

STAIN RESISTANT

A film by
SHRUTI TEWARI



A WOCF Lab presentation

CAST: ANJALI BHAID AMÉRAH GROVER SAREERA MALHOTRA SHRUTI TEWARI ALLISON VON HAUSEN
CINEMATOGRAPHER: RYAN CASTANEDA EDITOR: DIANA CHEN COMPOSER: JUSTIN PORTIS
WRITER, DIRECTOR & PRODUCER: SHRUTI TEWARI

2022

**A PROOF OF CONCEPT
SHORT FILM**

**FOR THE
WOMEN OF COLOR FILMMAKERS LAB
SUMMER CHALLENGE 2022**

**DEVELOPED BY
SHRUTI TEWARI**

LOGLINE

Amidst breaking news of a sting operation impacting both their lives, estranged best friends from Delhi reunite in Silicon Valley to regain control over their lives by breaking free of their suppressed traumas.

GENRE

Drama

THEMES

Indian American, Women Empowerment, Cultural Influences

SYNOPSIS

This is a story of two women, former classmates from Delhi, who reconnect in Silicon Valley in their forties, after taking completely different paths through life. Sunny came to the US after an arranged marriage and raised a family in Silicon Valley. Tara, a single New Yorker, is a successful journalist content with fulfilling her career ambitions. After being ghosted for a decade, Sunny meets with Tara on the very day that her husband, now a tech CEO, is caught in a sting operation. Unbeknownst to each other, both women were abused by the same man, and they had remained silent for different reasons. On this day, one has chosen to fight back while the other contemplates giving up. With words remaining unspoken, they recognize each other's trauma and resolve to liberate themselves of their stains.



Reference images



**WORLD: BAY AREA,
PAST & PRESENT**



New Delhi Restaurant, San Francisco



Hidden Steps, San Francisco



Silicon Valley



WORLD: New Delhi, 1997





CINEMATIC CHOICES: Framing, reflections and flickering flames



- Played by **Anjali Alurkar-Bhaid**
- Host of Indian American cultural events
- Actor in Marathi and Hindi plays



Character: **SUNNY**



- **Vivacious mother and homemaker in Silicon Valley**
- **In an arranged marriage with a tech CEO**
- **Suppressed teen trauma and silent endurance of abuse**
- **Seeks affirmation from mother and estranged best friend**
- **Reflects on ways to break free of her cultural trappings**

- Played by **Sareeka Malhotra**
- Lead actor, producer and director of numerous NAATAK plays
- Lead in award-winning short film

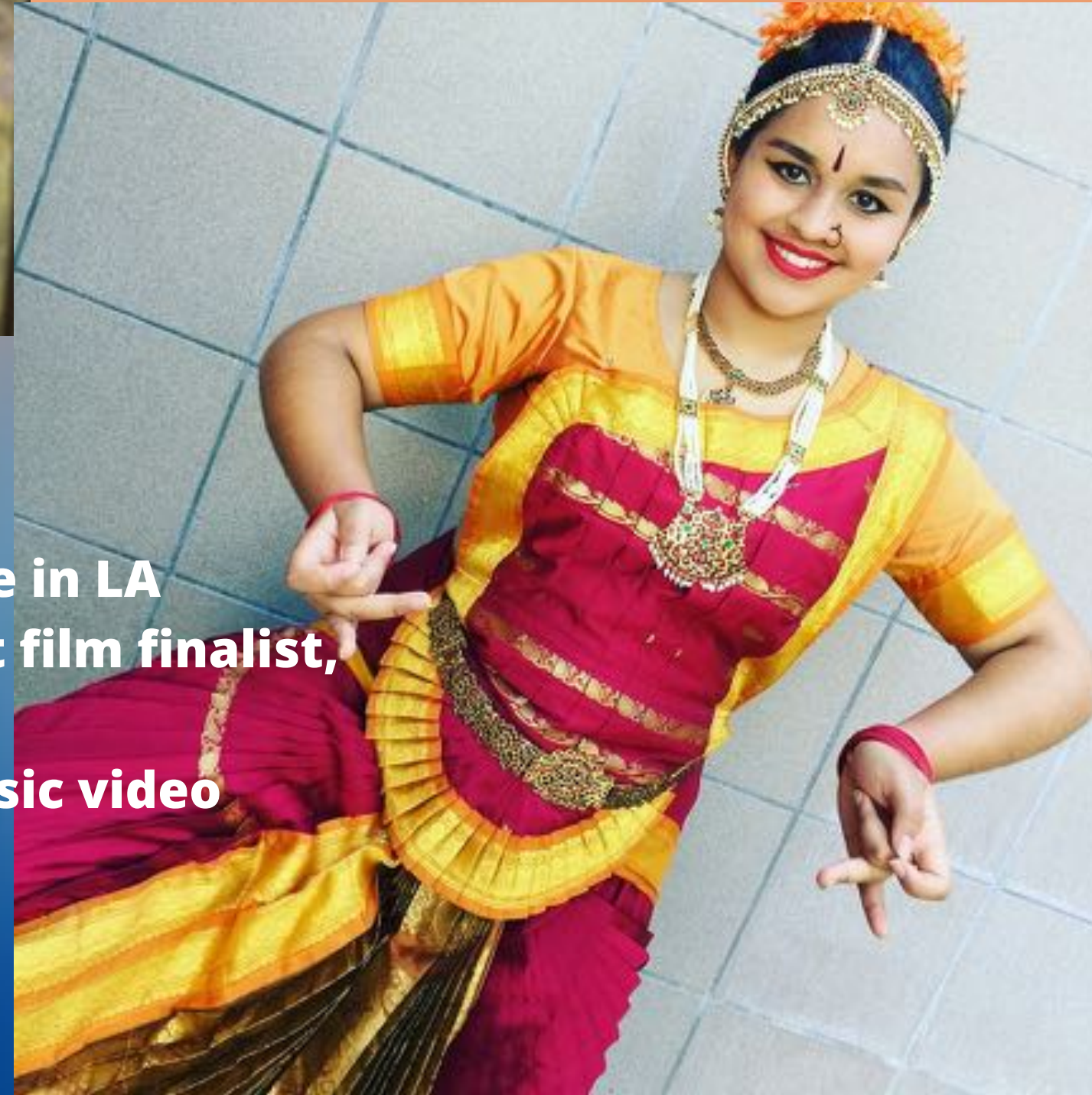
Character: TARA

- Driven and reputed journalist in New York
- Suppressed adult trauma
- Loyal friend even at the cost of her convictions
- Seeks to mend her friendship before taking a public stance against her abuser





Character: **YOUNG SUNNY**



- **Played by Ameerah Grover**
- **Senior at Harvard-Westlake in LA**
- **Appeared in BAFTA student film finalist, SHAYA**
- **Appeared in Bollywood music video**

- **College student in Delhi in 1995**
- **Swayed by her family's conservative values**
- **Forced into an arranged marriage**
- **Seeks affirmation from her mother**

Writer & Director Bio



Shruti Tewari
Writer & Director

SHRUTI TEWARI has spent over two decades in the creative arts with acting projects ranging from a Bollywood blockbuster to numerous award winning independent films. After her stints in investment banking and tech, she, an MBA from Mumbai and MIA from Columbia University, changed course to authentically represent minority voices.

A contributing playwright to Playground writer's pool, she has written several plays and screenplays. Earlier, she was selected for the Sundance Collab directors and producers programs to develop her first feature film, "Flares," the screenplay for which is an award winner at the Alliance of Women Filmmakers Scriptwriting Competition and a finalist at WeScreenplay Diverse Voices Screenwriting Lab as well as the Big Apple Film Festival. She was also a finalist at the Austin Film Festival Virtual Pitch Fest, 2020. Her short script, "Stain Resistant," was a finalist at the Female Voices Rock Film Festival and a semi-finalist at CineStreet Women's Short Script Competition and her limited series, "Letters in Her Name," was a second rounder at Austin Film Festival in 2021. Another feature she wrote on commission, "Mixed In America," was a semi-finalist at the 1497 screenwriting lab for South Asians.

In 2017, she wrote and directed the short, "Trail Past Prejudice," which premiered at the Delhi International Film Festival, won the Silver Remi Award at WorldFest Houston and was bought by Shorts TV, UK. Last year, her short film "Mum" premiered at the Silicon Valley Asian Pacific Film Festival and has been winning accolades at international film festivals. She was awarded a Certificate of Honor by the City and County of San Francisco for creating positive impact through the arts for her mentorship in juvenile halls.

WHY THIS FILM?

- Normalizes breaking the silence over suppressed traumas amongst women
- Focuses on those who remain unseen and unheard amidst the success stories of the "model minority" community
- Challenges cultural preconditioning and patriarchal value systems in immigrant communities

WHY NOW?

- Women's rights and choices continue to be curtailed in many ways, now more than ever
- Cultural incongruence, control over one's choices, and the weight of forever being torn between two worlds and identities



SUPPORTED BY:



WOMEN OF COLOR
FILMMAKERS





Highlights

- "Stain Resistant" is adapted from the award-winning feature screenplay "Flares"
- 80% women in the cast and crew
- Passes all diversity and inclusion benchmarks

Reviews

- "I loved this story. Arranged marriage is commonly used as an over dramatic device, but in this script it is very natural and leads to the great line that many choices in our own lives are not inherently our own." - Academy Nicholl Fellowships
- "Flares is an extremely powerful drama touching on many important issues and featuring quite a few memorable characters and moments." - WeScreenplay Diverse Voices





"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." - Martin Luther King Jr.

HELP US SPEAK UP

Contact: shrutistewari@gmail.com