

**THE FORGOTTEN WOMAN OPENS  
WITH FOUR STARS!**

**"Mr Mehta putts an unforgettable face on a problem of unimaginable scope"**

Nathan Lee- The New York Times

**Mehta's eye-opening documentary is one of the more important films to screen this year"**

Barry Hertz, National Post

**"The stories and images raise a powerful call for change"**

Lynne Fernie, Hot Docs

**"A powerful reminder of the forgotten"**

Susan Walker- Toronto Star

**"Pretty much guaranteed to knock your socks off! "**

Vanessa Farquharson, National Post

**"Stunning Beautiful"**

Susan Cole- Now Magazine

**"Gorgeous! "**

Alex Bozilovick- The Globe and Mail

**Hamilton Mehta Productions and Filmblanc**

**Present**

# **THE FORGOTTEN WOMAN**

**A film by Dilip Mehta**

**“ LA FEMME OUBLIÉE ”**

**“ LA MUJER OLVIDADA ”**

Bengali/Hindi/English  
Versioning: Subtitles available in English, French and Spanish

(90 mins, Canada, 2008)

## **THE FORGOTTEN WOMAN**

### **A Hamilton-Mehta- Filmlanc Production**

Directed and filmed by Dilip Mehta, and written by Deepa Mehta. *The Forgotten Woman* was produced by David Hamilton of Hamilton-Mehta Productions Inc., and Noemi Weis of Filmlanc Inc. with the financial participation of Telefilm Canada, CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), TV5 Canada and Sundance Channel USA. Distribution in Canada by Mongrel Media and international distribution is handled by Noble Nomad Pictures Inc.

### **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

Following the international success of Deepa Mehta's Oscar-nominated film *Water*, which has achieved, to date, sales of over \$15 million and more than 1,000,000 viewers, Ms. Mehta received thousands of letters from the audience. Set in 1938 Colonial India against Mahatma Gandhi's rise to power, *Water* is about eight-year-old child bride Chuyia, who is widowed and sent to an ashram where Hindu widows must live out their remaining days in penitence. After viewing the film, many wanted to know more about the state of widows in India today.

*The Forgotten Woman* was made in direct response to this interest and aims to bring about an understanding of the destitution and marginalization of many of the millions of widows in India today, who are forced by age-old traditions to live out their remaining years isolated from and shunned by the society at large. The film explores how these widows, coerced by their families to give up their possessions, become non-entities in society.

*The Forgotten Woman* aims to create greater awareness of the fact that in the 21st century, there are still numerous and wide spread issues surrounding women's search for economic independence in order to attain a modicum of dignity, self-sufficiency and basic human dignity.

### **LONG SYNOPSIS**

*The Forgotten Woman* is a documentary set in India which aims to understand the destitution and marginalization of many of the millions of widows in India today who are forced by age-old traditions to live out their remaining years isolated from and shunned by the society at large.

The film explores how these widows, coerced by their families to give up their possessions, become non-entities in society.

*The Forgotten Woman* captures these women in their new lives in Ashrams and in the streets where they wander, seeking solace and greater dignity by devoting themselves to religious practices which were established centuries ago, as a way to atone for their sins which, it is believed, caused their husbands' deaths.

It explores Indian traditions and religious implications of a patriarchal society that brings destitution to women once they become widows and highlights violations meted out to these women due to social and cultural sanctions, customary beliefs, misinterpretations

of religious texts, political apathy, economic deprivation, non-implementation of government programs and lack of access to the law.

***The Forgotten Woman*** draws attention to the impacts of these violations on many individual women who have become marginalized and forced to live in an invisible community so that the vital contribution which they could be making to society is totally eradicated.

In addition to exploring the lives of these women, the film also focus on the work of a Canadian woman, Ginny Shrivastava, who was born in Canada to a middle-class white family, married into an Indian family and relocated to Udaipur, India, with her husband. Having become widowed while living in India and instead of returning to her roots in Canada, she chose to remain to help fight the ignorance which underlies the treatment of widows and find ways to promote economic independence and empowerment and thus a sense of value for the self.

Ginny's remarkable work explores the positive changes to the lives of many of these women who previously had decided to live the rest of their lives waiting to die, or who had decided to accept their widowhood and allow their exploitation by society, exacerbated by their lack of education, personal strength, or lack of skills or economic independence.

The film also follows the work of Dr. Mohini Giri who has been working towards providing shelter to these women, specifically in the city of Vrindavan, home to a large migration of women from West Bengal who were shunted from their homes by their own family members upon becoming widowed.

The documentary adheres to the 'tell it as it is' approach without creating or recreating any additional scenes from the past or the present. The film is punctuated by interviews with organization heads, field workers, family members of the women, and of course the women themselves.

***The Forgotten Woman*** examines the general status of widows today as compared to the past. Interviews with urban, professional and upper-class women give contrast to the rural woman and also illustrate urban society's lack of knowledge vis-à-vis the large number of women living in deprivation today.

The film attests to the intense research conducted by the filmmakers and is truthful to the findings that indicate that although there has been a positive change in the state of widows in India over the past few decades, there is still an enormous stigma and exploitation of widows, which prevents them from living their lives with any basic human rights.

Web links for additional information:

[www.astha.org](http://www.astha.org) The Association of Strong Women Alone, Ginny Shrivastava  
<http://www.guildofserviceni.com> The Guild of Services India, Dr. Mohini Giri

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT – DILIP MEHTA**

In the making of *The Forgotten Woman* there was no framework as such. We just began. And there was a compelling reason to begin because the numbers were overwhelming - the number of women who were marginalized by ignorance, the number of women who were deceived by greed, and the number of women who were ostracized by tradition. Numbers that totaled a staggering 20 million widows in India. Numbers that almost equal the entire population of Canada.

To empathize with the complexity of widowhood and to understand the basic denial of Human Rights in my country is difficult, but to come to terms with all that it represents is harder still. As a male director/cameraperson I found myself steeped in guilt and almost always apologizing in silence each time we became a part of a widow's life in *The Forgotten Woman*.

The many hours of hopes, moments, and memories we recorded are not easy to share. In the process of making this documentary we saw and we heard too much. It's almost a betrayal of a secret.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The film *Water*, a fiction based on real life events set in 1938, deeply moved audiences around the world. Today in India, there are 45 million widows and in the intervening 70 years there has been some progress in how they are treated, but as Producer Noemi Weis observed, "We can say that probably half of those, still live in deplorable conditions: some in Ashrams, some in temples and some in the streets. They beg, they chant at temples where they get paid six rupees a day (38 rupees = \$1 Can.). Most of them are illiterate and therefore can't read the signs the government posts to announce their pension. They are abandoned by their families because they are a burden or they choose to leave their homes because they can't take the ill treatment they receive. Although there are some organizations that are helping, the number of widows is too large and the resources are not enough. Dr. Ginny Shrivastava, founder of the Association of Strong Women Alone, is an example of those organizations. She has been able to make a significant change, but her resources over the last 36 years, have only been able to help 20,000 women. This number is quite impressive considering the reach Ginny has been able to achieve in rural areas in the region of Rajasthan, but 20,000 women is

a very small percentage when we talk about millions of women living in these poor conditions. Dr. Mohini Giri, is another example, as founder of Amar Bari Ashram and shelter for widows in Vrindavan, where she is able to provide food and shelter."

The emotional outpouring from *Water* audiences is clearly an indication of concern for human rights and warrants a more in-depth and factual investigation of the political and social reasons that keep these rights and freedoms issues in continued silence. Deepa Mehta has been recognized by numerous human rights organizations around the globe. In 2006 she received the Bulgari Freedom of Expression Award in New York from the National Board of Review and The Humanitarian Award from The New York Online Critics. Human Rights Watch chose the film for their conference in London and the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles organized a special screening in Los Angeles in

support of their aims. In 2007 *Water* was nominated for an Oscar as “Best Film in the Foreign Film Category”.

***The Forgotten Woman*** aims at creating greater awareness of the fact that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there are still issues surrounding women’s search for economic independence in order to attain a modicum of dignity, self-sufficiency and basic human dignity.

Utilizing the documentary medium, it has been our intent to raise awareness around the world to the plight of these women in the hopes that audiences will be motivated to consider the abuse and marginalization which exist within their own communities and turn their attention to redressing the wrongs which continue to be wrought on those who tend to be more vulnerable.

### **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

Prior to the completion of the script for *Water*, a great deal of research on the widows of India had been completed, according to Producer David Hamilton. What was found was that even today, widows must shave their heads, wear only coarse white saris, and never eat anything but the blandest food donated to her just once a day, after hours spent strictly in prayer. Remarriage is not an option. On a deeper level, widows are regarded as witches or bad omens, sometimes held responsible for the deaths of their husbands. “The genesis of the documentary was not so much an epiphanic experience, but rather a creeping realization of the relevance of the story we were telling about the current lives of millions of women. The audience reaction was the final confirmation.” Hamilton felt a responsibility to let audiences know how much (or little) the condition of the widows had changed since the events depicted in *Water*, set in 1938.

The notion of following a feature film with a documentary on the same subject is something Hamilton endorsed in the case of *Water*. “The circumstances are very particular to the fact that the practices depicted in the film continue to be prevalent in India today. This documentary far surpassed my expectations. I had in mind that we would create a truthful and factual exposition of the conditions of a large number of widows in India today and it certainly achieved that. What I had not expected to experience was the profound sense of hope for mankind which resulted from peering into the lives of some remarkable women who do not allow their circumstances to burden their spirits to the point of despondency, but rather use them as an inspiration to either achieve a transcendent joyfulness or to spur them to action for the improvement of their own lives as well as the lives of others.”

“When Deepa Mehta called me one evening in November of 2005 to share the success of *Water* and how much she would like to produce a documentary about the widows in India today, I could only think of what I had learned from her film, and how much this, for me, was another case of Human Rights which I should face courageously and forcefully,” recounted Producer Noemi Weis. The relationship between the two women dated back to when Mehta directed *Let’s Talk About It*, Weis’ 2005 documentary about the children of domestic violence. Based on this collaboration, Noemi was the producer who Dilip, the director, and Deepa Mehta and David Hamilton turned to after *Water* began generating questions from the public about the current state of widows in India. “Noemi is someone who is motivated by issues that have been ignored or are challenging,” said Dilip.

“Like millions of people around the world, *Water* was my first encounter with the widows of India,” said Noemi. She spent a year researching the subject and gathering funding for ***The Forgotten Woman***.

In 2007, while waiting to secure a cinematographer, a Bengali-speaking researcher was also brought on board primarily because 60 percent of the widows at Amar Bari Ashram are from Bengal. The next step was for Dilip and Noemi to start doing their research on camera, so they embarked on a three week trip traveling through India, filming what they hoped would be a solid base of background footage. “Surprises were everywhere,” said Dilip. “That left me open to discovery, by chance and often by listening. Our approach was to stand back and observe.”

“When I entered into Amar Bari, an Ashram for widows in Vrindavan, I felt that I was entering the set of *Water*,” recalled Noemi. “I could not believe that this was happening today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, not in 1938, and the reality was appalling. Unfortunately, although some progress has been made, the ancient traditions were still rampant and the lack of dignity and basic rights were something I had never imagined possible to that extent.” After the first trip (several more were to follow), the footage was reviewed and the quality of the cinematography was so engaging that it was decided to continue with Dilip as the Director of Photography. “I began shooting as a form of research and my style is not necessarily an intrusive one. My experience as an editorial photographer came into play, having been an editorial photographer since the age of 20 [Dilip is now 55 years old] when I had my first TIME Magazine cover. I’d never shot video before this, and I must say I enjoyed the process immensely. It’s the same as still photography, but you have the addition of sound. Video is nothing more than a series of still images - framing is absolutely the same.”

“Working with Dilip as Director and Cinematographer was extremely interesting,” noted Noemi. “There I was with a renowned journalist/photographer who, in spite of his wealth of experience and knowledge, was like an emerging talent in filmmaking. He learned to operate a video camera during a half-hour crash course in a basement in Delhi so we could take a camera on our exploratory journey. The first afternoon, I stood behind him, watching through the camera how he was framing. The way he was unobtrusively capturing these women and their stories assured me that our film was in good hands. His sensitivity was reflected in every shot.”

Dilip’s purpose in making ***The Forgotten Woman*** was to be a fly on the wall, recording what he saw. “What I did not want to do was to make a statement, political or otherwise. I didn’t want to intellectualize, philosophize or manipulate the subject matter. The agenda was not to reveal the shortcomings of organizations or people. It’s to address the shortcomings of life.”

Initially, Noemi felt that the treatment of widows in India was a combination of culture and religion. “It is outrageous to think a woman is responsible for bringing on the death of her husband, yet this is the reason they’ve been shunned by that society. What we found was that this stigma was not restricted to rural areas, the uneducated or even to the poor. For centuries, widows have been perceived as witches, responsible for bringing bad luck.” But ultimately, Noemi and Dilip discovered that the root of the problem is mainly economic. They also found people like Ginny Shrivastava who are working to empower women and to teach them to first respect themselves and then to seek the respect from others.

“I don’t think the treatment of the widows is a secret,” Noemi continued, “but rather it’s that people are not aware of what is happening in their own country. The same applies to other countries in the world, where there is ignorance about what happens in rural areas. “We discovered that there was no difficulty in finding people who wanted to talk to us. These women really wanted to tell their stories; they needed to be heard. As a documentary producer, I always say that I use my medium to bring awareness of issues that people don’t know about, issues that must be talked about, and this situation is something that needs to be talked about,” concluded Noemi.

“I feel that every man in India should be watching this,” concluded Dilip. “That is not to say that there are no widows outside of India, but the problem is inherent there right now. We are talking about 40-odd million widows, which is more than the population of Canada. It’s shameful. I just want to reach out to people who are ignorant or oblivious to the situation.”

### **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

**DILIP MEHTA (Director/Camera)** was born in Delhi, India. For his secondary education, he attended the prestigious Doon School in Dehra Dun and graduated from the Delhi University with a degree in Economics/Commerce.

Along with his sister, Director/Producer Deepa Mehta, he was a founding member and partner of Sunrise Films Limited, Toronto, Canada. Sunrise Films produced numerous documentaries, television series and feature films during the eighties and nineties.

As an internationally renowned photojournalist, Dilip has photographed for some of the world’s leading publications such as *National Geographic*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Figaro*, *Stern*, *The London Sunday Times* and *The New York Times* amongst others.

His incisive coverage of the Bhopal Gas tragedy and photo reportage of its aftermath over a five-year period won him accolades including the World Press and Overseas Press Awards.

He is a member-photographer of the prestigious New York and Paris based CONTACT PRESS IMAGES, a photo agency that represents an exclusive group of photojournalists who share a unique vision.

His work has been published in the award-winning *Day in the Life* series in America, Canada, Russia, Australia, Japan, Italy, Spain, and China and he was the subject of a one hour documentary –“Traveling Light: The Photojournalism of Dilip Mehta,” co-produced with CBC and Channel-4, England.

In addition to his photojournalism, Dilip is active in the field of television and filmmaking. He was the Special Stills Photographer on *Gandhi*, *The Razor’s Edge*, *Fire* and the Canadian television series, *Danger Bay*. He was the Creative Producer of Deepa Mehta’s critically acclaimed *Earth*, and was the Production Designer and Associate Producer of the film, *Water*, shot on location in Sri Lanka.

Dilip's Directorial debut in *The Forgotten Woman* is followed by his second film "Stella", which was shot in India during the winter of 2008 and currently in post production.

Dilip currently divides his time between Toronto and Delhi.

**DEEPA MEHTA (Executive Producer/Writer)** was born in India and received a degree in philosophy from the University of New Delhi.

In 1991, Mehta produced and directed her first feature film *Sam & Me*, which won the very first Honorable Mention by the Critics in the Camera D'Or category in the 1991 Cannes Film Festival.

In 1992/93, she directed two one-hour episodes of the "Young Indiana Jones Chronicles," produced by George Lucas for ABC television.

In 1993, Mehta directed her second feature film, *Camilla*, starring (the late) Jessica Tandy and Bridget Fonda. It was shot on location in Toronto, Ontario and Savannah, Georgia. *Camilla* had a worldwide release early in 1995.

*Fire*, Mehta's third feature film, based on an original screenplay, was written, directed and produced by Mehta. *Fire* was released in 1996 and won fourteen international festival awards including best picture in Chicago and Los Angeles.

*Earth*, based on Bapsi Sidhwa's critically acclaimed novel, *Cracking India*, is the second film in Mehta's trilogy of the elements, *Fire*, *Earth* and *Water*. *Earth* won the Prix Premiere du Public at the Festival du film Asiatique de Deauville, France in March, 1999 and the Critics' Award at the Schermi d'Amore International Film Festival, Italy in April of the same year.

In 2002 Mehta's film, *Bollywood/Hollywood*, opened the Perspective Canada Program at the 2002 Toronto International Film Festival, and upon release became one of the top ten grossing English Canadian movies.

In 2003, Mehta co-wrote and directed *Republic of Love*, based on the novel of the same title by the world-renowned author, Carol Shields, starring Bruce Greenwood and Amelia Fox.

In the same year, Ms. Mehta won the prestigious CineAsia "Best Director" Award - an acclaim awarded to Steven Spielberg in 2002.

*Water*, the third film in the "elements" trilogy, opened the 2005 Toronto International Film Festival and was released in Canada in the fall of 2005, grossing over \$2.2 million. *Water* is the first Canadian film ever acquired by U.S. distributor Fox Searchlight and was released in the United States in the spring of 2006. *Water* has played many film festivals in North America and internationally, winning festival awards in Sudbury, Edmonton, Spain, Bangkok and San Francisco. *Water* received the Taormina Arte Awards for Cinematic Excellence in 2006. *Water*, received the Golden Kinnaree Awards for best picture from the Bangkok International Film Festival. The film was nominated for

nine Genie awards, winning three. It was nominated for a best foreign film Oscar in 2007.

**DAVID HAMILTON (Producer/Executive Producer)** was the producer on *Water* when it was shut down by Hindu fundamentalist factions during the attempted shooting in India in 2000 and has worked together with Deepa Mehta over the past five years to re-assemble the production that was ultimately shot in Sri Lanka in 2004. He had previously produced Deepa Mehta's critically acclaimed feature films *Fire* and *Earth* which he sold in conjunction with United Artists to over 40 countries worldwide. Following the original shutdown of *Water*, Hamilton collaborated once again with Mehta by producing *Bollywood/Hollywood*, which was shot in Toronto in late 2001, and the following year opened Perspective Canada at the Toronto International Film Festival. It was a box office success in Canada and sold in over 20 countries worldwide. He has also executive produced *Lunch With Charles*, a Hong Kong-Canadian co-production starring Sean Lau, Theresa Lee, Nicholas Lea and Bif Naked.

After completing his undergraduate studies at McGill, Hamilton went on to Harvard for a Masters degree. While at Harvard, he wrote a book on decision theory that was published by MIT Press. A Harvard Sheldon Traveling Fellowship enabled him to travel and study for one year in the Middle East, Iran and India. His business ventures have taken him to every corner of the globe and span a variety of enterprises, including communications, publishing, concert production/promotion and feature film production.

His passion early in life was gymnastics and theatre. He performed a tight rope act in a children's circus and wrote and acted in numerous plays and musicals. A strong supporter of the arts, Hamilton has been an active member of the board of directors of the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, School of Dance and the Ottawa International Writers Festival.

**NOEMI WEIS (Producer/Executive Producer)** is President and Executive Producer of Filmblanc an international production company created in 1998. Filmblanc has forged strategic alliances with overseas production companies, providing access to over 20 production facilities across Europe, the Americas, and Asia, and offering a one-stop shop whose expertise can help Canadian and International productions reach foreign markets.

To date, Filmblanc has been successful in servicing clients in the Canadian market, as well clients from countries such as USA, Argentina, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Spain, France, Italy, and Israel, in the production of television commercials, music videos, Long and Short Format films and Television Production.

Over the past few years Filmblanc has expanded into new territories by adding a division to create and produce long format films, television series and socially relevant documentaries, winner of best documentaries of the year 2005 and 2006 consecutively from the Canadian Broadcasters Corporation.

Noemi created and produced *Let's Talk About It*, directed by Oscar-nominated Deepa Mehta, (2005) reaching international markets. In Canada, it won the Jury Golden Sheaf Award and it was awarded by Canadian Broadcast Association with the Gold Ribbon Award as the best documentary of the year in the Public Affairs Category. *Let's Talk About It* is featured in schools and universities across Canada and the USA as an educational tool and has been distributed to women's organizations across North America. Official entries include, Hot Doc's International Film Festival, Winnipeg Film Festival, Yorkton, Yukon, Stories from the Field (New York); Nyon (Switzerland); FIAP (Argentina) and Amnesty International Film Festivals around the world.

Noemi's documentary as Writer and Producer, *Gloriously Free*, (2004) has won the Golden Ribbon Award from the Canadian Broadcast Association as the best Documentary in the social issues category. *Gloriously Free* continues to be featured in International Festivals with great recognition.

Noemi is a proud member of Unesco, Team Canada and a Business Ambassador of Ontario, promoting the merits of Canadian commercial and television production abroad. In this capacity, she has participated in various trade missions, and has been honoured with the nomination of "Woman Entrepreneur of the Year" for three years in a row, the last one by Export Development Canada. In 2004 she was nominated as a finalist for "Woman Entrepreneur of the World", as the sole Canadian nominee. Born in Buenos Aires and educated in Argentina and Canada, Noemi brings her skills and experience as an Executive Producer, Writer and Producer as well as her love for culture and humanity to every project. She continues to create and develop new projects utilizing her medium to promote human rights and social justice.

She is fluent in English, French, Italian and Spanish.

For more information, please visit our web site at [www.filmblanc.com](http://www.filmblanc.com).

## **ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEES**

### **DR. GINNY SHRIVASTAVA (Founder, Association of Strong Women Alone)**

Born in Canada, Ginny moved to India in 1970 after completing her studies at Queen's University. She founded in the region of Rajasthan, the Association of Strong Women Alone, devoted to educate and empower women in search of basic human dignity.

Her work as an activist for women's rights has been recognized over the years with various awards from people's groups of Udaipur, Rajasthan – Children, Bohra Muslims and Dalits, the Alumni Achievement Award from Queen's University, and a nomination as one of the "1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize" in 2005.

Ginny Shrivastava has been working as an international consultant since 1963, for organizations such as the I.L.O Consultancy in Nepal on Women's Income Generating Project, the Oxfam America Workshop in Bangladesh, Coady International Institute, Antigonish, Canada, Consultation on Tribals in Asia, Beijing World Conference on Women NGO Forum, Beijing, China, Asian Women's Pre-Beijing Workshop organized by ESCAP, Manila, Philippines, World Social Summit Plus Five, Geneva, United Nations, ECOSOC, World Social Forum, Mumbai, India and most recently at the Commonwealth Asia Colloquium on "Gender, Culture and the Law" organized by the Commonwealth Secretariat at Dhaka, Bangladesh.

As the founder of The Association of Strong Women Alone, Ginny continues after 36 years of living in India to be a driving force behind the plight of the 45 million widows

whose lives have been shunned from society for the mere reason of losing their husbands. Ginny's work has helped more than 20,000 women in the region of Rajasthan to find economic independence, assured jobs, educational training and the moral support needed to attain a modicum of dignity, self-sufficiency and basic human rights.

Ginny's tireless attitude and efforts, along with her kindness and wisdom, are just some of the attributes that have made a difference to her work and to the lives of many women and their families.

As a Canadian woman living abroad and fighting for social justice and human rights, Ginny is an inspirational role model.

**DR. V. MOHINI GIRI (Chairperson, Guild of Service & War Widows Association)**

Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005, Dr. V. Mohini Giri, social activist, writer, scholar and a leader in the women's movement, is the voice for women, peace and justice in India and South Asia. Specializing in human rights and gender justice, she is renowned both nationally and internationally for her four decades of committed work in empowering women politically, socially, legally and economically. She has worked relentlessly for the cause of National Integration. She has done pioneering work for war-affected families, rehabilitating war widows and spearheading a housing program for the 12,000 Sikh families who were victims of the 1984 Anti-Sikh Riots. In Godhra, the marginalized riot-affected women were rehabilitated. In Jammu and Kashmir, Dr. Giri runs a production and training center and a home for the war-affected widows of Kashmir. In the Tsunami-ravaged areas of Nagapattinam she runs vocational training and skill development centres for the victims. In Vrindavan she has been operating a home for the elderly widows of Vrindavan for the last decade and she is now constructing a home called "Ma-Dham" to rehabilitate 500 more elderly widows.

She has traveled extensively in conflict zones as special envoy for women and peace and has improved internal and external peace prospects in India and the South Asia Region. She is the chairperson of the Guild of Service, an NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, representing the interests of and creating initiatives for India's widows. She is a heroic leader and a courageous advocate for those in need.

Born in Lucknow in 1938, she comes from an illustrious family of scholars (Dr. V. S Ram), civil servants, musicians and members of the armed forces. Dr. Mohini Giri is also the daughter-in-law of the late Shri V.V. Giri, former president of India. She is proficient in nine languages.

For further information on Dr. Giri and her organization, please visit  
Website: <http://www.guildofserviceni.com>

Hamilton-Mehta Productions and Filmblanc present  
a film by Dilip Mehta

**The Forgotten Woman**

In Association with Telefilm Canada

Director & Camera:	Dilip Mehta
Executive Producers:	Deepa Mehta, David Hamilton, Noemi Weis
Producers:	David Hamilton, Noemi Weis
Writer:	Deepa Mehta
Editor:	Dilip Mehta
Interviewees:	Ginny Shrivastava, founder of the Association of Strong Women Alone  Dr. Mohini Giri, Guild of Services, founder of Amar Bari Shelter  Usha Rai, journalist and researcher
Production Manager:	Alok Kapur
Researchers:	Choiti Ghosh, Noemi Weis, Avani Batra, Devyani Mehta Saltzman
Interviewers:	Choiti Ghosh, Noemi Weis
Music:	“Nadia” by Nitin Sawhney From the album Beyond Skin Published by Zomba Mixed Publishers Ltd. & Outcaste Records Ltd.  “Alone” by Abhishek Mathur  “O’ Traveller” by Rabindranath Tagore

“Across the River” by A.R. Rahman &  
Mychael Danna  
From the Album - Water  
(Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)  
Varese Sarabande

“Maati” by Shubha Mudgal  
From the album Mann ke Manjeere:  
An album of women's dreams  
Lyrics: Prasoon Joshi  
Music: Shantanu Moitra  
(Breakthrough/EMI) © [2000]

“Radha & Sita Love Theme”  
composed by A.R. Rahman  
From the Album - Fire  
(Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)  
A Cinesound Production  
Additional Production by Peter  
Collmann  
Colosseum Schallplatten

“Kaaluu” by A.R. Rahman &  
Mychael Danna  
From the Album - Water  
(Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)  
Varese Sarabande

This film would not have been possible without the kind support of the widows  
and people of Vrindavan, Varanasi, Delhi, West Bengal and Rajasthan

Produced in collaboration with Telefilm, CIDA,OMDC,CAVCO,TV5, SUNDANCE

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