

**TUESDAY
JUNE 19
7:15 PM
MARATHON
BOY**



(UK/INDIA - 2010 - GEMMA ATWAL - 98 MINS)
**SPONSORED BY BARBARA MEISTER-
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"Marathon Boy" is a Dickensian tale of greed, corruption, and broken dreams set among the heart-racing world of marathon running, the poverty-stricken slums, and the political intrigue of a modernizing India. Gemma Atwal's dynamic documentary follows four-year-old Budhia, rescued from poverty by Biranchi Das, a judo coach and operator of an orphanage for slum children in the eastern Indian state of Orissa. When Budhia displays an uncommon talent for long-distance running, Biranchi nurtures his gift, heralding him as a folk hero for the impoverished masses, and maybe even for India itself. But after golden child Budhia breaks down during a world-record 65 kilometer run at the age of four, public opinion begins to turn against the guru and his disciple. Soon the two are swept up in a maelstrom of media controversy and political scandal. Following Budhia's roller-coaster journey over five years, nothing is what it seems in Budhia and Biranchi's story. Director Atwal continually shifts viewer identification to tell both a shocking story of opportunism and exploitation, but also a touching portrait of the complex bonds between a foster parent and a talented, cast-off child.

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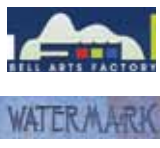
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VFS@420 EAST 2012 is made possible by major donors Barbara Meister, Micheline Sakharoff, and Patagonia/Great Pacific Iron Works, as well as by our generous VFS Film Sponsors, dedicated Volunteers, and loyal Supporters. Critical support also provided by Downtown Ventura Partners and by grants from the City of Ventura's Parks, Recreation & Community Partnerships Department.