

Al Jazeera's Contrast VR Completes *I Am Rohingya*, Studio's First Original Virtual Reality Documentary

"Contrast VR Originals" focus on the most pressing regional and global issues

DOHA AND SAN FRANCISCO (JUNE 20, 2017) – Contrast VR, Al Jazeera Media Network's new immersive studio, has today completed *I Am Rohingya*, its first original virtual reality (VR) documentary. Directed and produced by Contrast VR's Editorial Lead Zahra Rasool and co-produced by award-winning filmmaker and journalist Aela Callan, the Contrast VR Original is the first VR documentary filmed in a Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh.

I Am Rohingya gives a glimpse into the life of a Rohingya Muslim woman, Jamalida Begum, in the slums of the Kutupalong refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Jamalida is one of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims who are in limbo, unable to be resettled or return to their homes. The film depicts Jamalida's current living situation in the camp and her resilience in the face of adversity. Though recent atrocities are not far from her mind, Jamalida is still passionate about dance and life.

Contrast VR collaborated with AJ+, Al Jazeera's Media Network's digital division, to combine journalistic storytelling with compelling VR content. Viewers are able to accompany Jamalida inside her tiny home, ride with her in the crowded camp, and experience a first-person account of a refugee stranded in a foreign land. The film also weaves animations into the immersive content, illustrating Jamalida's moving flashbacks as she recounts her memories of fleeing violence in Myanmar. Editor Maria Fernanda Lauret managed the stitching of the footage, including editing the documentary and animations.

"One of the most attractive aspects of virtual reality is the ability to immerse viewers in an issue, in this case the plight of persecuted minorities in a refugee camp," said Zahra Rasool, Contrast VR's editorial lead. "We're able to connect with the issue on a deeper level and capture in detail the environment and circumstances of the Rohingya people."

Contrast VR is the newest brand in Al Jazeera's digital portfolio. Utilizing immersive media and new narrative styles, the studio will release a series of original documentaries to transport viewers to the people and cultures hit hardest by inequality and conflict.

The project was shot with the OZO+, Nokia's industry-leading professional VR camera solution, coupled with OZO Creator, Nokia's VR image processing and stereoscopic software now including mixed reality enablement. This powerful combination produces generational advancements in image quality and efficiency in the creative process.

More information is available at contrastvr.com.

About Contrast VR

Contrast VR is Al Jazeera's immersive media studio, specializing in the production of compelling 360-degree video, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR) content. The stu-

dio also collaborates with existing departments across Al Jazeera Media Network to produce best-in-class 2D and 3D content. Contrast VR produces unique documentaries, videos, and live streams that push the boundaries of narrative storytelling while taking viewers directly to the front lines of the biggest news events in the world. Learn more about the studio at contrastvr.com.

About Al Jazeera Media Network

Al Jazeera strives to deliver content that captivates, informs, inspires, and entertains. Launched in 1996, Al Jazeera was the first independent news channel in the Arab world dedicated to providing comprehensive news and live debate. It challenged established narratives and gave a global audience an alternative voice—one that put the human being back at the center of the news agenda—quickly making it one of the world’s most influential news networks. Since then, it’s added new channels and services, with more than 70 bureaus around the world, while maintaining the independent and pioneering spirit that defines its character. Each subsidiary follows the same principles—values that inspire it to be challenging and bold, and provide a “voice for the voiceless” in some of the most underreported places on the planet.

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