

A FILM BY ANGBEEN SALEEM



Billio Rami



Billo Rani

Running Time:

11 minutes

Directed By:

Angbeen Saleem

Written By:

Angbeen Saleem

Maryam Mir

Produced By:

Seika Paradeis

Angbeen Saleem

Production Company:

Third Cousin Pictures

Edited by:

Soraya Perry

Cinematographer:

Jason Velez

Composer:

Rianjali

STARRING KAVYA SURI KAKODKAR & WASIM AZEEZ
PRODUCERS SEIKA PARADEIS & ANGBEEN SALEEM EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS KHAULA WALIK & RITA MAHER
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JASON VELEZ PRODUCTION DESIGNER MEHULA SINGH COSTUME DESIGNER LIZZIE DONELAN
COMPOSER RIANJALI SOUND DESIGNER JAMES FINDLAY COLORIST SOYOUNG PARK EDITOR SORAYA PERRY
WRITTEN BY ANGBEEN SALEEM & MARYAM MIR DIRECTED BY ANGBEEN SALEEM
A THIRD COUSIN PICTURES PRODUCTION

IMPORTANT LINKS

Stills

Poster

BTS

EPK Folder



LOGLINE

When Hafsa, a sparkly and impulsive 12-year-old girl, is made aware of her unibrow at Islamic Sunday School in a lesson on “cleanliness”, her eyebrows come alive and begin to speak to her.

SYNOPSIS

Billo Rani is a whimsical short film about Hafsa, a 12-year-old South Asian Muslim girl who feels insecure about her unibrow—until it comes to life as two animated aunties, Billo and Rani. These cheeky aunties provide both humor and wisdom as Hafsa navigates societal beauty standards and the pressures of fitting in. Through a mix of live-action and animation, Billo Rani explores themes of self-acceptance, cultural identity, and the magic of embracing what makes you unique, offering a heartfelt and humorous take on growing up.

CAST



Kavia Kakodkar as *Hafsa*

Kavia Kakodkar (@KaviaKOfficial) is proud to make her professional film debut in *Billo Rani*. Professional theatre credits include *Billy Elliot* (Paramount Theatre) and *Children of Eden* (Broadway in Chicago). She is thankful to Angbeen Saleem for trusting her to tell her important story, to everyone on set for being great role models, to Gray Talent Group and to her family.



Wasim Azeez as *Ahmed*

Wasim Azeez is recognized for his versatile performances across languages including Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Malayalam, and English, with proficiency in Arabic. He starred in "Alone Alone on a Wide Wide Sea," featured at the Oscar-qualifying Tasveer and Chicago South Asian Film Festivals, and in Netflix-backed "Billo Rani." His upcoming project, "The Apple Picker's Son," is from the American Film Institute. With performances at The Public, Vineyard, Theater for the New City, and The Tank, Azeez amplifies Middle Eastern and South Asian stories on the global stage.

CAST



Sadhana Singhal as **Zainab Aunty**

Sadhana Singhal is a writer/actor. She graduated with a BA from UC Berkeley; and, is an alumnus of Studio ACT in San Francisco. She was a recurring CoStar on Netflix as Geeta in Mindy Kaling's *Never Have I Ever*, and starred in Films including *Learner's Permit*, *Girls Aren't Funny*, *Tate's Parade*, *The American Terrorist* and *The Book Of The Witch*. Her multi-award winning screenplay, *Mystic Masala*, a supernatural mystery series based in San Francisco, is currently in Pre-Production.



Devika Agarwal as **Sonya**

Devika grew up in India immersed in Bharatnatyam, school theater, and classical arts. After earning her medical degree, she built a successful pharma career and moved to the U.S. with her supportive husband. Now, alongside raising two kids, she pursues her passion for acting, with multiple short films and a social media ad to her name, drawn to storytelling that explores diverse perspectives.

CAST



Swineryy as *Billo* and *Rani*

Swineryy is one of South Asia's most beloved comedy accounts on Instagram, featuring short clips of original animated characters. Using Animoji animations on an iPhone, Swineryy has generated a collection of transgressive characters on social media that challenge norms in her country.

DIRECTOR, WRITER, PRODUCER, Angbeen Saleem

Angbeen Saleem is a Pakistani Muslim artist, filmmaker, poet, and aspiring gardener from Philadelphia, PA. She is a freelance digital strategist and graphic designer. Previously, she worked at North Star Fund, MTV, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and the Aspen Institute. She loves the way storytelling can create space for learning, joy, and healing.

Her poetry has appeared in Best American Poetry 2021, Blood Orange Review, Pigeon Pages, The Margins, The Slowdown, underblong, and in other timelines of the multiverse. An installation of her poem “black and brown people on shark tank” is on display at Cherry Street Pier in Philadelphia. Her debut short film, “Billo Rani,” premiered at the Oscar-qualifying Tasveer Film Festival in Seattle. She lives in Brooklyn, NY with her dustmites. You can find her on instagram @angribeen and via email at angbeens@gmail.com



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The film begins in an Islamic Sunday School, when a teacher points out Hafsa's unibrow — this actually happened to me when I was younger. It felt like such a huge moment, even though I doubt it registered for everyone else in the class. From a young age, even if I didn't have the words to say it, I spent a lot of time not feeling “woman” enough because of my body hair and appearance. Thinking about the performance of gender and the expectations placed on us from a young age has become a part of my artistry.

As I grew up, and I noticed the ways that my body hair put in a box, aunties are too. I feel like they've gotten a terrible reputation! And as I step into my aunty era, I want to make sure aunties get a rebrand and this is a huge part of that. We have a variety of aunties, from totally accepting to pushy, to well meaning and rude. Aunties come in so many shapes and sizes and we shouldn't be limited by negative portrayals.



PRODUCER, Seika Paradeis

Raised in New York City and trained as a classical ballet dancer in her youth, Seika found her passion for filmmaking and working with interdisciplinary artists while studying at Hunter College, City University of New York. Seika's tenure includes roles as an Associate Producer and Executive Producers Assistant at esteemed production companies like 1stAveMachine and Ummah Chroma Creative Partners. In 2022, she was awarded a grant from the Women of Color Short Film Incubator sponsored by NALIP & NETFLIX for her role as a producer of the short film, "Sunflower Girl." Currently, she freelances on a wide spectrum of projects that range from commercials, and branded and promotional content to scripted narratives and non-scripted documentaries. Working with the artist, Kenneth Tam, she recently produced a documentary for WLIW All Arts that delved into the lives of South Asian taxi drivers, exploring their relationship with debt. Her portfolio of documentary projects extends to projects that feature influential artists such as Kara Walker, Deana Lawson, Telfar Clemens, and André 3000. Some of her other projects include line producing or production managing on projects for cultural institutions like the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Guggenheim Museum, the International African American Museum, and Sesame Street.



EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, Khaula Haider Malik

Khaula Haider Malik is a filmmaker and programmer based in New York City.

She most recently co-produced Apple TV+'s *GIRLS STATE*, a sequel to the Sundance and Emmy award-winning *BOYS STATE*.

She is currently in post-production on her first feature doc which has been supported by DOCNYC and the Catapult/True False Rough Cut Retreat.

Khaula's work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Sight & Sound*, PBS and has worked with Netflix and HBO. She is a graduate of the MFA program at the Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema, and a programmer for the True/False Film Festival.



CINEMATOGRAPHER, Jason Velez

Jason Velez is a cinematographer based in the United States. Jason's interest in photography started as a 16 year old when his father gave him an old Yashica 35mm still camera. Jason's first introduction to motion picture filmmaking was while in college where he was able to experiment with Super 8mm, 16mm and Super 16mm formats under the teaching of Argentinian Avant Garde filmmaker Leondro Katz. Since 1998, Jason has been a contributor on over 60 feature films and nearly 2 dozen television projects. In 2002, Jason met the artist, writer, director Erika Goyzueta and began a lasting partnership and marriage. The two of them have three children and together have embarked on backpacking trips around the world. After spending the last 26 plus years primarily making studio and independent films within the United States, Jason is now looking forward to contributing to filmmaking beyond the borders of the United States. He believes the world's most powerful storytellers exists in every culture and he is inspired to help bring those words to life with cinema.



PRODUCTION DESIGNER, Mehula Singh

After pursuing an undergraduate degree in product design in India, Mehula found herself drawn into the world of film production while collaborating with friends from the film department in her school. This encounter led her to explore the art department, where she began her journey as a prop shopper for ad commercials before delving into set dressing, and construction coordination for Bollywood films.

With the onset of the pandemic, Mehula took the opportunity to further her education, completing her MFA in design for stage and film at NYU in 2023. She is now based in New York and continues to collaborate with like minded people to breathe life into captivating narratives, She likes to add a sense of humor to her design and is drawn to surrealism and absurdity.

Beyond her professional endeavors, Mehula finds solace in cooking and indulging in go karting whenever time permits. She shares her life with three beloved dogs who are in Mumbai and looks forward to a work-life balance that allows her to reunite with them annually.



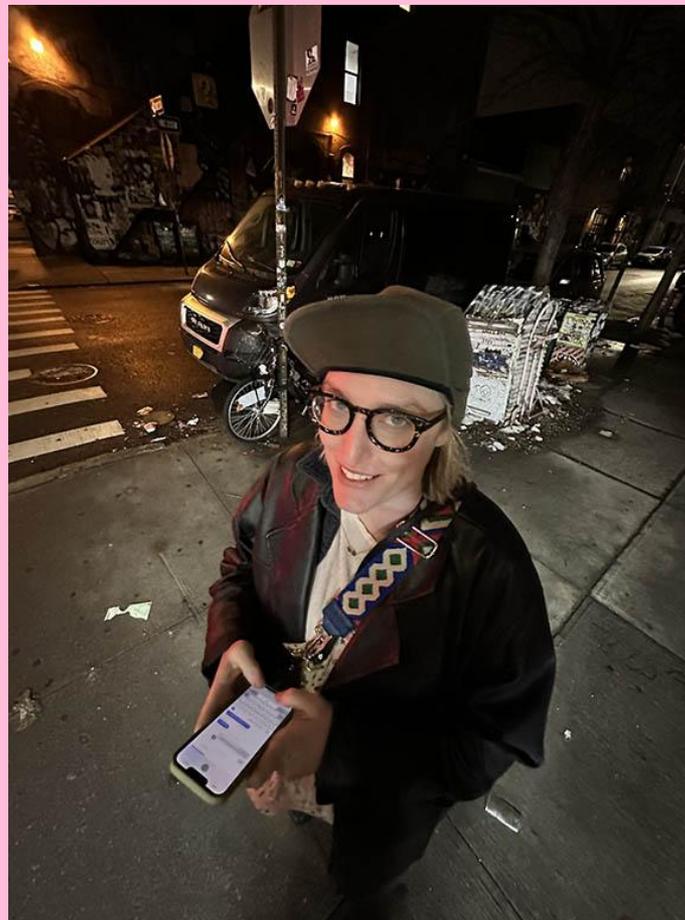
COSTUME DESIGNER, Lizzie Donelan

Lizzie Donelan is a Brooklyn-based costume designer for film, TV, and theatre. She designed A24's feature "Janet Planet" directed by Annie Baker starring Julianne Nicholson. Her work includes the feature films "The Adults" (starring Michael Cera, dir: Dustin Guy Defa, a Universal Pictures release), "Funny Face" (dir: Tim Sutton) and "Come Find Me" (dir: Daniel Poliner). Her work has premiered at festivals including Sundance, the Berlin Film Festival, and Telluride.

As an assistant, she has worked with designer Suttirat Anne Larlarb most notably on the James Bond film "No Time to Die", "Obi-Wan Kenobi" as well as others. She has worked in both assistant and associate designer roles for several Broadway productions including "Macbeth", "Finding Neverland", and "Waitress".

Lizzie has a MFA in Costume Design from Carnegie Mellon University a BA in Theatre and Dance at James Madison University.

When not designing, Lizzie is an avid painter and pastry enthusiast.



COMPOSER, Rianjali

An award winning, NYC born, L.A. based singer-songwriter/composer who found her pinch me moment when she was asked to work alongside A.R. Rahman 7 years ago, Rianjali has collaborated and performed with internationally acclaimed artists like U2, Bishop Briggs, Shawn Mendes, worked with A.R.R. on projects including Award-Winning Netflix original documentary Daughters of Destiny, Amazon Prime's Harmony, Le Musk (A.R Rahman's VR film) and penned songs for films such as Blinded by the Light and Love Sonia (Amazon Prime). She was Oscar shortlisted in 2017 and featured on Broadway World as a notable female songwriter to watch. Rianjali recently composed for Seeing God (Best Documentary SAFFA), Saltwater - (Wisconsin Film Festival, CSAFF, Culver City Film Festival), Sifter (Tasveer Film Festival, CSAFF, Top Shorts Film Festival) and is slated to compose for feature documentary in 2024 about the first professional South Asian basketball team. She continues to surround herself with all things film and music, making her mark in a space she never saw herself in.



EDITOR, Soraya Perry

Soraya Perry is an editor, musician, actor, and visual artist. She has been awarded music and art residencies at Vermont Studio Center, Worcester's Collective-A-Go-Go, and The Sitka Center For Art and Ecology. She has edited for Forbes, HBO, and Blumhouse Productions, and her short film *The Crack: An Origin Myth* was an official selection at In-Short Film Festival and the Feminist Border Arts Film Festival.



ANIMATION DIRECTOR, Alexa Lim Haas

Alexa Lim Haas (they/she) is a Filipino-Irish American artist from New York City. Alexa was selected by Filmmaker Magazine as one of the “25 New Faces of Independent Film.” Alexa’s films, *GLOVE* (2016), *AGUA VIVA* (2018) and *ODE TO OCEAN* (2020) each world premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. *GLOVE* and *AGUA VIVA* were awarded Grand Jury Prizes at SXSW. Alexa’s work has been exhibited at film festivals worldwide and at MoMA, BAM, The Brooklyn Museum, and The New York Times. Alexa has directed animations for Planned Parenthood, Beach House, HBO’s *RANDOM ACTS OF FLYNESS*, and the Netflix documentary *MUCHO MUCHO AMOR*. She is the screenwriter for *RACHEL IN LOVE* currently in development with Department of Motion Pictures and Park Pictures. Alexa is currently developing their first feature film to write and direct called *SAINT MALO* about a Filipino-Irish witch from Little Manila Queens who accidentally goes blind after casting a fertility spell. Alexa received her BFA from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts.



KEY CREW

Directed by

Angbeen Saleem

Written by

**Angbeen Saleem
Maryam Mir**

Produced by

**Seika Paradeis
Angbeen Saleem**

Director of Photography

Jason Velez

Production Designer

Mehula Singh

Editor

Soraya Perry

Costume Designer

Lizzie Donelan

Hair & Make-up Designer

Maria Matarasse

Music by

Rianjali

Animation Director

Alexa Lim Haas

Executive Producers

**Khaula Malik
Rita Meher**



KEY CAST

Hafsa

Ahmed

Billo and Rani

Zainab Aunty

Sonya

Noor

Kavia Suri Kakodkar

Wasim Azeez

Swineryy

Sadhana Singhal

Devika Agarwal

Soul Kaur



CREW

Associate Producer
Production Coordinator
Production Assistant
Production Assistant
Driver PA
Driver PA
Assistant Director
Assistant Director
1st Assistant Camera
2nd Assistant Camera
DIT
Gaffer
Key Grip
Grip
Art Assistant
Wardrobe Assistant
On-set Sound mixer
Hair & Makeup Artist
Script Supervisor
Lead Animator
Animation Color

Maryam Mir
Dylanne Hernandez
Mike Strobl
Tiger Lee
Cesar Monroy
Ainsley Samuda
Cami Olses
Ana Juanola
Troy Dobbartin
Marlena Strobe
Tiffany Armour-Tejada
Carolina Acero
Rob Harlow
Joe Doughan
Haolang Li
Nix LoPinto
Sam Beneitone
Maria Matarrese
Kelly Wang
Bernardo Britto
Eron Hare

Post Production by Dunya Post

Post-Production Supervisor
Colorist
Dialogue & SFX Editor
Re-Recording Mixer

Sound Designer &
Post Sound Supervisor

Kashif Pasta
SoYoung Park
Kabir Agarwal
Rosángela Hernández
Gómez
James M Findlay



PRESS, FESTIVALS, AND AWARDS



Islamic Scholarship Fund Recipient, 2022

Sachs Alumni Art Award from University of Pennsylvania, 2021

Interview: [Director Angbeen Saleem Gets Animated with "Billo Rani"](#)