



COWBOYS & HINDUS

“It’s never too late to start a new journey”



LOGLINE

A depressed, affluent, middle aged Indian woman ventures to a rugged Texas cattle ranch. While there, an unlikely friendship with a tough cowgirl gives her life new meaning and an understanding of the true Texan grit.



SYNOPSIS

The “Lone Star” is a cramped motel located on the edge of JFK Airport in New York City. The constant thunder of passing jets doesn't seem to bother ASHA PATEL, a middle aged Indian woman cleaning one of the motel rooms. She reminisces her youth in Hyderabad and remembers twenty years ago when she took that same flight across the Atlantic with her husband, SURESH, in search of the American dream. Now, she wonders if there is such a thing. Once Asha Reddy, now lost.

When Asha's beautiful daughter, SANGEETA, announces she's getting married, Asha's excitement quickly fades when she learns her daughter is marrying a cattle rancher. Despite her obvious disapproval, Asha heads to America's southwest to meet her future in-laws.

At the Wall Brook Cattle Ranch, the cowboys don't seem to know what to make of Asha as she approaches in an elegant “Kanjivaram with Bandhani” pattern sari. Asha meets her future son-in-law, DAKOTA, and his widowed mother, SALLY DANIELS, who runs the ranch. Sally is a first class cowgirl and a champion bull rider. Asha is in awe of Sally's confidence and strength. Before you know it, Sally is teaching Asha how to brand a bull, herd cattle, and deliver calves. Asha finds a certain kind of joy in working the land that she has never experienced. The women start to form a special friendship. As the days pass Asha appears less like a traditional Indian housewife and more like a free spirited American cowgirl. Her old life remains in the shadows as she saddles towards finding her own grit.

The wedding day is upon us. Suresh and the rest of the family arrive on the ranch. Despite Sally's rugged exterior she looks beautiful in an Indian sari. The wedding seems tense between the ranchers and Asha's family until the musicians find a way to blend Country music and Hindi music. It is a unique sound that invites both groups to come together in a new dance that is a composition of square dancing and Dandya Raas. The “Cowboys and Hindus” have the time of their lives.

Asha returns to New York City, but longs for the ranch. She knows what she wants with her life but she can't forget her duty and commitment to her husband. In the end she will have to choose. Will she follow her heart and “go west” or remain trapped behind the motel counter for the rest of her days?



THEMES

“Even Desis have true American Grit.”

New Friends New Life— Sometimes it takes a stranger coming into your life to remind you of who you are.

Finding Oneself — Healing through self connection.

New change can be healing— Every ending carries new life.

The Importance of Grit — Self Independence is true happiness.



TONE & GENRE

Dramatic coming-of-age as middle aged woman

COWBOYS AND HINDUS is a comedy about a depressed, traditional, middle aged, Hindu woman, ASHA, who finds out her daughter is going to marry a Texas rancher.

When she goes to the southwestern cattle ranch to meet the in-laws, she becomes enamored with cowboy culture, slowly transforming from Desi Kurtis to Denim, boots, and a Stetson hat. She discovers who she is and the meaning of true American grit.



VISUAL STYLE & WORLD

Concept: Bringing two different cultures and finding similarities under big Texas skies.

W o r l d

T o n e

V i s u a l L a n g u a g e

Asha

Fortitude, Self-recognition, Content

Golden-hour light, saturated color, handheld intimacy

Sally

Bravado, Enduring, Pragmatic

Golden-hour light, Naturalistic static frames

Sangeeta

Unapologetic, Strong-willed, Romantic

Colors, Lots of Happy Movements, Loud Spaces

Suresh

Inflexible, Pragmatic, Oblivious

Naturalistic static frames, controlled space

Memory

Dreamlike

80s Handheld Camera Quality for India Scenes.
Super8 for childhood scenes.

Aspect Ratio: 2.39 : 1

Lighting Arc: Dawn → Dusk → Sunlight → Bright Colors



VISUAL INSPIRATION





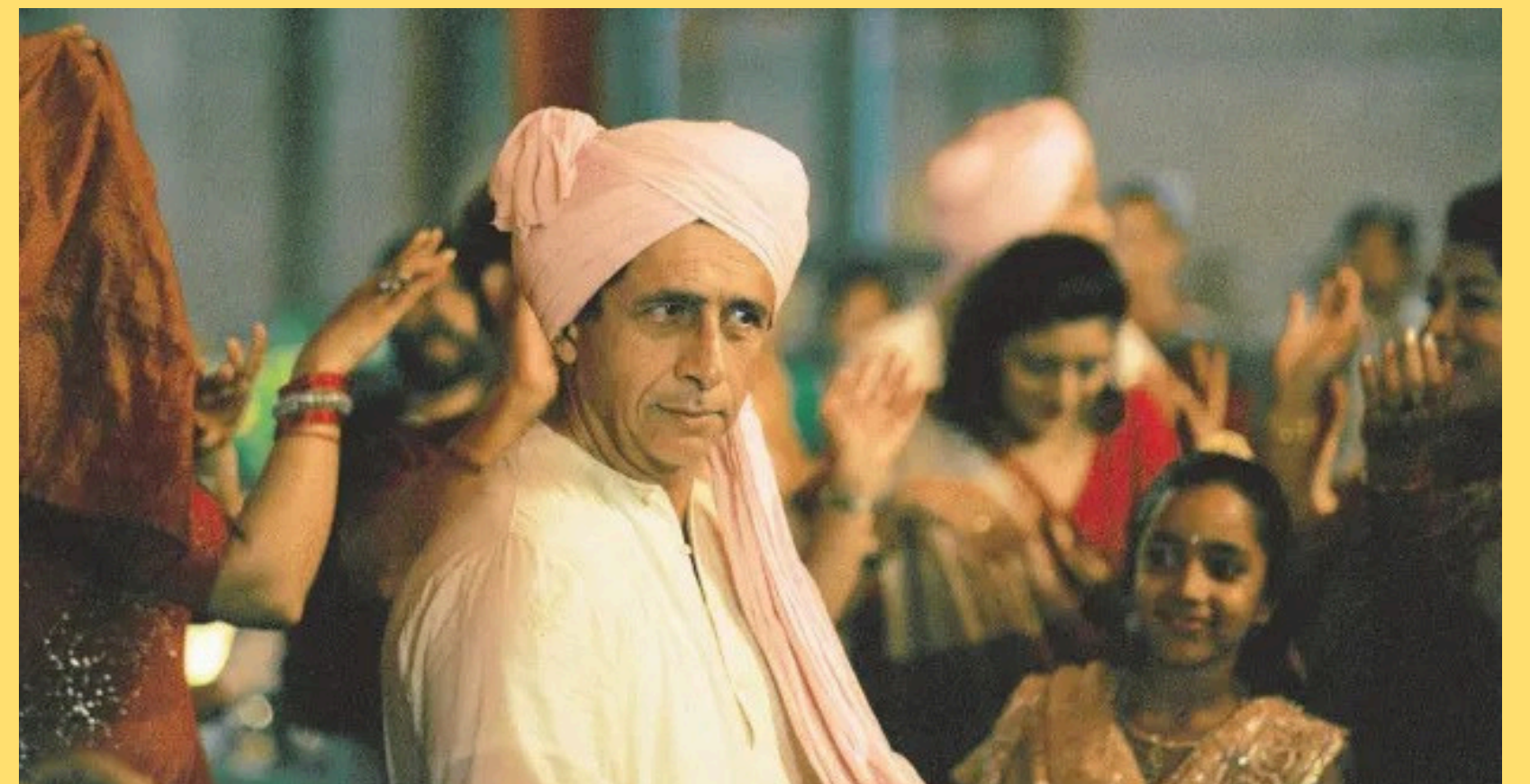
Thelma & Louise (Susan Sarandon)



The Namesake (Tabu)



Bride & Prejudice (Aishwarya Rai))



Monsoon Wedding (Naseeruddin Shah)





Band Bajaa Baraat (Anushka Sharma)



Footloose (Kenny Wormald)



Bend it like Beckham (Parminder Nagra)



The Good Time Girls (Laura Dern)



CINEMATOGRAPHY APPROACH

Lens: Soft Outdoors, Initially withdrawn for Asha's POV but things change later ;sharper, cooler for indoors.

Camera: Wide Shots + composed static frames+ intimate handhelds. Drone.

Movement: Slow initially but as Asha begins to grow, edits move quicker.

Film Feel: Digital 2.39 : 1 with Super 8 and VHS inserts for memory.

Light Journey: Dusk→ dawn → sun-kissed closure. Indoors→ Tungsten→ Warm



SOUND & SCORE

Original Score by award winning artists **Aditya Rao & Nagavalli Medicharla**

An indie soundscape – upbeat, tender, melancholic, traditional and country.

Acoustic/piano/string blend/blues guitar/percussions/flute

Moments of country meets desi in both grief and JOY!

Natural sound design –Texas exteriors, wind, cattle, barn animals, boots.



CHARACTERS & PERFORMANCE

C h a r a c t e r

A r c / E s s e n c e

Asha

Withdrawn, determined, content—Earth as a healing force.

Sally

Gritty & raw, accommodating, community, acceptance—accepting of the changing world

Sangeeta

Strong willed and carefree—ABCD (American Born Confused Desi, *kinda*).

Suresh

Pragmatic, Inflexible, acceptance—stuck between generational norm and heart.



ASHA - LEAD

(Late 40s- mid 50s)

45-50 years old, simple with a quiet beauty. She is very traditional and still believes strongly in her Hindu values. She grew up in a wealthy family as child in India, but that never meant much to her. She likes to laugh but doesn't get the opportunity much anymore. She runs a motel business with her husband in New York City and after 25 years of it, she is feeling disenchanted. Deep down there is strength and independence lurking, a passion. It's always been there but it has been repressed her whole life by her father, her husband and most importantly her culture. Landing at JFK airport, twenty-five years ago, she realizes this is not the American dream she imagined. She believes she has a purpose, but it seems to be diminishing after years of changing out dirty sheets.

Tone inspiration: Ashima from the Namesake, Basanti from Sholay

Casting approach: Open casting. Looking for a breakout performance that captures authenticity, humor, and emotional intelligence.



Manisha Koirala



Lara Dutta



Mindy Kaling

SALLY - LEAD

(Late 50s- mid 60s)

Sally Daniels is a mid-60s Texas cattiewoman who wears grit like a second skin. A widower for nearly a decade, she runs WallBrook Ranch with weather-beaten resolve. Sharp-eyed and stubborn, she can rope a steer, negotiate cattle prices, and stare down an oil man before noon.

Beneath that steel, though, is a quiet hollowness she never admits to. She still wears her wedding band, fears the ranch's future, and battles her own mortality. Her friendship with Asha softens her edges, offering peace and a slow rebirth. Anyone who earns her trust gains a lifelong protector—and despite her dry denials, a warm ember of hope still burns inside her.

Tone inspiration: Louise from Thelma & Louise, Leigh Anne Tuohy from The Blindside.

Casting approach: Open casting. Looking for a breakout performance that captures authenticity, humor, and emotional intelligence.



Laura Dern



Sharon Stone



Peggy Schott



CONFIRMED AS SURESH : ADIL HUSSAIN



Adil Hussain is an acclaimed Indian actor from Goalpara, Assam, known for his powerful work across stage, film, and television in India and abroad. Born as the youngest of seven children to a teacher, he grew up performing in school plays and later became a popular stand-up comedian in Guwahati, known for mimicking Bollywood actors. After studying philosophy at B. Borooah College, he trained at the National School of Drama from 1990 to 1993 and later at the Drama Studio London on a Charles Wallace India Trust Scholarship.

He began his career performing with Assam's Hengul Theater before moving to Delhi to train further and build a strong presence in theatre. His breakout performance in *Othello: A Play in Black and White* earned the Edinburgh Fringe First Award and established him as a respected stage actor. He went on to serve as an artistic director and trainer in Hampi, and has taught as visiting faculty at both the Royal Conservatory in The Hague and the National School of Drama.

Adil made his film debut with *Iti Srikanta* in 2004 and gained wider attention with *Ishqiya* in 2010. His international recognition rose in 2012 with *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Life of Pi*, along with notable Bollywood performances in *English Vinglish*, *Agent Vinod*, and *Lessons in Forgetting*. He continued to appear in a diverse range of films including *Lootera*, *Raag*, *Zed Plus*, *Har Har Byomkesh*, *Parched*, *Force 2*, *Mukti Bhawan*, *Love Sonia*, *Abyakto*, and *Pareeksha*, acting in multiple languages and earning praise for his versatility. On television, he became well known for his lead role in the detective series *Jasoos Vijay*.

Adil Hussain is married to Kristen Jain and is widely regarded as one of the finest and most versatile actors working in Indian and international cinema today.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

A Letter from the Director

Cowboys & Hindus

Howdy Viewer!

The film is also a journey, a fusion of two cultures, Hindu and Cowboy, both distinct and opposite in almost every way, but deeply rooted in fundamental ideologies. The film is an amalgamation of a refreshing new global society, where Cowboys eating Samosas, and Hindus doing the Line Dance, synchronize for a unique and fun filled experience. Choreographing Western dances to Indian, Hindi music mixed with Country guitar picking, are just some of the ideas we will develop to visually excite the audience. We will give the film a classic epic look where the vast geography of deep canyons, long grass, and breathtaking sunsets enhance the emotional content of the storyline. Comedy, pathos, and striking visual imagery will make the film appeal to the masses on both sides of the ocean. In essence, the film is about where we are going in an ever-changing world and finding the common bonds that connect us all, learning to live with each other and most importantly ourselves.

Cheers

Tejal Desai

"It's never too late to start a new journey."



DIRECTOR'S VISION



"Pearls crack. Boots fit just fine."

Cowboys and Hindus is a feel-good film about two women from vastly different cultures who discover their true identities against the sweeping landscapes of the American Southwest. As they journey together, they confront fears, share strengths, and form an unexpected, lasting friendship.

Blending Hindu and Cowboy traditions, the film celebrates a new global society—where cowboys eat samosas, Hindus line dance, and cultures intertwine with ease. Western choreography set to Hindi music, country guitar mixed with Indian rhythms, and epic visuals of canyons, grasslands, and sunsets create a vibrant, cinematic experience.

Ultimately, Cowboys and Hindus is a story about connection—finding common ground in a rapidly changing world and learning to live with one another, and with ourselves.



Production Company: Milro Productions & Banskota Productions

Director / Writer: Tejal Desai

Budget Level: \$1.2M (Indie Prestige Drama)

Fiscal Sponsor: Tasveer Film Festival

Shoot: April 2026 — Texas (19 days)

Format: 2.39 : 1 Digital + Super 8+ Camcorder

Crew: Experienced team / award-winning proof-of-concept

Status: Finalized Script — Financing for April 2026 Shoot

PRODUCTION OVERVIEW



WRITER/DIRECTOR: TEJAL DESAI



Tejal Desai is an award-winning screenwriter. He is an Academy Gold member for the Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences (AMPAS) and also a Nicholl Fellow for the AMPAS. Tejal won the prestigious Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting for his comedy *Linda and Henry*. Tejal also won the Final Draft Screenwriting award for his feature screenplay *Cowboys and Hindus*. He has written for Disney, Focus Features and Lifetime.

Recently Tejal was awarded best Director for the proof of concept for his film *Cowboys & Hindus (C&H)* at the Rock the Shorts Film Festival. Tejal also won the Cine story film festival with the feature script for (C&H). He also was a semi-finalist for the screen writers lab at prestigious Sundance Film Institute.

PRODUCER: KIRTANA BANSKOTA



Kirtana Banskota is an award-winning, first-generation Nepali- American filmmaker who loves applying her global-grown work ethic to the world of film and media specially by bringing films to Texas.

Having lived in Austin for over a decade she thrives in working with underrepresented communities alongside women, people of color, and the LGBTQ community while seeking to promote themes of passion, social impact, and integrity in all of her work. She is a Producer, Director, Actor, and Philanthropist.

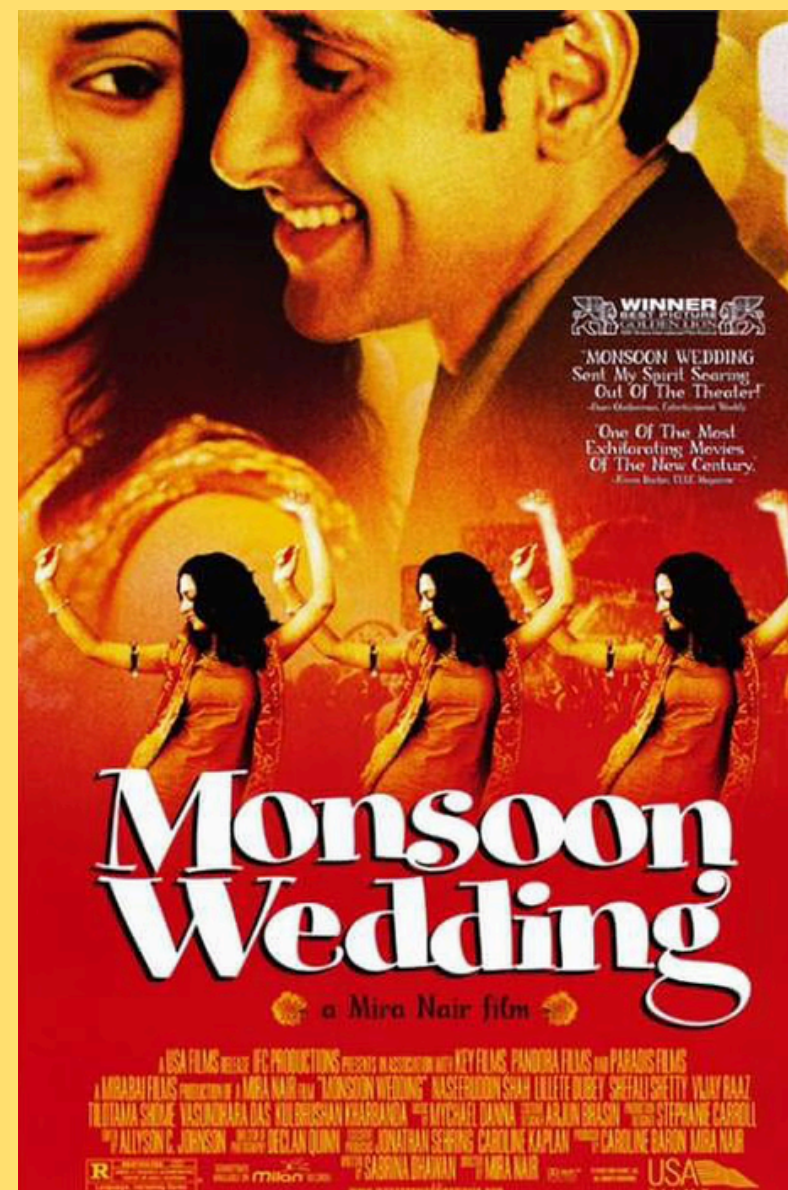
Kirtana is a current Alliance of Women Directors, and Film Fatales Member. She also currently serves as a Producer with the All Entertainment Business.

Other organizations she is affiliated with:

Banskota Productions- Founder + CEO | South Asian House, LLC- Co-Founder + Co-Producer Women in Film and Television, Austin-Board former member| Nepal America Film Society- Co-Founder & Nepal America International Film Festival- Co-Founder President Asian Family Support Services of Austin | Council Committee Member (District 6) - Austin Arts Commission



COMPARABLE FILMS



PROOF OF CONCEPT & FESTIVAL SUCCESS

Proof-of-Concept short premiered at the prestigious **Indie Meme Film Festival** in Austin (2025)

Winner: Best Indie Short Award – Rock the Shorts (2025)

Audience Choice Award- Indic Film Utsav (2025)

Best of Asia Awards-Independent Short Awards (2024)

Jury Award -World Class Film Awards (2025)



Official Selection - *Academy Qualifying*

Tasveer Film Festival (2025), Urban World Film Festival (2025)

Official Selection- *Canadian Screen Award Qualifying*

Whistler Film Festival (2025)

Official Selection- *Film Festivals*

Chicago South Asian Film Festival (2025), DC South Asian Film Festival (2025), World Culture Film Festival (2025) , Prescott Film Festival (2025), Best of Asia Short Film Festival (2025), Rock the Shorts Film Festival (2025), Moonwhite Films International Film Festival (2025), South Texas International Film Festival (2025), Indic Film Utsav (2025)

Demonstrates audience appeal and critical recognition for the feature concept.

The feature script of Cowboys and Hindus has won several screenwriting awards over the years including the Final Draft Screenwriting Award, Nicholls, Sundance Screening Writing Lab and the Cinestory award.



PROOF OF CONCEPT



TRAILER ✨

✨ CONCEPT

PASSWORD

==> MILRO (ALL LOWER CASE)

REVIEWS

==> ONE FILM FAN - REVIEW

==> THE DESI BUZZ - BEST DIRECTOR

==> REVIEWRON.AE



MILRO PRODUCTIONS

Milro Productions is an Indo-American independent film production company that aims to create original and engaging content that resonates to a universal audience. Our Projects will focus on all genres but will primarily use comedy and pathos that will inspire the human connection and make a lasting impact to a global audience.



CONTACT

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Kirtana Banskota - **Producer**
kirtana@banskota.com

Milro Productions & Banskota Productions

BANSKOTA PRODUCTIONS

Banskota Productions, founded by award-winning filmmaker Kirtana Banskota, is a multilingual, full-service film and media company specializing in socially impactful narrative films, documentaries, commercials, and live events. Our work centers culturally authentic, emotionally resonant storytelling that uplifts underrepresented voices.

With global language partners and inclusive production practices, our films have screened at SXSW, Tribeca, Art Basel, HollyShorts, and Tasveer. We provide full production services—development, filming, and post-production—delivering high-quality, globally minded content for creatives, nonprofits, and mission-driven brands.

Our mission is to tell meaningful stories that inspire empathy, spark dialogue, and create positive social change. We are from Texas but for the world!

