



NORWICH
UNIVERSITY
OF THE ARTS

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IRON MEN

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PROFESSOR SURI KRISHNAMMA IRON MEN

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1. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Output title IRON MEN
Output type Q - Visual Media
Output date 2017

Suri Krishnamma was approached by the film's producers at Spark Media who knew his previous work. The producers wanted a director with cinematic vision who understood the emotional wrench that moving from an historic stadium, and from one area of London to another, would represent to West Ham United football club and its supporters. Krishnamma and the producers were instrumental in convincing the club's owners and vice-chairman that their project should receive support and exclusive access, with a number of other projects vying for access to document the event.

Krishnamma and the producers decided to focus the film on the supporters and identified its key themes: the end of an era; leaving home; separation from the past; the effect of the move on the local economy; new beginnings.

Research included the history of the club and the area of Upton Park in East London, particularly locating archive photographs and film. Krishnamma was also involved in research to identify 'witnesses' to the significance of the move: supporters, match-day vendors, the local community, a celebrity supporter as well as club players, management and employees. As the director, he determined the documentary style and narrative of the film, and oversaw the logistics of pre-production, production and post-production.

The film chronicles a unique event, with privileged access to players and those who run the club, and documents the supporters' perspective and the significance of the move to the local community. It also uses the documentary format to raise broader themes of changing communities, the historic dispersal of communities and how a football club represents a sense of history and continuity for its fans.

The film was premiered on 2 March 2017. It has been widely distributed and broadcast three times on satellite television channels. Krishnamma has won five awards for the film to date.



Fig.1 DVD Cover

2. RESEARCH PROCESS

Iron Men is a documentary feature film covering West Ham United football club's move from its home of 112 years at the Boleyn Ground in Upton Park to their new location at the London Stadium (the former Olympic Stadium) in Stratford.

Suri Krishnamma is a lifelong West Ham supporter and a season ticket holder, so he understood the significance of the move and the difficulty of leaving the Boleyn Ground from the fan's perspective. However, gaining exclusive access to the players and club hierarchy was essential to determine a central theme of the link between the club, the ground, the fans and the community in Upton Park. This was achieved after a number of meetings between the Vice-Chairman, Karren Brady, the producers and Krishnamma. As the director, it was important that Krishnamma maintained the trust of the players and management, for example Club Captain Mark Noble, to maintain the access needed to complete the project. The film had a budget of £850,000.

A researcher was employed to source archive footage and identify background knowledge for the production. Krishnamma and the producers worked together to identify and research key 'witnesses', including the joint owners of the club who are lifelong fans themselves, to the oldest fan, the fanzine producer, the 'Rib Man', and a celebrity supporter, all of whom grew up in East London. Research also involved interviewing local businesses on the importance of match days to their turnover. Krishnamma emphasised filming the documentary as observational within the community and at the ground rather than as 'talking head' interviews. He reflected archive images in the contemporary footage. He worked with the producers to determine the main narrative of the film, particularly the narrative drive of the effect of the move on the local economy, as well as its emotional climax in the last game at the old stadium.

The film has two directors credited but the main footage of the film was planned and directed by Krishnamma, including the entire transition from the old to the new stadium. The co-director joined the team during the post-production stage when most material had been shot.



Fig.2 Research images



Fig.3 Research images



Fig.4 Research image



Fig.5 Krishnamma with Mark Noble, West Ham Club Captain



Fig.6 Images from the film



Fig.7 Images from the film

Professor Suri Krishnamma

3. RESEARCH INSIGHTS

The film chronicles a unique event, with privileged access to players and those who run West Ham United as well as documenting the perspective of supporters and the club's importance to the local community and its economy. It also uses the documentary format to raise broader themes of changing communities, the historic dispersal of communities and how a football club represents a sense of history and continuity for its supporters. The film not only documents a key moment in the history of West Ham United, it also contributes to the history of an area East London.

As co-director of *Iron Men*, Krishnamma has won five awards to date.

The trailer for the film is available at: https://www.imdb.com/video/vi4284855833?playlistId=tt6440810&ref=tt_pr_ov_vi (accessed 16 March 2021)

Hard copy DVD

Iron Men 1hr 15" (Certificate 12)

Directed by Paul Crompton & Suri Krishnamma

Producers:

Mark Baker

Marc Goldberg

Steve Havers

Caj Sohal

Researcher: Paul McCallum

Cinematography by Max Bell & Scott Newstead

Film Editing by Anton Short & Steve Struthers

Sound: Emanuele Constantini

4. DISSEMINATION

Iron Men was premiered on 2 March 2017 at the Genesis Cinema, Bethnal Green, London.

Broadcasts

It was broadcast on Sky Sports on 18 June (10pm) and 4 August (9pm), on BT Sports on 13 April 2019 (9pm).

Sales

The DVD has been on sale from March 2017 at many outlets, including in the West Ham United Club shop, and online. It was No.1 bestseller on Amazon on 6 March 2017.

The film was available to download from March 2017. It was No.1 documentary downloaded from iTunes in March 2017.

Exhibition

The film has been selected for screening at the following festivals:

2018

Idyllwild International Festival of Cinema, California, USA, 7 March 2018

Southend on Sea Film Festival, UK, 26 May 2018

Festigol3, Festival de Documentales de Futbol, Chile, 20 October 2018

2019

Rathmullan Film Festival, Ireland, 23 February 2019

Awards

Gold Award for Best Documentary Feature, Spotlight Documentary Film Awards, June 2017

Award of Merit, Accolade Global Film Competition, June 2017

Award of Merit, Impact Doc Awards, August 2017

Certificate of Excellence, 5th Indian Cine Film Festival, September 2017

Special Jury Award, North American Film Awards, December 2017

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6440810/awards?ref=tt_ql_op_1
(accessed 16 March 2021)

FESTIGOL FESTIVAL DE DOCUMENTALES DE FÚTBOL
20 Y 21 DE OCTUBRE DE 2018 - CORPORACIÓN CULTURAL DE RECOLETA - CHILE

VIERNES 12 DE OCTUBRE	SABADO 20 DE OCTUBRE	DOMINGO 21 DE OCTUBRE
12:00 a 19:00 Viñetas futboleras de Jose Gal Toda la semana hasta el domingo 21	14:00 a 18:00 Taca-Taca FestiGol Club Nacional de Taca Taca	
	14:00 a 18:00 Colección "El futbol en Recoleta" Fundación Ceachei	
	14:00 a 15:15 Documental "Iron Men" Inglaterra / 2017 / 75 min.	15:00 a 16:50 Documental "Miller & Fried" Brasil / 2016 / 80 min.
	15:35 a 17:00 Documental "The Other Kids" España / 2015 / 85 min.	17:10 a 17:40 Cuentos de amor, locura y fútbol Colectivo Mestizaje
	17:20 a 17:35 Documental "Iragartze" España / 2018 / 15 min.	18:10 a 18:45 Documental "La 28" Chile / 2018 / 35 min.
	17:55 a 20:00 Conversatorio COFFUF	19:05 a 19:20 Documental "El Mundo de Mao" España / 2015 / 12 min.

EVENTO GRATUITO
MÁS INFORMACIÓN EN
www.festigol.cl

* El Programa puede sufrir cambios por imponderables fuera del control de la organización.

CON EL APOYO DE:

MEDIA PARTNER:

PATROCINA:

Fig.8 Programme for FESTIGOL3

GOLD AWARD WINNER
SPOTLIGHT DOCUMENTARY FILM AWARDS
2017

OFFICIAL SELECTION
IDYLLWILD 2018
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CINEMA

WINNER
AWARD OF MERIT
IMPACT DOCS AWARDS

WINNER
AWARD OF MERIT
ACCOLADE DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

5th INDIAN CINE
FILM FESTIVAL-17
Certificate of Excellence

NORTH AMERICAN
FILM AWARDS
SPECIAL JURY
AWARD

Fig.9 Iron Men awards



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