

inspired by a true story

based on the NETFLIX x TASVEER FILM FUND WINNING short




BOO!

Math
Science
Homework
Cleanup

Ishu's 9th
Birthday!

Candy 

 Cake

A+

YAAAY!
Video games!



DOS BROS FORCE

an immigrant tale of love, sacrifice & videogames!

New Home

Old Home



The story... in a nutshell...

In a struggling immigrant household, a young girl's passion for an arcade game becomes the unlikely catalyst for her fractured family to reconnect, heal, and redefine their American Dream.

WHAT it's about...

Southern California, 1996. After a year apart, 8-year-old ISHA, her pre-teen brother VICKY and her mom REKHA move to live with their dad JAY, an overworked PhD student in America. Eight months into their new life, Vicky misses his old soccer team and friends; Rekha resents being a stay-at-home mom, restricted from working due to her visa status; while Jay buries himself deeper in research, hoping to win a \$50,000 grant that could ease their financial pressures. Isha, clinging to her childlike optimism, longs for the simple joy of being together.

When Jay's neglect and Rekha's frustration threaten to split the family again, Isha hatches a last-minute plan: to celebrate her 9th birthday at the arcade, where she hopes that beating the tough video game 'Dos Bros Force,' will be the adventure her family needs to reunite. Since Jay refuses to spend money on video games, Isha secretly enlists Vicky to sell their old toys at a year-end-sale sparking new friendships, and bringing twists and turns in their noble quest.

Despite crushing setbacks - Jay's failed grant application, Rekha's growing desperation, Vicky's first heartbreak and Isha's shattered birthday dream - their love for one another forges an unexpected path, allowing them to rediscover the connection and happiness they once shared.

WHAT it's really about...

childhood ambition love
adaptation **FAMILY** growing up
connection duty assimilation



WHO it's about...

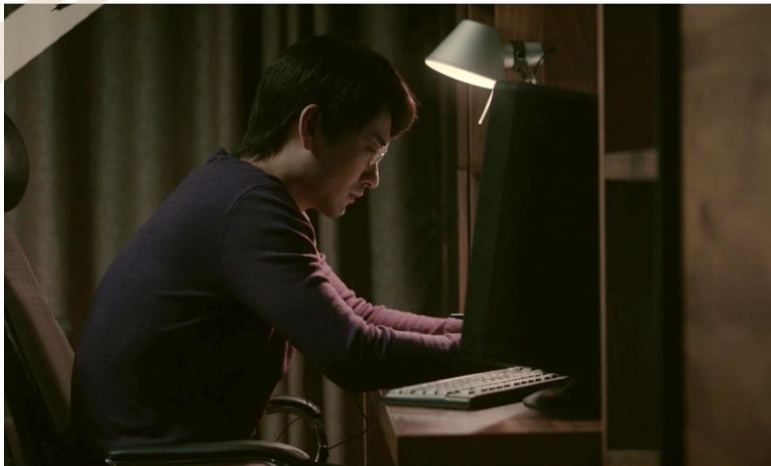
ISHA – sunshine smile and rainbow dreams!



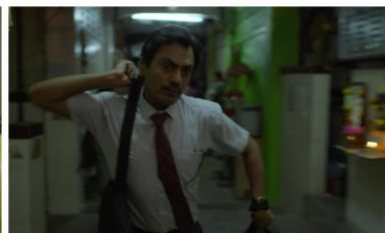
Loves comics & cartoons and finds her latest obsession - video games! Wants to win the arcade grand prize and game with her family!



JAY – The workaholic Dad



A PhD student who only wants a better future for his family, even at the expense of their present happiness.



VICKY – the pre-teen rebel



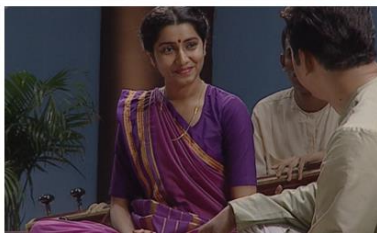
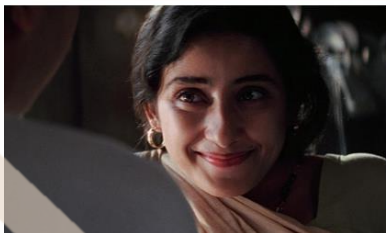
Misses his friends and soccer team. Not loving his new life. The de-facto coach, guardian and role model for Isha.



REKHA – The heart of the fam



Once a chess champion and respected Telugu teacher in India. Now a frustrated housewife in the US.



How it all unfolds...

Southern California, Winter 1996.

Eight-year-old **Isha**, with her playful pigtails and signature hot-pink glasses, is a feisty little girl. During a classroom assignment, she shares an animated tale—literally told through drawings—about her family’s journey from India to reunite with her father in the U.S. after a painful year apart. Her chirpy voice, accented English, and colorful cartoon drawings win over her teacher, earning her an A+ and the biggest slice of Christmas cake.

Across the university campus, **Jay**, a determined PhD student, is laser-focused on his Hobbs Grant application—a \$50,000 award that could ease his family’s financial burdens and allow him to spend more time at with his kids. When his advisor urges taking a break for the holidays, Jay flatly refuses saying "we don’t celebrate Christmas."

That evening, Isha walks home with her pre-teen brother **Vicky** and their mother **Rekha**, excitedly recounting her cake triumph. As they pass the playground, Isha spots an arcade across the street, glowing with neon promise. Before she can explore, Rekha steers them away toward their tiny, cluttered apartment— a space brightened by scattered toys and framed images of Indian deities and family memories. After tucking in the kids, Rekha settles into her nightly ritual—a solitary game of chess.

Later, Jay returns home to find Rekha waiting with a pile of financial concerns—requests for more money from India and maxed-out Visa cards. Then, she drops a bombshell: her university in India is asking if she’ll return to resume her job as a Telugu lecturer. Jay reassures her that once he secures the grant, they’ll apply for a green card, allowing her to work in the U.S. But Rekha remains uncertain, questioning their future in America.

The next morning, Jay rushes to the lab to run tests for his application, only to be met with equipment failures. Meanwhile, Isha, still enchanted by the arcade, drags Vicky inside. She discovers a dazzling side-scrolling platformer, **Dos Bros Force**, where two wizard siblings battle zombies and a menacing Boss Witch. Watching a father and son play together sparks a longing in her. When the kind father lets her try, Isha is instantly hooked.

Captivated by the grand prize—a family day of free gaming for anyone who beats a game—she dreams of celebrating her upcoming birthday there, hoping it can bring her family closer. But mastering the game requires many quarters. When Isha requests Jay for money, he dismisses video games as addictive and wasteful, disappointing Isha. **[End of Act 1]**



However, hope arrives in the form of a year-end campus sale. Isha convinces a reluctant Vicky to sell their toys at the sale to fund her gaming dreams. Overwhelmed at first, they get help from Vy, Vicky's Korean classmate. Isha, ever the storyteller, spins elaborate tales about their Indian toys, charming buyers. Their first sale? An old auto-rickshaw toy from India.

At the arcade, Isha breezes through the early levels but loses. Meanwhile, Jay struggles with broken lab equipment, and Rekha secretly takes a part-time job at the desi-mart, defying Jay's warnings, to find independence and companionship with the old, eccentric, Gujarati owner.

The next day, the kids hustle harder, earning a decent profit. Vicky impresses Vy with his soccer tricks, deepening their budding relationship. At the arcade, Isha refines her strategies, determined to win on the next go-around. But unbeknownst to the kids, Jay stops by an electronics store near the arcade to fix his broken equipment. Curious about what's been capturing his kids' attention, he steps inside the arcade.

Isha and Vy are deep in the game when Vicky notices Jay and panics. He yanks Isha away, accidentally damaging the game's controller. They escape unnoticed, but Jay finds Vicky's soccer ball—signed by his friends in India—abandoned near the machine. Back at the lab, Jay is weighed down by Vicky's offense, while the kids spend the day bonding at the sale.

On Christmas morning, Jay disappoints the kids—too exhausted to cook his promised "All-Potato Breakfast," he watches as Rekha takes over. Attempting to make amends, he offers to play soccer with Vicky, but it turns into a lecture, a warning about bad friendships and a reprimand for setting a poor example for Isha.

Feeling the weight of his lab work, Jay leaves, missing the day with his kids. With the arcade closed for the holiday, the kids resign themselves to a dull day at home—until Rekha steps in. She takes them to the desi-mart, turning it into a fun outing with snacks and board games. The warmth of the moment makes her question Jay's commitment to their family—a feeling further fueled when he spends the night in the lab, exhausted.

On the final day of the sale, Vy gifts Isha and Vicky "Team Isha" T-shirts. Vicky, in return, gifts Vy earrings. Overcome with emotion, Vy kisses him—but an offhand remark about her "fish breath" devastates her. She storms off, leaving Vicky heartbroken.

At the arcade, Isha's dream crumbles—her game is out of order. Desperate, Vicky recklessly gambles their savings on other games, hoping to win at least one for Isha's grand prize, but loses everything. Meanwhile, Jay's advisor rejects his Hobbs Grant application, asking for



more detailed results. Devastated, he hides his failure from Rekha, terrified she'll take the kids back to India. **[End of Act II]**

On Isha's birthday eve, her disappointment grows. Jay tries to make up lost ground— tracking down Isha's favorite cake recipe and buying balloons, and even coaching Vicky on a new soccer trick. Rekha watches, torn between hope and skepticism – unsure whether his change is fleeting. Only Vicky notices Isha's yearning for the arcade.

On her birthday, Vicky secretly pilfers money from Jay's wallet to fulfil their video game wish. At the arcade, Isha reaches the final boss, but loses. However, she wins the Grand Prize for setting the highest score. But their joy is short lived on their return as Jay learns about the missing money. Furious over the lies and stealing, he rips Isha's prize ticket and lunges at Vicky to slap him. Rekha intervenes, but in the chaos, Isha's birthday cake crashes to the floor. As Jay storms out, Isha notices her prize ticket in pieces and her birthday cake plastered on the floor. She is crushed!

This is the last straw. Rekha packs their bags— ready to take the kids back to India. Jay ponders his own actions and returns home late at night when he finally breaks down. He confesses the immense pressure he feels to secure their future and reveals about his failed grant application. Finally, Jay meekly expresses his understanding for Rekha's desire to leave until he can find solid ground for their family.

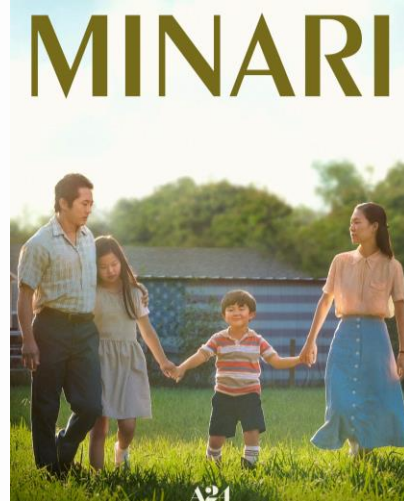
Rekha sees his pain—and a glimmer of change. Putting the kids first, she decides to stay in the U.S, and makes Jay realize that their family needs Jay not just as a provider, but a participant in their lives – as a father and a husband.

Rekha's words leave a mark on Jay. The next morning, he surprises the kids with a video game console, complete with Dos Bros Force, and asks Isha to teach him. Isha lights up with joy. As the family gathers around the screen, playing together, laughter fills the room.

Over credits, we see the family continue to bond over video games. Jay regains a sense of balance with work and family. Rekha continues helping at the desi-mart, and Vicky makes up with Vy. Together, the three kids once again resume their journey to conquer Dos Bros Force, this time inside what will become their new future – their home in America. **[The End]**



How it feels - quirky, exciting & poignant...



Why I ~~want~~ need to tell this story... - Director's Statement

'DOS BROS FORCE' tells the coming-of-age story of a South-Asian family in 90s America. The film bridges two sides of the immigrant experience: the wide-eyed wonder of dreamy kids and the harsh realities of all-sacrificing parents. This deeply personal film is inspired by my childhood love for video games and my bittersweet experiences with immigration as an adult.

I grew up in South India in the 90s. My early obsession with Cartoon Network, Hollywood movies and video games led me from studying computer science to working with DreamWorks Animations and to pursue filmmaking at USC. After working in VFX across independent films and multi-million-dollar blockbusters, I transitioned into Writing/ Directing to create nuanced stories of South Asians. Despite several successes, I found myself in a constant race for work-

permits at the expense of my well-being and precious time with family. Witnessing the burden that 'The American Dream' places on immigrant families, especially immigrant children who miss their overworked parents, compelled me to reevaluate my life and create 'Dos Bros Force.'

With 'MINARI' and 'MOONRISE KINGDOM' as touchstones, my film blends nostalgic charm with the vibrancy of free-spirited childhood. The daughter-father duo, Isha and Jay, is central to the story. While Isha's desire to celebrate her birthday with her family drives the plot, Jay's turn from a workaholic to someone who realizes the importance of quality family time in the present captures the film's heart. Besides driving the family narrative, Vicky, through his blossoming romance with his Korean classmate Vy, and Rekha, through her illegal job at a desi mart, each discover their freedoms and make peace with their new life in America.

Stylistically, every element – the colors, costumes, set design, and camera movement – reflects and contrasts Isha and Jay's emotional landscapes. Vibrant colors envelope Isha, symbolizing her whimsical outlook, while Jay's grounded sense of reality is reflected in his lab's muted tones. Fast pacing and dynamic camera movements capture the high-energy gaming sequences in the neon-lit arcade, while moderately paced, contemplative scenes convey the parents' introspective moments. A diegetic soundscape blends lively retro video game sounds and Indian motifs, adding depth and resonance to the film's kinetic visuals. Additionally, 2D animation sequences in the vein of classic video games, reveal Isha's optimism and imagination. The film will evoke the experience of a warm embrace from a long-forgotten piece of your childhood – bittersweet, poignant, and fully immersive.

'Dos Bros Force' delves into universal themes of cultural adaptation, and the pursuit of balance between ambition and familial connection, all while immersing the audience in a specific cultural outlook. Now is the right time, because our film not only breaks generational barriers between immigrant families but also humanizes their experience to promote empathy in a world that is growing hostile towards immigrants and the plight of children. Its message about love, forgiveness and connection transcends borders and cultures.

Moreover, the success my proof-of-concept short 'DOS BROS FORCE,' -- which won the NETFLIX x TASVEER FILM FUND 2021, and was selected at 50 film festivals, winning 15 awards -- proved audiences are hungry for nuanced narratives about the immigrant experience. I'm confident that support from AT&T Untold Stories will help up bring this portrayal to life.



The Team -

Writer/ Director/ Producer - Kalyan Sura

Kalyan Sura is a Writer, Director and VFX Supervisor whose work spans live-action and animation, featuring underrepresented communities. His writing and directing credits include award-winning films backed by GUNPOWDER&SKY and NETFLIX, while his VFX portfolio covers both independent features and multi-million-dollar blockbusters.



Kalyan's award-winning sci-fi short film 'THE LIE GAME' became the first with an all-South-Asian cast to be distributed by DUST. His sci-fi feature script 'MEMORY LANES' was a finalist (top 0.1%) in the 'Netflix x Impact Female Thriller Contest,' while his animation pilot 'JACKIE & JILAL' won 'ISA's TV Pilot Pitch Challenge 2023.' Kalyan's Tasveer-backed coming-of-age immigrant dramedy 'DOS BROS FORCE' screened at over 50 film festivals, earning 15 awards.

Kalyan is an alumnus of USC's School of Cinematic Arts, and a distinguished member of both the Visual Effects Society and the Screenwriting Association of India.

Screenwriter - Dini Parajitam

Dini Parajitam is a fiction writer, screenwriter, and filmmaker based in Brooklyn, New York. She earned an MFA in Fiction Writing from the Iowa Writers' Workshop and has held Emerging Writer-in-Residence positions at Yale-NUS College in Singapore and Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan. Her short fiction has been published in The Iowa Review, Boston Review, and Joyland Magazine. As a screenwriter, Dini has gained significant recognition with her projects advancing to the second round of both the Sundance Producer's Track and AT&T Untold Stories, and placing on the Blacklist's inaugural Desi List.



Producer - James Canellos

James Canellos is a Producer from Queens, NY who works in Los Angeles. James produced three narrative features and several shorts featured in the Bushwick Film Festival, Cinequest, Netflix funded programs, Cannes Short Film Corner and the Tribeca Film Festival. Along with producing he's Production Coordinated for clients such as Mercedes BMW, Mizuno, Food Network and A&E, Netflix and Mr. Beast.



Cinematographer - Adriana Serrato

Adriana Serrato is a Director of Photography based in Los Angeles, California. Adriana has worked on feature films, documentaries, music videos and commercials ranging across several genres. Her work has received recognition and excellence awards at the California Film Award, Ouchy Film Awards, Roma Cinema DOC and European Cinematography Award.



Production Design - Lakshmi Nymisha Gummadi

Nymisha is an LA-based Production Designer for Film and Music Videos. Originally from India, Nymisha earned her undergraduate degree in Architecture, before pursuing Masters in Production Design from the American Film Institute (AFI). Nymisha is a member in production design collective, and a fellow PDI at ADG Local 800.



Editor - Vishnu Perumal

Vishnu Perumal is an Editor hailing from Malaysia and currently based in Los Angeles. His works have been featured at film festivals and various platforms worldwide, earning him accolades for his editing and storytelling abilities. He was a former fellow at the Singapore International Film Festival and he currently works as a Story Producer/Editor for Network Television.



Music - Raashi Kulkarni

Raashi Kulkarni is a composer and classical pianist based in Los Angeles. Raashi is one of eight composers and the first person of Indian origin to be selected for the Universal Composers Initiative. From 2017 through 2021, Raashi worked with Emmy Award-winning composer, Blake Neely and composed additional music for over 150 episodes on The CW's Supergirl, DC's Legends of Tomorrow, Arrow, and The Flash. Raashi's latest scoring work can be heard in the Netflix feature, Wedding Season, the award-winning documentary, Barefoot Empress, and the Disney+ film, World's Best. Raashi is also currently serving as Executive Director of the Alliance for Women Film Composers.



Sound - Alexander Bologna

Alex is a sound designer and mixer from Palos Verdes, CA. A voracious cinephile, Alex found a passion for sound while studying at USC under veteran Sound Designers with credits like Captain America: The First Avenger, Evil Dead and Pulp Fiction. Since then, Alex has worked on several award-winning short films and independent feature films.



DOS BROS FORCE

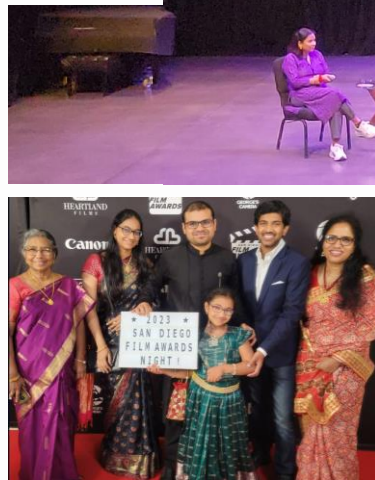
Budget Topsheet

Prep Weeks : 3
 Shoot Weeks : 4
 Post Weeks : 10

Prepared by: James Canellos

ACCOUNT	NAME	ESTIMATES
1100	STORY, RIGHTS & WRITING	\$22,500
1200	PRODUCER & STAFF	\$61,500
1300	DIRECTOR & STAFF	\$25,000
1400	CAST	\$80,085
1450	CASTING	\$10,000
1500	TRAVEL & LIVING	\$16,000
	ABOVE THE LINE	\$215,085
1404	BACKGROUND & STAND-INS	\$20,693
2000	PRODUCTION STAFF	\$90,600
2200	ART DEPARTMENT	\$74,050
2900	WARDROBE	\$35,100
3100	MAKEUP & HAIRDRESSING	\$18,900
3200	GRIP/SET OPERATIONS	\$48,950
3300	CAMERA	\$72,200
3400	PRODUCTION SOUND	\$14,000
3500	TRANSPORTATION	\$20,300
3600	LOCATIONS	\$91,700
	BELOW THE LINE	\$486,493
4500	PICTURE EDITORIAL	\$27,000
4600	MUSIC	\$20,000
4700	POST PRODUCTION SOUND	\$8,000
4800	POST-PRODUCTION COLOR & DELIVERY	\$23,000
3900	VISUAL EFFECTS	\$20,000
	POST PRODUCTION	\$98,000
6700	LEGAL & ACCOUNTING	\$55,000
6701	INSURANCE	\$20,000
7000	PUBLICITY & FESTIVALS	\$20,000
	MISCELLANEOUS	\$95,000
7010	CONTINGENCY (9.5%)	\$84,985
	DBF FEATURE TOTAL	\$979,563

The journey so far... DOS BROS FORCE short: 50 festivals, 15 awards...



Link to the short film - <https://youtu.be/5CUFzByUUzI>