

Much like any other commercial movie, I also started with a tentative shot deck by looking at images of Antarctica posted online. I had no idea what specific locations I would be visiting, but some idea of how I wanted to capture visuals if I came across them. Of course, there were some opportunistic shots that made their way into the final edit, and some planned ones I had to leave out because I could not take them or they just did not fall in place in the final narrative.

What gear did you carry?

It was basic, two cameras, a few lenses and accessories, most of which had to fit in a backpack. Traveling with a lot of gear is impractical, since we had to board and disembark from a Zodiac on every excursion, and there was not enough time and space to do elaborate camera setups on spot. In fact, the first day we stuffed the gear into two backpacks and a large dry sack, but realized that we were missing important time just taking things in and out of the bags. So, the next day onwards, it was just one backpack.

Did you see Antarctica through a lens?

Maybe half-and-half. I was indeed constantly thinking about my shots, but also consciously withheld the urge to keep shooting at all times, and appreciate what's in front with bare eyes.

What did you learn as a filmmaker from the experience?

As a first time filmmaker, I am glad that I took the time to slowly work through the project. There are a lot of creative and technical decisions at play, and I now have a deeper sense of what they are and their value in a production. I also learned that it is important to compartmentalize the different aspects of filmmaking, but also remember that everything will come together at the end to create something bigger, especially if you are going to wear multiple hats for a production.

BIOGRAPHIES



RINKU DEWRI
Director and Production Lead

Rinku grew up in India and moved to the United States for his PhD studies. He is currently a professor of computer science in the Denver, Colorado area. He is constantly drawn by the intersecting worlds of art and technology, and continues to explore old and new paradigms in both worlds. He made his directorial debut as an independent filmmaker through "Antarctica: From Anticipation To Reality", putting into practice what he self-taught about film making over the course of the project. He finds a deep sense of satisfaction when creative ideas take visual and audible forms, and will continue his exploration of the world of cinema into the future.



SAONTI CHAKRABORTY
Production Assistant

Saonti's passion dwells in Indian classical vocals, but she is also an avid follower of Bollywood and Tollywood cinema. She views cinema as a mode of entertainment, and also as a medium of social communication, an artistic rendition of issues that are sometimes difficult to talk about. For her, a story comes first, then its presentation. She has a PhD in Physics and is currently a professor and academic administrator at a local college in Aurora, Colorado.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Genre	Documentary; Travelogue
Runtime	49 minutes 22 seconds
Premier	Not premiered yet
Shooting Format	Digital
Aspect Ratio	2.39:1
Master Video Resolution	2048x858 (DCI 2K Scope)
Sound Mix	5.1 Surround; Stereo
Sound Format	LPCM; Dolby Digital
Rating	Not Rated
Language	English; Hindi
Captions and Subtitles	English
Filming Locations	Antarctic Peninsula; South Georgia Island; USA; Argentina
Shooting Ratio	30:1
Camera & Lenses	Canon EOS R7 (main camera); Canon EOS 70D; Canon EF-S 10-22mm f/3.5-4.5 USM; Canon EF 24-105mm f/4 L IS USM; Canon EF 50mm f/1.8 STM; SIGMA 18-35mm F1.8 DC HSM; Canon RF 100-400mm F5.6-8 IS USM
Cinematographic Process	10-bit HEVC (4K, source format), ProRes 422 HQ (2K, master format)
Age Limit	Suitable for all ages

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Video Credits

Mikhail Nilov
Wietse Van Den Hout
Pressmaster
Tom Schönmann
Blackboxguild
Videvo
Vecteezy
Rick Ray
Sven Hastedt
Premiumbeat
Sellfy

Sound FX Credits

Mixkit
Pixabay
Soundsforyou
Gregorquendel
666herohero
U_r7iwd4nklp
Olena
Soundshmyak
Audiohero

Photo Credits

Rawpixel
Underwood & Underwood

David Hocking
Mike Baird
Rohit Tandon
Vemaps
Pia Harboure
Nichola Meharg
Russell Henry
Mike Roberts

Background Score

"Otjánbird Pt. I" by Spheriá
soundcloud.com/spheriamusic
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"Piano Calm Music" by Relaxingtime
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"Inspiring Dreams" by Keys of Moon
soundcloud.com/keysofmoon
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"Main Theme (Overture) | The Grand Score"
by Alexander Nakarada
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"Documentary" by Yrii Semchyshyn

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"Energetic Rock Beat" by Yrii Semchyshyn

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"Aurora" by Scott Buckley

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"Nature Documentary" by Aleksey Chistilin

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"Documentary Background" by Aleksey
Chistilin

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"I Love You All" by Ashot Danielyan

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"The Epic Hero" by Keys of Moon

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"Through The Waves" by Keys of Moon

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"In Search Of Solitude" by Scott Buckley

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"Empires" by Alex-productions

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"Reaching The Sky" by Alexander Nakarada

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Media Assets

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