



CHANGING THE STORY



FILMMAKER, EDUCATOR AND activist **Shalini Kantayya** uses film and video to educate, inspire and empower audiences. A first-generation Indian American, she has been making films for almost a decade in Senegal, Mali, Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, India, Pakistan and the U.S. Her latest work, *A Drop of Life*, is a science-fiction film about water privatization in India.

"I'm a very unlikely environmentalist — an urban, hipster Brooklynite — but Bioneers has been a huge part of my development. I have attended the conference for three years on youth scholarships, and each year my worldview has deepened.

"Before, I identified much more with the social justice movement. What Bioneers did for me is connect the oppression of the environment with the oppression of peoples. I began to realize the interconnectedness between the environment and race — that the people most impacted by environmental justice issues look a lot like me.

"My life purpose is to make powerful, socially relevant, thought-provoking media that can compete with the commercial industry. My long-term goal is to make a trilogy of science-fiction films that are about the environment, specifically about rice, water and energy, with women protagonists.

"Bioneers helped me approach these issues from a more holistic standpoint. It's been central, absolutely critical, in my development as a thinker, media maker and culture maker."

Shalini is a member of the Bioneers Youth Advisory Council.

