



PINK CITY SKIES

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By Jagjiwan Sohal

Director: Maya Bastian

Producers: Leslie Hope and Tina Vacalopoulos

parallila
pictures



GODS ABOVE, CITY BELOW.



When seventeen-year-old Nikhil is caught having sex with his boyfriend, he flees his family home and roams the downtown Toronto streets, encountering enigmatic city residents while guided by mystical Hindu gods.



Be a good Indian boy for your dad.
Go to school, get a job...





“...and then you can be free.”



I can't be the son he wants.



ANIMAL!

LIKE A DOG!

FILTHY!

DIRTY!

FUNDA!



But I'm me.



And I'm tired of hiding.



“

Life is too short for bad shit, Imma tell you right now.



“

I know you're scared. I've been there. You just gotta let it go, darling.

My beloved father wanted to teach me a lesson about being a homosexual.

Why didn't your mom stop him?





Who do you think suggested the knife?





ff We're free.



“I don't feel free.”



“

The gods are with us and they guide us.



“

Never leave again...never...this is your home and you are my boy...mera beta.

you are my boy...my son.

SYNOPSIS

When Nikhil's father catches him having sex with his best friend Ajay, he becomes dangerously enraged and chases after his son, yelling 'dirty' 'shameful' 'disgusting' as Nikhil escapes and runs away to the city.

As the sun sets and the downtown sky turns pink, visions of Hindu deities appear to Nikhil. Struggling to come to terms with his sexuality and the expectations of his culture and his parents, Nikhil begins to lash out, creating chaos. But chance encounters with random strangers create an evening that is wondrous and poignant, filled with love, betrayal, violence, and self-discovery.

When the Hindu gods desert him however, his loneliness and despair deepen and he soon realizes he may not be able to escape his life. Nikhil may just reach his breaking point before the night ends and the pink-red sunshine of morning arrives.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I came out as queer when I was 35 years old, to everyone except my parents. Being brown and queer is a unique challenge unto itself. The South Asian diaspora can be very conservative. The phrase 'what will people think' is well known among us, as our community has always struggled to emerge from a past rooted in binary, traditional values.

Reading PINK CITY SKIES was deeply moving for me. Jagjiwan's script truthfully illustrates the complex feelings of hiding your identity. It also magically portrays what it can feel like to finally find the loving acceptance you've dreamed of. The characters could be anyone of us, straight, gay, gender fluid or trans. The Hindu mythology artfully woven into the fabric of the film demonstrates that our identities are as complex and layered as the stories we grew up with. The creative work I have dedicated myself to often addresses systemic inequities and intergenerational trauma. We need our elders to see films like this and we need our youth to feel accepted in popular narratives. The goal with this film is to create a graceful, kinetic portrait of the city we all love and the offerings it bestows upon a young queer person struggling with belonging.

PINK CITY SKIES is an LGBTQ love letter to the city of Toronto, to all those who have struggled to come out, and to the dream of feeling free in your own skin.



MAYA BASTIAN, Director

Maya Bastian is an award winning Tamil-Canadian filmmaker with roots in conflict journalism. Her work has been supported by HBO, Netflix, UN IOM, CBC and the Canadian Film Centre. Her film TIGRESS was produced by India's Suitable Pictures and participated at Cannes Court Metrage '21. She is in development on her arthouse horror feature THE DEVIL'S TEARS with Infinite Studios (Monkey Man, Crazy Rich Asians), and has just released a paranormal mystery series set in 1970's Southeast Asia for BANDAI NAMCO. She is currently in post-production on her feature debut GOOSE POINT for Fae Pictures and Superchannel. Her comedy series HOW TO BE BROWN is being Executive Produced by Marvel star Iman Vellani. She is an alumna of TIFF Filmmaker Lab, 1497 Features Lab, FNC New Market Pitch, Breaking Through the Lens @ Cannes & JETS Initiative Berlinale. Her work frequently explores South Asian identity and intergenerational trauma.

JAGJIWAN SOHAL, Writer

JAGJIWAN “JAG” SOHAL is a Punjabi-Canadian screenwriter/author who has worked with film and TV production companies around the world, both in live-action and animation. Credits include: NINA’S WORLD for NBC Sprout, Amazon’s DINO DANA, ENDLINGS for HULU, ACTION PACK, DEEPA and ANOOP and TEAM ZENKO GO for Netflix, CAILLOU and PRESS START for NBC Peacock, YouTube’s GHEE HAPPY, ELINOR WONDERS WHY for PBS and LATE BLOOMER for Crave.

Jagjiwan won the 2025 Writers Guild of Canada Award For Comedy Writing for his episode THE TURBAN on LATE BLOOMER. Jagjiwan is also a novelist with SMORGASBORD published in 2014 and TWO OLD INDIANS published in 2024.

LESLIE HOPE, Producer

With Tina Vacalopoulos, Leslie produced the feature film LIE EXPOSED which sold to Mongrel Media and Crave, and was picked up by Indican Pictures for US and international distribution. She was a producer on Season 4 of SNOWPIERCER and with Jon Eskenas she served as Executive Producer on THE BLING RING. Leslie produced the award winning documentary WHAT I SEE WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES which won several awards and was the official selection of over 30 film festivals. She was the Artistic Director of The Wilton Project, a Los Angeles based theatre company she founded and ran for 10 years. Leslie is a former actor who now enjoys a successful directing career.

TINA VACALOPOULOS, Producer

Tina produced the feature LIE EXPOSED with Leslie Hope. She Co-Produced KWÊSKOSÎW - She Whistles, awarded Best Live Action Short at the American Indian Film Festival and Bronze Audience Awards at the 2021 Fantasia Festival and Toronto After Dark Film Festival. In her 20-year + career in Production she's helped produce over 350 episodes of television including Canada's #1 longest running Drama MURDOCH MYSTERIES, and several films including CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2. Tina worked on live events such as the 2009 GENIE AWARDS and the LOVE YOUR HEART BENEFIT CONCERT that was simulcast across Canada.



Nikhil. It means complete. In Hindi. A man who is complete.



Coming of Age Drama, LGBTQ, Magic realism, English and Hindi

85 min

CAD \$1M

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