



Punam Gill
Lived Experience with Heart Disease
Calgary, AB

Biography

Punam (pronounced Poo-num) Kumar Gill is a self-taught, award-winning documentary filmmaker. Her first film told her father's life story, a man who lived as a modern-day monk, in under 12 minutes. Her latest film explores the most controversial issue of our times, abortion. It is the most comprehensive journalistic work ever done on the topic, and is the only work with a creative team from both camps, pro-life and pro-choice. Her films have received official selection and artistic recognition at numerous film festivals throughout the world, including opening night at LaFemme Feminist Film Festival Beverly Hills, the World Documentary Awards Jakarta, and the Harbourfront Festival Toronto. She has been a jury member of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, and the Calgary Foundation. She is also the award-winning TV Host of two food and wine shows, EATS Edmonton and EATS Calgary, and a commercial actor and model. She is currently writing her first book, the story of three generations of women from her maternal lineage in India.

In 2008, Punam was in the last trimester of a healthy first pregnancy, when she almost died. Her blood pressure suddenly skyrocketed to 156/112, and she experienced placental abruption from severe preeclampsia and HELLP Syndrome. Her baby boy, Jaisalmere, died instantly in utero at 32 weeks gestation. Because of Punam's life-threatening medical condition and high risk of bleeding, she needed to deliver the baby vaginally and without epidural, which she did 36 hours later. As a recognized speaker, she is helping to raise awareness about the unknown links between preeclampsia and heart disease.