Grant Knisely fell in love with Nepal in 2001, when he traveled there as part of a service-learning project at the University of Denver. It was during that trip that Knisely made his first documentary film, “Project Nepal: A Time to Learn,” which was about the DU students on the journey and their experiences volunteering with nongovernmental organizations in Kathmandu.

Encouraged by the student film awards he won for “Project: Nepal,” Knisely (BA ’02, communication) made two more short documentaries in the years following graduation. But it wasn’t until he heard horrific tales of sexual slavery in Asia that he turned to filmmaking full time. He formed his own production company, Code Red Films, and returned to Nepal in 2013 to begin work on his first feature-length documentary, “Untouchable: Children of God,” which tells the story of two Nepalese girls sold into sex slavery in India.

“It’s just beyond comprehension, how young these girls are and what happens to them in the brothels in India,” Knisely said. “It really moved me personally — I think it’s a life-or-death issue that was worth the risk to try to tell the story of these girls and shine a light on this issue.”

Knisely credits University of Denver film professors Sheila Schroeder and Tony Gault with spurring his interest in film — documentaries in particular.

“I feel like the medium of film can be such a powerful tool to reflect the reality happening in the world,” he says. “There is so much time and money and resources spent on features out of Hollywood, and so many of them, in my opinion, are quite poor. We shouldn’t be doing that until we’re at least using the medium to reflect a little more of the reality going on out there. There’s enough tragedy and comedy and drama in the real world.”